

ARQUITECTURE

The Metropolitan Cathedral of Santiago is part of an architectural group of buildings that includes the Archbishop's Palace and the El Sagrario Parish.

The current building was built between 1748 and 1906; It consists of an elongated design with three equal width naves separated by a serie of columns.

The Italian architect Joaquin Toesca created the main facade in a classic style with triumphal arches and baroque elements. The bell towers were designed by Ignacio Cremonesi.

Inside, the stone structure and semicircular arches were richly decorated with moldings and painted with imitation marble.



ALTARS

The Cathedral has fourteen altars distributed in both lateral naves: six in the south nave and eight in the north nave. In the middle of the 19th century, when Mariano Casanova was Archbishop, the shape and size of the arches were unified.

The existing altars are of Neoclassical style, some of marble and others of painted and gilded wood. Among the different dedications existing in the altars, those of San Alberto Hurtado and Santa Teresa de los Andes, the first Chilean saints, stand out.

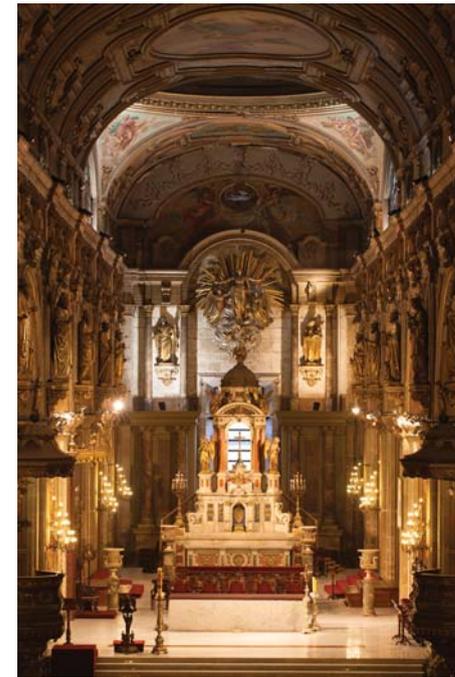


MAIN ALTAR

Three elements of different styles are distinguished. In the foreground, the granite main altar currently in use, made by the artist Marcela Correa, was installed and consecrated in 2006.

Behind, the magnificent marble altar with decorations in bronze, and lapislázuli, was brought in 1913 from Mayer & Co, Germany, and consecrated in 1914.

At the back of the central nave, dazzles the altarpiece that belonged to the altar made in situ in the second half of the 19th century. The sculptural group, that represents the assumption of the Virgin, was commissioned and brought from France in 1865.



STAINED GLASS



The Cathedral of Santiago has eighteen spectacular Munich-style stained glass windows, made in Germany by Franz Xavier Zettler between 1900 and 1904; They were brought to Chile during the remodeling process promoted by Archbishop Mariano Casanova.

Remarkable saints are represented in the stained glass windows of the lateral naves. Under the dome we can see two larger stained glass windows: in one, Resurrected Christ sending his apostles to evangelize and, in the other, Christ surrounded by important saints of Latin America.

They were manufactured with the blown glass plaqué technique, using intense colors and a figurative style. The saints appear with backgrounds inspired by nature.



1544-1548

1561

1747-1770

1780-1800

1840

1897-1906

2005-2006

- On the west side of the old Plaza Mayor de Santiago, current Plaza de Armas, the Iglesia Mayor is built in adobe, with its main facade facing north.
- Pius IX created the Diocese of Santiago under the patronage of the Virgin Mary, receiving the building the denomination of Cathedral Church. Rodrigo González Marmolejo is named the first Bishop of Santiago.

- Matías Vásquez de Acuña was commissioned to build the current temple. Its orientation changes from north to east.
- Joaquín Toesca, an Italian architect, comes to Chile to redesign and finish the main faade of the Cathedral. He is also entrusted with the design of the El Sagrario Parish.

- Pope Gregory XVI raises the Church of Santiago to Archdiocese, being called Metropolitan Cathedral. Its first Archbishop was Manuel Vicuña Larraín.
- Ignacio Cremonesi, an Italian architect, concludes the works on the Cathedral: he builds the belltowers, the dome and the Chapel of the Blessed Sacrament; remodels the interior and the facades.

- The Presbytery is remodeled and a new Archbishop's Crypt is built under it, in a contemporary style.

SEPULCHRAL MONUMENTS AND TOMBS

Important men and women in the history of Chile were buried in the Cathedral, among them, heroes of independence, bishops and governors.

In the lateral naves there are three funerary monuments belonging to: Monsignor Rafael Valentín Valdivieso (South Nave), Monsignor Joaquín Larraín Gandarillas and the Heroes of the Conception (North Nave) whose marble urn contains the hearts of four young soldiers.



In the south nave, in front of the sacristy, is the funerary sculpture of Monsignor Jose Alejo Eyzaguirre. During the major remodeling that the architect Ignacio Cremonesi, carried out between 1897 and 1906, the tombstones were removed from their original site, leaving 20 small marble slabs attached to the wall.

On the floor of the temple there are ten tiles with an engraved number indicating the place where unidentified persons were buried.



ARCHIEPISCOPAL CRYPT

Under the presbytery is the archiepiscopal crypt where are the tombs of some of the shepherds who have led the Church of Santiago: the first Chilean bishop of Santiago Alonso del Pozo, Primate Cardinal Jose María Caro and Cardinal Raúl Silva Henríquez, who was a prominent defender of human rights, among others. There is also a section for other ecclesiastical authorities.

The crypt has a space for prayer, with an altar made with the stones of the old presbytery, a Romanesque-style Christ from the 12th century and a small Pietá, Hispanic-Filipino style, carved in Ivory.

It was finished in 2006; the previous one, smaller in size and located at the back of the presbytery, was remodeled as the Civic Crypt. There rests Diego Portales.



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