

Rail holidays of Italy

Expressions



Rail holiday to Venice through the Alps on the Bernina Express



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7 NIGHTS / 8 DAYS

Bernina Express

St Moritz

Venice

Burano

Murano



In this rail holiday to Venice, you take in some of most spectacular scenery of the Swiss Alps viewed through the panoramic windows of the Bernina Express. Start from the UK by Eurostar to Paris where you change to a TGV Lyria train to Zurich. Following a night in Zurich, you travel onwards to St Moritz where you break the journey for to enjoy the Alpine lifestyle. The Bernina Express railway then takes you through the very heart of the Alps. Travelling slowly gives time to take in the glaciers, mountains, pretty villages, lakes and pine forests. The highest point is Ospizio Bernina, where the route reaches 2,253 metres before dropping 1,800 metres down to Tirano and into Italy. In Tirano there is time for lunch before travelling on to Milan. This is an attractive route, at first passing vineyards perched precariously on hillside terraces, and then along the eastern edge of Lake Como. From Milan, a high speed train takes you onwards to Venice. We suggest a stay of three nights in Venice to give you time to explore this fascinating city with its bobbing gondolas, Byzantine and Gothic architectural gems and interesting islands. This holiday uses the Thello sleeper train to Paris and then Eurostar back to London. Alternatively, you can choose to travel back by day trains with stopovers.

PRICES

From £2,290 per person

Price based on two sharing a double or twin room.

First class rail travel can be added for a supplement.

DATES

This rail holiday can be arranged throughout the year. Timings can vary depending on the month and day of the week. For more information regarding rail services to and within Italy, view our train guide.

WHAT'S INCLUDED

Accommodation on bed and breakfast as below

- 1 night in a Classic room at the Hotel Ambassador a l'Opera in Zurich
- 2 nights in a Standard room at the Hotel Schweizerhof in St Moritz
- 3 nights in a Classic room at the Hotel Bisanzio in Venice
- Train travel on all trains including the Eurostar (first class can be booked at a supplement)
- Double sleeper compartment on Thello sleeper train
- Private boat transfers in Venice

WHAT'S NOT INCLUDED

- Optional extra nights
- Transfers in Paris
- Meals other than breakfast at the hotels
- Early check in or late check out at hotels - though we can arrange this on request
- Supplements for alternative route options
- Any services not mentioned

DAY ONE: London to Zurich by rail

Your rail holiday starts at 7.00am with a journey by Eurostar from London St Pancras to Paris Nord station. On arrival in Paris you use a local taxi to change stations to Gare de Lyon. Leave here at about 12.30pm, where a high-speed TGV train takes you across France and into Switzerland, arriving into Zurich in the mid-afternoon. Spend one night in Zurich at the Hotel Ambassador a l'Opera.

DAY TWO: Zurich to St Moritz by rail

Spend this morning taking in this historic and enchanting city, perhaps stopping at the Grossmunster church and climbing the Karlstrum tower. Leave Zurich at lunchtime to travel to St Moritz, where you arrive at about 4pm. The first leg of the journey by train takes you along the edges of Lakes Zurich and Walensee to Chur. In Chur you change trains and continue along the first part of the Bernina Railway further into the mountains to the resort town of St Moritz. Spend two nights in St Moritz at the Hotel Schweizerhof.



Montebello Curve, Bernina Express

DAY THREE: St Moritz

You have a full day at leisure to enjoy St Moritz. At 1856m above sea level, visitors are welcomed by stunning views across the lakes of the Upper Engadine Valley, and the refreshing dry, clear, Alpine climate. There are a number of excellent walking trails in the area, or for an easier option there are cable cars which can take you up the mountain to enjoy the spectacular Alpine views. Navigate the local peaks via railway, reaching the Piz Corvatsch, Chantarella, and Corviglia, where a cable car takes you up to Suvretta's most famous viewing point. In the summer you might like to enjoy the water sports at the sublime Lake Sils and Lake St Moritz, or the windy Lake Silvaplana.

DAY FOUR: St Moritz to Venice via the Bernina Express

You board the famous Bernina Express in St Moritz around 10.30am and take this stunning scenic route all the way to Tirano. The journey takes you along the highest railway across the Alps, reaching an impressive 2,253m above sea level, before dropping down through a varied terrain of orchards, chestnut trees and vineyards on the way to Tirano. The train traverses numerous viaducts and tunnels and is a truly beautiful trip during the whole four hours. On arrival in Tirano in Italy, you will usually have time for lunch – there are a number of cafes and restaurants by the train stations. At about 3pm, continue by local Italian train to Milan where much of the journey has views over Lake Como. Following a simple change in Milan, a high speed train will whisk

you the remainder of the way to Venice where you arrive around 8.30pm. Here, you'll be met and taken by a private boat from Venice Santa Lucia station to your hotel.

DAYS FIVE AND SIX: Venice

You have two days at leisure in the Venetian capital. More than a city, Venice "La Serenissima" is an enchantress. Take the time to discover her winding streets, lavish ballrooms and lively wine bars, and perhaps catch one of local water taxis to explore the islands of the lagoon. Burano, island of lace-making and fishermen, is impressively picturesque whilst on Murano master craftsmen offer demonstrations of glass-making before you enter their shops. A visit to both these islands is thoroughly recommended to provide an alternative view of Venice.

RETURN OPTION 1 – DIRECT SLEEPER

DAY SEVEN: Board the sleeper train to Paris

You have most of this day to continue your exploration of Venice before being taken by private water taxi back to Santa Lucia station. Here, you catch the overnight sleeper train to Paris, leaving at around 8.00pm. We include a private twin cabin for your comfort.

DAY EIGHT: Rail to London

The sleeper arrives in Paris a little before 10am. Use a taxi to change from Paris Lyon to Paris Nord station, and end your rail holiday as the Eurostar takes you back to the UK where

you arrive in the early afternoon.

RETURN OPTION 2 – VIA MILAN AND LAUSANNE

DAY SEVEN: Venice to Milan

At around 10am a private water taxi will take you to Santa Lucia station where you board a train to Milan, arriving just before 1.30pm. A private car will take you to your hotel and back again at the end of your stay. Have the afternoon and evening to explore Milan from your centrally based hotel. Milan is Italy's second largest city in Italy, however the historic centre is easily manageable either on foot or by the comprehensive metro system and the atmosphere is sophisticated and not nearly as Mediterranean as other Italian cities.

DAY EIGHT: Milan to London via Lausanne

Leave Milan just before 8.30am to travel by train back to Paris through Switzerland. Your journey takes you past Lake Maggiore and through the stunning Simplon Pass. The train then descends, following the Rhone to Lausanne on the shores of Lake Geneva. You change trains easily here and arrive into Paris just after 4pm. You finish your rail holiday by boarding the Eurostar which gets you back into London around 8.30pm.

OPTIONAL

It is possible to add extra nights in any of these destinations if you would like to

HOTELS

Details of the hotels in Switzerland and Italy can be found below.

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ZURICH

Hotel Ambassador a l'Opera 4 star

The Hotel Ambassador a l'Opera is a historic boutique hotel located opposite Zurich's Opera House, set just back from the lakeside. This is a highly luxurious and unique option for a one or two night stay in central Zurich. The hotel has just 45 rooms and is renowned for their gourmet restaurant which is just as popular with locals as hotel guests.

ST MORITZ

Hotel Schweizerhof 4 star

Dating from over 100 years ago, the Hotel Schweizerhof St Moritz is a sophisticated hotel built in the Belle Epoque style. Fresh, bright, and luxurious rooms are accompanied by multiple dining options, a picturesque garden and a selection of relaxing spa facilities.

VENICE

Hotel Bisanzio 4 star

The Hotel Poseidon is one of our favourite hotels and offers a charming ambience of style and relaxation. This family-run resort is centrally located in the romantic, terraced resort of Positano and offers stunning views of the sea from its beautiful terraced garden. The restaurant is of good quality and serves guests both indoors and outdoors on the terrace, and guests can enjoy the view from the swimming pool on its panoramic terrace. Positano is a real gem on the Amalfi coast and has managed to preserve its atmosphere as a quaint artists' and fishing village, with numerous art galleries, clothes shops and restaurants.

MILAN (OPTION)

Baglioni Carlton Hotel 5 star

This luxury five star hotel can be found discreetly tucked away on the Via della Spiga, Milan's most fashionable shopping street, and the Via Montenapoleone, the cathedral and famous La Scala theatre are a short distance away. Inside, discover an intimate and sophisticated atmosphere with marble floors and dark wood wall panels. The hotel provides outstanding levels of service and facilities, including the historic Il Baretto al Baglioni Restaurant which serves national dishes with Mediterranean influences.



Terrace at Hotel Schweizerhof St Moritz



Room at Hotel Bisanzio



Garden at Baglioni Hotel Carlton



Room at Hotel Ambassador a l'Opera

MAP OF TOUR VENICE BY RAIL THROUGH THE ALPS ON THE BERNINA EXPRESS

The map below illustrates the route outlined in this touring itinerary, with overnight stops and places of interest highlighted.



GENERAL INFORMATION

This tailor-made touring holiday is one of several suggested touring holidays we can offer you exactly as it is but also with any alterations you might want including extra nights in one or more places or adding in extra places. All our tours can be extended so that you can include a longer stay in one mountain or lake resort too, perhaps at the end of the itinerary. Do call to discuss the options with our travel consultants.

OUR TOURS

Our rail tours are for individuals travelling on their own or in their own family group. You do not join a group and you are not escorted.

FLEXIBLE ARRANGEMENTS

Our arrangements are very flexible in that you choose to travel on any day you want, subject to availability of trains and hotels. As mentioned above, additional nights can be added at any point.

EUROSTAR

A rail holiday to Italy starts with a journey by Eurostar from London St Pancras, Ebbsfleet or Ashford stations in the UK to either Paris Gare du Nord or Lille Europe. In summer months there are direct trains on Saturdays from London St Pancras to Avignon with no change required.

Eurostar offers almost hourly departures every day, allowing you to travel from the centre of London to the centre of Paris on the same train in three hours. Not all trains stop at the Ebbsfleet and Ashford stations in Kent, but parking is plentiful at both stations and it allows you to avoid London.

Check-in is 30 minutes prior to departure, customs formalities are completed before boarding and there is no limit to the amount of baggage that can be taken on board. The Eurostar trains themselves have 8 coaches which are split into Standard Class, Standard Premier and Business Premier as well as 2 cafeterias. Standard Premier customers are served a light cold meal and enjoy a more spacious environment than Standard Class, while Business Premier customers receive a hot meal and unlimited beverages as well as lounge access.

TRAIN TIMES

We have planned our itineraries based on train times that work day by day at the time of planning which can be up to a year before you travel. Usually train times stay more or less the same every day, season by season. The times we have planned will be discussed with you at the time you enquire about the holiday and they are detailed to you in your written holiday quotation. It may be that the timetable changes between the planning of the itinerary and when you come to book but we can always adjust the itinerary to suit the actual train times and any requirements you have for particular times of travel.

FIRST OR SECOND CLASS

We will automatically include travel in second class but lots of our clients do upgrade to first class service. On Eurostar this is called Premier Standard for leisure travellers as it gives you an upgraded on-board service and more spacious seating but without paying for the fully-flexible business tickets. On the Inter-city trains, upgrading to first class gives you more spacious seating with increased legroom. The price of upgrading varies from route to route but is something that is not always proportionately a lot more on the price of the overall holiday, so well-worth considering.

TRANSFERS

Transfers in Paris between stations and from the station to each hotel are not automatically included in the price of the holiday. In Paris most clients choose to take a taxi between the stations rather than go on the Metro but we can arrange a private car with driver to take you in between. This is quite useful if you are a family group that can't fit into one Paris taxi.

PRICE INFORMATION

This tailor-made touring holiday is one of several suggested touring holidays we can offer you exactly as it is but also with any alterations you might want including extra nights in one or more places or adding in extra places. All our tours can be extended so that you can include a longer stay in one mountain or lake resort too, perhaps at the end of the itinerary. Do call to discuss the options with our travel consultants.

OUR PRICES

The sample prices mentioned in this leaflet are generally a 'from' price based on the cheapest season of travel. However, train fares and hotel rates can change (up and down depending on offers), so we give you an accurate price for your holiday when we provide you with a quotation. Our sample prices should be used as an indication of how much a particular combination will cost and to show the differences on average between the hotel categories on offer.

PRICE INFORMATION IN MORE DETAIL

From £2,350 per person with first class rail travel

From £2,290 per person with second class rail travel

Prices based on two sharing a double or twin room and return on the Thello sleeper.

What's included in this touring itinerary?

Accommodation on bed and breakfast as below:

1 night in a Classic room at the Hotel

Ambassador a l'Opera in Zurich

2 nights in a Standard Room at the Hotel

Schweizerhof in St Moritz

3 nights in a Classic room at the Hotel

Bisanzio in Venice

First or second class travel on all trains (as above) including Eurostar

Private boat transfers to and from Venice station to your hotel.

What's not included?

Optional extra nights

Meals other than breakfast at the hotels

Early check in or late check out at hotel – though we can arrange this on request

Supplements for alternative routes

Any services not mentioned above

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BOOKING CONDITIONS

Our booking conditions apply to all holidays. A copy can be found on our website and a copy is also sent to you with a written quotation and when you make a booking.

FINANCIAL PROTECTION

Expressions Holidays offers full financial protection for all holidays you book with us. If your holiday includes a flight, the ATOL (3076) covers the costs of the holiday. If the holiday does not include a flight, it is the ABTOT bond that protects the cost of the holiday. We are also members of AITO (the Association of Independent Tour Operators) and ABTA.



Expressions Holidays
Lynx House, Pynes Hill, Exeter EX2 5JL

HOW TO BOOK

To make a booking, just phone us on

01392 441275

and we can take you through the details we need and start the booking process. A deposit is required to confirm the arrangements and this can be paid by debit or credit card over the phone. The level of the deposit will be confirmed at the point of booking and will depend on the ticketing deadlines of the rail tickets involved in your booking.