



Share the Experience

July 2010

WINTER PRE-DEPARTURE 2010-2011 EUROHOTEL

Hi, thank you for choosing to holiday with Topdeck. We certainly appreciate your decision to travel with us and rest assured everyone at Topdeck will be doing their utmost to ensure you have the holiday of a lifetime.

We have prepared the following information for you which we trust will assist you in planning for your trip. Some points should be taken as a guide only such as personal spending money, which can vary greatly between individuals but we are sure you will find the information in general very useful.

Get ready for a fantastic holiday!

From all the Crew at Topdeck Travel

Baggage

We recommend frameless backpacks, plus a small day pack or carry bag. **No external framed packs** please, as they damage other bags on the coach. Remember, if you take too much, you have to carry it around before and after the trip! **Please limit your baggage allowance to a maximum of 20kgs.** Maximum allowable size for all bags must not exceed 70cm x 50cm x 25cm.

Please note that due to space and weight restrictions on our coaches, passengers with too much luggage on the morning of departure may be told that they cannot take their entire luggage with them. If you are joining a Topdeck trip in a city other than London, please be aware that if you have too much luggage you will be asked to leave the excess behind and will have to make your own arrangements to have it stored.

Suggested Clothing List

The following clothing list is suggested based on our experience. The basic rule however is "pack light". Our passengers invariably state they wished they had brought half the amount of clothes and remember you are bound to find items to purchase on your trip so leave room for additional purchases during your holiday. Full coaches with heavy bags will render our coaches overweight and that will cause major disruptions to our schedules which will disrupt your journey. Please therefore ensure your bag weight doesn't go over 20kg at the end of the trip not the beginning!!

- Smart casual evening wear
- 1 pairs of jeans & 1 pair trousers
- 1 pair of walking shoes
- 2 sweaters/jumpers
- 1 warm jacket/coat
- 4 shirts / t-shirts / long-sleeved shirts
- 1 rainproof jacket
- 1 pair of shoes (smart/casual)
- Underwear and socks
- Hat, scarf, gloves

General

- Washing powder
- Basic medical kit (inc. aspirins, plasters)
- Towel
- Sewing kit
- Toiletries inc. toilet roll!

Please Note: Please be aware also, entry into some sights requires clothing to cover knees, chest and shoulders. You should also bring a towel as although these are supplied in all hotels, they can sometimes be small in certain countries.

Visa and Passport Information

Please make sure your passport is valid for at least 6 months after the last day of your trip. Some countries will refuse entry if there is not at least 6 months validity on passports after your departure date from their country. Depending on your nationality, you may require a visa to enter certain countries. **It is your responsibility to obtain these prior to the departure of the trip.** Consult your agent to determine which visas you will require.

We also have a visa chart on our website listing the visas required by some nationalities travelling on our trips. To check go to our website www.topdecktravel.co.uk, click on to Travelling with Topdeck and then Visa Information.

Remember that some visas can take up to six weeks to obtain, so do not leave it until the last minute. Also bear in mind that the validity of the visa often runs from the date of issue rather than date of entry into the country. Please check with the appropriate embassies prior to departure as requirements do change periodically.

Multiple Entry Visas

Certain trips may require multiple entry visas. **Note that all trips departing and returning to London; under normal circumstances, enter and exit Europe through Calais in France.** Please check your itinerary for the correct port of entry / exit for your trip.

SCHENGEN AGREEMENT:

France, Italy, Austria, Germany, The Netherlands, Portugal, Luxembourg, Greece, Spain, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden and Switzerland are all part of the Schengen Agreement, which means that one visa can be used to cover all of these countries. If you need a visa for any of these countries that your trip visits, **you will require a multi-entry Schengen visa.** The country you will be spending the most time in usually issues the Schengen visa.

Insurance

It is compulsory for all passengers to take out comprehensive travel insurance before the trip departs covering cancellation, medical expenses including repatriation, loss or damage to baggage and personal belongings, money and public liability. Topdeck can issue travel insurance, please refer to our website www.topdeck.travel, click on Travelling with Topdeck and then Travel Advice for more information. You **must** bring a copy of your insurance policy with you on your trip.

Security

Use eKit's travel vault and avoid hassles along the way. You can securely store all your important documents online, passport number, insurance and visa information and travellers cheques details. Refer to the eKit brochure or visit www.topdeck.ekit.com

Health & Vaccinations

If you suffer from any kind of medical condition you must advise Topdeck at the time of booking, or at least six weeks prior to the departure of your trip. Be sure to have an ample supply of medication before your trip departs, as it can be difficult to obtain medication in some countries.

No vaccinations are currently compulsory for entry into European countries. Please reconfirm this before you leave as conditions could change.

Spending Money

Automatic Teller Machines (ATMs) are available all over Europe and are the safest and easiest way to have access to cash. Travellers' cheques are also accepted in Europe and are an alternative to using ATMs. Euro is the main currency used in Western Europe. We recommend at least €50-€60 Euros per day to cover your normal expenses. If you wish to purchase expensive souvenirs, you will need to budget for more, or use your credit cards for these purchases.

Credit Cards

Most well known credit cards are accepted in Europe. We recommend that you bring yours along in case you see something special, which you haven't budgeted for. Credit cards **CANNOT** be used for optional excursions.

Optional Activities

On all trips we have arranged extra activities that we think will enhance your travel experience, but you have a choice as to whether or not you will participate. These are called Optional Excursions and are not included in the cost of your trip. They are usually organised on a group participation basis and should be taken into consideration when budgeting your spending money.

FREE Topdeck Global SIM card with US\$5 call credit included

This year we are giving all our travellers a FREE SIM card to use while on their Topdeck trip! Sort out your mobile phone options before you leave home and stay in touch with family and friends while you are away.



The Topdeck SIM is a "Roaming-free" SIM card which allows you turn your own mobile phone into an international travel phone. No roaming fees mean savings up to 90% on calls while travelling throughout Europe.

- You get your FREE global SIM card and US\$5 of bonus call credit
- Coverage is good in over 130 countries and all of Europe is covered
- It also features the cutting-edge [Online Travel Journal](#), an automatically updated daily record of your trip with your location displayed on Google Maps for friends and family to follow!

- * Fast low -cost 1st class shipping to Australia, UK and Europe, USA and Canada
- * You can upgrade your SIM card's calling plan for even better international rates:
 - Passport Plus - International calls from just US\$0.29 per minute
 - Passport SIM / Home & Roam - Free to receive calls in over 60 countries

To redeem your SIM card before you travel visit - www.topdeck.ekit.com/freesim - and use your Topdeck "Booking Reference". For more information visit the above URL or phone or 24/7 Customer Service on 0800-376-2370 (UK), 1800-795-252 (Aus), 1-888-513-8804 (USA), 1888-513-8804 (Canada).

The Global Phonecard with more:



When you're on a trip with Topdeck you'll also receive your complimentary Global Phonecard on the bus. Your phonecard comes with a FREE 5-minute phone call and is a great way to stay connected and let your family and friends know how your trip is going.

It's fully rechargeable; you'll receive a \$5 bonus on your first recharge and it can be used in over 150 countries – so all of Europe is covered. An essential part of your European adventure, your Topdeck Global phonecard comes with easy to use voicemail and a free email account! Visit www.topdeck.ekit.com for more.

Arriving in London

From London Airports

Directions: Your London trip departure point is from the Umi Hotel, 16 Leinster Square, Bayswater, London – Ph: 02072219131. Here are a few directions to help you on your arrival.

Heathrow Airport to Bayswater – By British Rail and Underground (For the Umi Hotel)

Heathrow Airport is connected to the entire Greater London area by the capital's underground or the British Rail railway network. From passport control and baggage reclaim follow the signs to the train station. Take the Heathrow Express to Paddington and change to the Underground District or Circle Line towards High Street Kensington or Wimbledon then get off at the first stop, Bayswater. The journey should take you approx 30 minutes.

Gatwick Airport travel by overland rail Gatwick Express train to Victoria rail and underground station with departures every 15 minutes, travel time to Victoria station is approx. 30 minutes. At the underground station take the District or Circle Line westbound towards Edgware Road to Bayswater station (approx. 15 minutes).

From Bayswater Station turn left out of the Station into Moscow Road. Walk 200 metres and turn right into Ilchester Gardens, straight ahead up Princes Square, straight ahead up Garway Road and left into Leinster Square where the Umi Hotel is located.

Getting around London

If you are going to be in London for a few days, it will be cheaper for you to buy an Oyster Card on arrival. This will give you savings on all London's public transport for the length of your stay.

Departing on your trip

Trips depart from: Umi Hotel, 16 Leinster Square, Bayswater, London W2

By Underground: From Bayswater Station turn left out of the station into Moscow Road. Walk 200 metres and turn right into Ilchester Gardens, straight ahead up Princes Square, straight ahead up Garway Road and left into Leinster Square where the Umi Hotel is located.
If you have booked pre trip accommodation at the Generator Hostel you will need to make your way to the Umi Hotel by 6.30am to depart at 7.00am.

Departure times of European trips from LONDON:

Check-in time at the Umi Hotel 6.00 - 6.30am

Departure time by 7.00am

For trips departing from cities other than London, please see the check-in details on your itinerary.

If you miss the trip from London – What to do!

Firstly ring our emergency number +44 77 9277 5415

If you happen to miss your coach the route taken by the trips that first go to Paris is via Dover and Calais.

For EuroHotel trips going to Paris:

You can catch the Eurostar train direct from St Pancras Station to **Gare du Nord** station in Paris. To check which hotel you are staying at, please call our Reservations Staff after 9.00am (Monday – Saturday) on +442089873300 and they will give you the name and address of the Hotel you are staying in and how to get there. They will also give you the mobile phone number of your Trip Leader. We use a number of different hotels in Paris so make sure to call our reservations staff first.

If you miss the trip from other start points – What to do!

Contact Topdeck in London on +44 20 8987 3300 to check details.

Finishing your trip

All trips finishing in London finish at the Umi Hotel, Bayswater at approximately 9.00pm. Please be aware that delays often occur in winter either on the motorways coming towards Calais or at UK Immigration. If this happens and we miss our normal ferry from Calais to Dover, your arrival time back in London could be delayed by up to several hours. Therefore we strongly recommend that you do not book flights out of London on the night your trip finishes.

Accommodation

Our Hotels are a mix of 2* and 3* hotels. Please remember that the standard of hotels and the ratings are not always the same as in your home country.

Meals

Your meal plan is clearly shown on your itinerary. We provide breakfast on all mornings except the departure morning. Breakfast is normally continental style and is served in the hotel. If you are a big eater you may find the amount of food somewhat limited, but the breakfast served is typical of meals served in most European countries.

Lunches are not included. Dinners are normally served in the hotel where you are staying and are either 2 or 3 courses. Meals served in these hotels are usually of a limited choice and may seem similar in different countries.

Where possible we have arranged some of your dinners away from the hotel to give you a taste of the best of the local food.

Great Deals on our Festival and Short Break packages!

Did you know Topdeck also run a great range of festival and short break packages all year round?

These include:

Venice Carnival

Anzac Day

Las Fallas

St. Patrick's Day

Easter Trips

Pamplona – Running of the Bulls

Edinburgh Fringe Festival

Oktoberfest
Deckers trips
Christmas and New Years Trips
Ski packages and MORE

Past Passenger Discount *

As a thank you for being a loyal Topdeck customer. You can claim the following discounts on your next trip. (*Terms & Conditions apply – please see the website for full details)

- 5% off any Topdeck Europe, Egypt or Africa trip departing in 2010.
- £10/\$10 discount on any Topdeck Festival or short break.
- 5% off ANZAC trips.

Final Checklist

- * Passport
- * Airline tickets (Where applicable)
- * Insurance Policy (You must bring this with you)
- * Visas if required
- * Camera, Batteries
- * Conversion plug