

What's new this month

WELCOME

As well as various updates to current European rail schedules, this month's edition of the European Rail Timetable includes the latest version of our **Summer International Supplement** which contains advance timings for all our international tables valid from June 11. It will be found at the back of timetable, on pages 599 to 639, and will be updated further in our May digital edition.

To ensure our readers who prefer the printed timetable can keep fully up to date with the latest timetable news, we have included on page 560 a copy of our news page that appeared in the March 2017 digital edition.

ROUTE OF THE MONTH

Our regular travel correspondents, Nicky Gardner and Susanne Kries, head to southern Spain for a ride through the El Chorro gorge located on the original main line between Málaga and Bobadilla. Nowadays, most long-distance passengers travelling north from Málaga will use the new standard gauge high-speed route. However, a few *Media Distancia* services still use the classic Iberian gauge line and it is the scenic section through the El Chorro gorge which is featured as our *Route of the Month* on page 34.

TIP OF THE MONTH

Readers intending to make long-distance journeys in Spain may not be aware that local journeys at either end of a booked long distance trip are actually available free of charge. You must obtain a travel ticket before using a suburban connecting train but the whole process is quite straight forward and is explained in our *Tip of the Month* on page 35.

AIRPORT LINKS

Leoš Janáček Ostrava airport has been added to Table 5. It is, in fact, the only rail connected airport in the Czech Republic.

INTERNATIONAL

Timings for both Thalys and Eurostar are now confirmed until September 2 and November 4 respectively. Full details are shown in the relevant tables of our Summer International Supplement.

On Mondays and Fridays the first Eurostar departure from London to Brussels now leaves earlier, at 0613, does not call at Calais or Lille and runs with train number **9108** (Table 10). Not surprisingly, the revised timings also results in an earlier Brussels arrival (at 0922) meaning a comfortable connection can be made with the 0952 Thalys service from Brussels to Amsterdam. It also allows additional time to connect with the 1025 ICE service from Brussels to Frankfurt.

The 0609 departure from Zürich to Milano (train EC11) will be extended to Venezia Santa Lucia (arriving 1240) on Saturdays and Sundays from June 17. Train EC10 will form the corresponding return journey, leaving Venezia at 1520 (Table 82).

Austrian Railways will increase the frequency of its IC Bus service between Venezia Mestre and Lido di Jesolo this Summer from one to three daily (Table 88).

Services between München and Praha are subject to alteration on April 8, 9 and 10 with bus substitution in operation between Schwandorf and Plzeň (Table 76).

GREAT BRITAIN

The long awaited re-opening of the Settle to Carlisle line as a through route was due to take place on March 31 and updated timings are now shown in Table 173. It has been closed for 14 months to enable extensive damage, caused by a major landslip near Armathwaite, to be repaired. It has been estimated that 500,000 tonnes of earth slipped down the embankment towards the River Eden during the severe winter storms early in 2016. The repairs include a new steel tunnel-like structure which now sits beneath the railway, 70 metres above the river, to provide a stable base for the new tracks to be laid across the damaged ground.

FRANCE

Comprehensive updates to our tables showing new schedules valid from April 2 to July 1 have been completed for Tables 280 to 325 inclusive, although inevitably there are periods of engineering work which may affect published timings.

Services between Firminy and Le Puy will be operated by bus from April 10 to December 9 so that work to upgrade the line can take place. Revised timings from April 10 are now shown in Table 349.

One of the main European rail events this year is the opening of two new high-speed lines in western France on July 2: TGV L'Océane between Tours and Bordeaux and TGV Bretagne-Pays de la Loire between Le Mans and Rennes. We have obtained advance timings for the new services and have reproduced these in some special tables which will be found on pages 566 and 567.

NETHERLANDS

From April 1 the line between Hoek van Holland and Schiedam is temporarily closed (for approximately five months) so that the route can be modified for integration into the Rotterdam metro system. On completion, the route will operate as an extension of existing metro lines A and B. In the meantime a special bus service will be in operation with a combination of fast and stopping services. The interim bus timings are shown in Table 497 and it should be noted that these services are operated by RET, the local transport provider in the Rotterdam area, and so a revised fare structure applies. We understand that tickets for travel solely on Dutch Railways, including rail passes, are no longer valid on this route. Foot passengers transferring from the Harwich – Hoek ferry should ensure they have a valid ticket for their onward journey.

ITALY

Recent repagination of the European Rail Timetable has allowed an expansion and restructure of our high-speed tables.

All high-speed services from and to Torino are now shown in Table 600, including those to Venezia previously shown in Table 585. This is possible as from April 2 there will be no Frecciabianca services remaining between Torino, Milano and Venezia as all trains will be classified Frecciarossa or Frecciargento and use the high-speed line between Torino and Milano.

Trenitalia high-speed services using the route between Venezia and Bologna will now be found in Table 616, but those operated by Nuovo Trasporto Viaggiatori (NTV) remain in Table 600.

SWEDEN

New summer schedules for the Inlandsbanan have been received and Table 753 is now valid until August 20.

GERMANY

The key international route between München and Salzburg will be affected by engineering work for around three months from April 14 to July 16. During this period many trains will be retimed and a number of EC/IC services will not run between München and Salzburg (these trains will continue to run either side of the affected section, albeit with different train numbers in some cases). To help readers plan upcoming journeys, we have included details of the modified timetable in a special version of Table 890 on page 564.

The summer schedules of the Harzer Schmalspurbahnen valid from April 29 are shown in a special version of Table 867 on page 565.

POLAND

New schedules valid from March 12 have been received and all tables updated.

CZECH REPUBLIC

Recently introduced Ex531/2 Praha – Český Krumlov will be extended to Nové Údolí on the German border at weekends from May to October, and daily June 10 to September 17. Details are in Table 1131. The tourist destination Nové Údolí is the location of a railway curiosity, a line just 105 metres long restored by railway enthusiasts. Since it straddles the border it claims to be the world's shortest international railway!

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What's new this month (continued from page 3)

HUNGARY

Amendments from April 2 have been incorporated into the tables. Whilst mostly of a minor nature, a more significant alteration is that Sunday train **1943** Győr to Budapest, together with **1948** in the other direction, now serve Budapest Déli station instead of Keleti (Table **1250**). The cross-border Debrecen to Baia Mare train in Table **1277** no longer extends to or from Jibou.

Due to engineering work on April 1, 8, 9 and 10, *IC* trains Budapest – Győr – Szombathely and Sopron (Tables **1250**, **1251** and **1252**) will depart from and arrive at Budapest Déli instead of Keleti. The same applies to *IC* trains between Budapest and Pécs (Table **1200**). The latter are also affected on April 22 and 23, but at press date it was not yet clear if the Győr trains are also diverted on these dates.

SERBIA and MONTENEGRO

Following the abrupt curtailment of the direct service between Beograd and Sofia it is once again possible to travel between the two capitals, albeit with a change of train at both Niš and Dimitrograd and extended journey times. We understand that the *BALKAN* direct service will resume for the summer period from June 1 to September 17 (Table **1380**).

Readers are reminded of further disruption in the region. Services from Beograd to Skopje and Thessaloniki are currently suspended owing to work between Niš and Preševo (Table **1380**). In addition, services on the Bar line are subject to alteration until July 15 owing to engineering work on the 68 kilometre section between Beograd and Lajkovac; day trains are subject to bus replacement, and night trains are suspended until the work is completed (Table **1370**).

TURKEY

There has been an increase in the number of high-speed services operating in Turkey following the delivery of new Siemens Velaro TR trains to Turkish Railways. Table **1570** has been fully updated with the latest high-speed schedules. To create space for the additional high-speed services, timings of trains between Istanbul and Adapazari will now be found in a separate panel below the main table.

UKRAINE

All tables have been updated with the timetable changes from March 26, some of which were shown last month. Train **771** Kyiv to Khmelnytsky, which conveys the through sleepers to Praha and Bratislava, now departs approximately 30 minutes later from Kyiv at 2357.

BALTIC STATES

Estonian Railways has introduced new timetables from March 26 affecting all lines. Some of the changes are significant; for example the last train from Narva to Tallinn is now at 1818 instead of 1932 (Table **1870**).

Lithuania has also made some changes recently. In particular train **780/1** between Vilnius and Klaipeda (Table **1810**) now runs only on four days per week, namely Fridays to Mondays.

KAZAKHSTAN and UZBEKISTAN

On March 21 a new Talgo service was launched linking Almaty, Kazakhstan's largest city and former capital, with Tashkent, the capital of Uzbekistan. Running twice weekly, the train also provides Shymkent with an overnight service to Almaty. Details are shown in Table **1975**.

BEYOND EUROPE

This month we have included sections covering China, Japan, South Korea and South America. Please note that the Chinese pages are as they appeared in last month's digital edition with no further updates.

There have been numerous schedule changes in Japan and all of our tables have been updated accordingly. The most notable change is in Table **8235** where some journeys now require a change of trains at Asahikawa. We have added a new panel to Table **8110** showing trains to Huis Ten Bosch, many of which run as through services from Hakata. Services to Wakura Onsen have been moved from Table **8150** to a new dedicated table, numbered **8155**. Another new table, numbered **8233**, shows services connecting Kushiro and Abashiri.

In South America, visitors to Peru should be aware that, owing to recent flooding, many services will be disrupted until at least the end of April.

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