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FOOD, WINE AND ADVENTURE IN SANTIAGO December 2015

While Chile's wine-growing regions have achieved increasing fame over the past few years, the country's cuisine is only now coming into its own. Chile's capital, Santiago is fast gaining a reputation for cuisine that complements the attractions of the nearby wine regions and adventure activities.

Rich and varied, Chilean cuisine incorporates seasonal and locally-sourced ingredients that include meat, fish, seafood fruit and vegetables. With an explosion of talent on Santiago's restaurant scene, new and fascinating culinary experiences are popping up all over the city, from the barrios of Lastarria, Bellavista, Nuñoa and Providencia to charming Orrego Luco, where an entire street has been closed to all but pedestrian traffic to create a gourmet food zone. The authentic street markets in the downtown area also provide a plethora of foodie treats.

Restaurants such as Boragó combine gourmet cuisine with the most natural of ingredients, from foraged herbs to edible flowers and wild berries that come from as far afield as Patagonia and the Andes. At top establishments such as Ambrosía classical flair is combined with fresh Chilean produce, while restaurants like 99 and Las Cabras Fuente De Soda for a more rustic approach to creating cuisine that is classically Chilean but boasts a quintessentially modern touch.

This new flowering of gourmet cuisine combines flawlessly with the excellent vintages from Chile's Wine Country, which is easily accessible from Santiago. The Colchagua Valley, in particular, is not only renowned for its wine production but is also imbued with rural culture and traditions. Modern wineries such as Montes and Vik in Colchagua or Viña Odfell, which is only 40 minutes' from Santiago, are the modern face of Chile's wine production, while the more traditional vineyards like Neyén rely on centuries of winemaking tradition.

The quaint and picturesque villages near Santiago also offer a few real gems for gourmet travellers, such as Colmenares Abeja Sofia, producers of certified organic honey, and Emporio Caleu, which produces excellent honey beer and wine. Other regional products to sample include olives, olive oil, almonds and prickly pears.

To counteract this surfeit of excellent food and wine offers, Santiago also has a number of options for outdoor exercise and activities. The city itself offers a selection of golf, bicycle and running tracks set against the backdrop of the Andes Mountains. Attractions such as La Campana National Park, just an hour north of the city, are ideal for scenic and remote treks among spectacular landscapes. Known as the best ski resort in South



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America, nearby Portillo offers exceptional slopes and beautiful views of Inca Lake. The Mantagua Wetlands, an incredible ecosystem made up of dunes, forests and lakes, also lie within a two-hour drive of the capital.

Only one of the many cities in Chile with an abundance to offer the traveller, a visit to Santiago is easily combined with time in other well-known attractions in the region, such as in the [Fine Wines and Great Cities of Chile & Argentina](#) tours, which add Mendoza and Buenos Aires to the Chilean capital. To find out more, contact your preferred travel provider or log on to www.andBeyond.com.

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