

# Topdeck

## PLAY & PAUSE: INTRO TO EUROPE



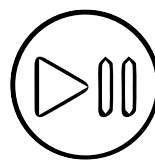
## TOPDECKER, meet Europe (TD)

TRIP VIBE = the perfect mix of group activities and all-important YOU time. Essential. Vital. The must-dos. The unmissables. Whatever you call those bits of Europe that you just HAVE to explore, you can rely on this fast-paced trip to properly school you in them. We're talking Rome, Amsterdam, Venice, Paris... the big guns. But that isn't all – this trip also swings by the likes of quaint little Heidelberg and lakeside stunner Lucerne. And adds in plenty of free time to do your thing. What a mix, right? Quick maths: take two weeks, turn them into something special.

### WORTH NOTING...

The Venice Gondola Ride will float from Included Experiences into Optional Activities in 2024. Meaning: more free time to do what YOU want.

### WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW



Play & Pause



Nights



Download app



Meals

# Thanks for choosing to holiday with Topdeck

Ready for the time of your LIFE?

The countdown's on...

## ABOUT YOUR TRIP NOTES

These Trip Notes contain everything you need to know before your trip departs – from where to meet your Topdeck fam to what we suggest you bring.

Read them on the train, in the supermarket queue or on the loo – we don't mind, just look through them carefully so you know what to expect on your trip. We recommend you download this document so it's with you when you travel (and give a copy to your MVPs so they know what you're up to).

**IMPORTANT:** please refresh this doc as close to your departure as possible. This means you'll have the most up-to-date info available.

### INCLUDED EXPERIENCES

- Orientation walk of Heidelberg with Trip Leader
- Walking tour of Munich with Trip Leader
- Walking tour of Venice with Trip Leader
- Gondola ride down the Grand Canal (included experience for 2023 trips only)
- Walking tour of Rome with Trip Leader
- Walking tour of Florence with local guide
- Walking tour of Lucerne with Trip Leader
- Paris highlights drive

## YOUR TRIP WILL START

### PICK UP:

London  
Europe

## YOUR TRIP WILL FINISH

### DROP OFF:

London  
Europe

## TRIP CURRENCIES

- England - GBP
- Netherlands - EUR
- Germany - EUR
- Italy - EUR
- Vatican City - EUR
- Switzerland - CHF
- France - EUR

# YOUR ITINERARY

## DAY 1 | LONDON (ENGLAND)

You. Us. The Big Smoke. Name a more iconic trio, we'll wait. Welcome to the home of red buses, red telephone boxes and red undies (optional). First up: time to get to know the who's who of the group at tonight's included dinner. Cheers to 13 days of adventures with this mixed bunch. Let's do this!



### MEALS:

- Dinner

## DAY 2 | LONDON – AMSTERDAM (NETHERLANDS)

Rise and shine: this morning's an early one, so pack your snacks and perfect your playlists. Today we'll be making our way to the land of tulips, canals and windmills. You guessed it: Amsterdam. This evening – you do you. Go pose in a giant pair of clogs. Sample some poffertjes (baby pancakes, cute AND tasty). Or just relax and watch life go by on the waterways. Yep: you're really here.



### MEALS:

- Breakfast

## DAY 3 | AMSTERDAM

This is your day, your way. Check out the likes of the Dam Square, the Royal Palace and the National Monument. For the culture fiends – delve a bit deeper with a visit to the Anne Frank House (make sure you book in advance!) or the Van Gogh Museum and Rijksmuseum. If you don't manage to grab those tix, the Anne Frank's Last Walk is a top tier option – it even includes an incred VR experience. Or get yourself a set of wheels and explore Amsterdam's iconic canals, bridges and parks on an optional bike tour. For dinner: try traditional Dutch pancakes (sweet/savoury/both at once) or head to the Foodhallen for alllll the world snacks. And later? Chill canalside at a local bar or brewery – Brouwerij 't IJ is the place to be for ultimate windmill vibes.



### MEALS:

- Breakfast



### OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES:

- Bike tour of Amsterdam: from €28
- Anne Frank's Last Walk with VR Experience: from €37

## DAY 4 | AMSTERDAM – HEIDELBERG (GERMANY)

Next up? A country where beer is officially considered an essential food group (right next to sausage and sauerkraut). Heidelberg is all about hilltop ruins, cobblestoned old quarters and fairytale bridges. Get your bearings on a stroll with your Trip Leader, then the rest of the afternoon is up to you. Take the cable car up to the Palace for some unbeliEVABLE views. Or find a local haunt to chow down on a head-sized pork knuckle – this is Germany after all.



### MEALS:

- Breakfast



### INCLUDED TODAY:

- Orientation walk of Heidelberg with Trip Leader

## DAY 5 | HEIDELBERG – MUNICH

Plug 'Munich' into the GPS – we're rolling into the capital of Bavaria today. Kick things off with a walking tour then it's the moment you've been waiting for: an appropriate occasion to wear lederhosen. Head to the 428-year-old Hofbräuhaus for a royal Happy Hour experience or find the Chinese beer garden (or any beer garden for that matter) for a stein-sesh with your trip mates. Prost! Finally: dinner's sorted tonight so sit back and soak it all up.



### MEALS:

- Breakfast
- Dinner



### INCLUDED TODAY:

- Walking tour of Munich with Trip Leader

## DAY 6 | MUNICH – VENICE (ITALY)

You know it as The Floating City, but this place is actually sinking (slowly). Check out the usual suspects on a walking tour with our Trip Leader – ticking off the likes of St Mark's Square, Doge's Palace and Accademia Bridge. Then: an included gondola ride along the Grand Canal awaits! Dinner tonight is on you, what delicious carb-laden Italian meal have you been dying to try? Order two.



### MEALS:

- Breakfast



### INCLUDED TODAY:

- Walking tour of Venice with Trip Leader
- Gondola ride down the Grand Canal (included experience for 2023 trips only)



### OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES:

- Get a personalised trip T-shirt or hoodie: from €23

## DAY 7 | VENICE – ROME

Hear that? It's bella Roma calling your name. Dump your stuff at the hotel and prepare for a walking tour to end all walking tours. Pass by the Pantheon, throw our two cents in the Trevi Fountain, (don't) sit on the Spanish Steps and check out the mighty Colosseum – getting the scoop on allllllll the ancient history as we go. You're in Disneyland for foodies so whatever you pick for dinner tonight is gonna be good – hit up your Trip Leader for some top recs.



### MEALS:

- Breakfast



### INCLUDED TODAY:

- Walking tour of Rome with Trip Leader

## DAY 8 | ROME

Time to live out your Eat. Pray. Love. fantasies – today is all about Vespas, espresso, two-cheeked kisses and pizza (the way it's supposed to taste). There's an optional guided tour of Vatican City on the cards. Not your thing? You can opt for a tour of the Colosseum, Palatine Hill AND Roman Forum instead. Feeling something a bit more relaxed? Do as the locals do and indulge in a little dolce far niente (delicious idleness) at a local cafe or piazza. Tonight, shake out those fat pants for round two and hunt down a local restaurant for dinner. Thought you'd tried all the gelato flavours? Head to Fatamorgana – and think again.



### MEALS:

- Breakfast



### OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES:

- Guided tour of Vatican City: from €50
- Tour of Colosseum, Palatine Hill and Roman Forum: from €50

## DAY 9 | ROME – FLORENCE

Florence has more stories than Bilbo Baggins, more culture than a London hipster, AND it gave the world David (the massive marble naked guy FYI). We'll get the lay of the land on an in-depth walking tour with a local guide, feat. a bonus leather-making demo (a real craft here). Then: it's time tuck into some of that hearty Tuscan cuisine you've been dreaming about at tonight's included dinner. Make room for another scoop (or two) of the good stuff and stroll around the Arno River at sunset. This is what you came for.



### MEALS:

- Breakfast
- Dinner



### INCLUDED TODAY:

- Walking tour of Florence with local guide

## DAY 10 | FLORENCE – LUCERNE (SWITZERLAND)

Order one more espresso in poor Italian (hey, you tried!) – we're off to Lucerne after breakfast. Glue your schnoz to the coach window as we wind our way into the heart of the Swiss Alps – cue epic landscapes. Later, check out the lake, Lion Monument, Chapel Bridge, Glacier Gardens and Hofkirche on a walking tour. Then: the rest of the day is 100% up to you. See if you can find the lion in the wall. Or settle in for some alpine specialties and in-house brews at Rathaus Brauerei.



### MEALS:

- Breakfast



### INCLUDED TODAY:

- Walking tour of Lucerne with Trip Leader

## DAY 11 | LUCERNE – PARIS (FRANCE)

The home of Coco Chanel, the Mona Lisa and world's craziest roundabout – Paris deserves its rep as the European capital for all things culture, fashion and bloody good food. Get to know the City of Love with a driving tour – ticking off heavyweights like the Louvre, Arc de Triomphe and the Champs Elysées. Then: you're free to explore this iconic city on your own. Tonight, dress to impress for an optional cabaret show. Or quiz your Trip Leader on the best place to try snails. Choices, choices...



### MEALS:

- Breakfast



### INCLUDED TODAY:

- Paris highlights drive



### OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES:

- Parisian cabaret show: price and location available locally

## DAY 12 | PARIS

Don't be alarmed, but this is your last day on tour. So make every second count. Create a solid dent in your bucket list with a visit to the Louvre (get your tix in advance!). Flash some plastic along the Champs Elysées. Or discover the hidden backstreets lined with quaint Parisian cafés and patisseries. Walking not your thing? Get a set of wheels with an optional bike tour. Or jump aboard an optional river cruise down the Seine. Then, give this trip the send off it deserves at tonight's included dinner – we're not crying, you are.



### MEALS:

- Breakfast
- Dinner



### OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES:

- Seine River cruise in Paris: from €15
- Bike tour of Paris: from €34

## DAY 13 | PARIS – LONDON (ENGLAND)

After breakfast it's time to hit the road back to LDN. Swap those numbers and say your goodbyes. Who said the good times have to end? Check out our other Play & Pause trips and keep the adventure going. We're with you!



### **MEALS:**

- Breakfast

# OTHER INFORMATION

## TOPDECK APP

Feeling appy? Download the Topdeck app and get PUMPED for the adventure ahead. Best bit is: from 45 days before departure you'll be able to chat with your soon-to-be tripmates.

Plus, get your itinerary at your fingertips – so you know where you'll be going and what you'll be doing on each day of your trip. Nice!

Links:

Apple <https://apps.apple.com/gb/app/topdeck/id994727866>

Android <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.FlexiTechSolutions.TopDeck&hl=en>



## YOUR SAFETY

### NIGHTS OUT

We love a good night out – experiencing the nightlife and entertainment places have to offer is a big part of travelling. But alongside the fun it's important to be aware of your surroundings and personal safety.

When you're out late, remember to avoid walking alone – particularly through deserted areas like beaches and back streets. Always stick together, take a registered taxi where possible, and keep a note of your accommodation so you can find your way back to your fellow Topdeckers if you become separated. Make sure you have your trip mates' mobile numbers in case you need to get hold of them while out and about.

In some countries, alcoholic measures can be considerably larger than what you may be used to. Try to keep track of what you're drinking – and if you see one of your trip mates looking a little worse for wear, take them back to your accommodation. Never leave your drink unattended.

It's also important to be aware that what you might consider harmless flirting may be interpreted differently in some countries. Be yourself and have fun, but stay savvy – you don't want to find yourself in an uncomfortable situation.

### DRUG USE

Topdeck has a strict zero-tolerance drug policy. Customers should not bring any illegal substances onto the Topdeck coach or into any of the accommodation we stay in on our trips. This includes marijuana – even if it is legal in some of the states your trip passes through. If you are found in possession of drugs, you will be removed from the trip immediately. All instances of drug possession will be reported to Topdeck Head Office, who may consider alerting the relevant authorities.

**REMEMBER:** if you are found in possession of drugs, not only do you risk getting in trouble with the local police, but our Driver will also be held responsible if they are found on the Topdeck coach. Trust us, you don't want that to happen to any of our Drivers – they're awesome.

### MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Culture shock, homesickness, random periods of feeling down – these things happen and are totally normal. You can rest assured that if you're feeling low, your Topdeck crew will do their utmost to cheer you up.

Measures you can take to look after your mental health and wellbeing while on the road with us are:

- Call home. Sometimes it's nice to hear a familiar voice and have a good old-fashioned catch up with your loved ones
- Eat well. Never underestimate the power of a good, wholesome meal. Nobody feels at their best when they're hungry!

- Drink responsibly. Not only will you swerve the dreaded hangover, but by keeping an eye on what you drink you could also avoid getting into any potentially uncomfortable situations
- Talk to your Trip Leader. Don't forget, they're probably far from home too – so they're sure to know some tried- and- tested ways to beat the blues
- Integrate with your fellow Topdeckers. This one is key! The more fun you're having on your trip, the less likely you are to feel homesick (fact!)

## **TRAVEL SINCE COVID-19**

Travel looks a bit different since COVID-19. That's why we've put some new procedures in place to help keep you safe on the road.

What remains the same? Your Topdeck trip will be run hygienically, responsibly, and with your safety at the forefront of everything we do. End of.

Here's the info: <https://www.topdeck.travel/resources/travel-safely>

# **RESPECT ON THE ROAD**

## **RESPECTING FELLOW TRAVELLERS**

Our trips are for everyone. We're a family – and we want every Topdecker to have an incredible time.

What we're not about is excluding people or making them feel like they don't belong. That's why we always encourage Topdeckers to be kind and courteous to their fellow tripmates . The golden rules? Respect each other's space, be mindful of causing excessive noise in shared accommodation, and treat others how you'd wish to be treated. Easy!

## **HOW TO BE A RESPONSIBLE TRAVELLER**

Responsible travel isn't difficult to achieve. With a little conscious thought and preparation, you can have an awesome adventure AND a positive impact on the places you visit. Sweet!

Here are five things you can do to ensure you're travelling responsibly:

- Conserve water. You know the drill – reuse your room towels, take short showers and remember to turn off the tap when you're brushing your teeth
- Reduce your waste. Ditch the plastic bag, refuse unnecessary packaging, dispose of your waste responsibly and recycle as much as possible
- Go local. Hunt down locally owned and operated restaurants and bars, shop in local markets, and book tours and activities run by local guides
- Consider the wildlife. Avoid any attractions that involve closely engaging with wild animals
- Respect local people and culture. Obeying local laws is a given – but also remember to dress and behave in a manner appropriate to the community. Be polite and keep an open mind!

# **INSURANCE**

Before your trip departs, it's compulsory for all passengers to take out comprehensive travel insurance covering cancellation, medical expenses (including repatriation), loss or damage to baggage and personal belongings, money and personal liability.



Head to our FAQ for more info: <https://www.topdeck.travel/resources/faqs-0>

Got more Qs? Chat with our Customer Service team: <https://www.topdeck.travel/about-us/contact>

## PASSPORTS AND VISAS

Please make sure your passport is valid for at least six months after the last day of your trip. Some countries will refuse entry if you do not have at least six months validity remaining on your passport after your departure date. Depending on your nationality, you may require a visa to enter certain countries.

It is your responsibility to obtain visas prior to your trip's departure. To determine which visas you'll need, you can consult either your own government's website or the government websites of the countries in which you will be travelling. Check out our handy interactive map showing global visa requirements:

<https://www.topdeck.travel/resources/latest-border-restrictions>

PLEASE NOTE: some visas can take up to six weeks to acquire, so don't leave it until the last minute. Also, bear in mind that the validity of a visa often runs from its date of issue rather than the date of entry into the country. Please check with the appropriate embassy/embassies prior to departure, as requirements do change periodically.

## TIPPING

Basically: it's not necessary.

Your Trip Leader and Driver don't expect tips, and they won't ask for any either. Meaning? More dollar to spend on optional activities (and a souvenir for your nan).

## WHAT TO BRING

Based on our experience, these items are key. Everyone's different though – so if you want to bring more or less, go for it (as long as you don't exceed your 20kg allowance, that is!).

Off to Japan? Your luggage must be no bigger than 160cm in total (height x width x length). So maybe leave the hairdryer at home.

Psst: this is a packing list for Topdeck trips in general. Obv you'd look silly splashing around the Greek islands in a snowsuit.

- 1 pair of comfortable walking shoes + 1 pair of smart casual shoes
- 1 pair of thongs/jandals/flip-flops
- 2 pairs of jeans/trousers
- 2 pairs of shorts/skirts
- 4 shirts/T-shirts
- 2 sweaters/jumpers
- Smart casual evening wear
- 1 warm jacket + 1 rainproof jacket

- Underwear and socks + swimwear
- Towel
- Toiletries
- Hat and sunscreen
- Basic medical kit (including plasters, aspirin etc)
- Adaptor plug
- Reusable water bottle
- Snow gear



**THAT'S IT!**