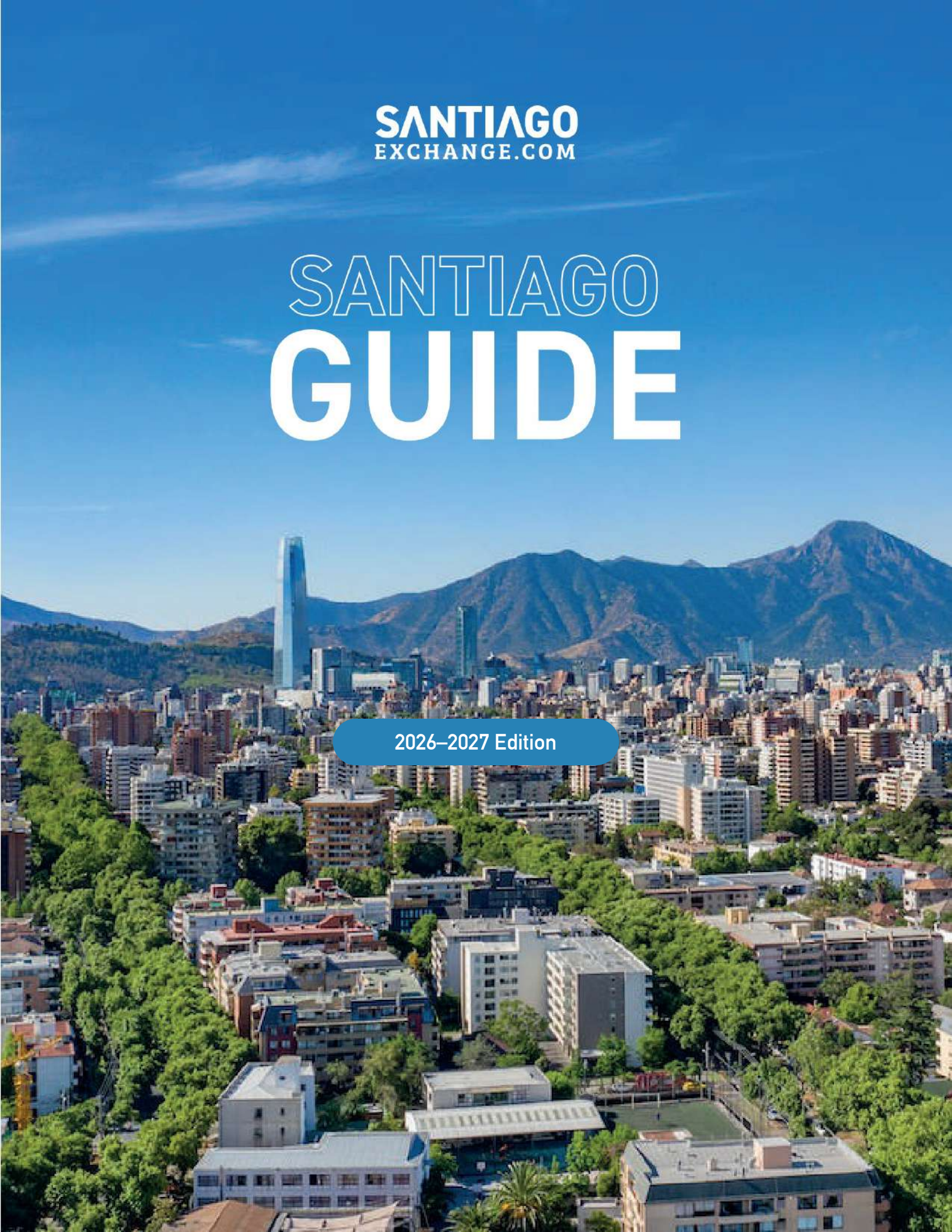
SANTIAGO EXCHANGE.COM

SANTIAGO GUIDE

2026–2027 Edition



SANTIAGO EXCHANGE.COM

Welcome, po!

Quick guide for students in Santiago | 2026–2027 Edition

Before you arrive in Chile

Weather: Santiago has a Mediterranean climate, with hot summers (over 30 °C) and cold, dry winters, with mornings that can drop below 5 °C. It rarely rains, and almost only in winter.

What to bring

- Warm clothes for winter: a thick jacket and closed shoes. Many houses don't have central heating, so bring warm layers for indoors too.
- Light clothes for summer, plus sunscreen and sunglasses: the sun is strong all year round.
- A type C or L power adapter (220 V).
- An unlocked phone, so you can use a Chilean SIM.
- Arriving in winter? Ski resorts usually open between June and August.



Arriving at the airport

Arturo Merino Benítez Airport (SCL) | 30 to 45 min by car to Providencia

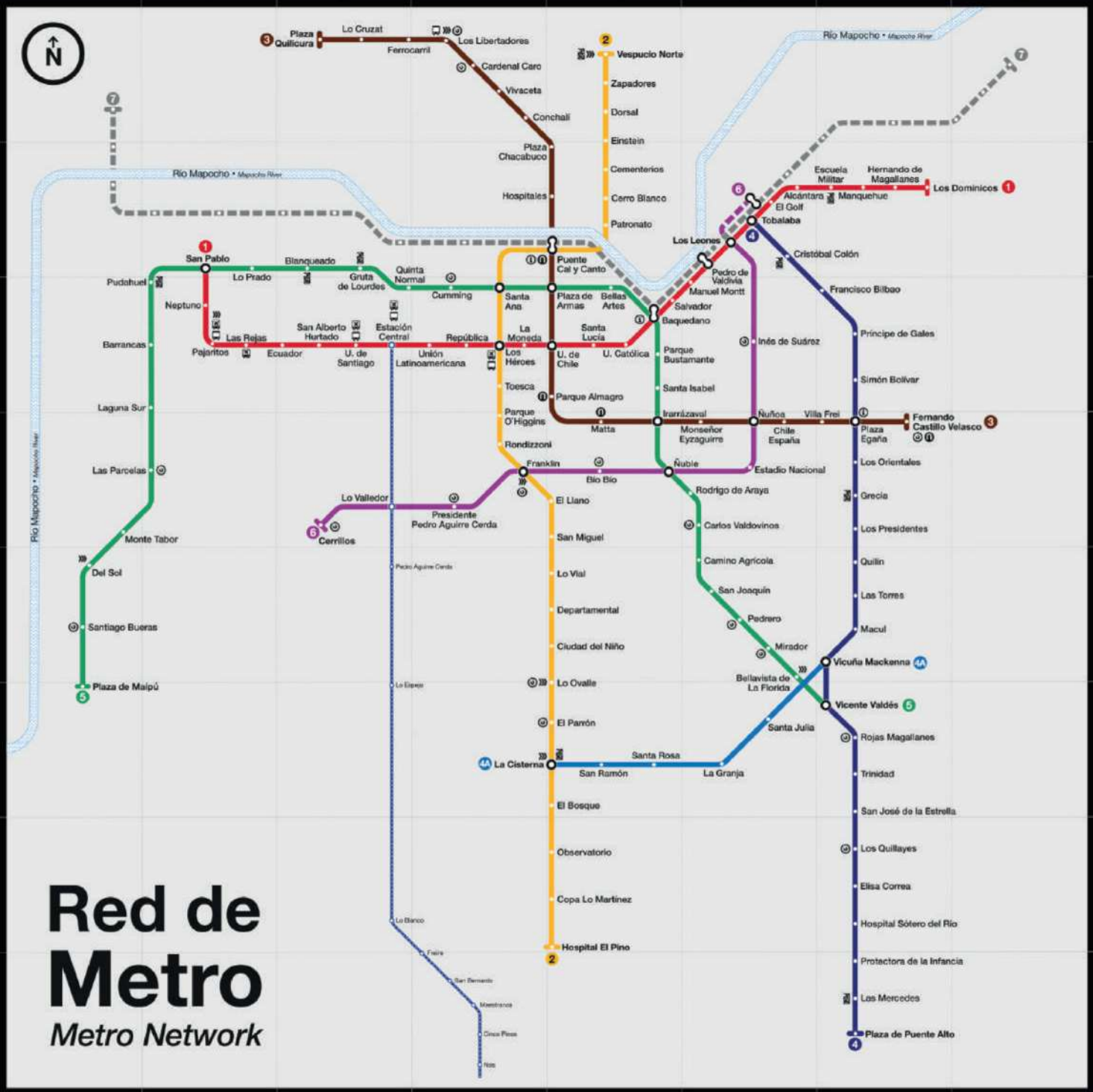
OPTION	HOW IT WORKS	PROS	CONS
Santiago Exchange transfer	Shared, CLP 15,000. Add it when you book your room	Drops you at your residence, no searching for transport	Residents only
Transvip	Shared vans or private cars. 10% off with our partner deal	Safe, with a counter in the arrivals hall	Can take longer with many stops
Bus + Metro	Centropuerto or Turbus to Pajaritos or Los Héroes Metro stations	The cheapest option	Hard with big suitcases
Apps (Uber, Cabify, DiDi)	Book in the app when you land	You see the price before the ride	Airport pickup rules change often

Only accept rides from official counters or apps. Politely ignore people offering taxis inside the terminal.

Santiago Metro

The fastest and safest way to get around. It covers most of the city, and almost every student uses it.

- **Official map:** metro.cl (also on the next page).
- **How to pay:** with a Bip! card, which you buy and top up at stations, or with a QR code from the Red Movilidad or MetroQR apps.
- **Useful apps:** Google Maps to plan routes, and Red Movilidad to see when your bus arrives.



Líneas de Metro
Metro lines

1. San Pablo - Los Dominicos
2. Hospital El Pino - Vespucio Norte
3. Plaza Quilicura - Fernando Castillo Velasco
4. Plaza de Puente Alto - Tobalaba
4A. La Cisterna - Vicuña Mackenna
5. Plaza de Maipú - Vicente Valdés
6. Cerrillos - Los Leones

Simbología
Symbols

- Estación — *Station*
- Estación Terminal — *Terminal station*
- Proyecto en construcción — *Project under construction*
- Combinación líneas — *Interchange stations*
- Transbordo tren — *Train transfer*
- Transbordo buses interurbanos — *Transfer to interurban buses*
- Bus al aeropuerto — *Bus to airport*
- Intermodal — *Bus transfer*
- Oficina atención al cliente — *Customer service office*
- Línea de tren — *Train*
- Línea 0 — *Line 0*
- Bicicleteros — *Bike racks*
- U Invertidas — *Inverted U*

Contacto
Contact

- metro.cl
- 600 600 92 92
- Metro de Santiago - Chile
- @metrodesantiago
- @metrodesantiago
- App Metro de Santiago Oficial

Public transport fares 2026

In effect since February 22, 2026

TIME	HOURS (MONDAY TO FRIDAY)	METRO AND TREN NOS
Peak	07:00–08:59 and 18:00–19:59	CLP 895
Off-peak	09:00–17:59 and 20:00–20:44	CLP 815
Low	06:00–06:59 and 20:45–23:00	CLP 735
Red buses	All day	CLP 795
With TNE (students)	All day, Metro, buses and Tren Nos	CLP 260

Pay with QR while you wait for your TNE

Pay with a QR code from the official apps (Red Movilidad, BancoEstado, Mercado Pago, Movired or MetroQR). With the "Dale QR!" benefit there's a monthly cap of CLP 42,000: once you've spent that, the rest of your trips that month are free.

Express Route

During weekday peak hours, some lines run an Express Route: trains are split into red and green routes and only stop at stations of their color and at shared stations. Check which lines and stations apply at metro.cl.

Fares can change. Check current prices at red.cl and metro.cl.

TNE: your student transit card

Pay CLP 260 per trip instead of CLP 795 to 895

The TNE student card (Tarjeta Nacional Estudiantil), also called the "pase escolar", gives you reduced fares on the Metro, Red buses and Tren Nos, 24 hours a day.

How to get it

- **Ask your university:** the TNE is always processed through it, also for exchange students.
- **Pay CLP 2,700** for the new card, as your university instructs.
- **Get your photo taken** through Junaeb's online tool or at a TNE kiosk.
- **Wait for your card:** it's delivered to your university in about a month and a half.
- **Use it** like a regular Bip! card and top it up at stations or in apps.

Regular (degree-seeking) students need a copy of their Chilean ID card, so get it as soon as you arrive. Until your TNE arrives, pay with QR.

Savings

With two trips a day on weekdays, the TNE saves you about CLP 25,000 a month.

Full TNE guide

Phone and money

Your phone line

- Buy a prepaid SIM (Entel, Movistar, WOM or Claro) with your **passport**, at their stores or at the airport.
- Since August 2026, all prepaid lines must be registered to their owner. The carrier guides you through it when you activate the SIM.
- If your phone was bought outside Chile, you may need to register its IMEI. Ask at the store.
- For your first days, an eSIM such as Holafly or Airalo is very handy.
- In Chile almost everything is coordinated on WhatsApp.

Money and payments

- The currency is the Chilean peso (CLP). "$5.000" means five thousand pesos, not dollars.
- Credit and debit cards are accepted almost everywhere. Carry some cash for street markets and small shops.
- At ATMs (Redbanc), choose the option for foreign clients and **check the fee shown on screen** before accepting.
- ATMs have a limit per withdrawal. Withdraw larger amounts less often and check your home bank's fees before you travel.
- Some Chilean payment apps ask for a RUT: you can use them once you have your ID card.

Apps and supermarkets

Ride-hailing apps

APP	SAFETY	PRICE	PROS	CONS
Uber	Very high	Variable	Widely available	Surge pricing at peak hours
Cabify	High	Variable	Good service quality	Fewer cars available
DiDi	High	Moderate	Good prices and promotions	Less coverage in some areas
InDrive	Depends on the driver	Usually lower	You can negotiate the price	Less quality control

At night, book your ride from inside the place you're at and avoid hailing taxis on the street.

Supermarkets

- **Líder:** one of the cheapest.
- **Jumbo:** more variety and quality, but more expensive.
- **Unimarc, Santa Isabel and corner shops:** handy for quick shopping.
- **Street markets (ferias) and La Vega Central:** the cheapest for fruit and vegetables. Bring cash.

At checkout they may ask for your RUT. If you don't have one, just say "no tengo" (I don't have one) and it's no problem.

Paperwork: visa and ID card

The two procedures every international student must complete

1. Student visa: before you travel

- You apply online, always from outside Chile, at tramites.serviciomigraciones.cl (Temporary Student Residence).
- Once approved, download your **electronic visa stamp** (estampado electrónico) and enter Chile within 90 days.
- It lets you work up to 30 hours a week.
- If you enter as a tourist (Permanencia Transitoria), you can't switch to a student visa from inside Chile or get an ID card.

2. ID card and RUT: within 30 days of arrival

- Book an appointment at registrocivil.cl: "Cédula y pasaporte" → "Primera obtención extranjero/a".
- Bring your passport, your electronic visa stamp and proof of entry into Chile.
- What counts is the booking date. If you book after the deadline, you first pay a fine.
- Pick up your ID card at the same office, about 20 business days later.
- With your RUT you can get the TNE, open a bank account and sign up for a phone plan.

Requirements can change. Always check serviciomigraciones.cl and registrocivil.cl before your appointment.

Step-by-step guides on our blog

Student visa

ID card and RUT

TNE

Safety and emergencies

Santiago is safe if you take normal big-city precautions

The most common problem is petty theft, not violent crime. Providencia and Las Condes, where most exchange students live, are among the quietest districts in the city.

Practical tips

- Don't walk while looking at your phone near the curb: phone snatching is the most common risk.
- On the Metro, wear your backpack in front and keep your phone in a zipped pocket.
- Don't leave your phone on café or restaurant tables.
- At night, move around in groups or use ride-hailing apps.
- Carry a copy of your passport and leave the original at home.

Emergency numbers

SERVICE	NUMBER
Police (Carabineros)	133
Ambulance (SAMU)	131
Fire department	132

Earthquakes

Chile is very seismic and you'll probably feel a tremor. Buildings follow strict earthquake codes. If it shakes, stay calm, move away from windows and follow the instructions of the people around you.

How much does it cost to live in Santiago?

Approximate monthly budget for an exchange student

EXPENSE	TIGHT BUDGET	COMFORTABLE
Housing (room, utilities included)	CLP 280,000	CLP 380,000
Groceries	CLP 150,000	CLP 200,000
Eating out and coffee	CLP 40,000	CLP 100,000
Transport (Metro and buses)	CLP 12,000	CLP 42,000
Phone plan	CLP 10,000	CLP 20,000
Going out and leisure	CLP 50,000	CLP 120,000
Total per month	≈ CLP 542,000	≈ CLP 862,000

Not included: flights, travel around Chile, health insurance, university fees and the one-time costs of your visa and ID card.

Housing is the biggest expense. When you compare options, check what each price includes: utilities, internet, furniture, cleaning and laundry can add up. At Santiago Exchange, one price covers everything.

Santiago Exchange prices as of November 2026. Other figures are estimates and vary by neighborhood and lifestyle.

Full cost of living guide

Embassies in Santiago

COUNTRY	ADDRESS	PHONE
Germany	Las Hualtatas 5677, Vitacura	+56 2 2463 2500
Argentina	Miraflores 285, Santiago Centro	+56 2 2582 2500
Australia	Isidora Goyenechea 3621, of. 12-13, Las Condes	+56 2 2550 3500
Brazil	Alonso Ovalle 1665, Santiago Centro	+56 2 2698 2486
Canada	Nueva Tajamar 481, Torre Norte, piso 12, Las Condes	+56 2 2652 3800
China	Av. Pedro de Valdivia 550, Providencia	+56 2 2333 9898
South Korea	Alcántara 74, Las Condes	+56 2 2729 3999
Spain	Av. Andrés Bello 1895, Providencia	+56 2 2235 2754
United States	Av. Andrés Bello 2800, Las Condes	+56 2 2330 3000
France	Condell 65, Providencia	+56 2 2470 8000
India	Alcántara 200, of. 201, Las Condes	+56 2 2263 4917
Italy	Clemente Fabres 1050, Providencia	+56 2 2470 8400
Japan	Av. Ricardo Lyon 520, piso 1, Providencia	+56 2 2232 1807
Mexico	Félix de Amesti 128, Las Condes	+56 2 2583 8400
United Kingdom	Av. El Bosque Norte 0125, Las Condes	+56 2 2370 4100

Contact details may change. Check opening hours and phone numbers on your embassy's official website before you go.

SANTIAGO EXCHANGE.COM

Live your exchange with Santiago Exchange

Since 2009 | 5,000+ students hosted | 200+ furnished rooms

We run 9 student residences, 7 in Providencia and 2 in Las Condes, all close to the Metro.

ROOM	MONTHLY PRICE
Double (shared)	From CLP 280,000 per person
Single	From CLP 380,000

Everything included

- Utilities, Wi-Fi and purified water.
- Free use of washing machines and dryers.
- Cleaning twice a week in our houses and three times a week in our buildings.
- A manager in every residence, and a Lease Office that speaks English and Spanish.

Resident perks

- Shared airport transfer for CLP 15,000, or 10% off Transvip.
- 15% off our trips around Chile and free entry to our Sunday Funday parties.
- Semester contracts and online booking from your home country.

See our residences

WhatsApp +56 9 3430 9784

Student blog