

Room service

Colonial chic in a buzzy barrio

Lastarria, Santiago de Chile
By Simone Kane

This 14-bedroom 1920s townhouse is in the heart of Santiago's most bohemian *barrio*, the eponymous Lastarria. A meticulous restoration has transformed it into a comfortable hotel with a homely atmosphere. Family-owned and run, the charming Lastarria Boutique Hotel opened in late 2011 and offers a stylish base from which to explore Chile's vibrant capital.

The colonial-style house is located in an area steeped in history, and the sympathetic renovation has retained much of its refined architecture. Stand-out features include an elegant white marble staircase, huge period windows and original oak parquet flooring.

While the original imprint has been retained where possible, the overall style is modern, with contemporary art adorning the walls. Meanwhile, nooks and crannies on the landings have been transformed into small, lounging areas furnished with inviting chaises longues and armchairs.

The dark and sexy bar-lounge opens on to a terrace overlooking the leafy courtyard garden and inviting pool. The hotel has recently opened its Deli Lounge restaurant, which serves sandwiches and salads alongside top-class wines from the nearby vineyards.

For a small hotel, the Lastarria offers impressive facilities: a hair salon and spa treatments, small gym, free Wi-Fi and complimentary newspapers. It can also organise a range of activities, from city tours and museum visits, to Spanish lessons and trips to nearby wineries and ski resorts.



Freshen up: the 1920s townhouse has a new lease of life

Travel Essentials

Coronel Santiago Bueras 188, Barrio Lastarria, Santiago, Chile (00 56 2 840 3700; lastarriahotel.com)

Rooms ★★★★★
Value ★★★★★
Service ★★★★★

Doubles start at US\$169 (£107), including breakfast. Cox & Kings (0845 154 8941; coxandkings.co.uk) offers a 15-day private tour of Chile, including three nights at the Lastarria, from £3,845pp, with B&B, flights, transfers and excursions. For more information on Chile, visit chile.travel.

Location

Santiago's rapid expansion has transformed it into a sprawling city, wedged between the Andes and the Chilean Coastal Range. It has a charming historic centre and the Lastarria is ideally located for ticking off its key sights. There's also a creative pulse in this barrio reflected in its cafés, bars, restaurants, galleries and boutiques.



'The hotel's renovation has retained much of the refined architecture of this colonial-style house'

Within easy reach is Santa Lucía Hill, which the conquistador Pedro de Valdivia captured in the 16th century – today the landscaped hill is one of Santiago's most popular parks.

A short walk away is the Parque Forestal, a strip of green parallel to the Mapocho river, which slices through the city. The park hosts two of Chile's most important art museums, the Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes (mnba.cl) and the Museo de Arte Contemporáneo (mac.uchile.cl). The 2,000-seat Municipal Theatre (municipal.cl) is around the corner.

Comfort

The simple elegance of the communal areas continues in the bedrooms. These calming retreats come in different shapes and sizes and feature contemporary decor, with muted colour palettes, dark-wood floors, a combination of modern and antique wooden furniture, and stylish, ceramic-tiled bathrooms with either bath or shower.

The four room types – ranging from four superiors to the four top-end suites – have free Wi-Fi, minibars, LED televisions and iPod docks.

My deluxe room had a huge bed and French doors on to the walled garden; other rooms have balconies and the two rooftop junior suites feature private terraces, perfect for relaxing and watching barrio Lastarria come to life. All rooms are sound-proofed against street noise.