



Lastra Street to Hontaneda Neighborhood

Summary: This walk is recommended to people who already have visited the more obvious sections of Valparaiso and are seeking something different. The stretch includes two of the littler known, but most interesting funicular elevators: Mariposas and Monjas, as well as an abandoned funicular, La Cruz.

Estimated Walking Time: Approximately 3 hours.

How to Get Here: The stage begins at the bottom of the Florida Funicular, located two blocks from the Falabella department store just off the Plaza Victoria. Most buses will go by the plaza. A trolley bus can drop you behind the Falabella on Colon Street. This is only a block from the starting point.

Degree of Difficulty: At the beginning, you will be riding the funiculars up and hiking down, but don't be deceived, the hike up La Cruz hill is nasty. But if you are too exhausted, you can always stop a "colectivo" (taxi).
Tourist Infrastructure: There is little in the way of professional tourist accommodations for much of the route. The notable exceptions are two B & Bs, the lovely Grand House and the Garibaldi. If you manage to make it up to Grand House without stopping a taxi, don't hesitate to knock on the door to ask the host, Edith Vega, for a cold drink on her outstanding terrace.



Lastra and Vicuña Mackenna Streets

Although not a privileged neighborhood by any means, the neighborhood around Lastra and Vicuña Mackenna Streets features much notable architecture, including an astounding Italian Villa known as the Peraga House at the intersection of Lastra and Vicuña Mackenna. The architects were, you guessed it, the noted Italian duo of Barrison and Schiavon. (See sections 2 and 3).

Mariposas Elevator

Valparaíso's longest funicular is also one of its most curious. At 177 meters in length, this strange national monument actually travels beneath the level of a major street. Rumor has it, if you travel up at the right time, you can reach out the window of the cars and steal a cup of tea off of somebody's living room table!

Baquedano Street

From the top of Mariposas Hill we will descend by foot on Baquedano Street, flanked by wide, sweeping, attractive vistas, until we arrive at the Monjas Funicular.

Monjas Funicular

This is Valparaíso's most elevated railway. The upper station house exits via a charming pedestrian bridge into a surprisingly residential neighborhood that appears out of nowhere. Zig zag your way down to Avenida Francia, where you will access La Cruz Hill through a steep street on your right one block before the stoplight.

La Cruz Hill



Vista desde The Grand House

Since the funicular is out of service, you will be required to undertake a strenuous, but picturesque climb. The reason this hill is so steep is that half of her was carved away to use as landfill in the late 19th century. Towards the top, we recommend a visit to the Grand House Bed and

Breakfast, where your host, Edith Vega, may offer you a cold beverage and the opportunity to marvel at the extraordinary view.

El Litre Street and Park/ Sector Hontaneda

The beltway connecting La Cruz to El Litre Hill is poor, but once you connect onto the exceptionally steep El Litre Street, your path down, the architecture becomes splendid again. The Hontaneda Area at the bottom once featured many important homes. Today, the most important neighbor is the Medical School of the University of Valparaiso. Other stately old homes have been converted into garages for mechanics and auto supply shops, giving the neighborhood a cluttered feel. On a neighboring hillside you can see the skeleton of another abandoned funicular: Las Cañas.

The area features many architecturally notable buildings, ranging from neoclassical to Arte Nouveau. Many have been tattered by time, but it is worth the effort to sneak a peak inside several of these old vestiges days gone by.

