

# WHY TO TRAVEL BY TRAIN IN THE AGE OF FLYING?



Train is the oldest means of public transport in the modern society today. It is at least one hundred years older than airplane and car. Still, travelers have a number of modern options how to make their train experience easier and exciting - apps and social media are only part of it.

According to Margaret King, a regular train passenger going from Philadelphia to Boston (with a New York stop), it took her less time to travel by train than taking a plane. There was no need to pay extra for her luggage, she was able to work with ease while aboard the train, and did not encounter any security hassles.

With some help from your smartphone apps, you can actually plan and make a booking for your travel via high-speed trains. Now look at the ways that make travelling by train in this age a smart choice to make.

## **The Reliable Smartphone Apps**

Any national railway has an app that will help you find schedules complete with departure and arrival dates as well as book your train seats. If you are in Europe, you can get Rail Europe app for free or you can download the apps for the particular country you are visiting (some with a minimal fee). Though it has still a long way to go from being perfect (because purchased tickets must be sent through email as an e-ticket), Rail Europe gives information for thirty five European countries regarding the station, timetables, and more. Amtrak also uses the same free app that includes a section for their loyalty program in which their regular travelers can earn points that can accumulate to give the loyal customers some free trips.

## **Modern Rail Travel with the Help of the Web and Social Media**

Twitter is a favorite social media among travelers because of its quick response on queries regarding rail information especially service interruptions on rail lines. Transitpal is a service that particularly caters to the passengers of San Francisco Bay Area's Caltrain. It screens tweets to determine delays, changes in schedule, and policy activity. Google alum and developer of the app Frederick Vallaey's said that the app could be easily applied to rail lines in nearby or other cities as well.

Hipmunk, which became the first online travel specialist in fall 2011 to amalgamate Amtrak searches, uses the web to improve the train travel. It now displays schedules and fares for the train as well as air travel. The purpose is to give the passengers flexibility and pricing power for their destinations of choice. It is unfortunate that the fares for Amtrak are not part of the app.

## **Super Fast Rail and Trains**

Putting an investment on infrastructure for high-speed rail has become the main concern from local to federal level as more clients are willing to pay a little more for faster means of transport. Some countries that joined the high-speed rail campaign are China, Turkey, Russia, and Italy. China opened its Beijing to Shanghai express in June 2011. NTV (Italy's first private bullet train operator)

has set spring 2012 as the service commencement date of its Italo swift trains. There is also a 20% wager by the French National Rail Service, SNCF.

Russia is also presently working on its line from Moscow to Sochi in preparation for 2014 Winter Olympics. It will be an addition to its high-speed trains from Moscow to St. Petersburg and St. Petersburg to Finland's Helsinki.

### **The Delightful Train Amenities**

In an attempt to be at par with (if not outdo) bus services and airlines, trains start to offer distinctive dining options and Wi-Fi. As a proof, Amtrak already launched free Wi-Fi in fall 2011.

Passengers on board VIA Rail Train that travels from Toronto to Vancouver can look forward to a one of a kind dining experience as VIA signed up eight chefs to create seventy two fine gourmet dishes as part of their menu.

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