



Topdeck

PLAY & PAUSE: CENTRAL & EASTERN EUROPE (WINTER)







TRIP CODE:
TWDLL4

TOPDECKER, meet Europe (TD)

TRIP VIBE = the perfect mix of group activities and all-important YOU time. Scrolling for a winter journey through iconic European cities steeped in history, dripping in romance and jam-packed with jaw-dropping sites? You can stop now. This Play & Pause adventure soaks up the splendour of Paris, the ancient majesty of Rome and the ultra-hip atmosphere of Berlin – adding the wonders of Ljubljana, Budapest and Prague for good measure. Not to mention bags of free time to do your thing PLUS an awesome AF Trip Leader with tips for days (22 days, in fact). This? This is how you discover the REAL Europe – winter-style.

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

- Paris highlights drive
- Walking tour of Florence with local guide
- Walking tour of Rome with Trip Leader
- Walking tour of Venice with Trip Leader
- Visit Lake Bled
- Orientation walk of Ljubljana with Trip Leader
- Budapest highlights drive
- Vienna highlights drive
- Visit Schönbrunn Palace (entrance not included)
- Visit former concentration camp Mauthausen
- Walking tour of Prague with Trip Leader
- Orientation walk of Dresden with Trip Leader
- Berlin highlights drive

YOUR TRIP WILL START

PICK UP:

London
Europe

YOUR TRIP WILL FINISH

DROP OFF:

London
Europe

TRIP CURRENCIES

- England - GBP
- France - EUR
- Switzerland - CHF
- Italy - EUR
- Vatican City - EUR
- Slovenia - EUR
- Hungary - HUF
- Austria - EUR
- Czech Republic - CZK
- Germany - EUR
- Netherlands - EUR

YOUR ITINERARY

DAY 1 | LONDON (ENGLAND)

Hope you've packed your thermal undies – you're gonna need them when you touch down in LDN. First: say 'how do you do' to the small bunch of trip mates sharing the wintery adventure. Then: get to know one another better at our first included group feed. Ready for three weeks of icy cobbles, frosty canals, cosy pubs and crackling fires? See you bright and early!



MEALS:

- Dinner

DAY 2 | LONDON – PARIS (FRANCE)

Down that cuppa and wave cheerio to the Big Smoke – we're hitting the road and jumping across the Channel. The home of Coco Chanel, the Mona Lisa and the world's yummiest macarons – Paris deserves its rep as the European capital for culture and drool-worthy food. Trust us. We'll tick off all the showstoppers with a driving tour around the City of Light. And for dinner? The choice is yours, but your Trip Leader's got all the hot tips – just ask. Bon appétit!



MEALS:

- Breakfast



INCLUDED TODAY:

- Paris highlights drive

DAY 3 | PARIS

Yep, you're finally here – so, this is your day to simply do you. Create a solid dent in your bucket list with a visit to the Louvre (book your tickets in advance!) and the Musée d'Orsay. Hunt down the cosiest patisseries in town (your Trip Leader knows where it's at). Get lost amongst the shelves of history at Shakespeare and Co. Bookshop. Flash some plastic along the Champs Elysées. Or inject some feel-good vibes at the I Love You Wall. Feeling frosty? We got you – keep those calves warm on an optional bike tour. Or get an alternate view of the City of Love with a river cruise down the Seine. Tonight, go all-out with an optional evening at the cabaret. Think: bright lights, OTT costumes and death-defying acrobatics. You're in the home of the can-can after all.



MEALS:

- Breakfast



OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES:

- Seine River cruise: from €10
- Bike tour of Paris: from €30
- Parisian cabaret show: from €75

DAY 4 | PARIS – SWISS ALPS (SWITZERLAND)

Disclaimer: today is a bit of a drive day. But you already knew that, right? Strap in. Get to know your trip mates better. Or simply soak up the jaw-dropping, snow-capped scenery as it whizzes past the window. They don't have views like this back home. Cue the fairytale villages and romantic castles of your imagination. Later, we'll get stuck into a group dinner before heading to the hotel bar. Or sit back in the crisp (note: freezing) alpine air with a steaming cup of glühwein. Yep, this is what you came for.



MEALS:

- Breakfast
- Dinner

DAY 5 | SWISS ALPS

There's one word to describe Switzerland in winter: MAGIC. So, here's a free day to discover exactly what that means. Our suggestion for a clear day? Take the revolving gondola to the top of Mt Titlis for all the unbeliEVABLE panoramas (without the effort). Or strap on your boots and explore the forest trails – 'holy sh*t' moments guaranteed. Rather uncover the gastronomic wonders of this place? Head into town and sip on the world's best hot chocolate by a crackling fire. Whatever you choose, you're gonna have views for days. Dinner tonight is on you – haven't tried cheese fondue yet? Now's your chance (unless you're lactose intolerant, obv).



MEALS:

- Breakfast



OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES:

- Scenic excursion to Mt Titlis:
from 64 CHF

DAY 6 | SWISS ALPS – FLORENCE (ITALY)

Pelt your Trip Leader with one last snowball and snap another pic of the dreamy frosted-peaks (it'll never do this place justice) – we're rolling on to the capital of Tuscan cuisine today. You packed your fat pants, right? Before our included dinner tonight, rug up and take a stroll along the Arno River for those this-is-what-I-came-for-vibes. Then: did someone say karaoke? If you're up for it, join the gang in a battle of the ballads at a local bar. Or hunt down a gelateria for a scoop (or two) of the good stuff. Who said you can't have gelato in winter? This is your trip, after all.



MEALS:

- Breakfast
- Dinner

DAY 7 | FLORENCE – ROME

Florence has more plot twists than Game of Thrones, more culture than a Fitzroy hipster AND it gave the world David. Spend the morning exploring this beaut city on a walking tour with a local guide. Bonus! You'll witness a leather demonstration with a REAL awesome artisan. Later, bella Roma is calling our name. Two-and-a-half millennia of history. Vespas. Espresso. Two-cheek kisses. Aggressive hand gestures. And pizza the way it's supposed to taste. There's a reason Rome is on the top of Europe's must-do list. And it's even better in winter (in our totally unbiased opinion). Tonight, you're in Disneyland for foodies – so shake out those fat pants and ask your Trip Leader where to find the best cacio e pepe. You won't be disappointed, trust us.



MEALS:

- Breakfast



INCLUDED TODAY:

- Walking tour of Florence with
local guide

DAY 8 | ROME

Rise and shine! Slip on your boots, grab your beanie and pack your camera – today's walking tour is one for the books. We're talking a solid few hours of non-stop sights, off-the-tourist-trail hidden gems and a run-down of almost 3000 years of history. Pass by the Pantheon, throw your two cents in the Trevi Fountain, (don't) sit on the Spanish Steps and wind things up under the shadow of the mighty Colosseum. One word, four syllables: INCREDIBLE. The rest of the afternoon is 100% up to you. Count your blessings and play I-spy with historical masterpieces on an optional tour of Vatican City. Get up, close and personal with the Colosseum, Palatine Hill and Roman Forum on a guided tour. Or do as the locals do and indulge in a little dolce far niente (delicious idleness) at a local cafe or piazza.



MEALS:

- Breakfast



INCLUDED TODAY:

- Walking tour of Rome with Trip Leader



OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES:

- Guided tour of Vatican City: from €60
- Guided tour of Colosseum, Palatine Hill and Roman Forum: from €50

DAY 9 | ROME

Didn't tick everything off? We got you. Here's another free day we prepared earlier. Don't just skim the surface, experience every moment to the fullest. Head up Capitoline Hill for awesome views. Check out Castel Sant'Angelo (aka Hadrian's Tomb). Snack on roasted chestnuts and stroll along the Tiber River. Battle the lunchtime rush for a slice at Pizzarium Bonci. Shop till you drop on Via Condotti. Or strap on the skates and hit the rink (depending when you're here, obvs). Tonight, it's round 306 of You vs Delicious Carbs at our included group dinner. We believe in you.



MEALS:

- Breakfast
- Dinner

DAY 10 | ROME – VENICE

Tums filled with another included brekkie, we're heading to that famous sinking city today. After checking in at the hotel, it's time to see what all the fuss is about. Acquaint yourself with the who's who of Venice's usual suspects on a walking tour – ticking off the likes of St Mark's Square, Doge's Palace and Accademia Bridge. And then – this beautifully romantic city is yours for the taking. Our suggestion? Grab a macchiato overlooking the canal and watch the gondoliers guide their vessels through the fog. This place has romance written all over it. Later, score a cheap meal at a local restaurant or fill up on alllll the drool-worthy Venetian pastries (no judgement here).



MEALS:

- Breakfast



INCLUDED TODAY:

- Walking tour of Venice with Trip Leader



OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES:

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

DAY 11 | VENICE

Centuries-old architecture. Inventive cuisine. And a bucket-load of culture. Venice is just begging to be explored. News just in: you've got the whole day to do just that. Need suggestions? Go classic with a gondola ride down the Grand Canal. Rummage through piles of books-in-bathtubs at the floodproof(ish) Libreria Acqua Alta grotto. Head off the tourist trail with a trip to Giudecca Island. Get lost in the maze of canals and piazzas. Then seek out Café Florian for a piping mug of rich hot chocolate and zaletti biscuits. That's what makes memories.



MEALS:

- Breakfast



OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES:

- Gondola ride down the Grand Canal: from €30

DAY 12 | VENICE – LAKE BLEĐ (SLOVENIA) – LJUBLJANA

Today we're plugging Ljubljana into the GPS. Try pronouncing it, we dare you. But first: a visit to the mesmerising Lake Bled. It's even better without the filter, trust us. Take a stroll around the glistening blue lake. Or hire a boat across to the island and ring the wishing bell. You wished for more wishes, didn't you? After we roll into Slovenia's hip capital, take a quick stroll around the Old Town with your expert Trip Leader – before heading out to explore on your own. The castle has been waiting for you since Celtic times, so don't keep it hanging any longer. Tonight, gather the gang and hit the town for a vino with a side of live music. Or chill back at the hotel and recharge those batteries – there's still 10 days of adventuring left!



MEALS:

- Breakfast



INCLUDED TODAY:

- Visit Lake Bled
- Orientation walk of Ljubljana with Trip Leader

DAY 13 | LJUBLJANA – BUDAPEST (HUNGARY)

Our Ljubljana love affair was short but oh-so-sweet. Up next? The twin cities of Buda and Pest. See why they call this place the City of Bridges, as we're chauffeured past the Chain Bridge, Castle District, Gellert Hotel, Heroes' Square and House of Terror on a driving tour. SD cards full and tummies grumbling, we've got the evening free to explore. Love that! Get stuck into some local fare: goulash, chicken paprikash, langos, dobos cake. Hopefully you like paprika, they're kinda obsessed with it here. Or hang with the hipsters at one of the original ruin bars. Our suggestion? Try pálinka (traditional fruit brandy) – it's like a warm hug for your insides.



MEALS:

- Breakfast



INCLUDED TODAY:

- Budapest highlights drive

DAY 14 | BUDAPEST

You wanted freedom to explore – here it is. Check out the Central Market Hall. Explore the Jewish Quarter. Play pinball at the Flippermúzeum. Get a harrowing education at the House of Terrors. Hunt down the Anonymous Statue. Soak in the warm therapeutic waters of the Széchenyi Thermal Baths. Or head to Buda Castle and check out all the views from Fisherman's Bastion. Just be back for tonight's included dinner. Stuff your bellies with droolworthy Hungarian goods. Tomorrow we're hitting our next destination with all we've got!



MEALS:

- Breakfast
- Dinner

DAY 15 | BUDAPEST – VIENNA (AUSTRIA)

Viszlát (bye) Hungary, hallo (erm, hello) Austria! Ten points if you can guess what Vienna is famous for. Musicians. Grand coffee houses. And strudel (duh!). Prepare to have your heart captured as we drive by the likes of the Opera House, Hofburg Palace, Museum Quarter and Ringstrasse. We'll have a poke around Princess Sissi's opulent gardens at the Schönbrunn Palace – with enough time to check out her extravagant decorating too, if you fancy it. Then: the afternoon is yours. Explore the Museum Quarter in depth. Head to Cafe Central for the most boujee afternoon tea you've ever had. Or enjoy the sweet sounds of Mozart and Bach played by a Viennese orchestra at an optional concert. Culture mode = activated.



MEALS:

- Breakfast



INCLUDED TODAY:

- Vienna highlights drive
- Visit Schönbrunn Palace (entrance not included)



OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES:

- Viennese orchestra experience: from €65
- Viennese orchestra experience (dinner included): from €110

DAY 16 | VIENNA – MAUTHAUSEN – PRAGUE (CZECH REPUBLIC)

Onwards to the spire-filled skyline and mysterious streets of Prague! But first: a visit to former concentration camp Mauthausen for a lesson in the resilience of humanity. Dump your bag at the hotel, before embarking on a walking tour to get better acquainted with this picture-perfect city – complete with a 600-year-old Astronomical Clock. Your expert Trip Leader will point out all the must-dos for tomorrow as we go. After our included dinner, hit the town to try some local Czech beer or sample a cocktail at The Alchemist. Hint: if you want the full experience, ask for the 'choose your fate' (we'll see you in the morning).



MEALS:

- Breakfast
- Dinner



INCLUDED TODAY:

- Visit former concentration camp Mauthausen
- Walking tour of Prague with Trip Leader

DAY 17 | PRAGUE

That's right folks – it's your day, your way. So get out there and do your own spontaneous this-is-what-I-came-for thing. Check out the John Lennon wall. Soak up some history at the Communist Museum. Take the funicular up Petrin Hill for allll the views. Or grab a delish roast pork roll at one of the street vendors lining Old Town Square. Fancy yourself as a bit of a hops connoisseur? Don't miss the beer tasting optional this afternoon. Or delight your inner-fat kid with a sugar-filled serving of trdelník. Think: warm, fire-roasted pastry coated in cinnamon sugar – add Nutella and you've got the stuff of dessert dreams *wipes drool from chin*.



MEALS:

- Breakfast



OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES:

- Local beer tasting in Prague: from 800 CZK

DAY 18 | PRAGUE – DRESDEN (GERMANY) – BERLIN

Next up? A country where beer is officially considered an essential food group (right next to sausage and sauerkraut). Helloooo Germany! We'll get acquainted with 800 year-old Dresden on the way. Then: prep yourself for currywurst and more hipsters per capita than anywhere else. We'll drive you around the main sights including (what's left of) the Berlin Wall, the Reichstag, Checkpoint Charlie and Brandenburg Gate. After dinner together, see whether this city's nightlife really lives up to the hype. Or kick back and unwind in the privacy of your accom. You do you – that's what it's all about.



MEALS:

- Breakfast
- Dinner



INCLUDED TODAY:

- Orientation walk of Dresden with Trip Leader
- Berlin highlights drive

DAY 19 | BERLIN

You've got 24 hrs of free time here – don't muck around. Our advice? Opt for a local walking tour that's, you know, not boring. Or put that elastic waistband to the test on the ultimate Berlin food tour. Rather explore solo? Head to the Mauerpark markets for stalls filled with stuff you didn't know you needed. Explore Museum Island. Take a ride in a Trabi and see why it's Germany's best-loved car. Or turn off Google Maps and simply get lost in the unknown. Tonight, seek out Burgermeister. This place used to be a public toilet (ew) but now serves up the best burgers in Berlin. You know you wanna try it...



MEALS:

- Breakfast



OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES:

- Third Reich walking tour: from €12
- Berlin food tour: from €45

DAY 20 | BERLIN – AMSTERDAM (NETHERLANDS)

Quick maths: the adventure is coming to an end. But we're sure as hell not done yet! Set your sights on the one-and-only Amsterdam. Dump your stuff and hit the cobblestones – Dam Square, the Royal Palace and the National Monument are waiting. This place is a foodie's haven so you'll have no issues finding somewhere to settle in for dinner. Or grab a cone of hot chips, park up on a bench and watch life go by on the glassy, golden-lit canals. Prepare for chills – in more ways than one.



MEALS:

- Breakfast

DAY 21 | AMSTERDAM

This. Is. It. Our last full day. So, don't hang about! Check out Amsterdam's iconic canals, bridges and parks on an optional bike tour. History buffs should pay a visit to the Anne Frank House (don't forget to book in advance!). And for the culture fiends – the Van Gogh Museum and Rijksmuseum. Seek out the best appeltaart in the city. Or just get lost amongst backstreets of this city's diverse districts – each one's got a unique vibe. Make sure you're back in time to toast with your trip mates at tonight's included dinner. What. A. Trip.



MEALS:

- Breakfast
- Dinner



OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES:

- Bike tour of Amsterdam: from €25

DAY 22 | AMSTERDAM – LONDON (ENGLAND)

And just like that: it's over. 22 days. 10 countries. And alllll the mems. Before we make tracks back to London, stock up on stroopwafels, get mum a last-minute souvenir and swap Insta handles with the gang. Who's up for a reunion trip next year?



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!