

Destination RÍO HURTADO

SERNATUR Coquimbo Region
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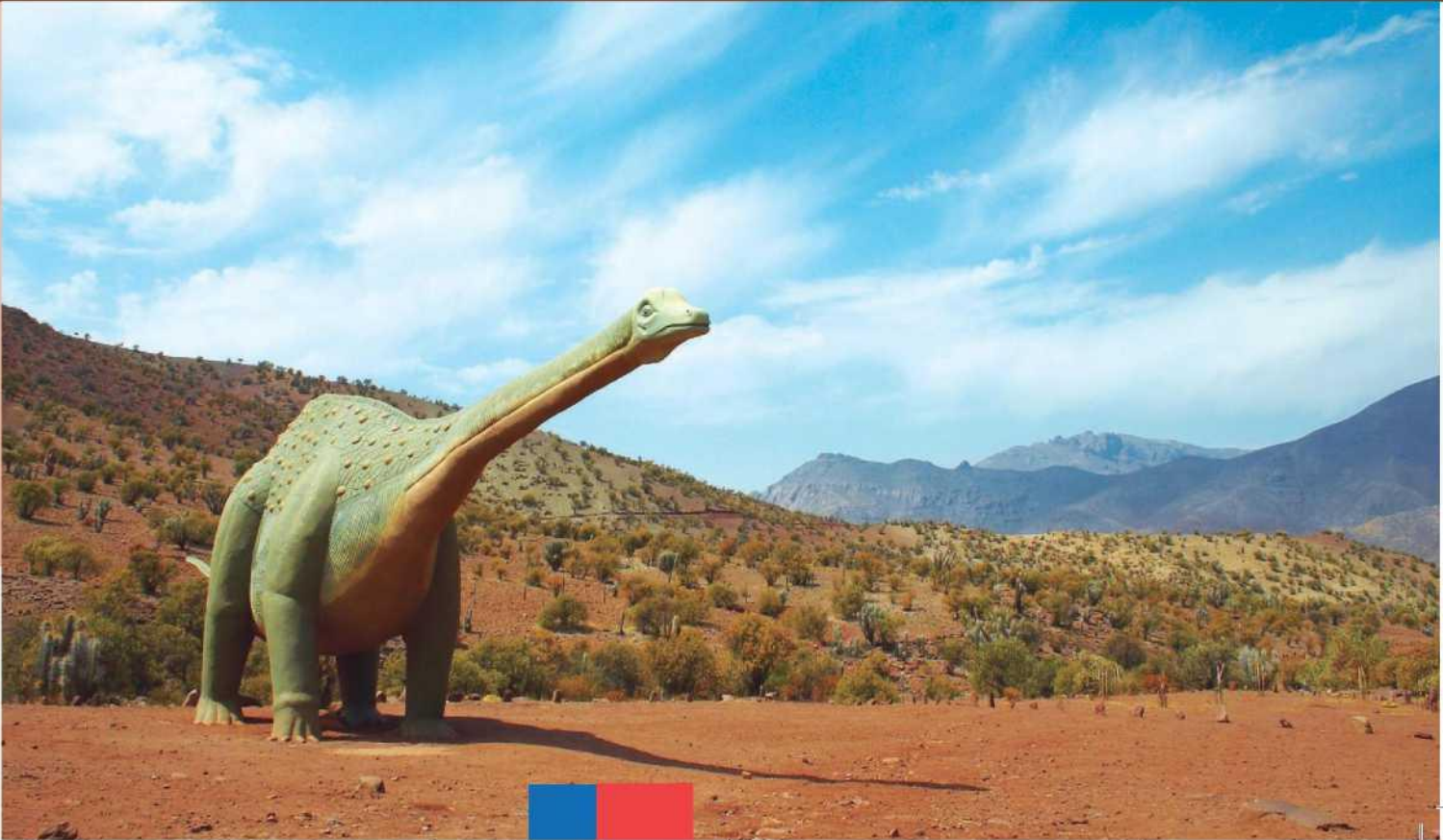
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COQUIMBO REGION AND ITS DISTRICTS



Districts

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

Coquimbo Region

Pichasca Natural and Historical Monument



Nestled in the foothills of the Andes, this site can be explored to discover petrified forests, fossilized remains of prehistoric animals, and a rock shelter used by ancient cultural groups dating back 8,000 years.

Traditional Festivals



Experience traditional and cultural festivals celebrated all year round.

Río Hurtado

The town of Samo Alto, the district capital of Río Hurtado, is located 42 km from Ovalle and 95 km from La Serena. It can be accessed via Ruta D-43 (Ovalle-La Serena), connecting with Ruta D-595 at the Recoleta Reservoir junction.

Boundaries

To the north with Andacollo, Vicuña, and Paihuano; to the south with Monte Patria; to the east with the Republic of Argentina; and to the west with Ovalle.

USEFUL INFORMATION

Emergencies

	Ambulance	131
	Carabineros (Chilean Police)	133
	Firefighters	132
	Andean Rescue Corps	136
	CITUC (Toxicology Center)	(56-2) 635
	Denuncia Seguro (Safe Report)	4242

Dialing Phone Numbers

From Chile to abroad:

carrier + 0 + country code + city code + phone number

To another city within Chile: **area code + phone number**

From landline to mobile: **9 + phone number**

From mobile to landline:

0 + area code + phone number

Transportation Phones

	Arturo Merino Benítez International Airport	(+562) 2690 1796
	La Florida Airport, La Serena	(+56 51) 2270353
	Feria Modelo de Ovalle Buses, Maestranza n/n	

Information Contacts

SERNATUR, Tourist Information Office,
Malta No. 461, La Serena.
+ Info.: www.turismoregiondecoquimbo.cl

I. Río Hurtado Municipality
Samo Alto n/n, (56 53) 2 655900

INTRODUCTION

The Río Hurtado valley is one of the hidden gems in the heart of the Coquimbo Region. It offers natural attractions complemented by an emerging tourism infrastructure. Here, visitors can experience agrotourism through rural accommodations and various natural products, including goat cheese. It is also one of the ancient settlement sites in the country, with archaeological evidence of ancient cultures spread across 2,117 km².

The district boasts an intriguing scientific heritage due to its geological formations that are about 70 million years old. The area is complemented by fossilized remains of animals and plants, including the existence of a petrified forest and the only documented remains of titanosaurs (Mesozoic land reptiles) in Chile.

Following the course of the river that gives the district its name, you can find a series of small towns and traditional farming areas nestled in the foothills of the Andes.



Top: Panoramic view of the valley. **Center:** Dinosaur replica, Pichasca Natural Monument. **Bottom:** Alero Rocos, Pichasca Natural Monument.


RÍO HURTADO

Enjoy significant activities related to history and archaeology. In this area of the country, human remains dating back 10,000 years have been found, revealing early settlement, making it a top-tier tourist attraction.

Embalse Recoleta. Although it belongs to Ovalle, it is a must-visit as it is located 12 kilometers before reaching Samo Alto on Ruta D-595. Windsurfing, laser sailing, and fishing are popular activities here.

TOURIST ATTRACTIONS

Pichasca Natural Monument. It is possible to explore the flora and fauna from 70 million years ago, as well as the cultures that existed 10,000 years ago. This small area, managed by CONAF (National Forest Corporation), preserves the archaeological heritage for future generations in places like the Alero Rocoso and Casa de Piedra (the latter used by various cultural groups throughout history).

 Located in the San Pedro Viejo area, 7 km from Samo Alto.

Quebrada El Romerito (Laguna de Serón). It is located in a northern interfluvium. Access is restricted and can only be gained through local tour guides. The petroglyphs display framed crosses, figurative geometric designs, and human figures.

Las Tinajas. It is a small ravine with rock art. The motifs include human figures, camelids (guanacos or llamas), and stylized geometric designs. It is believed to be over 2,000 years old.

 Located 4 km from Samo Alto, very close to the main road.

Map of the Río Hurtado District





Hacienda Los Andes. Located in the Morrillos ford, this outdoor lodge is fully equipped and offers a cozy and comfortable atmosphere. Built in a colonial style in 2001, it spans approximately 500 hectares and features rooms of various categories, its own restaurant, 3 km of trails along the riverbank, and a palm garden. Additionally, it has a private observatory. Its main attractions include sunshine, fresh air, equestrian sports, and extremely diverse vegetation.

 It can be accessed from Ovalle to the Morrillos ford via Ruta D-595, 5 km past Serón town.

Tricahue Parrots. In various parts of the valley, you can find Tricahue parrots in their natural habitat. With their vibrant colors and unmistakable chatter, they are a protected species and at risk of extinction.

FESTIVALS & CELEBRATIONS

Feria Costumbrista. Exhibition and sale of typical products, handicrafts, traditional games, folklore, and local cuisine.

Summer Ranchera Festivals. Regional community gathering celebrating ranchera music.

Fiesta de La Trilla. A celebration of rural traditions featuring folkloric performances, traditional food, and the sale of local products and handicrafts.

Festival del Loro Tricahue. An artistic gathering of popular music and singing, along with local handicrafts.

Rodeo. A traditional Chilean festival held in the rodeo arenas of Pichasca and El Chañar.

Fiesta de la Vendimia. Celebration of the harvest season, the selection of queens, traditional games, folkloric music, local cuisine, and products.

100 Pañuelos al Viento. A celebration that marks the beginning of the national festivities' month, with 100 handkerchiefs waving in time to the national dance, "la cueca". The event includes the sale of typical products, competitions, and awards for dancers.


Religious Festivals of Patron Saints. Popular celebrations honoring the patron saints of different towns. Fiesta de San Pedro in the town of the same name; Fiesta de Cristo Rey in Pichasca; Fiesta de Francisco Javier in Samo Alto; Fiesta de la Virgen del Carmen in Serón and Hurtado; Fiesta de Santa Teresita in Las Breas; and Fiesta del Niño Dios in El Romeral.

Mateada. A gathering for senior citizens to enjoy a good cup of *mate* (yerba mate drink), along with tastings of *churrasca* (traditional Chilean flatbread), goat cheese, *cachitos de nuez* (dough with crushed walnuts), *mote con huesillo* (sweet peach drink), sweets, and other local delicacies.

HANDICRAFT PRODUCTS

Stone Handicrafts. The creation of silver jewelry and natural stone pieces by artisans from the towns of San Pedro Norte and El Espinal, near Samo Alto.

Textiles. Notable things are the weaving groups from Huampulla and AlphaHur in Hurtado, known for their beautiful loom, knitting, and crochet creations.

 The towns of Huampulla and Hurtado are located 7 km and 41 km, respectively, from Samo Alto.

Antakari Route. A fun alternative for those who enjoy rugged landscapes and rural life is to explore this route of the Diaguita, Molle, and Inca cultures. In Río Hurtado, the itinerary includes two key sections. The first is a 50 km stretch from the town of Hurtado to Samo Alto, which serves as the gateway to towns such as Morrillos, Serón, Fundina, Pichasca, San Pedro de Pichasca, and El Espinal. The route showcases the beauty of the valley, as well as the traditions and ancient customs typical of rural communities. There are various camping, cabins, family lodging, and restaurant options along the way. The route also includes Vicuña, Río Hurtado, and Andacollo.

El Maray. El Maray is an area known for its stunning landscapes. Its petroglyphs are threatened by thermal fracture processes. Nevertheless, the most significant ones are visible to visitors. Notables are the figures of animals (such as llamas or alpacas) and anthropomorphic shapes.



Typical Products of Río Hurtado.

Advice. Prefer service providers that are registered and certified by SERNATUR. Registration for accommodation and adventure tourism services is mandatory according to Tourism Law No. 20,423.

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