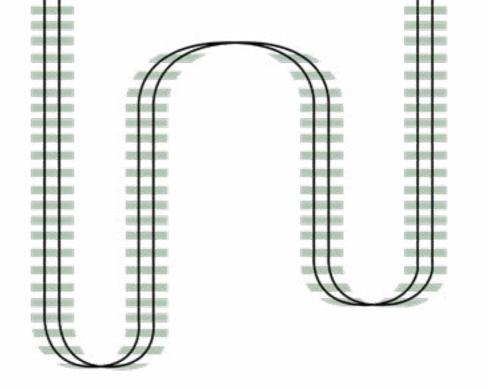
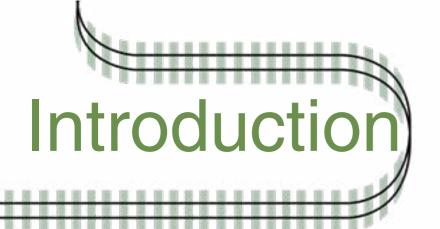


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Dear reader,

This guide is our attempt to make a small contribution to environmental protection. It is meant to show and explain how sustainable travel (for example by train, bus, or even carpooling) is a great and sometimes also cheap alternative to travelling by plane.

We, the authors of this booklet, are students of the University of Basel who are all very interested in and passionate about sustainability. We have carefully compiled the results of our research and tried to present the information as clearly as possible. We will continue to update and expand it in the future.

As inspiration for your next travels, this guide also shows you various destinations that can be reached by sustainable means. To help you with your decision-making process when planning these trips, we have indicated the approximate travel time and collated information about the average travel costs. Practical insight is added by travel testimonials of people who have already tried out holidays with sustainable travel.

and Motivation

In addition, at the beginning of the guide you will find information about and reviews of various booking portals that you can use to book your trip. These differ, among other things, in whether you want to make the booking yourself, as is the case with Trainline, for example, or whether you want to get a free quote for the journey, as Simple Train offers.

With the sum of these parts, we hope to show that such a journey can be an interesting adventure or a relaxing way of getting around, forgetting the airport stress, travelling with luggage limits and turbulences in the plane - not to mention the environmental benefits... Of course, travelling by train also involves extra effort in some areas. However, if you have the goal of a more sustainable world in mind, you will enjoy this guide to get a little more involved with the topic of sustainable travel and hopefully be inspired to work it into your next holidays.

On that note, we wish you a lot of fun with the guide! Always remember what Confucius said: "The journey is the destination."

Benjamin, Muguette, Julia, Chloé and the Travel Guide Team

Comments on the guide can be sent to ag-nachhaltigkeit@unibas.ch.

Sustainable Travel

At this point you may be asking yourself 'is it worth the hassle?'. Why bother when buying a plane ticket is often cheaper and quicker? Does it really make that much of a difference?

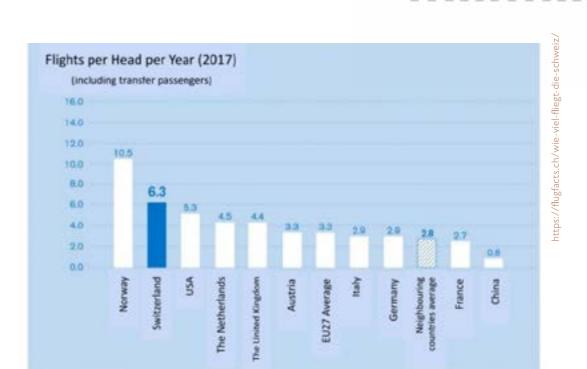
To that, we offer some comparisons:

A flight from Zurich to Amsterdam (615km) emits as much CO2 as the production of 90 hamburgers, the production of 23 T-shirts, II months of heating an average home, an 800km trip with the car, or 28 hours of running a cruise ship. If we zoom out, we see that plane travel is responsible for at least 18% of the climate-damaging gases emitted by Switzerland, of which only 2/3rds are CO2.

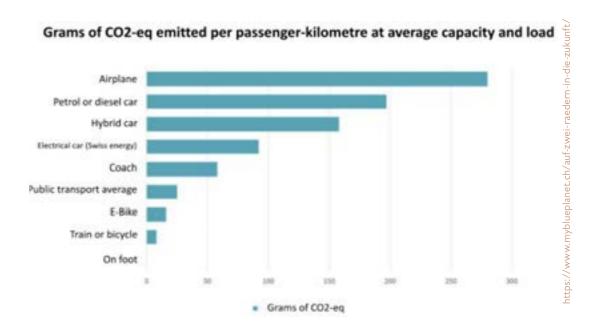
So concretely, what does this mean for the individual? The Federal Office for the Environment estimates that each person in Switzerland has a CO2 budget of 0.6 tonnes annually if the planetary boundaries (defined in the Paris Agreement) are not to be exceeded. This budget includes the entire lifestyle (travel, consumption, diet), and in Switzerland the current per capita CO2 emissions are at around 14 tonnes. Globally, the per capita emissions are at 6 tonnes.

But what does this have to do with flying? Consider this: one flight from Zurich to Lisbon and back is the equivalent of the entire annual CO2 budget for one person. When you consider that Switzerland also has the second highest rates of annual flights per capita, the gravity of the overdrawn budget becomes clearer. Especially when regarding Switzerland's neighbours in this graph (who have almost half the amount of Switzerland), the steep rate of annual flights per person seems unnecessary or at least inexplicable.

Why?



The huge impact of flying becomes even clearer in the following comparative graph:



Sustainable

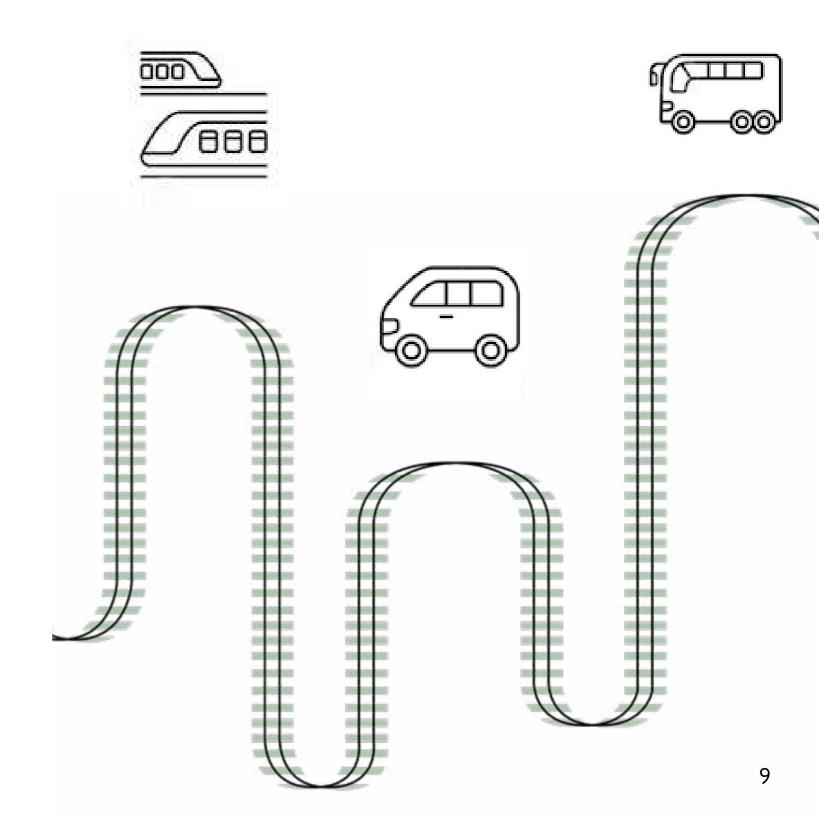
This travel guide thus recommends that you consider other modes of transport when travelling. The first and most popular that comes to mind is the train: in Europe, train lines are well connected and fast. As you can see in the above graph, trains are also quite sustainable.

That being said, a vehicle is more sustainable the higher its degree of utilisation. By this we mean that the more people being transported by the same vehicle as you, the more sustainable it is. Here, the train is not as successful: on average, it has an occupancy rate of 42%, whereas a bus is often fuller.

This means that the bus can in some cases (depending on the train line, bus company and distance travelled) be more sustainable as the amount of passengers balances out the emissions. Similarly, ridesharing services where a car driver would make the trip regardless of whether or not you would join (and they usually have an occupancy rate of 80%) becomes quite a sustainable option in this light.

Ultimately, all options are better than the plane, and so if you pick one you can ease some of your climate guilt regardless of your choice.

Modes of Transport



Booking and Comparison Portals

If you're unsure about how to go about organising this kind of trip - you're in luck! There are a host of booking and comparison portals that make it easy to compare and book more sustainable trips. On the following pages, we'll provide you with a small selection:

Trainline

Trainline is Europe's leading train and bus app with handy comparisons and a huge network (working in more than 45 countries!).

Pros: With their wealth of experience, trainline is your one-stop-shop for comparisons and great ticket deals. What's more: with a very easy to use app and downloadable tickets, this is an uncomplicated way to travel and allows you to enjoy the journey rather than stressing about when the ticket inspector comes.

Cons: Because Trainline is a very big company, they do not offer personal advice or consultation services. Furthermore, they do not make clear which discount cards are valid on which journeys.

Blablacar

Blablacar is a carpooling platform that allows people who are driving somewhere to advertise their trip to other travellers to give them a ride. This means you can get from A to B knowing your carbon footprint is incredibly minimal - your driver would have been doing the trip either way!

Pros: A great way to travel sustainably, as well as get to know local people.

Cons: Sometimes it can be difficult to find a trip at your desired time, from your area (you might have to travel to the outskirts of the city to meet the driver), and the trip is subject to your driver's ability to carry out the trip: it's not entirely uncommon for a driver to get sick or change their plans, leaving you without a ride. If you head into this experience with a relaxed mindset and not a fixed desire of where exactly in the city you want to get to when, this will be a great experience for you!

Flixbus

Flixbus has the largest bus network in Europe and is used by thousands of travellers. While buses are generally not as environmentally friendly as trains, FlixBus is aiming to make all their travel carbon neutral by 2030. Until then, they also offer you the option to offset your emissions.

Pros: Very cheap, quick, and uncomplicated travel to most European cities. They also have charging portals and internet onboard.

Cons: Not as environmentally friendly as trains or ridesharing. Also, with covid-19, some cities are no longer being visited as regularly as before - be sure to research your intended route well before leaving.

Interrail

Interrail is a well-known booking company that allows for relatively cheap and flexible travel all through Europe. The idea is that you have a pass that covers all train travel for a predetermined amount of days - this means you can hop on and off at your leisure!

Pros: You can let the whims of travel overcome you by making spontaneous decisions, and it often ends up only costing about 50.- per day - regardless of how far you go!

Cons: Many train lines (for example TGV in France or Renfe in Spain) require you to book your seats even if you have an interrail pass, which ends up being an additional cost. Make sure to check this before you travel so you don't end up having to sit in the luggage area. Additionally, you need to acquaint yourself with the app in advance to make sure you know how to validate your ticket, and you need to type in each train you're on and your intended destination before climbing aboard for it to be valid. What is more, they are quite slow in answering their emails so if you find yourself in a pickle on your trip you might be on your own.

Simpletrain

Simple Train is a young student start up from Zurich seeking to take the complication out of sustainable travel. Specialising in trains, they do all the research for you and provide you with a selection of the best (quickest, cheapest, most comfortable) connections for your trip.

Pros: Their mindset of making sustainable travel more accepted but also enjoyable for the passenger is inspirational, and this shines through in their joy for the work they do. If you are apprehensive about how to find the best routes or trains, you can rest assured that they will help you with their expertise and find the cheapest possible option. Comforting, too, is their personal service - it is not an automated system but in the hands of a passionate employee. What is more, you can ask for a quote from them without entering into any commitment - this way, you can get an idea of how much the trip would cost through them but still pick another option if you prefer.

Cons: Their methods can be a bit confusing if you're new to the world of train travel: all communication runs over their platform (with notifications being sent to your email address) and the trips they organise can often be a potpourri of different trainlines and booking systems - this means some tickets will arrive in your email inbox to be printed out, and others in your letterbox.

Comparison Portals: Rome2Rio and Omio

Rome2Rio and Omio bring together the above services (train, bus, ridesharing, as well as flights) in an easy-to-use format. You enter your desired destination and travel day and are provided with the length of trip and price of each option.

Pros: These can both be your one stop shop for travel: if you're not sure which mode of transport is quickest or cheapest, this is where you can find out and even book the tickets! They both collaborate with the local train lines, bus companies, and more international options like FlixBus and blablacar where applicable. You can even buy the tickets through their websites.

Cons: The only con we could think of is that these are both pretty big companies, so if you want to support smaller and more local travel companies this is not for you.

this is not for you.

Routerank

Routerank is a travel search engine that combines car, air and rail routes and calculates the CO2 emissions, price and travel time for each trip.

Pros: This is another one-stop-shop for all the information you could possibly want about your trip. They also have a link to compensate your CO2 emissions through myclimate.

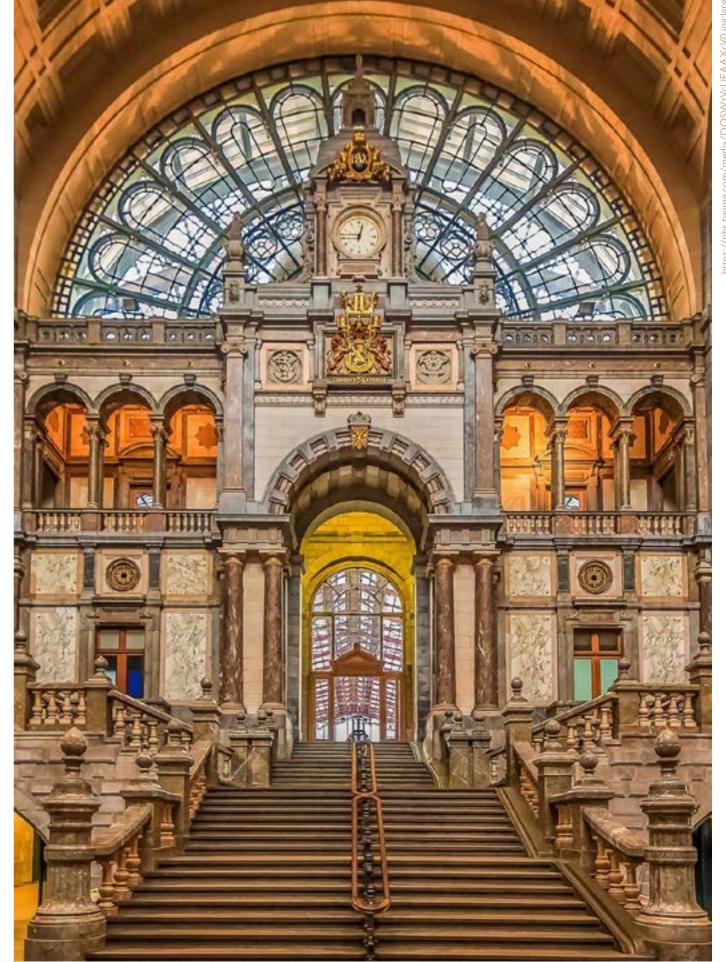
Cons: The connections they find are often quite pricey, and as far as we can tell you can't actually buy the tickets on their website.

Ecopassenger

Ecopassenger compares the energy consumption, CO2 emissions and other environmental impacts of planes, cars and trains in passenger transport.

Pros: With handy graphs and easy-to-follow data, you are enabled to make informed decisions about your trip.

Cons: The platform is only equipped to do calculations on popular routes and seems not to be able to calculate more out-of-the-way trips with numerous stopovers.

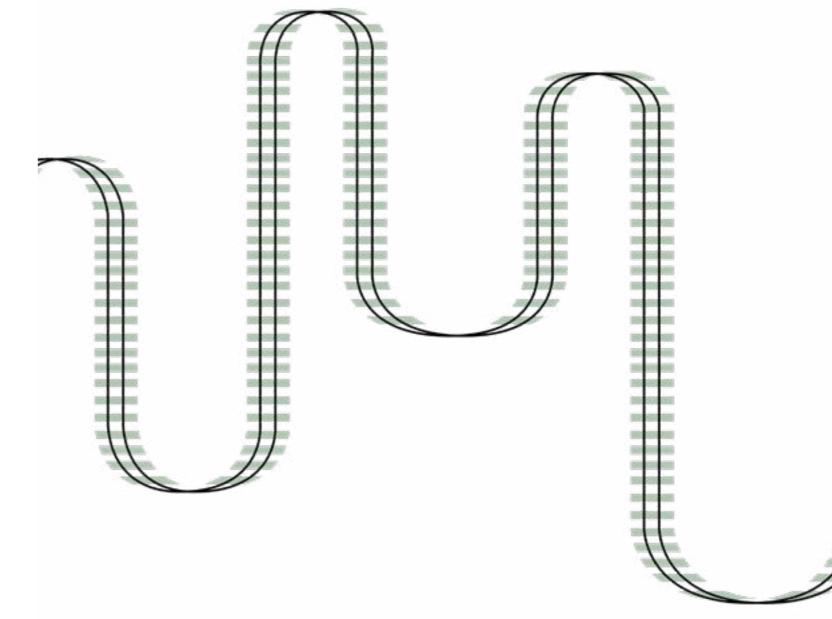


Antwerpen Train Station

The Fastest

Trains of Europe

	Train	Fastest Speed	Appearance
Germany DB	ICE – Inter City Express	Up to 330km/h From Basel to Hamburg (700km) in 6h50 Up to 100 seats per train	B
France SNCF	TGV – Train à Grande Vitesse	Up to 320 km/h From Basel to Paris (420 km) in 3h	
Spain RENFE	AVE - Alta Velocidad Española	Up to 330 km/h From Barcelona to Madrid (700km) in 2h30 The largest high-speed train network in Europe	
Italy Trenitalia and Italo	Freccia and Italo	Up to 400 km/h From Milan to Rome (600km) in 2h50 Fastest train in Europe	
Austria ÖBB	Railjet	Up to 230 km/h From Basel to Vienna (680km) in 9h 100% of electricity used is renewable	
Connections to the United Kingdom	Eurostar	Up to 300 km/h From Paris to London (350km) in 2h20	



Night Trains - NightJet and EuroNight

There is a huge night train network all over Europe. The map below shows the connections to and from Basel. The network is constantly being expanded, and as early as 2024 there will also be connections to Barcelona and Rome.

The provider is the Austrian Federal Railways (ÖBB) in cooperation with several other countries.

The following should be highlighted:

- » There is a choice between carriages with normal seats and carriages with recliners or beds (the latter being more comfortable but also more expensive)
- » Tickets can be booked on conventional booking sites, for example sbb.ch. For some connections, however, booking is easier via the SBB Travel Centre which can be contacted either in person in the Basel train station, on 0848 44 66 88 (SBB, 8Rp/min) or via Simpletrain (free quotes provided by the company but a booking fee of ca. 50.-)
- » Tickets vary between 40.- and 200.-, depending on the level of comfort and route
- » Compartment size ranges from single-occupancy to six-person cabin
- » Women-only cabins can be booked
- » Some trains depart from Zurich. If departing from Basel, they mostly leave from the Basel Badischer Bahnhof
- » There are daily trains for most connections

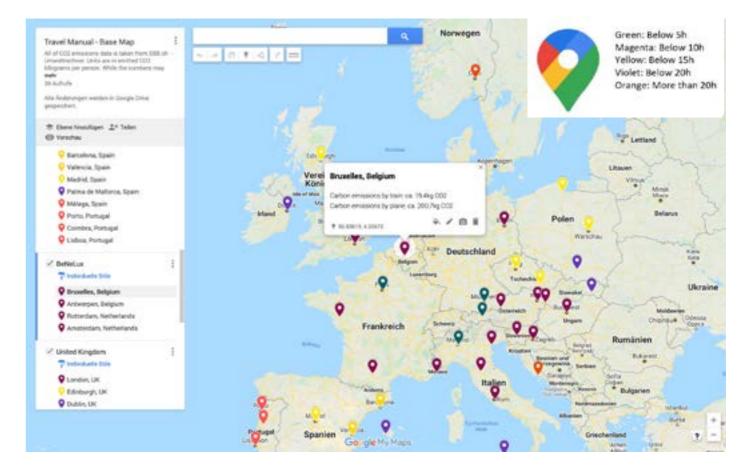


Destinations

In the following section we will present you with train and bus connections to selected countries in Europe.

Please note that:

- » We calculate all travel times and prices with the starting point as Basel, but they may still vary. The most efficient connections at the most popular times are sometimes much more expensive. You can prioritise yourself if you would prefer to spend more money or more time on your journey.
- » In all countries it is possible to obtain discount cards from the train companies (for example, the German Bahn Card or the French Carte Avantage for young people up to 28 years of age). In most cases, these are worthwhile from the first journey and are valid on many routes. The validity can be checked with Trainline, for example, by comparing the prices for the selected connection with and without a discount card. We provide information on the best of these discounts for many of the countries we explore below.
- » Sometimes the journeys, especially those to more distant countries, are relatively expensive. In these cases it is highly recommended to buy an Interrail Pass. This is discussed in more detail in the "Booking and Comparison Portals" section.



Map with information about train trips (length and CO2 savings compared to planes)

The United Kingdom

Noteworthy:

- » High-speed trains: TGV (France), Eurostar (link to UK), Javeline and others (UK).
- » Possible stopovers: Paris, Belfort
- » Possible stopovers in the UK: London
- » Onward journey to Ireland possible
- » Journey through the 50 km long Eurostar tunnel (the longest underwater tunnel in the world)



	Train	Bus
London	150 / 8h	55 / 19h30

Prices and travel times from London:

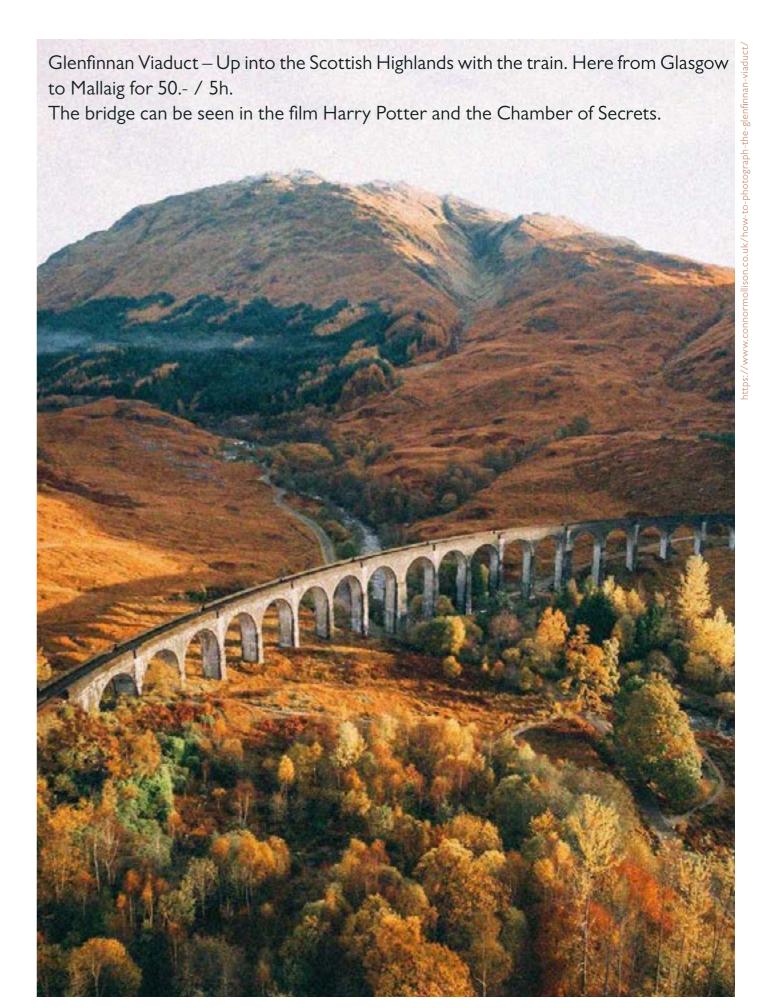
	Train	Bus
Manchester	150 / 8h	55 / 19h30
Penzance	60 / 5h	20 / 9h
Glasgow	60 / 4h30	20 / 9h30
Edinburgh	50 / 4h	20 / 9h

Worthwhile discount cards:

22

For your trip through France: Carte Avantage (50.- for one year, needs to be bought at least seven days before the trip)

For your trip through the United Kingdom: 16-25 Railcard (40.- for one year)



France

Noteworthy

- » High-speed trains: TGV (France)
- » More than 50 high speed connections including Basel-Paris, Paris-Marseille, Paris-Bordeaux, Paris-Lille-Bruxelles
- » Possible stopovers in France: Paris, Belfort
- » Onward journey to Spain, Belgium, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom
- If your train is running more than
 30 minutes late, you can apply for a
 25% refund

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	Train	Bus
Paris	55 / 3h	25 / 10h
Toulouse	90 / 8h	-
Marseille	67 / 5h30	-
Nice	100 / 8h	44 / 8h

Prices and travel times from Paris:

	Train	Bus
Bordeaux	20 / 2h	9 / 9h
Rennes	20 / Ih30	-

Worthwhile discount cards:

For your trip through France: Carte Avantage (50.- for one year, needs to be bought at least seven days before the trip)



Italy

Noteworthy:

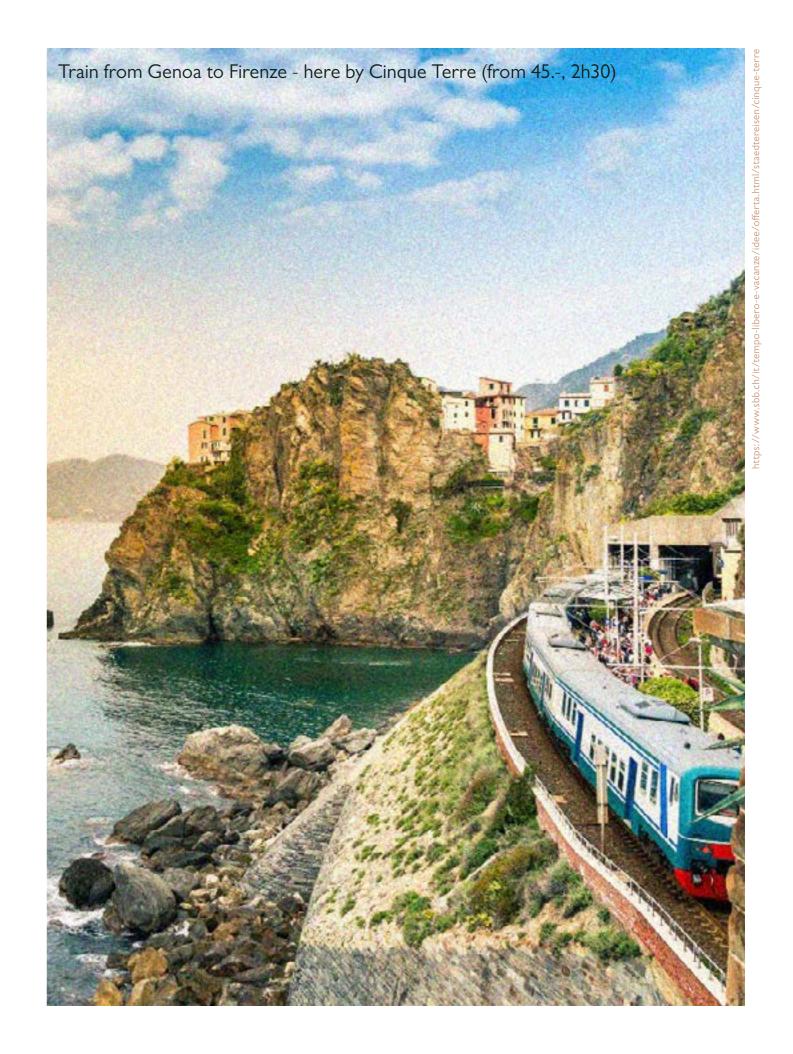
- » High-speed trains: Freccia and Italo
- » Possible stopovers in Italy: Milano, Bologna, Firenze
- » Onward journey to France, Slovenia and Croatia
- » Frecciarossa trains are built out of 94% recycled materials, and the electricity used is from 100% renewable sources



	Train	Bus
Milano	58 / 4h	22 / 4h30
Venezia	82 / 8h30	30 / 9h30
Firenze	106 / 7h	46 / 9h30
Roma	146 / 8h30	41 / I4h
Palermo, Sicilia	206 / 21h	121 / 30h30

Worthwhile discount cards:

For your trip through Italy: TrenItalia-Pass as an alternative to an Interrail-Pass



Germany

Noteworthy:

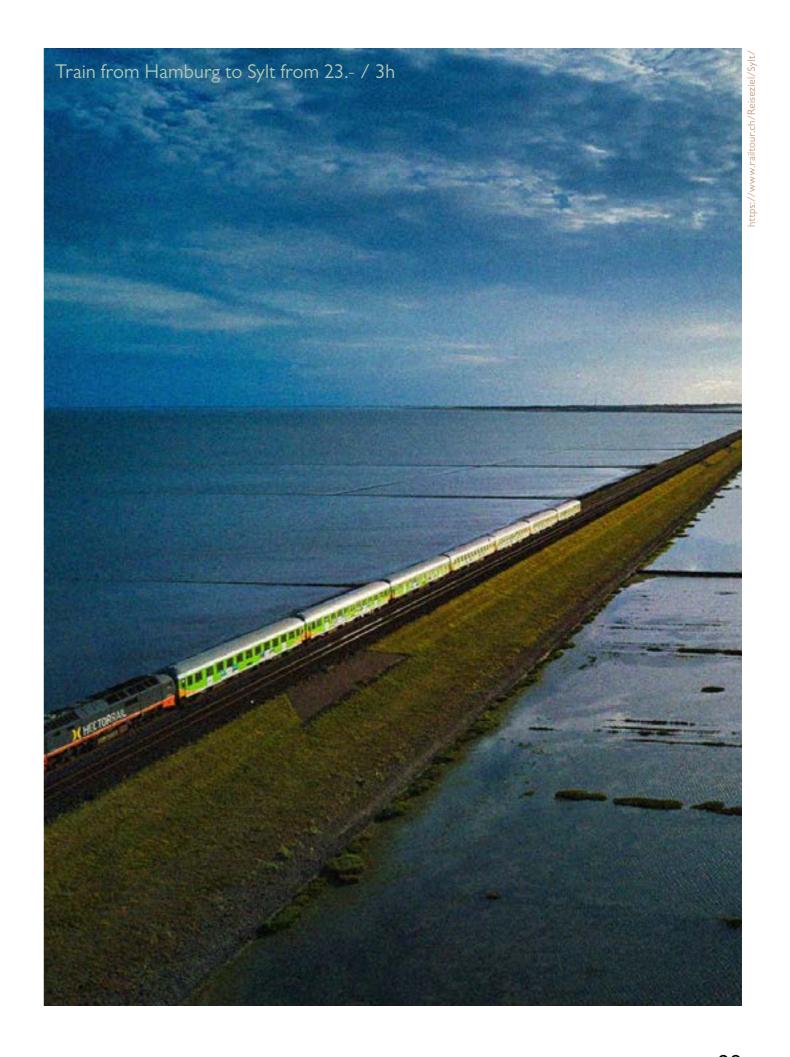
- » High-speed trains: InterCity-Express
- » Possible stopovers in Germany: Frankfurt, Köln, München
- » Onward journey to Belgium, the Netherlands, Poland and Scandinavia
- » The Deutsche Bahn aims to be climate neutral by 2040 and recycle an estimated 95% of the raw materials used.



	Train	Bus
Hamburg	57 / 6h30	40 / 18h
Berlin	62 / 7h	47 / 16h30
München	22 / 5h30	26 / 9h30

Worthwhile discount cards:

For your trip through Germany: Bahncard 25 (25% discount - trial period for 3 months for 20.-, one year 65.-)



Austria

Noteworthy:

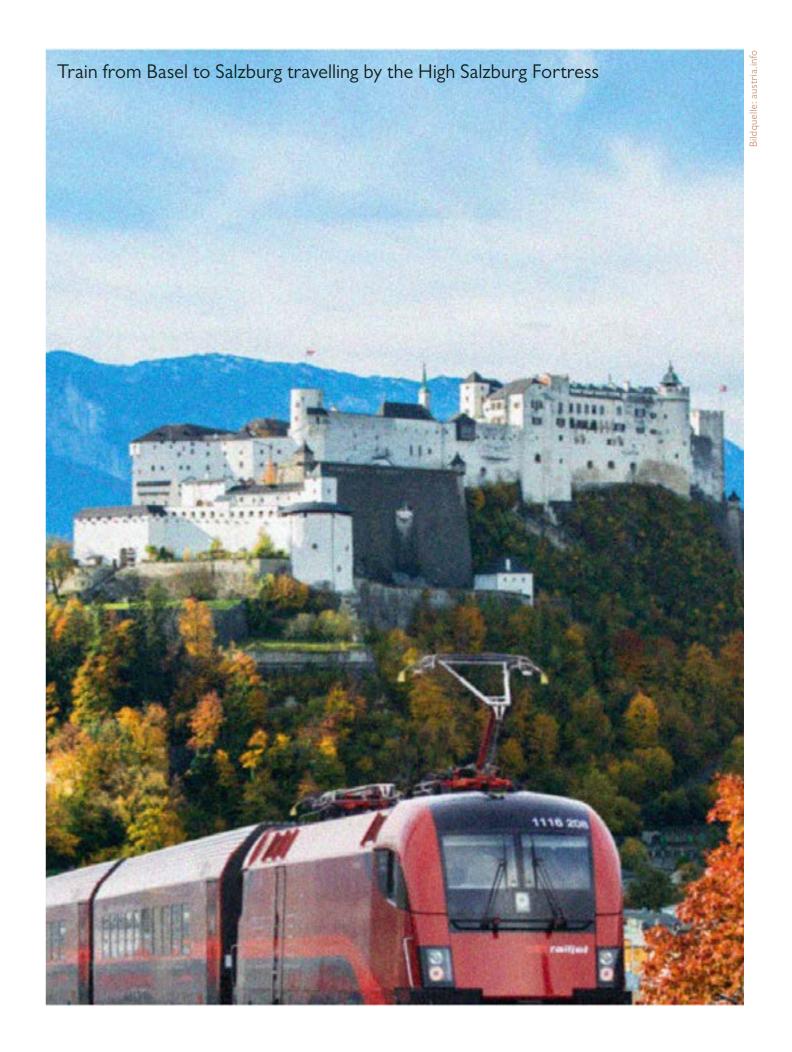
- » High-speed trains: Railjet
- » Possible stopovers in Austria: Innsbruck, Salzburg
- » Trip along and through the Austrian Alps
- » Onward journey to Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovakia
- » Trains run on 100% green electricity



	Train	Bus
Wien	49 / 9h	46 / I7h
Salzburg	40 / 6h30	-
Innsbruck	34 / 4h30	-

Worthwhile discount cards:

For your trip through Austria: ÖBB Vorteilscard (50% discount - I year 23.- for youth up until 26 years old, 80.- for everyone over 26 years old).



Spain

Noteworthy

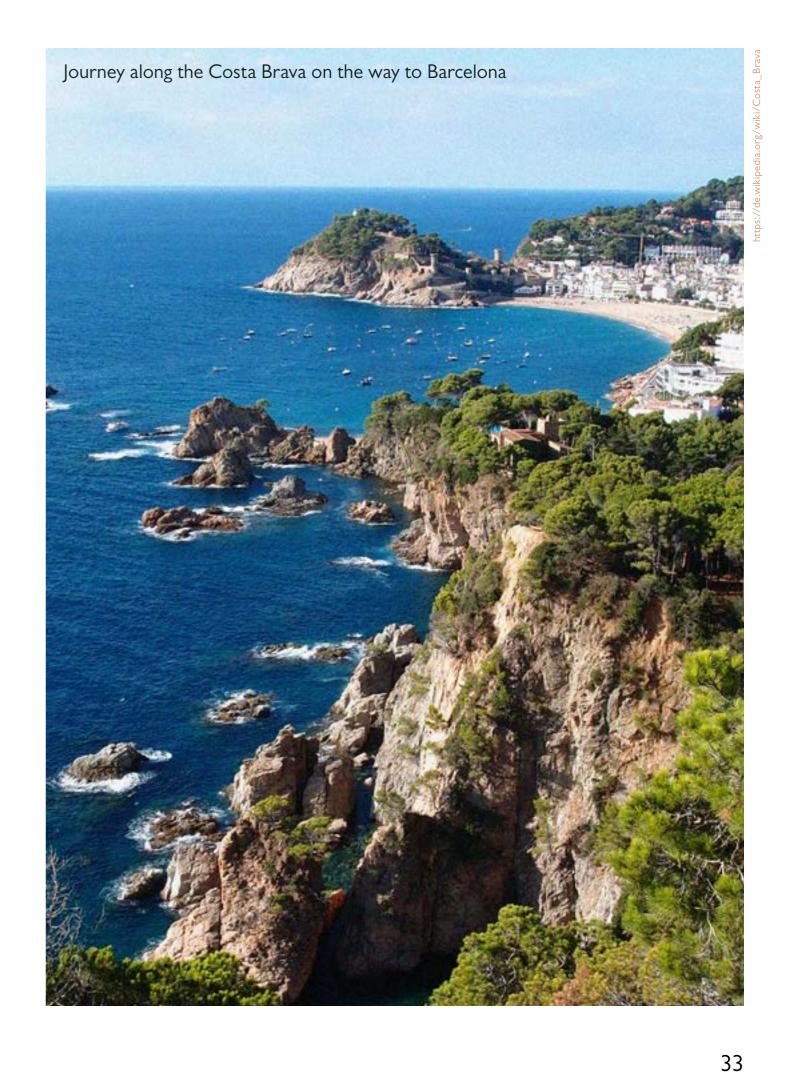
- » Highspeed trains: TGV (France), AVE (Spain)
- » Possible stopovers: Genève, Paris, Bordeaux, Lyon
- » Possible stopovers in Spain: Barcelona, Madrid
- » Trip over the Côte d'Azur and Costa Brava
- » Onward journey to Portugal possible



	Train	Bus
Barcelona	115 / 10h	Only wothwhile from Genève, 109 / 8h
Madrid	106 / 14h	Only wothwhile from Genève, 63 / 21h30
Sevilla	190 / 16h30	-
Valencia	140 / 12h	Only wothwhile from Genève, 65 / 18h
Mallorca	140/16h	140/26h30

Worthwhile discount cards:

For your trip through France: Carte Avantage (50.- for one year, needs to be bought at least seven days before the trip)



The Netherlands

Noteworthy:

- » Highspeed trains: Deutsche Bahn (Germany), TGV (France)
- » Possible stopovers: Frankfurt, Köln, Paris
- » Possible stopovers in the Netherlands: Utrecht
- » Travel through the Dutch lowlands with rivers, wide meadows and windmills
- » Onward journey to Belgium, France, or the United Kingdom possible

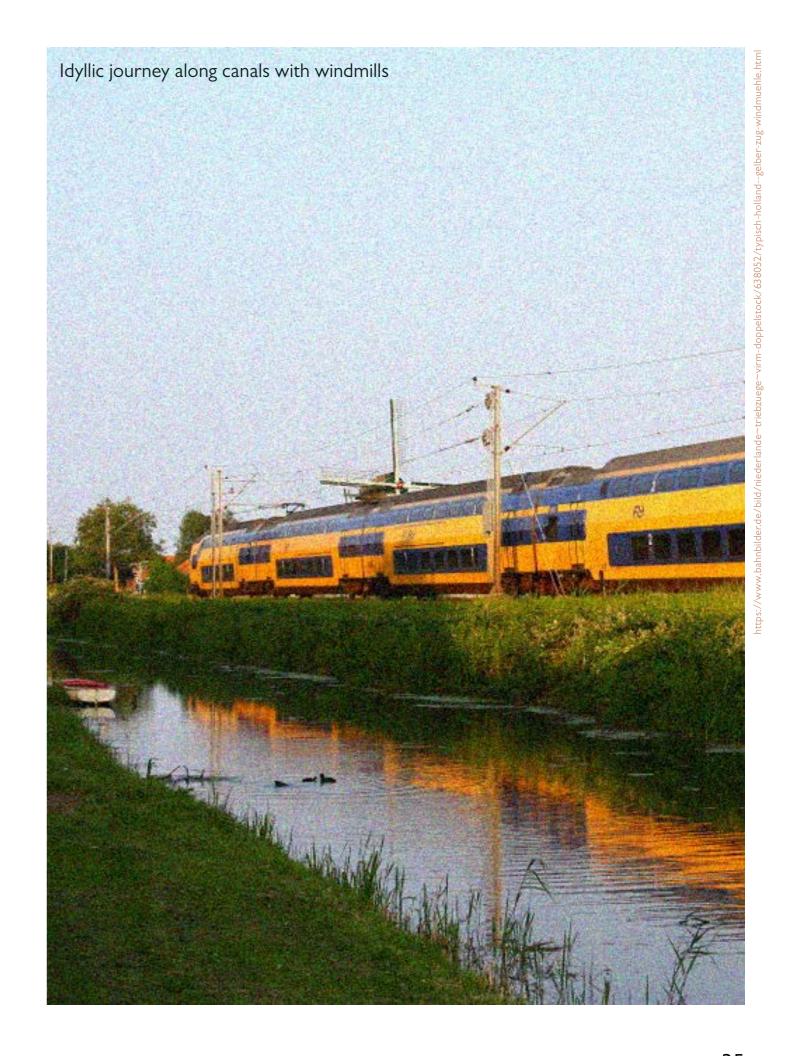


	Train	Bus
Amsterdam	45 / 7h30	45 / IIh40
Rotterdam	45 / 7h50	39 / I7h

Worthwhile discount cards:

For your trip through Germany: Bahncard 25 (25% discount - trial period for 3 months for 20.-, one year 65.-)

For your trip through France: Carte Avantage (50.- for one year, needs to be bought at least seven days before the trip)



Anecdotal Reports



While I was apprehensive to drive for so long with a stranger, I needn't have been: the driver was friendly, accommodating, professional, and very safe on the roads. There was another ridesharer who came along, too, so most of the drive was filled with getting to know one another and learning about local culture or tips for our arrival in València.



Getting from Basel (or Switzerland in general) to Paris is quick and usually direct. There, you just need to take a quick 10 minute walk to the Gare du Nord where the Eurostar will take you comfortably under the Channel and to London before you know it. I split up my trip to make the most of being in the UK for the first time visited the most iconic sights of London, headed up to Cambridge, and explored the canals. The next morning I hopped on a train from Cambridge to Edinburgh and revelled in the seaside views, the rolling green hills, and the little towns we passed on the way. A tip here: it was only an additional £5 to upgrade to first class where there was a breakfast included!



The trip from Venezia to Firenze S. M. Novella was 25 Euros and took 1.5 hours. The view transitions from the city of canals and grand churches to the renaissance beauty with impeccable architecture. The train has enough seating space and place for luggage. There were enough spots for extra baggage as well. We traveled on the train Frecciarossa 1000. It's also the first high-speed train in the world to have obtained EPD certification for environmental impact.

If you want to read more similar reports from sustainable travellers or have an experience of your own you would like to share, visit our <u>sustainable travel forum!</u>

