

Euro Travel Secrets: A Compendium of Tips, Tricks, Hacks, and Updates

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In memory of Alan Hogenauer

No liability is implied nor is to be inferred.

Abstract

This paper presents a compendium of information, recommendations, and updates for travel to and in Europe. These include: country codes, time zones and jetlag, flags, numbers and measurements, getting ready, packing, money, where to stay, telephone, driving, language, rail travel, primary and secondary rail stations, country differences, street foods and drink, smoking, and customs.

Keywords: Travel, Europe, packing, rail, Eurail, money, language, jetlag, street food, dining, smoking, customs

All 20 graphics by the author except:

European Country Codes—Wikipedia/OpenStreetMap

Flags—Popartuk (European Union flag added by the author)

92—Reddit/MapPorn

European Time Zones—Eurail Map

European currencies—Eurail Map

French Hotel Ratings—Canal du Midi Bike

plus public domain:

World Time Zones

Sizes

kph/mpg signs

In traveling mostly by trains through some 33 countries in Europe, I have gathered a number of suggestions that I wished I had known in advance. One may have a travel theme: beaches, cathedrals, ceramic tiles (see my portugalazulejo.tumblr.com), paintings (like Dali, Mucha, Kandinsky, Klee, Munch, Pierre et Gilles, Toulouse-Lautrec, Van Gogh, Vermeer, the Flemish, or in my case Tissot), fine dining or street foods (see later), night life or in my case the Love Parades, scenic train rides like along the Rhein in DE, *Train Jaune* in FR, Flåm in NO, the *Glacier Express* between Davos-Filisur in CH, or steam trains like the *Fresa* Madrid/Delicias ES, Mariembourg BE, Binz/Schwerin DE, Appeldorm NL, and art and history museums or rail (Mechelen BE, Bern CH, Nürnberg DE, Odense DK, St. Vincenç de Calders ES, Mulhouse FR, York GB, Utrecht NL, Entroncamento PT, and Alvesta SE).

European nations can be referred to by their 2 letter ISO country codes. Note the Swiss CH is from the Latin for *Confederatio Helvetica*:

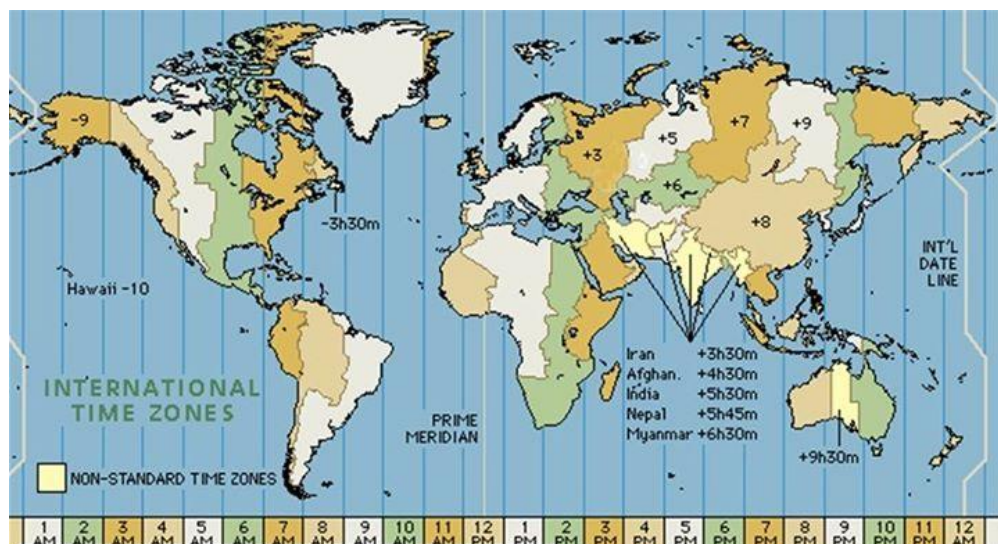


Native names are: AL *Shqipëri*, DE *Deutschland*, FI *Suomi*, GR *Elláda* = *Ελλάδα*, HR *Hrvatska*, HU *Magyarország*, IE *Éire*, and ME *Crna Gora*.

I've done the openings of the DK/SE bridge, Köln/Frankfurt-M and eastern FR high speed routes, plus last runs of the original Orient Express, DK/DE boat train, and PT/ES/FR hotel train (see my videos).

Time Zones

European time zones have IE/GB/PT one hour earlier than Central European Time and the Baltics and eastern Europe as one hour later; note that summer CET=GMT+2 and is 3 weeks later in spring and 2 weeks earlier in the fall vs. US. If pm, 12=0 add 12 for 24 hours.





Jetlag is worse eastbound noting that flights are quicker with the Jet Stream flowing eastward. It takes a day of adjustment for each hour of difference and melatonin doesn't work for me but green tea does. Get early sun to reset your diurnal clock. For night life, I keep my home sleep schedule with "disco naps" in multiples of 90 minutes.

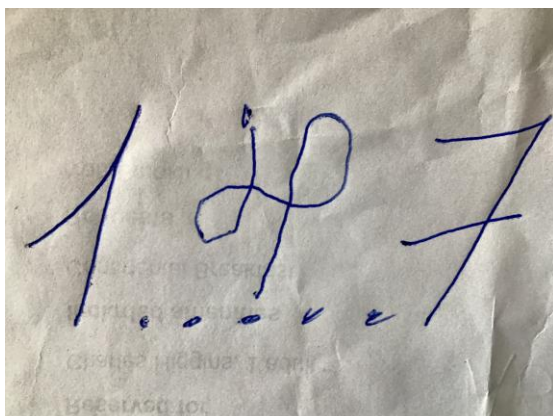
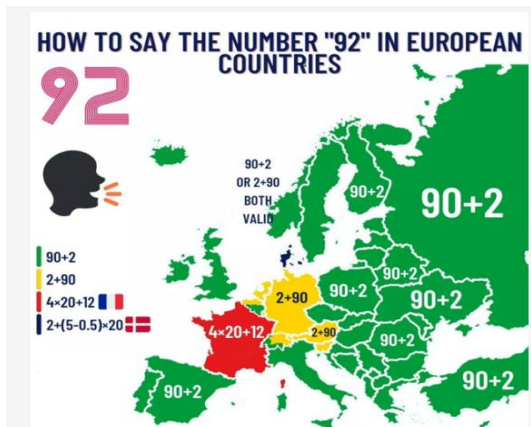
Flags



Numbers and Measurements

Numbers are different in Europe. When counting on a hand, start with the thumb; I've seen Americans order two beers with two fingers to then receive three! Unlike in the West, 7/10 is October 7 and not July 10. Some calendars may start on Monday instead of Sunday.

Elevator floor numbers start with the ground floor as zero, or its equivalent *B* in ES, *E* in AT/DE, *RC* in FR, or *PR* in HR. The letter *Z* (often written with a line through it like the European 7) while pronounced as “zee” in the U.S. is usually pronounced “zed” or “zeta” elsewhere. The handwritten 1, 4, and 7 can be very different:



U.S. and international nomenclature for large numbers may differ; a billion may be a milliard and a trillion a billion respectively. Notation may differ with the usage of commas instead of decimal points and vice versa (or blanks) so that 1,234.56 in the U.S. is 1.234,56 or 1 234,56 internationally. U.S. measurement (as opposed to no longer used Imperial measurement) differs in metric system. Here are common conversions with a kilometer to mile ratio of 8 to 5 or approximates:



1 kilometer = .62 miles
 1 meter = 39.4 inches
 1 hectare = 2.47 acres
 1 square mile = 640 acres
 1 kilogram = 2.2 pounds
 1 liter = 1.05 quarts
 1 gallon = 4 quarts

Note that 68 degrees Fahrenheit is 20 degrees Celsius; add or subtract 9 Fahrenheit degrees for each 5 degrees Celsius. Thus 30 degrees Celsius is 86 degrees Fahrenheit or 10 Celsius is 50 Fahrenheit.

Clothing and shoe sizes differ in Europe:

S-M-L	USA	UK / AU / NZ	Italy	France	Germany	Japan	Russia
S	2-4	6-8	38-40	34-36	32-34	7-9	40-42
M	6-8	10-12	42-44	38-40	36-38	11-13	44-46
L	10-12	14-16	46-48	42-44	40-42	15-17	48-50
XL/1X	14	18	50	46	44	19	52
1X/2X	16	20	52	48	46	21	54
2X	18	22	54	50	48	23	56
3X	20-22	24-26	56-58	52-54	50-52	25-27	24-26
4X	24	28	60	56	54	29	28

Shoe Sizes								
Women					Men			
US	UK	Europe	US	UK	Europe	US	UK	Europe
4	2	35	6	5.5	40	10	9.5	44
4.5	2.5	35	6.5	6	40	10.5	10	44
5	3	36	7	6.5	41	11	10.5	45
5.5	3.5	36	7.5	7	41	11.5	11	45
6	4	37	8	7.5	42	12	11.5	46
6.5	4.5	37	8.5	8	42	12.5	12	46
7	5	38	9	8.5	43	13	12.5	47
7.5	5.5	38	9.5	9	43	13.5	13	47
8	6	39	10	9.5	44	14	13.5	47
8.5	6.5	39	10.5	10	44	14.5	14	47
9	7	40	11	10.5	45	15	14.5	47
9.5	7.5	40	11.5	11	45	15.5	15	48
10	8	41	12	11.5	46			
10.5	8.5	41						
11	9	42						
11.5	9.5	42						
12	10	43						

Getting Ready

Reservations for travel to Europe will likely be by air—in Europe more effectively by train and/or car. Contrary to many, including Peter Greenberg, air travel is not the safest mode using an incorrect mileage measure. Consider standing still which would produce a nearly infinite fatality rate when using a mileage measure or that the space shuttle with a one-in-ten trips fatality rate is safer than motor cycles! Instead, the proper approach is to measure by time which is the typical industry standard with coach, rail, then air being the safest means (see my paper).

Using travel booking services often produce substantial savings over those of the respective air carrier sites even if frequent flyer points are considered and should be an even lesser consideration with regard to credit card, hotel, and other points programs. Yes, book two months in advance preferably during midweek. Inside Europe rail travel is often faster, cheaper, and more convenient than air travel. Considering travel to an airport and security checks the effective distance between air and rail in terms of equal time is about some 600 kilometers or 375 miles. I use CheapTickets.com which charges no fees for flights or hotels and is a well organized easy to use site. Bookings that are prepaid are in \$, otherwise are in € or other local currency and in either case may be or not fully refundable. It recently was acquired by Expedia and while nominally unchanged “chat” help may not work. Instead I use their excellent U.S. telephone service and not easily found phone numbers for date changes to avoid cancellation fees especially if non refundable: 844 803 5582, 800 445 9444, and/or 844 709 7928. I do not buy travel insurance given its cost is about 1/5th of the price. From DUB and Canadian airports (starting with the letter Y excluding Yuma) with U.S. customs clearance is before boarding is a time saver. Cities with multiple airports can be searched: QLA does Los Angeles with notable ones LON for LGW/LHR, PAR for CDG/ORY, and ROM for MCO/CIA. Berlin’s Tegel TXL is now closed.



Packing

Everyone (including me) over packs; you may buy clothing and gifts. Do consider rinsing reusable shirts and pants. Do set aside separately: a copy of your passport with 6+ more months and some empty pages, a visa if needed, extra money, pens, glasses, a spare key, hardcopy prescriptions—not electronic ones, insurance, lighters, a comb, pain killers only available at pharmacies (or *Apot[h/e]ek*—some homeopathic) generally closed on Sundays in BE/DE, and maybe contraceptives. Carry on luggage is preferred noting that GB airports have smaller (about ¾) size allowances with small liquids in a clear baggy or shower cap avoiding fees and lost time while gaining convenience. Use comfortable broken-in shoes. I avoid shoe laces and touching your feet to underwear (tip per YouTube’s Walter who says clip your nails before leaving atho’ I disagree with his not eating in German trains). No lace shoes are easier to adjust given feet will swell and shrink, and are more hygienic. Rick Steves has great guides. Bring or accumulate plastic or paper cups avoiding the hotel provided glass containers—while sparkling clean, many have observed that they may not be hygienic. Recharging may be available from a USB port on the TV. Electronic plugs differ in GB vs. US and the continent.

Money

While traveling one may save on auto expenses (if not later rented) and heating or cooling expenses at home. Get cash with a no fee debit card rebating fees without currency conversion exchange rate fees (try brokerages or credit unions) or take large amounts; one may need hand sanitizer. ATMs are: ES *caixa*, FI *Otto*, AT/DE/(NL) *Geldautoma(a)t*, FR *distributeur d'argent*, GB cash dispensers, or SE *Bankomat/-o* IT. Get no annual fee credit cards for purchases without a currency conversion fee (usually 3 percent or more) with 3, 4, or 5 percent cash back like *CapitalOne* which is worth more than mileage points of about 1.5 percent—it's immediate without travel restrictions. In euro and non euro nations, one can usually charge almost everything by credit card. Here's a stylized currency cross rate table with 3 letter ISO codes:

	USD	CAD	GBP	CHF	EUR
U.S.	-	.909	.500	1.250	.667
Canada	1.100	-	.550	1.375	.733
U.K.	2.000	1.818	-	2.500	1.333
Switz.	.800	.727	.400	-	.533
Euro	1.500	1.364	.750	1.875	-

The vertical labels are 1 unit denominators buying the horizontal labels as numerators. The third letter refers to the currency noting that they do sometimes change as in the MXP Mexican peso became the MXN *nuevo* (new) peso at a ratio of 1 per 100. Likewise, the TRL Turkish lira became the TRY *yeni* (new) lira at a ratio of 1 per 1,000,000:



Thus AUD, CAD, HKD, and USD are Australian, Canadian, Hong Kong, and U.S. dollars with a dollar sign \$ (the U.S. version may be doubled stroked per the U over the S per an apocryphal story), GBP for UK pound (£), CHF for Swiss franc (SFr), Czech, Danish, Norwegian, & Swedish kroner (CZK/DKK/NOK/SEK), and EUR for the euro (€). Here they are per the euro and € per their currency as of 13/11/24:

AUD	CAD	HKD	GBP	CHF	CZK	DKK	NOK	SEK	USD
1.614	1.469	8.197	.8336	.9306	25.34	7.459	11.63	11.61	1.053
.6196	.6806	.1220	1.200	1.075	.0395	.1341	.0860	.0862	.9495



While Bosnia is not currently a member of the European monetary union they do use the euro. The following are exemplars of the euro noting that the banknote designs are stylized representations. Banknote size shrinks per the denomination to 5 € with serial numbers starting with a different letter for each country. The 24 different national coins have a different reverse—often with commemorative versions. The smallest coins are not issued in FI/NL. The 1 euro and 50 cent coins are similar in size but can be distinguished by the *reeding* or ribs on the edge with the 1 euro coin being fine and intermittent and the 50 cent coin reeding being continuous and bolder:



The transfer of money may require a SWIFT (Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunication [vs. Society for Wire Intercommunication Funds Transfer]) or BIC (Bank Identifier Code) code in addition to an IBAN (International Bank Account Number which is used outside Canada and the U.S.).

Where to Stay

Besides prearranged or spontaneous stays, arrangements can vary. Hostels while inexpensive can be problematic with seniors allowed in some countries and at the other end are those private residence rentals with hotels being the likely choice in between. While many have star ratings, these are only regulated in GB and FR with a one star having no elevator. There will be a posting of high and low pricings with both being often irrelevant. Here's a more detailed set of specifications in FR:

canaldumidi.bike									
Extérieurs de l'hôtel									
1	Existence d'un accès en bon état	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
2	Les jardins et modules doivent être propres et en bon état	2 au NA	1	2/NA	2/NA	2/NA	2/NA	2/NA	Les critères passés en NA si pas d'extérieur
3	Facades propres et en bon état	2 au D	1	O	O	X	X	X	
4	Pavés ou joints (au maximum 200 m ²)	O	1	O	O	O	O	O	
5	Terrasse propre de l'habitat (20 m ² minimum)	O	1	O	O	O	O	O	
6	Les extérieurs sont éclairés	2 au D au NA	1	O/NA	O/NA	O/NA	2/NA	2/NA	Les critères passés en NA si pas d'extérieur
7	Mise en valeur des bâtiments par végétation ou fleurissement	2 au D A/D	1	O	O	O	O	X	A/D : A justifier obligatoirement lors de l'inspection
Hall de réception et salon									
Hall de réception									
8	Entrée de l'hôtel indépendante et gratuite	2 au D	1	O	X	X	X	X	
9	La tenue du personnel d'accueil doit être propre	X	2	X	X	X	X	X	
10	Existence d'un système de chauffage en état de fonctionnement dans le hall	X	2	X	X	X	X	X	Seul Doublet, Matignon, Marais, Miquel et Quatre. A vérifier par tout moyen.
11	Existence d'un système de climatisation en état de fonctionnement dans le hall	O	2	O	O	O	O	O	Seul Saint Pierre et Miquel - haute montagne (+1000 mètres d'altitude) et établissements saennois pour en être exclus. A vérifier par tout moyen.
Surface minimale de l'ensemble constitué par l'espace bar, la salle de petit									
				moins 20 m ²	moins 30 m ²	moins 50 m ²	moins 70 m ²	moins 90 m ²	
12	L'ensemble constitué par l'espace bar, la salle de petit déjeuner, le salon et le hall d'accueil doit être propre et en bon état	X	2	X	X	X	X	X	Intérieur de salles et les murs, de parois latérales, de papier peint adhésif, de carrelage cassé, de moquette défectueuse, de tables de moquette, de mobilier cassé.
13	Surface minimale respectée	X	2	X	X	X	X	X	Le total compte moins de 10 chambres les surfaces cumulées pourant être minimales de 25% au maximum.
14	Surface totale respectée	O	1	O	O	O	O	O	Sanctification de 1 point par tranche de 10% de surface supplémentaire, plafonnée à 5 points.
Espace salon, bar, hall d'accueil									
15	Existence d'un espace salon, bar, hall d'accueil	2 au D A/D	1	O	O	X	X	X	Intérieur salon, bar, hall d'accueil est compris au minimum de quatre espaces et d'une table basse. A/D : A justifier obligatoirement lors de l'inspection.
16	Existence d'un système de climatisation en état de fonctionnement dans les salons	O	2	O	O	O	O	O	Seul Saint Pierre et Miquel - haute montagne (+1000 mètres d'altitude) et établissements saennois pour en être exclus. A vérifier par tout moyen.
Réception et Accueil									
17	Existence d'un coffre fort en état de fonctionnement à disposition du client dans l'hôtel	O au NA	2	O	O	O	NA	NA	Critères NA en catégories 4* et 5* car le coffre fort doit se situer dans la chambre.
18	Mise à disposition d'un téléphone en libre accès pour les appels d'urgence	X A/D	2	X	X	X	X	X	Les critères sont validés si toutes les chambres sont équipées d'un téléphone pour les appels d'urgence. A/D : A justifier obligatoirement lors de l'inspection.
19	Mise à disposition de chaises à l'extérieur propres et en bon état	2 au D	1	O	O	O	O	X	L'équipement minimum.
Salle de petit déjeuner									
20	Existence d'un système de climatisation en état de fonctionnement dans la salle de petit déjeuner	O	2	O	O	O	O	O	Seul Saint Pierre et Miquel et haute montagne (+1000 mètres d'altitude). A vérifier par tout moyen.
Restaurant									
21	Existence d'un système de climatisation en état de fonctionnement dans le restaurant	2 au D au NA	1	O/NA	O/NA	O/NA	O/NA	2/NA	Seul Saint Pierre et Miquel et haute montagne (+1000 mètres d'altitude). A vérifier par tout moyen. Passés en NA en l'absence de restaurant.
22	Les horaires des services sont affichés	2 au NA A/D	1	2/NA	2/NA	2/NA	2/NA	2/NA	A/D : A justifier obligatoirement lors de l'inspection. Passés en NA en l'absence de restaurant.
Bar/Salon									
23	Distributeur automatique payant avec boissons froides ou boissons chaudes	2 au D	1	X	X	O	O	O	
Sanitaires communs									
24	Sanitaires communs propres - Service	X	2	X	X	X	X	X	Sanitaires propres, propres pour les catégories 4* et 5*.
Équipement électrique des locaux communs									
25	Équipement électrique des locaux communs	X	2	X	X	X	X	X	

On checking in, I like to get a separate business (visiting) card with the hotel address and write my room number on it. Likewise, check to see if the WiFi (sometimes pronounced “veefee”) and the password (if needed) work. In some hotels the card key is needed to operate the elevator if going up. Minimize touching surfaces that the public touches. Upon entering the room, there may be a slot for the card key to turn on the electricity. This can be annoying if on going out and you want to continue charging your devices and/or keep the air conditioning on. A work around with a similar size card (a parking or work card and not a credit card) may do the trick. If breakfast is not included, I decide whether to accept it when I see it: AT/DE *Frühstück*, CZ *snídaně*, DK *frokost*, ES *desayuno*, FR *petit déjeuner*, IT *prima colazione*, or NL *ontbijt*. The hotel will likely print your trip reservation as a PDF (not a photo) if sent to the hotel email address. I do not use the often provided safety deposit safety lock box with a keyboard...I’ve never had a need.

Telephone

Public telephones have virtually disappeared throughout Europe save GB, IT, and PT. A personal phone (cellphone or *Handy* in DE, *móvil* in ES, *porti* in FR, *mobile* in GB, *cellulare* in IT, or *GSM* in NL) have predominated noting that a foreign based phone may require upgrading. Unlike the U.S. where often one dials 011 to start an international call, usually 00 (or 9 in SE) starts an int’l call. In DK the phone pad is “up side down” or like that of a calculator! The two and three digit codes don’t overlap. Here are the European country codes with some requiring an additional zero before a city code:



Wifi (“veefee”) is available (often intermittently) on some better trains. The trains in ES and FR may require ticket reservation number entry.

Driving

Your driver license is generally valid. Yes the British drive on the left and their automobiles reflect that. In Europe, the E and number designation indicates a trans-European highway as opposed to those starting with an A (for *autoroute*, *Autobahn*, *autostrada*, *autopista*) or those starting with an N for a national highway. The E highway numbering system is similar to the U.S. Interstate system, save that lower numbers are in the north and the three digit loops (even) and spurs (odd) vary by the last or third digit versus the first digit as in US.

Language

Alphabets differ among languages. Notable is that the modern usage of computers and English in the travel industry has resurrected the original characters. Some with different keyboards, letters may be (or were) alphabetized separately in the native language including: Æ, Å, CH, IJ or Ÿ, LL, Ø, and RR. Often diacritical marks may be omitted for uppercase (majuscule) characters, namely: Á, È, É, Î, Ï, and Ô; this is less so for: ã, Ç, Ö, and Ñ. The following letters are equivalent:

Å	AA	ß	SS
Ä, Æ	AE	Ü	UE
Ö, Ø	OE	ÿ=IJ	IJ

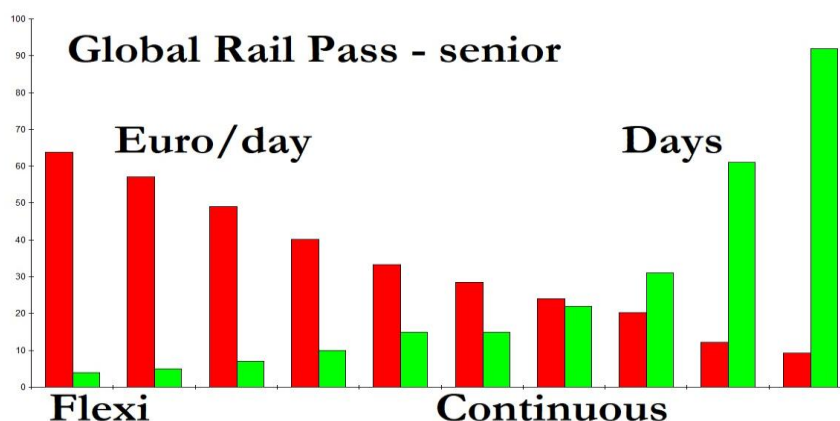
City names may differ: AT Vienna/-ne/Wien/Bècs, BE Antwerp-en/-nvers, Brussels/-uxelles/-rüssel, Liège/Lütich/Luik, CZ Prag-ue/-aha, DK Copenhagen/København/Köpenhamn, FI Turku/Åbo, FR Bordeaux /-deus, Lille/Rÿsel, Lyon/Lione, Marseille/-ellas, Nice/-izza, Paris/-rijs/-rigi, DE Aachen/Aken/Aix_la_Chapelle, Berlin/-ijn/-lem, Cologne/-onia/Köln/Keulen, Hamburg-o, Hanover/-nnover, Munich/-ique/-ünchen, Nuremberg/Nürnberg, Stuttgart/-rdo, GB London/-dres, GR Athens/ Αθήνα, IE Dublin/Baile Átha Cliath, IT Florence/-nz/Firenze, Genoa/-ova/Gêne, Milan-o/Mailand, Naples/-poli/Neapol, Padua/Padova, Rome/-ma/-me, Turin-o, Venice/-nezia/-nedig, NL The Hague/Den Haag/La Haye, PL Danzig/Gdańsk, Warsaw/-rzsawa/-rschau/Varsovie, PT Lisbon/-bõa/-ssabon, RO Bucharest-i, RS Belgrade/-eograd, SK Bratislava/Preßburg, SL Ljubjana/Laibach, ES Valencia/-ce, CH Basel-ia/Bâle, Geneva/-ebra/-nève/Genf, and Zurich/-igo/-ürich. See also: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Names_of_European_cities_in_different_languages: A . The Greek alphabet:

Α Β Γ Δ Ε Ζ Η Θ Ι Κ Λ Μ Ν Ξ Ο Π Ρ Σ Τ Υ Φ Χ Ψ Ω
α β γ δ ε ζ η θ ι κ λ μ ν ξ ο π ρ σ τ υ φ χ ψ ω
equivalent: Α Β Γ Δ Ε Ζ Ε Θ Ι Κ Λ Μ Ν Χ Ο Π Ρ Σ Τ Υ Φ Χ Ψ Ο

See my *YouTube* videos “Euro Foreign Languages [language]” listed later on my ChuckJPC channel with preferred city dialects as is *Omaha* in the US. Int’l mail from DE costs about 1€ and about twice as much elsewhere with DK even higher. Stamps are available tobacco shops in ES/IT/FR and bookstores in CH/GB/NL. Mail to *USA* or in CZ *SSA*, ES *EE.UU.*, FR *États-Unis*, GR *ΗΠΑ*, IT *Stati Uniti*, or PT *EUA*. Mail to yourself as a confirmation, souvenir, and collect the stamp!

Rail Travel

There are various country, regional, and Global rail passes for non Europeans as Eurail (better than RailEurope) and for Europeans as InterRail. The good but not great Eurail map shows reservation fees. The German pass includes travel to Brussels, Salzburg, and Italy. The 33 country Global pass is discounted 10% for seniors, children, and 25% off for those under 28. It can be flexi where you choose the day or continuous; it sometimes goes on sale. 1st class with 3 instead of 4 seats across and perhaps meal service, costs 27 percent more. There is a paper pass requiring validation now or later, or electronic *RailPlanner* app with pass code on a ios-16+ device. It functions off line save for new reservations. Here’s a cost per day analysis of the various possibilities:

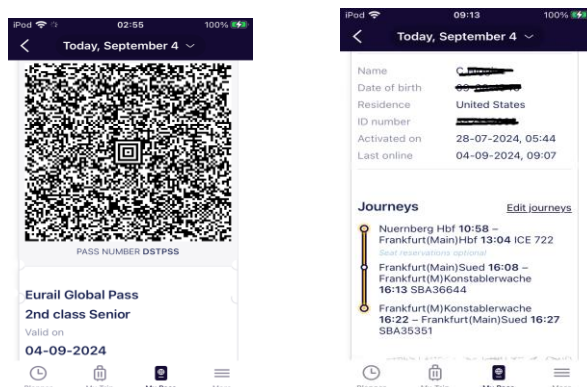


The required sometimes refundable 150 (IT), 120, 90 (ES), or 60- day advance 2€ reservation can be made at <https://www.eurail.com/en> with storage retrieval should it be needed or can be made on the *RailPlanner* app. Excluded trains are *Ouigo* in ES, *Italo* in IT, and *Ouigo/(IT)FR* in ES/FR. Some dozen ships are valid on the pass. Northern European trains are generally on a 2, 1, or 1/2 hour basis without reservation save SE whereas southern European trains tend towards a peak demand basis with reservations. Limited ES/FR int’l service is distance priced; as a last resort see www.sncf.fr www.renfe.es. In DK, FR, IT, & PT *Eurocity* or *InterCity*[-é] national trains may need reservations. PT rail pass reservations are only made inside the country; see www.cp.pt. Direct trains are often cheaper. Schedules updated for June and December are available at www.bahn.de; those marked R need reservations. Do see similar cheaper www.oebb.at for optional reservations in CZ, DK, & IT. Reservation costs in €: AVE 10-24, EIP 10, EST 15-35, IT-FR/A 13 & FB 10, PT-AP/IC 5, SE 7-17, & TGV 9-35.

In GB and IE passenger trains do not have train numbers; they identify them by departure time and station. On the continent, train numbers vary greatly with only international train numbers displayed in NL. Lower train numbers are often associated with major longer distant trains with the notable exceptions of 6000s for TGVs and 9000s for 3 class EUR/ESTs *EuroStar* née *Thalys* (to/from London: +20 minutes). No reservation regional trains often have train numbers up to six or eight digits. In NL you will need your encoded pass or ticket to enter and leave stations. First class coaches often have a yellow stripe designation. Multiple sections in FR TGVs *rame* 00s & 10s, DE ICEs *Abteilung* 10s & 20s are not mutually accessible thus note the coach locators in DE/FR or in IT above each coach. In ES reservations 1st = *P*(referente), 2nd = *T*(urista); in PT 1st = *C*(onfort), 2nd = *T*(uristic). Departure boards using a 24-hour clock are usually yellow, arrival boards white; in BE there’re two sets of boards workdays and weekend/ holidays.

Slavic countries may refer to platforms *peron* instead of tracks (equaling 2 times less 2). Cancel(l)ed: DE *fällt aus*, DK *aflyft*, ES *anulado*, FR *suprimé*, IT *sorpreso*. Strike: DE *Streik*, FR *grève*, ES *huelga*, IT *scopero*. There are quiet and family cars. For rail meal service, found often between 1st and 2nd class except CH and CZ, my preferences are for no reservation sit-downs: AT, CZ (maybe 40% off in Czechia), CH, & DE; stand-up bistros ES, FR, IT, & PT and some DK service. Pay in train's home currency with no conversion—may get rewards. Use toilet before leaving train given pay versions elsewhere.

The two versions of the *RailPlanner* on ios-16+ app are handy but sometimes they can go down or become unavailable until adding back the pass number then reinitialize. As a backup, when I show my ticket I also take a screen shot picture of it noting that it is not train specific:



The rail pass is generally accepted on commuter trains: AT/DE *S-Bahn*, DK *S-toget*, and ES commuter *Cercanias* or *Rodiales* in Catalunya (see renfe.es). The pass is usually not valid in subways or metros/tubes/*U-bahns* but is accepted on CH busses. Below do find examples of Madrid metro (pass not valid), ES commuter *Cercania* or *Rodiales* (pass is valid--use code on train ticket), Lisbon metro (not valid), Paris RER/Metro (pass not valid) and Rome (pass not valid). Most tickets are reloadable (saving cost and time if unavailable) and should be kept until the end of journey—they may be needed to exit.



Primary Rail Stations *capital city* *Terminal station, otherwise through

ISO Airport	City/native name	Primary	Secondary
AT VIE	Vienna/Wien Hbf		Meidling
BE ANR	Antwerp/-en	Centraal	Berchem
BRU	Brussels/Bruxelles	Midi/Zuid	Central/-raal
CZ PRG	Prague/Praha	hl.n.	Holesovice
DE BER	Berlin	Hbf	Spandau
CGN	Cologne/Köln	Hbf	Messe Deutz
FRA	Frankfurt-Main	Hbf*	Flughafen airport
HAM	Hamburg	Hbf	Altona/Harburg
MUC	Munich/München	Hbf*	Ost
STR	Stuttgart	Hbf*	Bad Cannstatt
DK CPH	Copenhagen/København	H	Kastrup airport
ES BCN	Barcelona	Sants	Passeig de Gracia
MAD	Madrid	Pta. Atocha*	Chamartín/Príncipe Pio*
AGP	Malaga/Málaga	María Z(ambrano)*	Centro
SLM	Salamanca	Salamanca	La Alamedilla*
VGO	Vigo	Guixar*	Urzaiz*
ZAZ	Zaragosa	Delicias	Goya
FR AVN	Avignon	TGV	Centre
LIL	Lille/Rijsel	Europe	Flandres*
LYS	Lyon	Part Dieu	Perrache
MRS	Marseille	St. Charles*	Blancarde
MPL	Montpellier	St. Roch	Sud de France
NCE	Nice	Ville	Riquier
FNI	Nîmes/Nîmes	Nîmes	Pont du Gard
CDG/ORY	Paris	Est/Nord/Lyon/Montparnasse*	St.Lazare/Austerlitz*
GB GLA	Glasgow	Central	High Street ▼LHR/LGW
London	Euston/St. Pancras/Paddington/Waterloo/Kings Cross/City*		
IE DUB	Dublin/Baile Átha Cliath	Huston*	Connolly
IT FLR	Florence/Firenze	Sta. Maria Novella*	Rifredi
GOA	Genoa/Genova	Piazza Principe	Pontedecimo
MLX	Milan/Milano	Centrale*	Lambrate/Porta Garibaldi
FCO/CIA	Rome/Roma	Termini*	Tiburtina
TRN	Turin/Torino	Porta Nuova	Porta Susa
VCE	Venice/Venezia	Mestre	Sta. Lucia*
VRN	Verona	Porta Nuova	Porta Vescovo
NL AMS	Amsterdam	Centraal	Schiphol airport
PT CBP	Coimbra	Coimbra-B	Coimbra-A*
LIS	Lisbon/Lisbõa	Oriente	Sta. Apolonia*
OPO	Porto	Campanha	Saõ Bento*
SK BTS	Bratislava	hl.st.	Petrzalka*

National differences with currency and telephone country code:

ISO	\$/time	Tele.	Differences
AT	€ 43		Business Executive class pass is not valid even if 1 st
BE	€ 32		Use cheaper ICEs; use Lille TGVs versus costly ESTs
			Two sets of timetables—weekday/weekend & holiday
CH	SFr	41	Reservations not needed except for TGVs
CZ	CzK	420	40% off dining in CZ. <i>SuperCity</i> /ICs need reservation
DE	€ 49		EXP/ <i>Sprinter</i> pass not valid. Bottle deposit .25 €
DK	DkK	45	Free coffee in first class. Bottle deposit 1.50 DkK
ES	€ 34		Bags are screened, only need reservation, 1 st =P 2 nd =T
			<i>Ouigo</i> not valid. For <i>Cercania/Rodalies</i> see renfe.es

FR	€ 33	Limited TGVs need the pass and seat reservation <i>IT-FR/Ouigo</i> trains are not valid; IT/FR reopened
GB	£ -hr	44 Free reservations except ESTs—cheaper in advance
IT	€ 39	<i>Italo</i> trains not valid; 10 € supplement from AT/DE
NL	€ 31	Code required to enter and to leave train stations
PT	€ -hr	351 Pass reservations made in PT—see cp.pt, 1 st =C 2 nd =T Faster AP/ <i>Alfa</i> listed as IC takes same reservation
Country Rail Dining—Restaurant <i>bistro</i> , Preferred Food and Drink		
<i>ISO</i>	<i>Dine</i>	<i>Item</i> <i>Spirit/Drink</i>
AT	R	Mozart <i>Kugeln</i> chocolate Marillen schnapps
BE	R/b	Guylain chocolate Duvel beer
CH	R Spätzli	Kirschwasser schnapps
CZ	R	Schnitzel (on Czech trains) Budvar beer
DE	R	Currywurst Williams/Obstler schnapps
DK	<i>b?</i>	polser (hotdog) akavit schnapps
ES	<i>b</i>	tortilla (omelet) orujo
FR	<i>b</i>	crêpe l'eau de vie poire
GB	R/b	fish & chips India pale ale
IE	R/b	stew poitin
IT	<i>b</i>	arrancini (rice ball) caffè' corretto
NL	R/b?	bami croquette jonge jenever
PT	<i>b</i>	bifana sandwich Licor de Beirão

Smoking

Northern Europe is stricter about smoking with SE requiring open sky above. In DE there are designated *Raucherbereiche* inside a yellow line, in NL there're *Rokzones*, and ashtrays in ES and IT plus elsewhere. In DE rules differ by federal states (*Länder*). Menthol cigarettes are not available in the EU; there is a work around in FR mild menthol cigars *Signature* and in DE do-it-yourself kits *Elixyr*. In hotels if you can't lean out of a window with the curtain behind you, instead in a closed bathroom noting the rare prohibition there, with maybe with a fan on, run a cold shower, rinse and wrap the butt in tissue, then flush down the toilet.

Customs

Customers greet first with no tipping on the continent. You ask for the bill. Be aware of loud talking; it may attract inappropriate attention. Dress and act as a local. Try eating with fork in left hand and knife in the right. In Paris prices rise as one sits down and greater outside. Building numbers often are in multiples of tens per block. IT may require paying first at walk-ups and do take the receipt. Also in IT red numbers are commercial and black residential and may duplicate.

Just as native New Yorkers likely have not visited the Empire State Building or the Statue of Liberty, consider in Europe: skiing in AT, the Atonium in BE, the Matterhorn in CH, České Budějovice in CZ, a Ratskeller in DE, the Little Mermaid in DK, the uniquely deadly bullfights in ES, in FR the Eiffel tower in Paris (try Montmartre instead with the Eiffel Tower included in the view), Big Ben in GB, Acropolis in GR, Blarney Stone in IE, Sistine chapel (they don't allow pictures) in IT, canal rides in Amsterdam NL, and Sintra in PT. What with some hundred visits I haven't done any of these...I guess I'm a true European. And...do let the good memories cancel the unpleasant ones.

References

Higgins, Charles “Travel Safety: Time vs. Distance” *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science* Volume 5, Number 7 [July, 2015], pp. 132-133.

YouTube/ChuckJPC videos “Euro Foreign Languages”:

Western European Language Summaries

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PqUBfx5P_hw

Part 1 with Dutch, preferred dialect: *Alkmaar*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v5rc3g9Gdbo>

Part 2 with German, preferred dialect: *Hannover*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6zfc4s288N0>

Part 3 with French, preferred dialect: *Tours*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YXwyxczo-xY>

Part 4 with Spanish, preferred dialect: *León*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5RcOxloYqZ8&t=5s>

Part 5 with Italian: *Firenze* & Portuguese: *Guimarães*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4QkJ4NyEm00>

Many YouTube/ChuckJPC videos as “Euro Travel Secrets”

“New TGV High Speed French Trains”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sGheNkHX2W4>

“Me on Portuguese TV RTP Sud Express”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IeMRWFmJM78>

See/hear the revised video version of this paper:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O7FRIVe_Ui8