



Eurail tips

Transcript 023

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Linda: Hi I'm Linda.

Craig: And I'm Craig.

Linda: And this is the Indie Travel Podcast, episode 22. This week's show was recorded in Tallinn, in Estonia.

Craig: Last week we did a review on the Eurail global pass, which is a ticket for unlimited travel in 18 European countries. This week we want to give you a few tips for using this pass.

Linda: We discovered some of these tips by painful experience, and some by trawling through the fine print on the accompanying booklet that we got when we got the pass. We've also spoken to some people who've been disappointed in the pass because they didn't understand it well enough.

Craig: So, point number one: is, as always, read the small print. Work out what exactly you're getting yourself into.

Linda: Point two: work out where you're going. It might be cheaper to pay as you go. Italy is quite a cheap country for train travel, as are many Eastern European countries. Also check out the local train websites like www.trenitalia.it for Italy and www.oebb.at for Austria. Also, make sure you get the right pass for you, there's so many options.

Craig: Point three: Check the exceptions. For example, you've got to pay extra for seat reservations and for places in sleeping carriages. Usually this is about three euros for a seat reservation, and 20 euros for the cheapest couchette. Not all trains require you to have a seat reservation, but if there is an R next to the train on the timetable, you must have a reserved seat. And sometimes it's worth having a reserved seat, even when it's not compulsory - like the first train we ever caught. It was travelling from Sicily up to Rome. It was heavily overbooked

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and people were running for the train as it pulled into the station. We managed to get seats, but it was a mission! I think that might be a story for another podcast.

Linda: Definitely. Point four then: don't plan too much. You'll be tempted to use the pass as much as is humanly possible, but you're better taking it a bit easy. Or use it for an intense part of your trip, with a relaxed week or so at the beginning and at the end. Or at the end.

Craig: Yeah, at some points we were doing two or three cities a day, and that is insane.

Linda: It was fun for a week or so, but at the end we were exhausted.

Craig: Yeah. Point five: look out for Switzerland! We were warned already, but we still managed to get on to a private train network that wasn't covered by the pass.

Linda: Point six: buy the pass before you leave home. You can get it sent to you in Europe, but it's difficult. We were thinking, we were in Malta when we wanted ours, and it was going to cost to get it posted out to us, but it was free to have it sent to New Zealand.

Craig: Right, well, I think that's enough for today, we've got an early start in the morning - a trip out to Helsinki. A couple of shout-outs - cheers to those who've commented on the site, it's great to hear from you. And we especially want to thank Ben, who has emailed a tip about cover charges in Italy. You can see that in the show notes for episode 20. You might also want to check out a listener blog: Everything, everywhere - links are in the show notes at www.indietravelpodcast.com. Next week, if all goes well, we'll be interviewing the man in seat 61 - an expert in rail travel.

Linda: So, until next week, travel well.

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