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by Libby Zay (RSS feed) on Apr 11th 2012 at 10:30AM



Forget flying around Europe. At 30,000 feet it's impossible to truly experience the continent's remarkable landscapes. Rather than being shuttled around in a plane that only allows a birds-eye view, train trips immerse travelers in the terrain. There's a reason why trains are often thought of as the most romantic mode of transportation: riding the rails makes you feel more connected and in tune than air travel ever could. Instead of feeling like a chore, as flying often does, train travel can be an experience in itself. In fact, there are plenty of scenic train rides in Europe that are worth the trip just for the view. The following are top rated train trips, and from the rolling hills of England to the craggy Alps of Switzerland, each one offers travelers something different.

6. United Kingdom

[London](#) to [Edinburgh](#)

The [rolling, green hills and moors](#) that are often associated with [Yorkshire](#) make this one of the most scenic train trips in Europe. When entering the northern parts of [England](#), travelers

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will catch glimpses of the rugged coastline along the North Sea. During the 4 1/2-hour train ride, English speakers will notice a distinct difference in passenger accents as the train gets closer to [Scotland](#). Although the common language is English, it can be hard to decipher as the Scottish brogue gets thicker and thicker.

[Flickr photo via [boutmuet](#)]

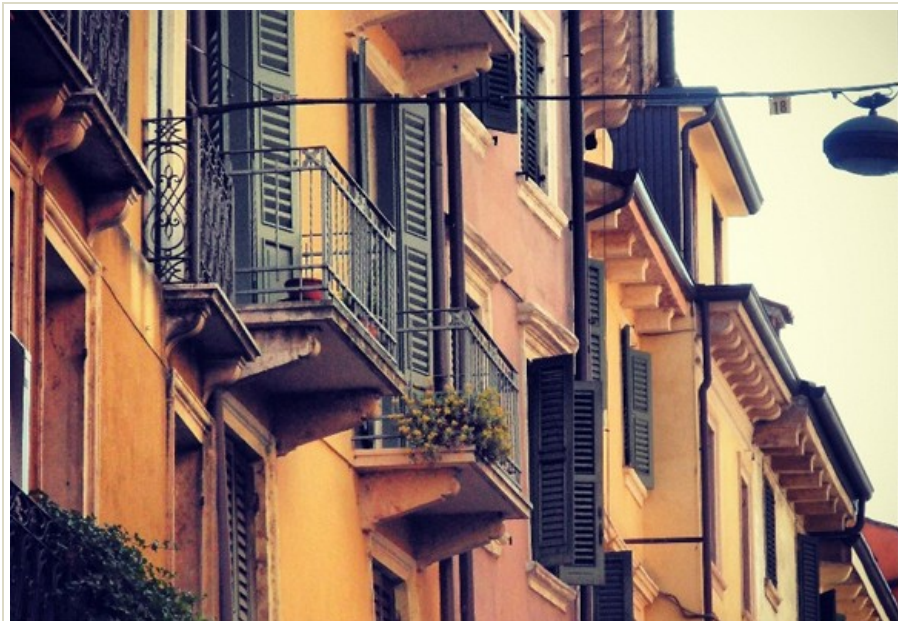


5. Holland

[Amsterdam](#) to [Groningen](#) (best in April)

In Holland, the most scenic train trip isn't necessarily about being on the right track; it's actually all about timing. Travelers will want to hop onboard in spring – particularly in April – to see the blanket of colors that results when the [famous Dutch tulips](#) are in full bloom. On the two-hour route between Amsterdam and Groningen, travelers will also be able to spot plenty of windmills, another quintessential part of the Dutch landscape.

[Flickr photo by [Amy Bonner](#)]



4. Italy

[Rome](#) to [Verona](#) to [Venice](#)

Train trips [don't get much more romantic](#) than the ride from Rome to Venice, especially if you make a stopover in Verona. The train ride starts in [Rome](#), the enchanting "Eternal City," and then makes its way through the Tuscan farmlands to [Verona](#), a pleasant city famous as the setting for Shakespeare's "Romeo and Juliet." Make a day of wandering around the city's



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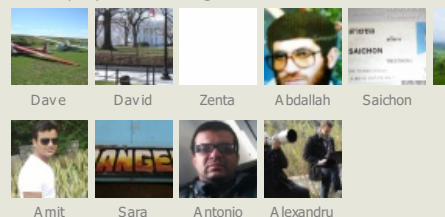
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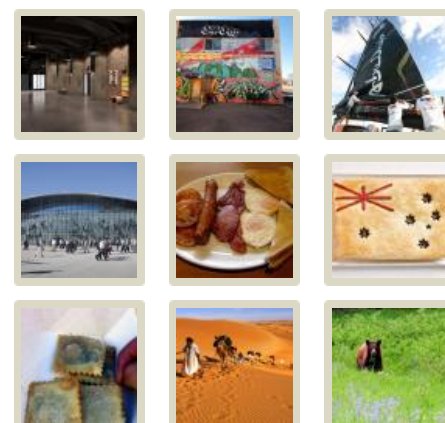


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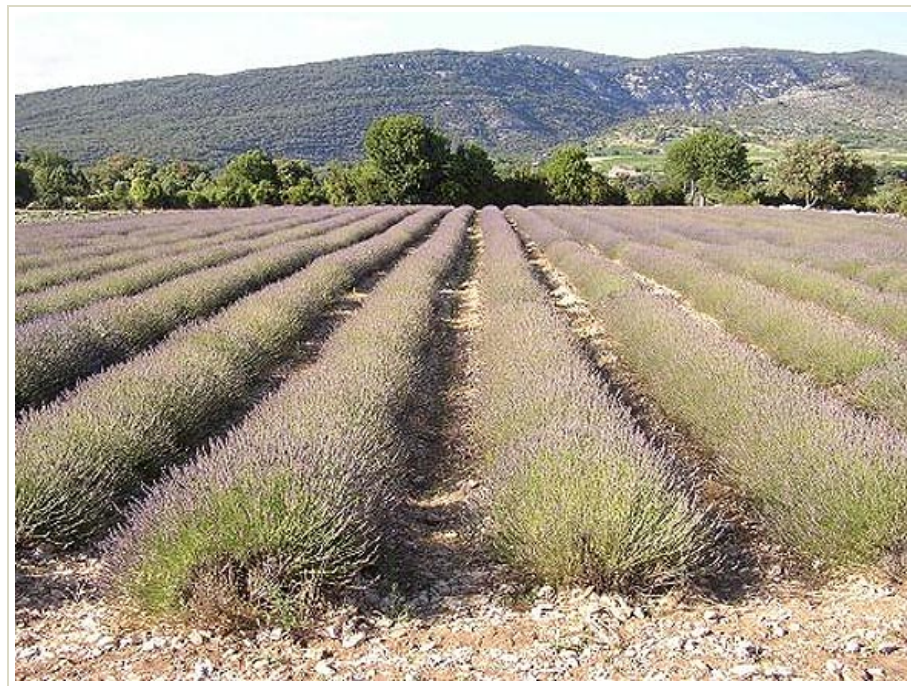
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lovely corridors (pictured above) and passing some time in a local cafe or bar. Then head to [Venice](#), Italy's famed "Floating City," that is by far one of the most romantic destinations in the world. The train approaches through Venice's lagoon in the [Adriatic Sea](#), and upon arrival you can hop on a gondola ride for two - what could be more romantic than that? Another scenic train trip in Italy is the route from Venice to Trieste. On this trip, the train hugs the coast of the Adriatic Sea until reaching Trieste, a charming destination with beautiful sea views and several cafes and pubs for you to spend your days and nights in.

Balconies in Verona, Italy [Photo by Libby Zay]



3. France

Montpellier to Nice

The [train ride through southern France](#) from Montpellier to [Nice](#) is another visually stunning trip. From Montpellier to Marseille, travelers will see the [typical Provençal landscape](#) of red-colored soil, tall cypress trees and expansive fields of lavender and olives. As the train gets closer to Nice, the coastal scenery along the Mediterranean Sea comes in to view. Note that if you have a [France Rail Pass](#), it's possible to break the ride up to spend some time exploring small Provençal towns, such as [Aix-en-Provence](#), the famous home of Paul Cézanne, or Nîmes, with its stunning Roman amphitheater that is second only to [Rome's Colosseum](#).

[Flickr photo by [paularps](#)]



2. Germany

Black Forest Railway

The Roman's gave this thickly wooded and mountainous region in [Germany](#) the name Silva Nigra (i.e. "[Black Forest](#)") because the dense growth of trees blocked out most of the light

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inside the forest. Experience the spectacular scenery on the Black Forest Railway, part of the German National Railway that connects Offenburg and Singen. The 93-mile-long route ascends (or descends, depending on which way you travel) more than 2,000 feet as it passes through 39 tunnels and over two viaducts. The section between Hornberg, Triberg, and St. Georgen is particularly pretty. The stretch is also popular with locals, who use it as part of their regular commute between the towns they live in and larger cities. Tourists, however, will probably think it looks straight out of a storybook – so it shouldn't come as a surprise that the Black Forest is the setting for the Brothers Grimm tale "[Hansel and Gretel](#)." But don't worry, you won't need to follow a trail of breadcrumbs to get back home.

Look closely for one of the viaducts trains along the Black Forest Railway pass over in Hornberg [Wikimedia photo by [Prolineserver](#)]



1. Switzerland

Wilhelm Tell Express (May to October only)

Switzerland is known for some of the most stunning scenery in all of Europe. This trip from Lucerne to Locarno connects two of the prettiest parts of the country, central [Switzerland](#) and the Italian-speaking Ticino region. While in Lucerne, travelers can opt to take a boat ride on a vintage paddle steamer where they can enjoy lunch or dinner. When the boat reaches Flüelen, step onto a panoramic train that will whisk you past lone cottages on pine-covered hills, glistening streams, cerulean lakes, vast valleys covered in green, and craggy, snow-covered peaks, as it makes its way to Ticino. If you get a chance, make a stop in the tiny town of Bellinzona, an easily walk-able place that is well worth a day trip in order to explore one of their three medieval castles. Switzerland has some of the most fantastic scenic train trips in Europe with the [Golden Pass](#) and [Glacier-Express](#) also offering awe-inspiring views through panoramic train windows.

[Photo by Libby Zay]

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BETTY

Apr 11th 2012 11:48AM



The trip from Fianarantsoa to Manakara in Madagascar is not only scenic but a completely unique experience!! It passes through fields, towns, forests, by waterfalls and gives the opportunity to meet all the Malagasy people who turn out to greet the train!

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nc3Vt7F2W20&feature=related>

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GZZY

Apr 23rd 2012 7:39AM



i enjoyed the magnificent beauty of italy— germany & denmark. would love someday to visit switzerland .italy is in a world of its own!!!

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