

What's new this month

WELCOME

Welcome to the April edition of the *European Rail Timetable* which includes various updates and amendments to the current schedules. Many countries will be introducing new or amended timetables for the summer period and these will be shown, where possible, in the June edition. In most countries these changes will take place on June 15, but there are a number of exceptions. For example, updated British schedules will be valid from May 18, whilst in Russia and Ukraine new timings take effect from May 25. Information regarding timetable validity will be found in each individual country heading.

We have had a number of enquiries regarding the availability of the reprinted 1873 *Cook's Continental Time Tables & Tourist's Hand Book*, as well as the final editions of both the Thomas Cook Overseas and European Timetables, which were advertised on various pages of our March edition. Unfortunately we have experienced a slight delay setting up the system to sell these particular products, but we are confident that they will be available for purchase from our website (www.europeanrailtimetable.eu) early in April.

ROUTE OF THE MONTH

Nicky Gardner and Susanne Kries explore the classic Paris – Lyon – Marseille route, along which a journey is still possible using long distance regional services without the need for an advance seat reservation. A selection of other interesting regional routes in France are also outlined in an especially extended *Route of the Month* article which will be found on pages 34 and 35.

INTERNATIONAL

Only one of the expected two additional *TGV* services between Paris and Barcelona started running from March 31 which means that there are currently three daily *TGV* services in each direction between these two cities. We understand the fourth service is not now expected to start operating until July 6. The planned second *TGV* service between Lyon and Barcelona has also been postponed to a later date.

A correspondent has suggested that connections to and from Barcelona and Madrid with overnight trains **3731/3730** Paris – Cerbère/Portbou can be made at Perpignan (Table 13).

AVE 9735 Toulouse – Barcelona has been retimed to depart Toulouse over five hours earlier at 1505 (Table 49).

The thrice weekly Train **24/23** *Trans-European Express* Paris - Moskva will only run once a week during May due to engineering work in France. Run resumption it will run five days a week (Table 24).

GREAT BRITAIN

Good progress is being made on repairing the damage to infrastructure in the Dawlish area caused by the winter storms. Through services to and from the south-west of England are now expected to recommence on April 4, two weeks earlier than originally planned. The *Night Riviera* sleeper service is expected to resume from April 9. Services between Bristol and Exeter have also been restored following disruption caused by flooding in the Bridgwater area. Details of the temporary timetables, which are expected to remain in place until April 3, will be found on pages 562 and 563.

FRANCE

Until August 29 services on the route linking Lyon with Genève, Évian, St Gervais and Aix les Bains (via Ambérieu) are subject to alteration. Engineering work is taking place in four phases and timings are subject to variation during each phase while the maintenance is carried out. The latest available timings are shown in the relevant tables, but readers travelling in the area are advised to confirm timings locally. On the Lyon to Genève route (Table **346**) services are subject to extended journey times from April 5 with certain journeys operated by bus between St Julien en Genevois and Genève.

BELGIUM

On Mondays to Fridays from April 7 local trains between Antwerpen and Roosendaal are re-timed by a few minutes (Table **421**) which will improve connections at Roosendaal with services to and from Amsterdam.

SWITZERLAND

Buses continue to replace trains between Vallorcine and Argentière on the Martigny – Chamorix route, but an amended timetable applies from March 31 (Table **572**).

SPAIN

Trenhotel 897 Alhambra Barcelona – Granada departs Barcelona two hours earlier at 2000. This unfortunately severs the connection with the afternoon Paris to Barcelona *TGV* service.

SWEDEN

No sooner had last month's edition closed for press, than we were informed that the sleeper service between Stockholm and Malmö has earned a reprieve. The train is now shown to operate daily except Saturdays until October 31 but a final decision on its future will be made in the summer (Table **730**).

FINLAND

Our Finnish tables have been updated following the introduction of a new timetable valid from March 30 to June 15. The basic level of service remains the same, although journey times of many services in the north of the country have been considerably extended, in some cases by over one hour.

Services between Tampere and Pori are replaced by bus on Mondays to Fridays from April 14 between the hours of 0800 and 1600 (Table **792**).

GERMANY

From April 14 a new daily low-cost regional through service will be introduced between Berlin and Hamburg (via Stendal and Uelzen). Table **841** has been updated to include details of the new service.

From April 22 to September 28 regional services between Freiburg and Basel operate to a special timetable. During this period only a limited number of regional services will operate south of Schliengen with most other services replaced by bus. To help passengers make their journeys easier a number of *ICE* services to and from Basel will call additionally at Müllheim (regional tickets will be valid, but only between Müllheim and Basel Badischer Bahnhof). Details of the revised service will be found on page 559.

The international link between Trier and Luxembourg is affected by engineering work between May 2 and June 27. Buses replace all trains on the German side of the border resulting in extended journey times. Full details will be found in a special table on page 559.

The summer *Harzer Schmalspurbahnen* tourist railway timetable valid from April 26 will be found on page 559.

POLAND

Owing to refurbishment work on the bridge over the River Vistula in Warszawa, many services (particularly 'eastbound') currently use Gdańska station rather than Centralna and Wschodnia. Work is scheduled for completion ready for the start of the summer timetable on June 15. Apparently, PKP tickets are valid between Gdańska and the city centre either by metro or tram.

In Lithuania, services between Šeštokai and Kaunas are currently suspended for construction of a standard gauge line. Consequently, the international service *HANČZA* (Warszawa - Šeštokai and v.v.) now terminates at Suwałki (Table **1042**).

SLOVAKIA

There have been some minor amendments to a small number of local trains valid from March 2. These were not received in time for the March edition but the relevant tables have now been updated.

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SLOVENIA

During winter storms substantial damage was caused to electrification infrastructure. This has affected all services on Table 1305 including the Koper line - a major freight route - and as a result passenger services have been cancelled or replaced by bus in order to concentrate on moving the large tonnages of merchandise from Slovenia's premier port. Work to restore normal service continues apace but the situation remains fluid with frequent changes to schedules, and readers should consult local information if travelling in the area.

ALBANIA

We have been informed that the line between Tiranë and Vorë has closed and has already been considerably dismantled, with Tiranë station itself demolished to make way for a new road project. A bus service is in operation between Tiranë and Vorë but timings are not known (Table 1390).

ESTONIA

AS Eesti Liinirongid is a state owned enterprise that now runs all train services in Estonia under the *Elron* name, operating new Stadler FLIRT multiple units. A new timetable has been introduced with many additional services running. Travellers between Tallinn and Valga now have to change trains at Tartu (Table 1880).

SHIPPING

Minoan Lines' service from Ancona to Igumenitsa and Pátra (Table 2715) is now extended from/to Trieste. During the summer period (July 24 - September 10) the three times weekly sailings will serve Ravenna instead of Ancona and supplement the more frequent Ancona service (Table 2870).

Two withdrawals to report this month are DFDS Seaways' Sassnitz-Mukran - Klaipeda service (Table 2453), and the Århus - Kalundborg route of Kattegatruten (Table 2300).

BEYOND EUROPE

This month our Beyond Europe section covers Japan which has been updated with the latest timetable amendments. The Japanese tables are numbered from 8000 upwards.

THANK YOU

Sales of the first edition of the new *European Rail Timetable* exceeded all expectations and we would very much like to thank every one of our readers for their continued support. We have received a wide variety of messages offering suggestions, advising us of changes or simply acknowledging receipt of their timetable and we really do appreciate every single one of them. Your input helps us continually improve the timetable and make it as accurate as possible. However, together with the many sales enquiries, the sheer volume of correspondence we have received recently means that it may take us a little bit longer to reply than normal. Please be assured that we will endeavour to respond to all queries as soon as we can.

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