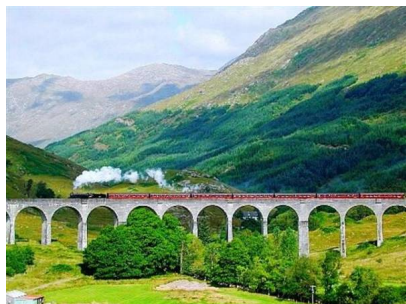


EUROPE BY TRAIN - RAILPASSES AND PLANNING PAY OFF



Gone are the times when low-cost airlines offered truly cheap tickets. Many European travelers are learning to appreciate the value of local network of railways.

Europe, the 'Old Continent', remains the tourists' favorite. The wonders of local historical and artistic heritage continue to baffle visitors and European cities attract thousands for even a short weekend break.

Very often, travelers who come from afar wish to make the most of their time and decide to visit more than a couple of counties and search for the most cost-effective transfer options. Several years ago, flying with a low-budget airline seemed a perfect choice; however, times have changed. Flying is no longer exactly cheap. **Tourists who are willing to sacrifice a bit more of their time on transfers will value traveling by train.**

While for decades, traveling by train was considered a typical students' option, today, it seems a rather savvy way of exploring European countries. It is relatively fast and comfortable, yet passengers need to realize that even trains may become expensive, especially when booked last minute.

Planning ahead is a definite advantage and choosing a route to follow is the right start.

Depending on the number of countries visitors plan to see, they may opt for a selection of passes. Global pass will allow one to travel around 21 countries. Regional passes are ideal for popular countries like Belgium, the Netherlands, and Germany, France and Italy.

The EurailDrive Pass is valid for eight weeks and combines train as well as a two-day rental for each 4 to 10 days of train travel. The website Eurail.com features very useful information as well as booking options. Passengers taking high-speed trains ought to know these are the most luxurious and thus most expensive option and often require an additional charge.

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