

Artillery Elevator to Justice Square



Summary: This section zigzags through much of the older section of Valparaíso's historic quarter, declared a UNESCO world heritage site. The area around the Echaurren Square and the base of Santo Domingo Hill, surrounding the Church of the Matriz constitute outstanding cultural heritage sites. Still, hikers should be aware this is the poorer section of the historic quarter (section three is much better preserved) and a certain spirit of adventure is recommended.

Estimated Walking Time: 90 minutes to 2 hours.

How to Get Here: Take any of the buses on Errazurriz or Pedro Montt Street that says "Aduana". Better yet, take a trolley. Get off at the Aduana and ride the funicular to the top of Artillery Hill.

Degree of Difficulty: This section features two significant climbs: one in Santo Domingo Hill and one in Cordillera Hill. The first can be avoided by shortcutting from the Plazuela Santo Domingo directly to Cajilla Street via Ulyses, eliminating the ascent. Still, wear comfortable shoes and avoid heels at all costs.

Tourist Infrastructure: There are cafes, restaurants, artists stands, and public bathrooms around the 21st of



May Promenade at the beginning of the route. Once you get started, you may not find another clean bathroom until the Plaza Sotomayor, so start with an empty tank! There are a number of “picadas” (cheap, unglamorous restaurants recommended only

to the most adventurous) around the Market place in Echaurren Square. At the end of the section you will find yourself at Sotomayor Square, in the heart of the Valparaiso Financial District, with many amenities and fine restaurants galore.

Artillery Elevator

Built in 1893, The Artillery Funicular is the second oldest in Valparaiso and was once the busiest, actually possessing four cars that moved up and down on two parallel tracks. The wooden cars, together with those of the Baron Funicular, are the largest in Valparaiso. Originally, this elevator worked on coal.

Café Mirador

In the ex -machinist’s house you’ll find the Café Mirador. The café’s owner is Danilo Bruna Tello who has adorned the establishment with antiques, photographs, paintings, fluted bottles, keys, and old sewing machines, all brought together by attractive woodwork and a distinct maritime motif. At the end of the dining area you can actually gaze into the wheelhouse and see the machine work of the funicular in action. The café specializes in shrimp and cheese empanadas. He also sells a couple of specialty coffees, including cognac and chocolate, amongst others. “I’d always imagined a café like an anchored boat,” he says.

The House of Artillery Hill:

The Grand Legacy of Barrison & Schiavon

One of the most photographed houses in Valparaiso is the stunning Victorian hanging from the precipice of Artillery Hill, just outside the station house of the Funicular. The house is inspired by the Harrington style (see section 1) and was one of the last homes of that period after the edification of the passage of the same name. This particular home was built between 1908 and

1909 for Don Wenseslao Campusano, a high level functionary at the custom's house. The architects were two Italians, Arnaldo Barrison and Renato Schiavon, two architects recently arrived from Genova inspired by the thought of putting their expertise in historic restoration to work after the earthquake of 1906. Barrison and Schiavon brought to Valparaiso a knowledge of European Art Noveau, which had to be adapted to the conventional tastes of the porteños. They also needed to learn to adapt their constructions to the steep hillsides.



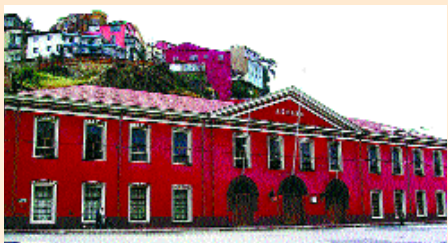
Barrison was born in Venice in 1883 and was educated in a family of artists and musicians. He studied architecture in Trieste and it was there where he met Schiavon who would become his inseparable friend and partner. These two architects later worked with Jose Smith Solar, author of the Santa Maria University. Barrison's most noted work in Valparaiso is, without doubt, the Baburriza Palace in Pleasant Hill (section 3), whose spectacular Art Noveau styling could only have come from an expert. Constructed in 1916, the Baburriza Palace was completed the same year that his Chilean wife of two years, Mercedes González, passed away. Other important works by these famous architects cited in this book include the Severín Library (section 13), la Casa Peraga (section 7), and the spectacular Rivera Palace (section 14) with its notable onyx stairway.

Later, Barrison and Schiavon would go their separate ways. Barrison's later works would include the Rivoli Theater on Victoria Street (1921), the Monumento de los Caídos (Monument to fallen Italian war heroes), the restoration of the San Juan Bosco School, the Hotel O'Higgins in Viña del Mar, the Carrera Theater in Quilpue, and numerous elegant homes in Viña del Mar and Recreo. He was buried at the Playa Ancha cemetery at the age of 87. His partner, Schiavon, was born in Pola in 1887. After meeting Barrison in Trieste, he decided to try his luck in Valparaiso. He worked as an artist for various newspapers and magazines. He married in the Italian Valparaiso community and became a professor of architecture at the Catholic University of Valparaiso. Schiavon's major later works included the Banco de Chile on Prat Street, the Pompei Theater in Villa Alemana and the Municipal Theater of Viña del Mar. He passed away in 1945. Barrison and Schiavon will always be remembered for their priceless

legacy in Valparaiso.

Artillery Passage to the Customs House

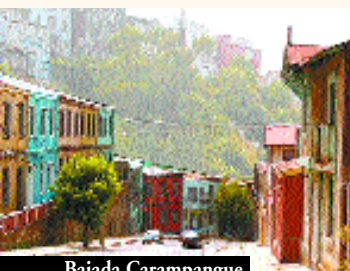
From the 21st of May Promenade the route extends down the stairway past noble, but dilapidated houses until arriving at Carampangue Street, which leads us to the Customs House. Carampangue Street was originally named “The Ravine of Juan Gómez” in honor of one of the city’s first police chiefs. In 1871, it was changed to Carampangue in honor of a famous military battle. In one of these old houses Chile’s first professional soccer team, “Santiago Wanderers,” was founded in 1892. Why is Valparaiso’s professional soccer team called Santiago Wanderers? Simple. At the time of their founding, there was actually an amateur club team called Valparaiso Wanderers. That team has since disappeared, and Santiago Wanderers of Valparaiso is now the deacon of Chilean soccer. The route heads down Carampangue until the Custom House Square, also known as Plaza Wheelwright in honor of the great Bostonian venture capitalist who financed the Chilean railroads and founded the mythical Pacific Steam Navigation Company. (See section 11).



Bustamante Street

The Custom’s House, a national monument, constitutes a rare example of colonial architecture in the city. The most celebrated functionary was Rubén Darío, a great Nicaraguan Poet considered to be the father of modernism in Latin America. Darío rented an apartment off the Atkinson Promenade in Concepción Hill and wrote, in Valparaiso, the book “Azul” (Blue), a masterpiece in Latin American literature.

From the Custom’s House, our route continues via Bustamante Street, entering a neighborhood that once was known as Valparaiso’s “Chinatown.” Curiously, there is nothing Chinese about Chinatown in Valparaiso. Such a “politically incorrect” moniker actually refers to a zone historically associated with sailor bars and bordellos. The most famous bars included the now defunct



Bajada Carampangue

American Bar and Roland Bar, oft frequented by sailors, college students and Nobel laureates (Neruda). The only remaining bar echoing its forefathers today is the Flamingo Rose. Hungry? Try the Sethmacher Sausage Shop, a family business making homemade cured meats for more than 60 years.

Echaurren Square

This is the historic birthplace of Valparaiso and contains many notable buildings, including the historic Market Place. The dilapidated market offers cheap seafood for adventurous travelers. The more hygienic of these ma and pa eateries are located on the first floor and across the street, such as the “Marisqueria Las Porteñas,” which at least offers some clean bathrooms and a bit more acceptable ambience for more conservative tourists.



Most buildings around the plaza date to the mid—19th century, including old emporiums and pharmacies that are worth a visit. The “Emporio Echaurren” is one of the most legendary old groceries in Valparaiso and has a fanatically faithful clientele that enables the owners to stock some fine premium wines and many European gourmet products that may, at first sight, seem out of place in such a working class neighborhood. Along the sidewalks, street vendors hawk cinnamon, oregano, paprika, and old fashioned stove toasters. Many of the stores in this neighborhood supply ships during their stays in the port of Valparaiso.

As you gaze upon the bustle of this historic center, you will inevitably discover various eccentric personages such as the organ grinders or old ladies feeding the pigeons. It is hard to imagine that what is now a chaotic urban center once was a sandy beach and that it was precisely in this spot 480 years ago, that the wooden schooner, *Santiaguillo*, captained by the Spanish explorer Juan de Saveedra, touched ground as the first European to set foot in what later would become Valparaiso.

The Church of the Matriz

A hundred or so meters behind the Echaurren Square stands the noble and stark steeple of the Church of the Matriz. The church and its tiny plaza serve as the gateway into the Santo Domingo Hill National Historic District, a labyrinthine hodge podge of alleys, tiny pedestrian plazas, and almost vertical stairways with some exquisite old houses left among what is today one

of Valparaiso poorest neighborhoods. The most peaceful time to stroll in this neighborhood is early morning, especially Sunday, around mass at the church.

The Church of the Matriz, declared a national monument in 1971, is possibly Valparaiso's most significant icon. The original version of the church was built in 1554 and in 1578 was sacked by the legendary corsair Sir Francis Drake. In 1615, it was sacked again by the Dutch pirate George Spilbergen. Earthquakes eventually did away with the church, obligating the community to erect a replica in the 17th century. That version, too, was downed by earthquakes. In 1837, work began on the third version of the church, which remains in tact today. The finished church was originally baptized "Our Lady of Mercedes of Clear Port," but later was

changed to "The Parish of the Saviour of the Matriz". The austere elegance of the church contrasts with its current use as a social center that attends to the poorest and neediest of Valparaiso's impoverished.

Nonetheless, many Catholics from around Chile enjoy celebrating mass here, independent of their social standing, due to the quaint ambience and historic relevance of the parish. The neo-classical adobe facade with three doors, and the

octagon-shaped steeple of this church have become icons, not only in Valparaiso, but all over Chile. A row of quaint wood and adobe houses, with exquisite balustrades and balconies, complements the plaza and serves as the entrance into Santo Domingo Hill.

Inside the church, constructed in three naves, you can find an important 17th century Spanish carving, dating to the School of Seville and donated by the King of Spain. The sculpture was intended for the a church in Santiago, but, as legend has it, the Christ refused to leave the Church. When they finally got it out, the oxen refused to budge an inch to initiate the trip to Santiago. Neighbors considered this a sign from God and the statue of the Christ has not been moved since. From the Church we continue down Santo Domingo Street towards a tiny plaza known as Santiago Severín. The beautiful building on the corner originally belonged to the Company of Jesus, and in 1767 was transferred under the title Temple Santo Domingo. In this building civic leaders met to form the first town meeting, and in



the first years after the Chilean Independence the building also served as a meeting place for the provisional national congress. Several years ago, the building was taken over for use as a police station.

Looking back from the Plaza Severín toward

the tower of the Church of the Matriz, the writer Augusto D'Halmar once wrote, "With its ancient gallery of stone, its old steeple, its cobbled streets and balconies, its pigeons and its bell tower, one almost feels as they are in Rome. Although when I was in Rome all I could think about was my old parish in Valparaiso."



Santa Domingo Hill National Historic District

The climb up Santo Domingo Hill can be done in car via Marquez Street or by foot on Echaurren Street. Both eventually lead to the Camino Cintura (Beltway). The climb by foot is one of the most surprising and fascinating excursions in all of Valparaiso, although one should be alert and accompanied. From the Severin Square we continue along to another small plaza called Santo Domingo. From the picturesque cobbled street we can detect numerous stairways taking off in every conceivable direction. The route guides you up the right stairway, toward Juvenal Street.

Juvenal is a small passage midway up this stairway. The alley is famous for the spectacular colonial house with wooden balconies constructed in such a way as to form a natural tunnel. Unconfirmed folklore has Bernardo O'Higgins, Chile's first President and leader of the Battle of Independence, taking his summer vacations here. Regardless of the veracity of such lore, the house is beloved by photographers in all of Valparaiso.

For those who want to avoid the impending climb, we recommend doubling back to the entrance to the Plazuela Santo Domingo, taking the first stairway to the left (Ulyses) until it empties out into Cajilla Street. This will save you half an hour and sore calf muscles.

But for the more adventurous climbers, we continue up the stair and turn uphill at Pueyredon Street, which is actually another picturesque alley. At this point, we are winding through some of the most startling vernacular architecture available in the city. When Pueyredon ends, we wind around the corner and start down the "Calle del Ministro." The first thing we discover on our way down is the abandoned





Posada O'Higgins

Santo Domingo Elevator. This is one of 12 disappeared funiculars dispersed around the city and coming upon it evokes so much melancholy and solitude that one senses they have stumbled upon an archeological ruin. The Calle del Ministro zigzags down amongs adobe houses toward the Plaza Santo Domingo, but the route veers off via Ulysses Street en route toward Toro and Cordillera Hills.

Cajilla Street

At the intersection of Ulyses and Cajilla Streets, the route doubles back towards Echaurren Square, but you may want to turn right and walk up Cajilla 2 blocks to get a better view of the abandoned old elevator. If not, one of the first houses you'll see features spectacular balconies and is registered to the architect Cabaude.

Cordillera Hill

As we return to the Echaurren Square area, the route offers two interesting alternatives for scaling Cordillera Hill: by foot via Castillo Street or by funicular elevator via Serano Street. Either way, you will arrive at a small plaza known as Eleuterio Ramirez. The funicular, built in 1888 and is the third oldest in the city.

The small plaza outside the upper station house is named after a Lieutenant who died in the Battle of Tarapacá in 1879. Victor Hugo and Merlet Streets feature wonderfully noble old buildings, including the old San José castle, known today as the Lord Cochrane Home, administered by city hall as a museum. From 1820—1860, these homes once housed some of Valparaiso's most opulent families, such as the Purcells, the Zhars, the Peragallos, the Weigands, the Consiglieris, the Lunds, and the Frugones. The wealth later emigrated to Concepción and Pleasant Hills. Hence, today most of these homes are subdivided and sublet into tiny apartments.

The Lord Cochrane House

At the end of Merlet Street you will come upon the Lord Cochrane House. Originally, this was the San Jose Castle built in 1692. Later, it was destroyed. An English watchmaker, John Mouat, built his home, known as "the observatory," on the same spot between 1840-43. The current house features Chilean colonial architecture that differs markedly from other more European homes in the port. This colonial style, featuring low adobe

buildings with oak pillars, iron work on the windows, Spanish tile, and handsome inner patios, is typical of the haciendas in the Chilean countryside. The house's most outstanding feature is probably the exquisite balcony with cannons overlooking the Sotomayor Square and the bay. The view is one of the best in all of Valparaiso. The house was built for the renegade British noble, Lord Cochrane, but the fact is the house was not finished when he was living in Valparaiso.



Continuing Up Castillo Street

The route continues up Castillo Street past facades much more impressive than those in Santo Domingo. The route then turns right toward Canal Street and the San Augustin Elevator, the least known funicular in Valparaiso. Nonetheless you may want to detour several more blocks up Castillo Street to take in two historic sights: The Capilla Santa Ana and the Workers Cooperative Building.

The Capilla Santa Ana was built in 1882. Its tower was felled in the earthquake of 1985. On the other side of the same block is the fascinating Workers Cooperative Building, the first social housing project in Chile. The building was built in 1898 by one of Valparaiso's leading philanthropists, Doña Juana Ross de Edwards. Accessed by a small entry on Castillo Street, visitors are welcome inside the central patio which shows evidence of structural damage of 5 earthquakes. Many families living here are direct descendants of the original families sponsored by Mrs. Ross. At this point, you can return to the San Agustin Funicular. You will end up on Tomás Ramos Street, quickly arrive at Justice Square and the end of section 2.

