**WOW Chile Tour- Astronomy, Atacama Desert, Wine & Easter Island**

Chile is known to have one of the clearest skies in the world. Join us as we visit La Silla Observatory, which enjoys one of the darkest night skies on Earth. Then we will travel to high altitude, as we begin in San Pedro de Atacama, a true oasis in the driest desert in the world. We continue our odyssey south to the Casablanca wine valley where we will taste the gift the Mediterranean weather has blessed this area with by way of world famous wines. Why did so many cultures try to invade this portion of land? Easter Island is claimed to be the most remote inhabited island on the planet, and famous for its 887 extant monumental statues, called Moai. It is a World Heritage Site (as determined by UNESCO) with much of the island protected within Rapa Nui National Park.

**Departure:** Friday September 4, 2015  
**Destinations:** La Serena, San Pedro de Atacama, Casablanca Wine Valley & Easter Island  
**Duration:** 12 days / 11 Nights  
**Price:** US$4,860 with flights - Single Supplement: $990

**Included:**  
- Internal airfare Santiago – La Serena – Santiago – Calama – Santiago  
- Internal airfare Santiago – Easter Island – Santiago w/ LAN – Economy Class (Business Class available for +$390)  
- 1 night lodging in La Serena – Hotel Mar de Ensueño - [hotelmarensueno.com/en](http://hotelmarensueno.com/en)  
- 1 night lodging in SCL Airport Hotel – Hotel Diego de Almagro - [www.dahotelesaeropuerto.com](http://www.dahotelesaeropuerto.com)  
- 3 nights lodging in San Pedro de Atacama - Hotel La Casa de Don Tomas - [www.dontomas.cl](http://www.dontomas.cl)  
- 1 night lodging in Santiago – Hotel Torremayor - [www.hoteltorremayor.cl](http://www.hoteltorremayor.cl)  
- 4 nights lodging in Easter Island – Hotel Paku Vai - [www.pukuvaihotel.com/index.html](http://www.pukuvaihotel.com/index.html)  
- Personally escorted throughout tour by Wangulen Tour Host.

**Not included:**  
- International Airfare to Santiago,  
- Alcoholic drinks,  
- Activities not mentioned in program,  
- Souvenirs, other personal "extras",  
- Travel insurance,  
- Gratuities
Tour Itinerary

**Day 1 Santiago – La Serena (Fri, Sept 4):**
Most flights will arrive to Santiago airport from 6:00 am to 10:00 am. Greeting in the Santiago Airport by Wangulen Travel Tour Host. Once the group arrives we will make our way to check in for our short flight to La Serena, transfer to our hotel located in front of the Pacific Ocean. Rest of day free to relax until time for our welcome dinner.

**Dinner – Hotel Mar de Ensueño**

**Day 2 La Silla Observatory - Santiago (Sat, Sept 5):**
Check out by 10:00 in the morning, then we begin our 100 mile drive to La Silla (2 hours) by route 5 until we will see the southern border of the Atacama Desert. ESO’s La Silla Observatory is equipped with several medium-sized optical telescopes and is home to the world’s foremost exoplanet hunter: HARPS (High Accuracy Radial velocity Planet Searcher), a spectrograph with unrivalled precision. The 3.58-metre New Technology Telescope (NTT) broke new ground for telescope engineering and design and was the first in the world to have a computer-controlled main mirror (active optics), a technology developed at ESO and now applied to most of the world’s current large telescopes. The La Silla Observatory is the first world-class observatory to have been granted certification for the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) 9001 Quality Management System.

The infrastructure of La Silla is also used by many of the ESO Member States for targeted projects such as the Swiss 1.2-metre Leonhard Euler Telescope, the Rapid Eye Mount telescope (REM) and the TAROT Telescope gamma-ray burst chaser, as well as more common user facilities such as the MPG/ESO 2.2-metre and the Danish 1.54-metre Telescopes. The 67-million pixel Wide Field Imager on the MPG/ESO 2.2-metre Telescope has taken many amazing images of celestial objects, some of which have now become icons in their own right.

**While on La Silla**
All buildings and public areas on La Silla are non-smoking.
During your visit, you must stay with the ESO Guide at all times. In an emergency, always follow the Guide’s instructions.
The La Silla Observatory permits photographs and video recording during the tours.
The La Silla Observatory is located at 2,400 meters altitude. We recommend that you do not walk quickly. Restroom facilities are available.
After our tour we will make our drive back to La Serena Airport for our return flight to Santiago.

**Breakfast & Snack – Hotel Mar de Ensueño**

**Day 3 San Pedro de Atacama (Sun, Sept 6):**
Transfer to airport for our 2 hour flight to Calama & 1 hour transfer to San Pedro de Atacama, an oasis at the north end of the Atacama Salt Flats, a vast saline lake. We will check into the Hotel La Casa de Don Tomas for the next three nights and then take a walking tour around the village, visiting the museum. In the afternoon we will drive to the Moon Valley, a unique geological formation to wait for once in a lifetime sunset views. In the middle of the deep dryness of the salt mountain range we find a landscape of salt and clay shaped by water and wind over millions of years. In our journey we can enjoy the beauty delivered by extravagant forms that the cordillera mountain range gives us, encouraging imagination and reflection for your journey.
peace of mind. As we spend the afternoon we will go into the Death Valley where we will enjoy one of the best views of the Andes and its volcanoes, to finally finish watching the sunset that through its colors gives us a wonderful end to our day.

**Easy -Mild 15 minute hike up to the hill for the sunset view**

**Breakfast & Dinner – Hotel La Casa de Don Tomas**

**Note:** The town lies at an average of 7,900 feet (2,400 m), and visitors often experience mild altitude sickness such as dizziness, lethargy and headaches. The local climate is extremely dry and mild, with daytime temperatures between 18–25 °C (64–77 °F) in the winter (June to August). Nighttime temperatures routinely drop below 0 °C (32 °F) and can reach as low as −10 °C (14 °F) in the winter.

At higher altitudes, the pressure of the air around you (barometric pressure) decreases so there is less oxygen in surrounding air. People can live comfortably at moderately high altitudes, but the body must make some adjustments, and this takes time. If you ascend to altitudes above 8,000 feet, you will be in danger of developing uncomfortable or dangerous symptoms from the change in altitude.

You can treat mild altitude sickness with rest and pain relievers. The drug acetazolamide can speed recovery. This drug balances your body chemistry and stimulates breathing.

If you have symptoms of altitude sickness, avoid alcohol, sleeping pills and narcotic pain medications. All of these can slow your breathing, which is extremely dangerous in low-oxygen conditions.

You can treat high-altitude cerebral edema with supplemental oxygen and the drug dexamethasone, which decreases brain swelling.

*Information provided by Harvard Health Publications*

**Day 4 San Pedro de Atacama (Mon, Sept 7):**

Breakfast at the hotel. On this occasion, we’ll visit the great Salar de Atacama in Los Flamencos National Reserve where we can enjoy its immensity surrounded by fauna in the Chaxa lagoon and surroundings between the flamingos that prove to be the main attraction of the salt flat with their beauty. Then we will take the road to the Highlands to visit the lagoons Miscanti and Miñiques at 4,200 meters above sea level at the base of the volcanoes of the cordillera of the Andes. Through its paths we will be delighted by the nature of a landscape of contrasts. We will then enjoy lunch in the town of Socaire village highlighted for its traditional cuisine. Finally, before returning, we will visit the town of Toconao, its bell tower and Church of San Lucas, both national monuments since 1951.

**Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner – Hotel La Casa de Don Tomas**

**Day 5 San Pedro de Atacama (Tue, Sept 8):**

Our trip to the highlands begins during the early morning hours to finally reach one of the most important geothermal fields in the world, “Geysers del Tatio” (4,200 mts./ 13,800 fts.). Surrounded with water emanations and steam, we will enjoy the beauty of the Andes and with this natural stage we will offer you an agreeable breakfast. Return to town, with time to relax until 2 PM.

San Pedro de Atacama is the archaeological capital of Chile, not only its landscapes are part of its appeal, its history enriches it and also to you, your stay and experience. We will visit the most important archaeological sites of the area and will travel to the past to learn about the origin of the Atacama or Licanantai culture. The Pukara de Quitor is not only important for the local history, but also for the history of Chile through the battle of Quitor (1540), one of the first conflicts between
Spaniards and Indians. **1 hour hike around the fortress.** In the Atacama farm we will see how a family combines the ancestral traditions of agriculture and livestock with tourism, tasting some local products, then we visit Tulor village, which corresponds to the oldest settlement in the basin of the Salt Flat of Atacama and one of the first tests of sedentary lifestyles in the region. Early dinner and then we will enjoy the “Star Tour”. Space Star Tours have the largest park of telescopes of any public observatory in south America (between 20 and 60cm diameter), correctly aligned to always provide the best possible view, in order to let you discover some of the incredible views the sky has to offer. These telescopes are correctly maintained, and we use only high quality eyepieces to provide clear, sharp wide angle views. The 60cm telescopes are the largest touristic telescope in Chile, and we are currently working on a larger one with 72cm of diameter. Large diameters give much better views of the sky. Transfer back to hotel.

**Breakfast & Dinner – Hotel La Casa de Don Tomas**

**Day 6 Santiago - Casablanca Wine Valley (Wed, Sept 9):**

Morning flight back to Santiago. Then we will visit the Casablanca wine valley where we will enjoy a premium wine tasting & lunch in Casa del Bosque Winery. Then we will continue to Matetic vineyards where we will enjoy another wine tour & have a refined dinner.

**Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner – La Casona Matetic**

**Day 7 Santiago (Thu, Sept 10)**

After breakfast we will return to Santiago where we will enjoy a cultural day in the capital, visiting the Human Rights Museum in order to understand who Chileans are today, and the price we paid for our freedoms. Then we will take a walking tour (around 10 blocks walk) to the civic center from the Presidential Palace, Huerfanos & Ahumada pedestrian streets, Plaza de Armas, Post Office, Cathedral and ending in Mercado Central to enjoy our seafood lunch. Then we will continue by our bus to the bohemian neighborhood of Bellavista where we will visit one of Pablo Neruda’s house “ La Chascona”. We will end our day with a perfect spring view of Santiago from San Cristobal Hill.

**Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner – Hotel Torremayor Providencia**

**Day 8 Santiago - Easter Island (Fri, Sept 11):**

Return to the airport for our flight to Easter Island and transfer to our hotel. Rest of day free.

**Note:** The Island is extremely basic, over-priced and everything runs at a different speed and mood, so please relax and enjoy this unique mysterious piece of land with an open mind.

**Breakfast & Dinner – Hotel Puku Vai**

**Day 9 Easter Island (Sat, Sept 12):**

We will take a Morning Half day tour to visit Ahu Ahu Vinapu which comprises two temples in ruins, one of them appreciating the extraordinary similarity in the carving of the stones with the ruins of the Inca people. Scholars have reinforced the theory that the first inhabitants of the island may have come from the Americas. The trip
continues along the coast to the Rano Kau. Next the crater, this ancient Orongo has the largest concentration of petroglyphs. There are images of the birdman Tangara Manu, the creator god Make Make and Komari, fertility symbols. From the edge of the cliff you can see the three islets Motu Iti, Motu Nui and Motu Kao Kao. Afternoon tour to the archaeological Center Roihi sector which was the first scientifically restored area in the 60s, is a ceremonial place, particularly interesting not only for its location but also for its legends regarding its seven moai. Then we will visit Puna Pau, a site located east of the town of Hanga Roa, in a small crater of red scoria. From there they got the pukao or hats that crowned the moai. On the way you can see the path by which they carried them, with some of the hats still unfinished.

**Breakfast & Dinner – Hotel Puku Vai**

**Day 10 Easter Island (Sun, Sept 13):**
Full day tour where we will visit Akahanga archaeological area, with several moai face down, abandoned during transportation. Then the volcano Rano Raraku and its quarry where all the moai that exist on the island were carved. Here you will find more than 300 moai in various stages of construction. On a hike we will climb to the crater of the volcano where we can see a small lagoon and other moai. We continue to the Ahu Tongariki recently restored, with the largest group of moai that were destroyed by a large earthquake in 1960. Finally we reach Anakena beach with her two beautiful temples or Ahu. After lunch, there will be an option to take a swim or explore the magnificent surrounding landscape. Return in the afternoon to the town of Hanga Roa.

**Breakfast, Box Lunch & Dinner – Hotel Puku Vai**

**Day 11 Easter Island (Mon, Sept 14):**
Free day on the island, with extra activities such Horseback riding, Diving, hikes, trekking, etc (not included in the price). At night we will have a Te ra’ai Dinner Show.

**Breakfast & Dinner – Hotel Puku Vai**

**Day 12 Easter Island – Santiago (Tue, Sept 15):**
Flight back to Santiago for your international connection.

**Breakfast**