

# Destination LA SERENA

**SERNATUR Coquimbo Region**  
Matta #461, of. 108, La Serena, Chile  
@sernaturcoquimbo  
/SernaturRegionCoquimbo  
@sernatur\_region\_coquimbo

**Servicio Nacional de Turismo | Chile**



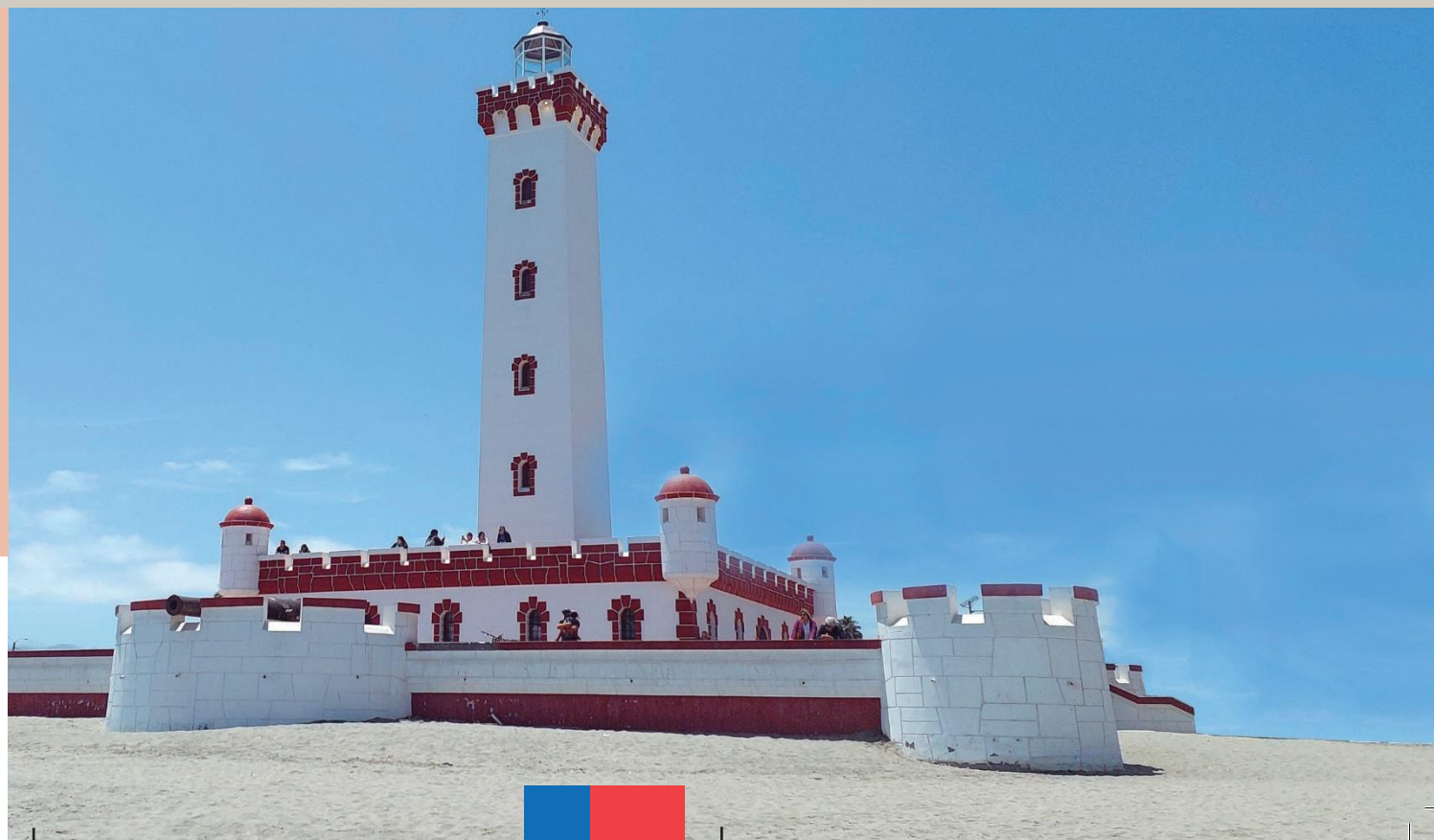
January 2023 Edition. Production made with FNDR 2022 resources.



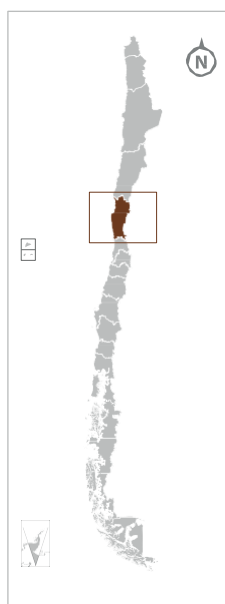
Visit our official websites.



Scan the QR code.

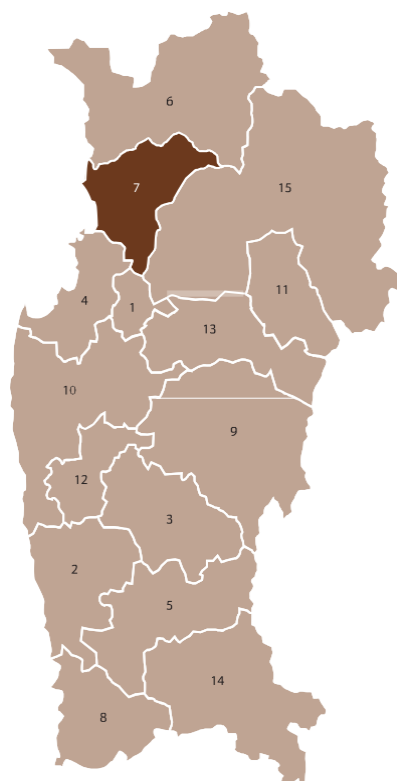


## COQUIMBO REGION AND ITS PROVINCES



### Provinces

1. Andacollo
2. Canela
3. Combarbalá
4. Coquimbo
5. Illapel
6. La Higuera
7. La Serena
8. Los Vilos
9. Monte Patria
10. Ovalle
11. Paihuano
12. Punitaqui
13. Río Hurtado
14. Salamanca
15. Vicuña



## Must-sees

### Beaches



Its beautiful littoral, at the foot of a city settled in stairs of littoral terraces, invites you to enjoy extensive beaches for every taste.

### Avenida del Mar



One of the most famous walks in Chile connects the beaches from the Monumental El Faro, symbol of the city in its coastal expression.

### Historical and cultural heritage



Owner of an architectural tradition worthy of admiration and walking through the city and its historical center is a must-do to discover its long history.

#### La Serena

Located 12 km north of Coquimbo and 470 km north of Santiago, by Ruta 5 Norte.

#### Limits

To the south with the province of Coquimbo, to the north with the province of La Higuera, to the east with the province of Vicuña and to the west with the Pacific Ocean.

## USEFUL DATA

	Ambulance	131
	Police	133
	Firefighters	132
	Andean Emergency Corps	136
	CITUC Intoxications	(56-2) 635 6800
	Denounce Safe	4242

### Phone number dial

From Chile to abroad:

**Carrier + 0 + country code + city code + phone number**

Another city in Chile:

**Area code + phone number**

From landline to cellphone:

**9 + phone number**

From cellphone to landline:

**0 + area code + phone number**

### Transportation phone numbers

	Arturo Merino Benítez International Airport	
	La Florida Airport in La Serena	
	La Serena terminal	(56 51) 222 45 73

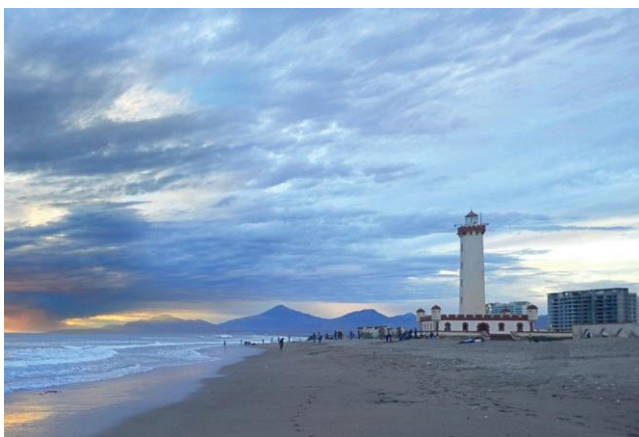
### Information

Sernatur, Tourism Information Office  
Matta #461, La Serena  
+ Info.: [www.turismoregiondecoquimbo.cl](http://www.turismoregiondecoquimbo.cl)

Tourism and Heritage Directory,  
La Serena Town Hall  
Casa Jilberto, Cienfuegos Street #226, La Serena.  
(+56-51 2206544)

## INTRODUCTION

Historic and heritage city, capital of the Coquimbo Region, it is the second oldest city in Chile after Santiago. Founded in 1544 by Captain Juan Bohón and re-founded in 1549 by Captain Francisco de Aguirre. In it you can breathe the past and the history, with a taste of Spain and pre-Hispanic cultures. Its Typical Area was declared a National Monument in 1981 and includes 20 National Monuments such as houses and heritage buildings, palaces, and churches built with limestone. The site chosen by Francisco de Aguirre is the same that the city occupies today, on top of five terraces on the left edge of Elqui river, which go down in steps towards the sea in a similar way to an amphitheater.



**Above** Cuatro Esquinas Sector, Avenida del Mar. **Center** Archaeological Museum.  
**Below** El Faro, National Monument.

## LA SERENA

Tourism has become one of the most important economic activities in the city, doubling the population of the province in summer.

---

## COASTLINE

**Avenida del Mar.** Coastal area that joins La Serena and Coquimbo, one of the most attractive walks in the city. From El Faro to the south a beautiful tour starts for 7 kilometers of extensive beaches, with lifeguard teams, and paramedics in the summer season. It has a large hotel and gastronomic infrastructure, with dishes made from typical sea products from the area. A cycle lane joins the sections El Faro-Beach, La Barca and from Los Corsarios Beach to the border with Coquimbo, ideal to tour by bike or skates.

📍 **Access by Avenues Francisco de Aguirre, Cuatro Esquinas or by Peñuelas sector.**

---

**Monumental Faro.** Imposing construction built at the start of Francisco de Aguirre Avenue, next to the sea, at the dawn of Plan Serena (1948-1950). It is the north landmark that indicates the start of Avenida del Mar and the western landmark of the international highway Ruta Gabriela Mistral. It performs ornamental functions and was declared a National Monument on June 9<sup>th</sup>, 2010.

---

**Punta de Teatinos.** The Laguna Saladita wetland is there, a protected ecosystem, which it is usual to see species on such as the garuma seagull, cuca heron, chorlos, and playeros, among others. It is accessed by a dirt road in good condition, in a 2 km section. It is not possible to camp, bathe, or enter vehicles onto the beach.

📍 **Located 7 km north of La Serena.**

---

## HISTORIC CENTER

**Route of the 5 limestone churches.** They are in the historic center, giving it a unique and characteristic stamp to the city.

---

**Cathedral Church.** Neo-classic style basilica plant, with three stone ships, wooden columns and ceiling over a tower, axis of the façade; in addition to beautiful religious stained glasses. Its first attempts of construction date from the year 1633. Its actual edification is from 1844, by the architect Juan Herbage.

📍 **Located on Los Carrera Street on the corner with Cordovez, it is part of the civil complex of Plaza de Armas. National Monument since 1981.**

---

**San Francisco Church.** It is the only temple that was not consumed by the flames of the 1680 fire, caused by the attack of the pirate Sharp. Its construction started in 1563 with an oratory and adobe house. With Mannerist European style, it was built between 1585 and 1590 by Fray Medina, Juan Carbero, and Francisco Román, and inaugurated on December 25<sup>th</sup>, 1627, as Nuestra Señora de Buena Esperanza (Our Lady of Good Hope). It is considered one of the most important testimonies from the Colony given its antiquity and architectural quality. National Monument since 1977.

📍 **Located on Eduardo de la Barra Street on the corner with Balmaceda.**

**Santo Domingo Church.** Its construction starts in 1613 with the arrival of the Saint Dominic Order and concludes in 1775 as can be seen in a numerical inscription on the staircase leading to the high choir. It is said that its Virgin of the Rosary saved the locals from a flood in those years. Its style is classic Mannerist, of one ship, and constructed in limestone and wood. It has an eclectic style bell tower raised in the second half of the XIX century. With refurbishments made in the years 1850 and 1958, it preserves a valuable baptism font from the XVII century. National Monument since 2001.

📍 **Located on Cordovez Street on the corner with Pedro Pablo Muñoz Avenue.**

---

**San Agustín Church.** Its construction dates from 1750. During its first years it suffered from lootings and fires caused by pirates, as well as ravages of nature. It represents an urban landmark because it marks one of the limits of the antique city. At the beginning, it belonged to the Jesuits that left it after their expulsion. Its last refurbishment was in 1994 for the 450 years of the city. With this, elements from its original façade were rescued.

📍 **Located on Cantournet Street corner with Cienfuegos, next to La Recova.**

---

**La Merced Church.** Its first construction dates from the year 1557. It was reconstructed on many occasions due to the constant attacks from pirates. It is known that the arrival of the Mercedarian Order to La Serena was in the year 1555, but the final edification of the temple is from 1709. Its actual tower dates from the year 1830 and it is gothic style.

📍 **Located on Balmaceda Street corner with Arturo Prat.**






**Above** Coquimbo Regiment, Santa Lucía Park.  
**Below** La Serena Cathedral.



## VIEWPOINTS

### **Santa Lucía Viewpoint – Infantry Regiment Nº 21**


**Coquimbo.** Placed over the top of Santa Lucía Hill, at 113 meters above sea level, in the second of the five terraces shaped in geological eras. It is possible to explore its park and visit the historic gallery of the regiment. It offers a panoramic view of the city and the sea.

 **Access through Las Casas Street with Justo Donoso Street or through General Novoa Avenue.**

---

### **Campus Andrés Bello Viewpoint – Universidad de La**

**Serena.** Next to the Central House of the Universidad de La Serena, in the so-called El Pino Hill, is located the viewpoint, which offers a panoramic view of the city and the conurbation La Serena-Coquimbo, and the sea.

 **Access through the stairs on Cisternas Street, or through Raúl Bitrán Avenue, main access to the university campus.**


---

**Cerro Grande Natural Viewpoint.** At the top of the hill, the panoramic views of La Serena, Coquimbo, and the Elqui Valley can be appreciated better. You can go up by 4x4 vehicles, bicycle, or by foot. It is an ideal place for photography, flora observation, and long walks. There is no enabling infrastructure at this viewpoint.

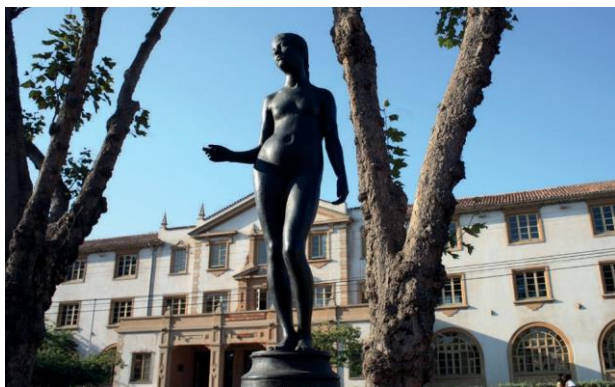
 **Access through 4 Esquinas Avenue, past El Milagro sector, approximately 20 minutes by vehicle from the center of the city.**

---

**Pedro Pablo Muñoz Avenue Viewpoint.** Natural viewpoint that marks the outline of one of the five terraces which the city is built on. You can widely see the Coquimbo Bay and admire the architecture and balconies characteristic of La Serena.

 **Located on the west limit that corresponds to the typical area of La Serena.**

---



**Above** Open-air Museum, Francisco de Aguirre Avenue. **Center** Frontis of Gabriel González Videla Historic Museum. **Below** Solar Eclipse Umbra, Avenida del Mar.

## MUSEUMS

**Gabriel González Videla House Museum.** It is the only house from the XIX century that is still preserved around the Plaza de Armas. Two-floor construction of two houses decorated with central patios, that belonged to the former President of the Republic and Illustrious Son of La Serena Mr. Gabriel González Videla. Declared National Monument in 1981.

 **Located at Matta Street N° 495 on the corner with Cordovez.**

-----

**Archeological Museum.** It has around 25.000 pieces that give traces to the life of the primitive inhabitants of the region during the Paleoindian, Archaic, El Molle, Las Ánimas, Diaguita, and Diaguita Inca periods. Its façade preserves a stone doorway from the year 1820, of mixed Baroque style.

 **Located on Cordovez Street on the corner with Cienfuegos.**

-----

**Open-Air Museum.** The Alameda Francisco de Aguirre was started in 1855, with the transformation of Quebrada San Francisco into a public walkway. The space between José Manuel Balmaceda Street and Ruta 5 Norte used to be the favorite place for the people from La Serena, where they celebrated the national holidays, Christmas, New Year, and religious holidays. Leafy white poplars, acacias, and banana trees surround the walkway.

Around the middle of the XX century, statues were incorporated, which today constitute the Open-Air Museum. The walkway was redesigned by the landscape designer Oscar Prager and pieces from studies and galleries from Florence, Pisa, Rome, and Naples, and from studios in Pietra Santa Lucca were brought, such as Carrara marble quarries, as part of the called Plan Serena. It currently has 30 original pieces from important artists such as Virginio Arias, Lily Garafulic, Berta Herrera, and Samuel Román.

---

**Ignacio Domeyko Mineralogical Museum.** It gathers around 7,000 mineralogical samples from mining districts located in different parts of the country and abroad. Among the most interesting pieces the visitor can see at this facility are the silver rosiclers from Chañarcillo, Indian rubies, diamonds from Brazil and Africa, Chilean lapis lazuli, meteors, fossils, and rocks that make up the terrestrial crust, and unique gold ores from El Indio field.

📍 **Located at Benavente Street # 980 on the Ignacio Domeyko Campus of the Universidad de La Serena.**

---

## PARKS

**Pedro de Valdivia Park.** It has a mini zoo with species such as condors, eaglets, ducks, guanacos, turtles, among others. The park also offers sports fields for football, rugby, and basketball, a picnic area, playgrounds for children, and trails to walk.

📍 **Located on Brasil Street on the corner with Ruta 5 Norte.**

---

**Gabriel Coll Park.** An ideal place to enjoy with the family, it has green areas, playgrounds for children, grills, as well as trails for recreational hiking.

📍 **Located between Cisternas and 18 de Septiembre Avenues.**

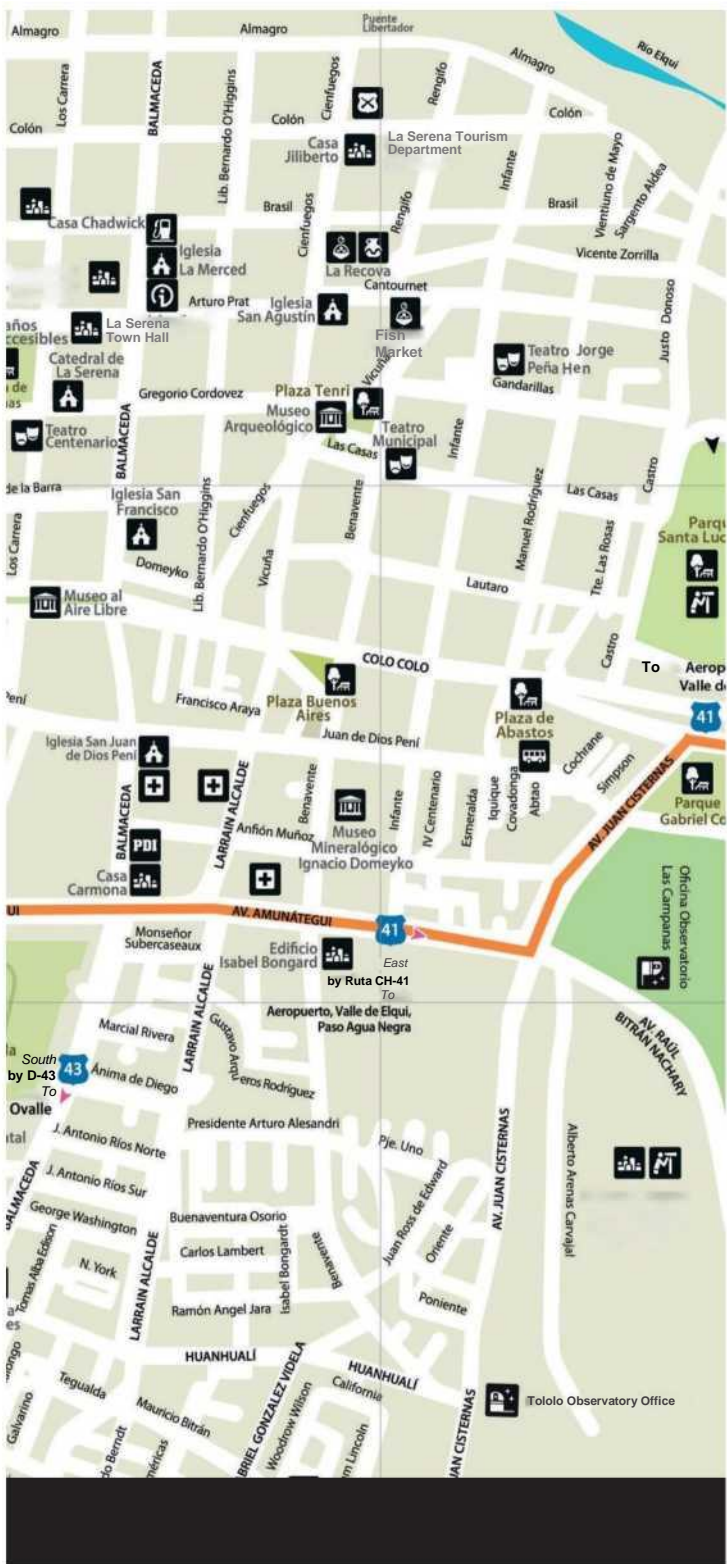
---

**Japanese Garden.** Its original name is Kokoro No Niwa (Garden of the Heart). Its main attraction is the Shinji-ike lagoon, whose name is due to the similarity with the Japanese letter that symbolizes the heart. Meanwhile the Turu-shima and Kame-shima islands (Crane and Turtle) represent the symbol animals of happiness and longevity respectively. In addition to this, the place has trails for walking, water currents, the House of Tea, and the Zen Garden. It also has a pagoda and lanterns, which were gifted by Japanese partners linked to the company CAP Mining. In this place you can admire over 70 varieties of plants, cultivated following the Japanese style. Among them stand out cherry blossom trees, camellias, azaleas, ginkgo biloba, cypress, domestic nandinas, Japanese maple, sweetgum tree, myrtles, cryptomeria pines, and aucubas. Regarding its delicate fauna, we can find Koi fish, highlighted by their longevity and size, living up to 100 years and reach one meter in length, as well as black, white, and black neck swans. This latter species is protected; aquatic turtles, taguas, mayares and Peking ducks, among others.

📍 **Located between Pedro Pablo Muñoz Avenue and Ruta 5 Norte.**



Map of La Serena







**Above** Japanese Garden Panoramic. **Below** Historic center of La Serena.



**Above** Historic center of the city. **Below** University of La Serena viewpoint.

## HOUSES AND BUILDINGS

**Casa Carmona.** Its construction dates from 1855 and was done by the English builder Thomas James. It has one floor and two patios. Its long side façade stands out because of its bulky lookout. Declared a National Monument in 1981.

📍 **Located at Balmaceda Street #1080 on the corner with Amunátegui.**

---

**Casa Herreros.** It was built approximately in 1860 by the British architect David James and has a classic style of La Serena. Declared a National Monument in 1981.

📍 **Located at Matta Street #331 - 351 between Prat and Brasil.**

---

**Casa Chadwick.** It is probably the residence that best preserves original elements in La Serena. Built around 1865 and 1870 by Mr. Bartolo Varela. Its style is neoclassic of La Serena, with two floors surrounding two interior patios. Declared a National Monument in 1981.

📍 **Located at Los Carrera Street #271-299 on the corner with Brasil.**

---

**Town Hall, I. Municipalidad de La Serena.** Built by the architect Enrique Benavente in 1938. It forms a whole with the Court of Justice building. Elements such as thick pillars, ornamental lamps, and a balcony in the center stand out. The first Council started to work in this place in 1549. The façade keeps the city's old coat of arms, which flanked the entry of La Serena in times of pirate's plunders.

📍 **Located at Prat Street #451 on the corner with Los Carrera.**

---

**Plazas de Armas.** In the heart of the city, it is the traditional stroll in La Serena. During colonial time, the Plaza de Armas was an open-air market. The main plant species that can be found are Chilean palm tree, jacaranda, cedar, camellias, crowns of the Inca, blooming laurels, and bohemian olive, among others. In the middle of the square there is a huge fountain sculpted in stone by Samuel Román (National Art Award, 1964). The square's kiosk was donated by the Syrian Lebanese Cologin in 1945.

---

**La Recova.** The old Recova dates from the year 1876, which changed its name to Municipal Market in 1930. Due to the earthquake in 1975, the new building was constructed in 1981. There are handicrafts from the region and typical food restaurants. It is one of the most attractive and comfortable markets in the country.

📍 **Located on Cienfuegos Street on the corner with Cantournet.**

---

**Isabel Bongard Building.** Former Normal School of Preceptors, of great importance in the past century. In 1993, in honor of its contribution to the educational field it is designated as Isabel Bongard campus at the Universidad of La Serena. It was declared National Monument on June 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1995.

📍 **Located at Amunátegui Street #851.**

---

**Casa Jiliberto.** House built with adobe, partitions, and woods, that has parts of its façade covered with tin sheets printed imitating bricks. It represents a typical exponent of the eclectic period of La Serena's architecture. It is structured surrounding an interior patio towards which the galleries from the second-floor face. It has an overlook on the third floor, to the axis of the main façade, common element of Chilean architecture from the late romantic period, especially in coastal cities.

📍 **Located on Cienfuegos Street on the corner with Colón.**

**Interpretation of the Religious Heritage Center, Santa Inés Church.** Erected into one of the oldest churches in La Serena, which dates from 1670, the place was declared National Monument in 1977. In 1975 its doors close leaving its ecclesiastic functions. Subsequently, a refurbishment study was carried out to recover its historic legacy, which was materialized in 2010 with the delivery of its refurbished structure and a permanent exhibition of the religious heritage from the Coquimbo Region, through an interactive and modern exhibition, with the installation of four touchscreens that allow the visitor to access the information only by touching the screen.

📍 **Located on Almagro Street on the corner with Matta.**

-----

**Casa de Las Palmeras.** House bought by Gabriela Mistral in 1925, which her mother Petronila and her half-sister Emelinda lived on. Declared a National Monument in 1990. At the back is the Gabriela Mistral Regional Library.

📍 **Located on Francisco de Aguirre Avenue on the way to the monumental faro.**

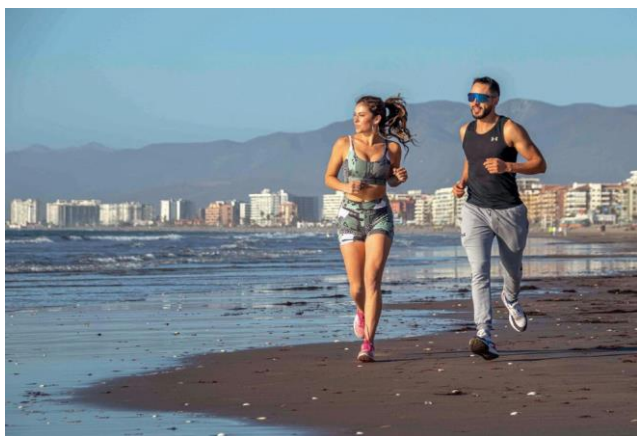
-----

**Solar Eclipse Umbra.** The sculpture is on Avenida del Mar in La Serena. This historical landmark keeps the Solar Eclipse phenomenon in everyone's mind, on July 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2019.



**Above** Plaza de Abastos "La Recova". **Center** Typical products from the province.  
**Above** Inside of Casa de Las Palmeras.





**Above** The papaya, typical fruit of this area. **Center** Cerro Mayu Observatory.  
**Above** Coastal line of Avenida del Mar, La Serena.



## PICTURESQUE TOWNS

The Elqui river flows through extensive fluviomarine terraces, allowing the development of horticultural activities typical of rural villages. From waters under the Puclaro reservoir, there is a rosary of towns and villages that maintain the tradition of the life linked to agriculture and livestock. The access to these villages is through Gabriela Mistral international route (Ruta CH-41) and through Islón Avenue that surrounds the populated area of Las Compañías.

---

## TOWNS

**Santa Gracia ecotourism trail.** Ideal place to do special interest tourism such as wildlife observation, trekking, and horseback riding, among others. Special attractions are the El Romero and Lambert villages (vestiges of the mining history of the area) and its San Gerónimo mine.

📍 **Located 40 km northwest of La Serena.**

---

**Algarrobito.** Village recommended to taste different products made from papaya, and manjar blanco. There are many artisanal factories.

📍 **Located 11 km from La Serena, Ruta CH-41.**

---

**Altovalsol.** Village with wonderful panoramic views of the Elqui valley in the daytime and the clearest skies at night. Antique settlement of indigenous population during the Inca domination. It has a 10-hectare aquatic park, and a variety of camping spaces for recreation.

📍 **Located 14 km from La Serena, Ruta CH-41.**

---

**El Rosario.** In this rural area is the Elqui Equestrian School, where horseback riding and jump classes are held, and there is a hippotherapy school, with horses trained to work with children, and particularly with people with disabilities.

📍 **Located 18 km from La Serena, Ruta CH-41.**

**Las Rojas.** It stands out for a picturesque adobe church built in 1892 along the slopes surrounding hillsides stair shaped.

📍 **Located 21 km from La Serena, Ruta CH-41.**

---

**El Hinojal.** It has an attractive zoo that houses animals in a natural setting. Among them, cougars, monkeys, Bengal tigress, swans, African lions, red and silver foxes, porcupine, pudú, gazelles, macaws, parrots, and African birds stand out. Gabriela Mistral Ruta 41, site 3, El Hinojal.

📍 **Located 23 km from La Serena, Ruta CH-41.**

---

### **Quebrada de Talca and Cerro Mayu Observatory.**

Mayu in Quechua language means river of stars (Milky Way). Entering Quebrada de Talca, 30 km east of La Serena by Ruta CH-41, there is Cerro Mayu Tourism Observatory, in middle of an extensive field where papayas and grapes are cultivated, and export wine is produced. It has a 14-inch telescope, two solar telescopes, and a beautiful archaeo-astronomical park with modern sculptures that represent pre-Hispanic cultures.

📍 **Tours are offered from 6:30 p.m. in winter, and from 9:00 p.m. in summer.**

---

**Caleta San Pedro.** Attractive gastronomical center to taste fish-based preparations, and fresh seafood, such as caldillo de congrio (conger soup), pailas marinas, seafood empanadas, fried fish, among others. You can also get excellent quality handicrafts, do sportfishing, and watch greyhound races, among other activities.

📍 **Located 4 km north of La Serena by Ruta 5 Norte.**

**La Serena Golf.** Golf course located in front of the sea. Its great extent and high standards, position it as one of the most important golf courses in the country.

📍 **Located at the northern exit of La Serena, Ruta 5 Norte, km 482.**

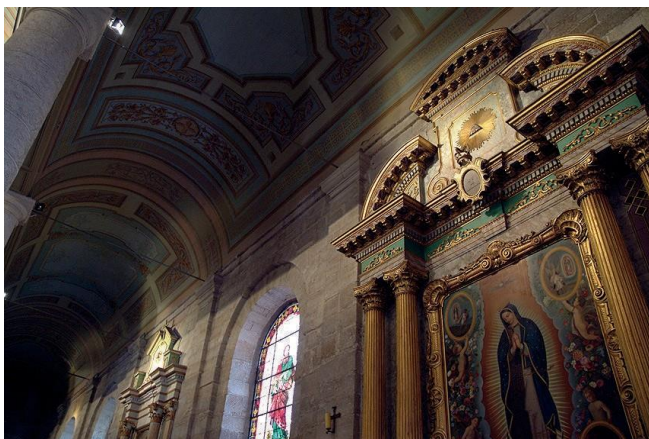
---

**La Portada Stadium.** It was inaugurated in 1952 and then re-inaugurated in May 2015. It has a capacity of up to 18.501 spectators. Also, it is the official stadium of the Club Deportes La Serena.

📍 **Located at Avenida Estadio #1440.**



La Portada Stadium.



**Above** Interior architecture of the Cathedral. **Below** Diaguita Ceramic.

**Tip.** Prefer tourism service providers registered and certified with Sernatur. The register for accommodation and tourism services is mandatory, according to Tourism Law N° 20.423.

**Visit:** [serviciosturisticos.sernatur.cl](http://serviciosturisticos.sernatur.cl)