

General information for visiting LSST

How to prepare

June to September is winter in Chile. In La Serena the average July highs are 62°F (17°C) and the lows 47°F (8°C). However, the top of Cerro Pachón is at an altitude of 8,900 feet (2,715 meters). The temperatures can vary widely but we recommend you dress very warmly, other times of year can be warmer and there is often direct sun on the summit.

For a winter visit (June – August) please pack:

- Warm winter jacket
- Wool or fleece sweater
- Warm leggings or pants with an extra layer of long underwear (avoid jeans as they don't retain heat if wet)
- Winter hat, gloves and scarf
- Hiking boots or other insulated footwear
- Warm socks

For other times of year:

- Wear light long sleeves and long trousers (these should be kept on at all times when outside to avoid sunburn even if sunscreen is applied)
- Wear closed toe shoes – sneaker type footwear is best, (women's slip on shoes are not suitable)
- Wear a cap to keep sun off your face and neck

Regardless of season of visit the UV is more intense at elevation so bring:

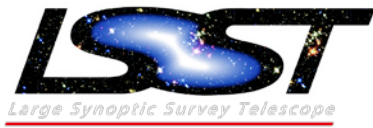
- UV filtering sunglasses
- SPF 50 Sunscreen or greater (we will also provide you with some)
- Sunhat

Connectivity

Cellular/mobile phone service is limited and only available on some networks. We do **not** have guest wifi access. To request to the LSST network this form must be completed before arrival.

<https://project.lsst.org/visiting-the-summit/network-access>





Altitude

Cerro Tololo is at an altitude of 8,900 feet (2,715 meters). Ascent to this altitude exposes you to a reduction in atmospheric pressure, which can result in a variety of medical conditions. For the majority of visitors, this altitude causes few or no problems. However, some visitors may suffer some of the following symptoms: headaches, dizziness, tiredness, irritability, insomnia, reduced intellectual capacity, impaired exercise/exertion tolerance, and vomiting.

In the event of any such problems, you should immediately inform the safety officer.

It is also possible, although rare below 3000 meters (9840 feet), to develop one or more of the more severe mountain sicknesses: pulmonary or cerebral edema, both of which can be fatal.

The altitude may also aggravate pre-existing disease, particularly cardio-vascular and respiratory diseases. Individuals with these conditions should seek professional medical advice before planning any trips to the summit.

You should stay rested and avoid heavy meals and alcohol on the day before your trip to the mountain.

Please note that you should drink plenty of bottled water or juice, in order to compensate for the low humidity and avoid dehydration at the summit. Take your time, walk slowly, and be cautious when getting up from sitting while you are at the summit.

Conduct

You must stay within the areas designated safe for visitors and not stray. There are steep drop offs and scree falls at the edge of the summit platform - do not go beyond the safety barriers/walls. Do not feed or pet any of the wildlife. Do not enter areas of vegetation as there is presence of insects, such as “gergenes” and “vinchucas”.

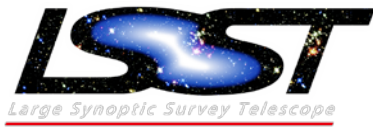
We require all visitors to read this Non-Harassment Policy Statement: <https://www.aura-astronomy.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/B25-B-XXV-Standards-of-Workplace-Conduct.pdf> before your visit.

Smoking is not permitted in or around any of the buildings on Cerro Tololo. Alcohol and drugs are prohibited anywhere on the AURA property.

Water

Do not drink the tap water at Cerro Pachón, it is not potable.





Earthquakes

Chile is a seismically active region. Small but perceptible earthquakes are frequent with a few moderate to strong events every year, and, of course, there is the possibility of a very strong event. Earthquakes are not predictable natural events, so be prepared.

Should an earthquake occur follow these guidelines:

DURING THE EARTHQUAKE

- Keep calm, do not run.
- If you are the observatory site, follow instructions from the staff in the red jackets and hats.
- Local residents are familiar with earthquakes and have learned what to do – use the behavior of those around you as a guide to your own.
- Move to a safe place, clear of heavy objects or furniture and suspended light fixtures, that may fall. Stay away from windows.
- Do not use elevators; do not go down the stairs until you are sure the quake is over.
- If you are outdoors, move away from steep slopes where rockslides might occur, or trees that could fall. Do not enter buildings.

AFTER THE EARTHQUAKE

- After an intense earthquake, it is normal for there to be aftershocks. These are almost always of lesser magnitude than the main earthquake.
- If you are instructed (or decide) to evacuate a building, follow the marked evacuation route and go to the nearest safety zone. Try to stay in a group and don't wander off. Use stairs, do not use an elevator. Do not reenter a building until you are informed it is safe to do so.
- After an intense earthquake low lying coastal areas (like the beach at La Serena) may be affected by a Tsunami. If you are in such an area and experience an earthquake so strong that you find it hard to stand, or if an evacuation alarm sounds, immediately follow the marked evacuation route which will lead you to higher ground. Don't panic, walk briskly, do not attempt to drive.

