

What's new this month

NEW WINTER SCHEDULES

Winter schedules commence on **December 11** throughout most of Europe, with significant changes to International and domestic services in almost all countries, and most of our tables in this edition are valid from this date. For services up to December 10 please use our November edition.

Our International tables are valid from **December 11** until **June 9**, although amendments can happen at any time. Many of the country by country tables are also valid until June 9, but Finland changes its timetable on March 5, and timings in Great Britain are valid to May 12. The introduction to each country section has further details of dates of validity, and exceptions are noted in individual tables.

Whilst we have the new timings for the vast majority of trains, only partial information was available for certain countries as we went to press. In the case of Italy, many of the international and high-speed trains are confirmed, but timings for the majority of trains were awaited. This is also the case for most trains in Bulgaria, and local trains in Spain. We are also waiting to hear if Portugal are planning changes from December. Further updates will follow in subsequent monthly editions.

RHIN-RHÔNE HIGH-SPEED LINE

Highlight of the new timetable from December 11 is the opening of the 140 km Rhin-Rhône high-speed line linking Dijon with Mulhouse. This will have a significant impact on international services between France and Switzerland as well as domestic French services. One important effect of the new line will be that *TGV* trains from Paris to Mulhouse, Basel and Zürich will switch to using the new line via Dijon instead of travelling via Strasbourg, and will therefore depart from Paris Gare de Lyon instead of Paris Est station (Tables **40** and **370**). This means that Paris to Zürich is achieved in around four hours, some 30 minutes faster than before. The routing of these trains via Dijon is, in fact, a return to the situation prior to the opening of the *Est Européenne* high-speed line in June 2007. At that time, however, the Zürich trains travelled via Bern and took 6 hours 15 minutes to reach Zürich.

There will be two new stations on the high-speed line, Besançon Franche-Comté TGV, and Belfort Montbéliard TGV. The former will have a shuttle rail service to the existing Besançon station (Besançon Viotte) taking around 15 minutes. The new line will also revolutionise services on the north-south axis (Table **379**) from Strasbourg to Dijon, Lyon and beyond. There will be six daily Strasbourg - Lyon TGV trains, three continuing to Marseille and two to Montpellier. A third Metz - Nancy - Lyon TGV train will also be introduced, continuing to Marseille.

INTERNATIONAL

Table **10** - Eurostar tables are valid until July 7.

Table **10a** - P & O Ferries is altering the schedules of its ships four times during the winter timetable period and this is affecting the rail-sea-rail timings between London and Paris.

Table **11** - This table is significantly recast with many changes. Amongst the highlights are **5104/5187** Lille - Toulouse terminating at Montpellier, and **9286/9864** Brussels/Lille - Nice calling at Lyon St Exupéry with the northbound service running 60 minutes later. Train **5100** Lille - Lyon extends to Marseille, runs an hour earlier, and has a portion for Montpellier.

Table **13** - Three out of the four Paris - Figueres Vilafant TGV services have been retimed, with the connecting services to Barcelona being changed accordingly.

Table **17** - Train **9074/9057** London to Marne la Vallée (for Disneyland Paris) continues to run on five days a week and daily during the school holidays. The outbound service runs 30 minutes later, the additional outbound on Saturdays runs 30 minutes earlier and the inbound 90 minutes earlier.

Table **18** - One pair of *Thalys* trains on the Paris - Brussels route extends to and from Brussels National / Zaventem airport daily.

Table **20** - The plan to extend two further Paris - Köln *Thalys* trains to Essen from December 11 has been dropped.

Table **24** - The *Moskva Express*, running between Berlin and Moskva three times a week, is extended to start from Paris. Named the *Trans-European Express*, it replaces the existing twice weekly Paris - Moskva service, with its long layover in Berlin. Connections from and to London are available at Frankfurt, although passengers will have to make their way between the Hauptbahnhof and Frankfurt Süd, as the

Moskva train only calls at the latter station. As an alternative, connections via Köln and Berlin are also shown in this table.

Table **40** - As mentioned above, Paris - Basel - Zürich TGV trains no longer run from Paris Est via Strasbourg, but now run from Paris Gare de Lyon via Dijon, Besançon and the new Rhin-Rhône high-speed line. The number of trains on this route has increased from five a day to six. Trains **91/90**, **97/96** and **295/296** on the Brussels - Strasbourg - Basel corridor have been moved out of Table **40** and into a revamped Table **43**, in order to accommodate the Paris - Zürich services. Connections London - Lille - Strasbourg - Basel have been recast.

Table **43** - This table has been altered to show two alternative routes between Brussels and Milano via Köln or Strasbourg. Train **295/296** Brussels - Luxembourg - Strasbourg - Basel now runs only between Luxembourg and Strasbourg and will be found in Table **383**.

Table **44** - *Artesia*, the joint Trenitalia - SNCF company which ran international services between France and Italy, has been wound up from the start of the new timetable. The TGV services between Paris and Milano are now run solely by SNCF (officially a subsidiary called *Società Viaggiatori Italia*), using refurbished trains. There are once again three trains each way instead of two, but they now terminate at Milano Porta Garibaldi rather than Centrale. Passengers travelling beyond Milano may find that a more convenient connection may be available at Torino Porta Susa.

The night trains between France and Italy also have a new operator, a joint venture between Trenitalia and Veolia Transdev, using the brand name *Thello* (pronounced Tell O). Initially there is only one train, a nightly service from Paris to Milano, Verona and Venezia (formerly the *Stendhal*, although the name has been dropped). After more than ten years of using the nearby Bercy station, the new service will now depart from Paris Gare de Lyon. One, two and three berth sleepers are provided together with four and six berth couchettes and a full restaurant car. The Paris to Bologna, Firenze and Roma night train (formerly the *Palatino*) will cease to run for now, but *Thello* plans to introduce a new service on this route from mid 2012. In the meantime, connections have been inserted in Table **44** at Milano (or at Brescia for passengers who require a later arrival or earlier departure).

Table **46** - TGV **8505** Paris to Irún terminates at Hendaye, thereby severing the onward connection into train **413** to Valladolid and Salamanca. The two following southbound TGV services are retimed earlier, increasing the connection time into the *Renfe* services at Irún. Northbound connection times have increased. The Paris - Irún overnight service (train **4053/4052**) has been cut back from running daily to three times a week and diverted via Toulouse, increasing the journey time by three hours and severing the onward *Renfe* connections to Madrid and A Coruña.

Table **47** - With the opening of the Rhin-Rhône high-speed line, there is a new daily TGV **9580/9582** from Marseille to Strasbourg via Lyon. From March 23 this service will be extended to Frankfurt (Main) with connections to and from a number of German destinations.

Table **50** - The Berlin to Malmö *Berlin Night Express*, a joint venture between Swedish Railways and GVG GmbH, is now operated solely by Veolia Transport. It will run three times weekly between April and November.

Table **54** - *CityNightLine* has introduced a new service, train **50473/40456**, between København and Praha, named *Orion*, conveying sleepers and couchettes. It will also have a restaurant car between Hamburg and København. The service calls at Berlin and therefore provides an overnight service, albeit short, between Berlin and København.

Table **56** - Due to reconstruction work at Warszawa Wschodnia, train **116/117** Warszawa - Minsk (with portions for Moskva and St Peterburg) now departs from and arrives at Warszawa Gdańska station (see city plan, page 32) instead of Centralna and Wschodnia, thus necessitating an earlier connection from Berlin and Köln.

Table **59** - Train **17** Moskva to Nice is retimed to depart earlier on Thursdays to enable an earlier arrival in Nice on Saturday mornings. This in turn allows train **18** Nice to Moskva to depart almost 24 hours earlier on Saturday evening.

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INTERNATIONAL - continued

Table **60** - *Avala 345/344* Praha - Beograd is renumbered **271/270**. A Praha - Bratislava service is extended to Budapest making a total of five direct daytime services.

Table **61** - The Wien - Budapest - București night train *Dacia 347/346* is cut back to run on a seasonal basis, including the period from the start of the timetable until mid January. On the dates when it doesn't run, a new train named *Muntenia* (numbered **1347/1346**), will operate between Budapest and București to maintain a daily service, albeit in different timings. The change to the *Dacia* means that there will no longer be sleeping cars from Wien to Beograd and Sofia, which previously transferred at Budapest to train **341/340** *Beograd*.

Table **62** - *EC 110/111* München - Klagenfurt no longer conveys a portion to Beograd, but a connecting service, *EC 211/210*, is available at Villach for Ljubljana, Zagreb and Beograd.

Table **70** - A pair of München - Verona trains will be extended to and from Venezia at weekends only from the end of March to the end of October. Train *EC 88/89* München - Milano Garibaldi is cut back to terminate at Verona.

Table **76** - A new express bus service has been introduced between Praha and München on which rail tickets and passes are valid. Jointly run by German Railways and the Czech company Student Agency, there are four journeys each way, taking four hours 45 minutes. Refreshments and toilets are provided on board.

Table **82** - Train *EC 158/153* Basel - Milano - Venezia now terminates at Milano.

Table **86** - *Railjet 165/162* Zürich to Wien is extended to and from Budapest.

Table **89** - The Budapest - Venezia night train, *EN441/440* *Venezia*, has been withdrawn, along with the Beograd - Venezia couchette cars and the once weekly Moskva - Venezia sleeping car.

Table **91** - Services between Austria and Slovenia have been considerably reduced with the withdrawal of the four Wien - Graz - Maribor trains (one of which started from Graz).

GREAT BRITAIN

One item of interest in the new timetable is that Newquay will have a Sunday service this winter.

FRANCE

As might be expected, many services have changed as a result of the new Rhin-Rhône high-speed line. As well as the Paris - Basel - Zürich services and inter-regional trains mentioned earlier, other TGV services link Paris with Mulhouse, whilst several trains run between Paris and the new Besançon TGV station, continuing to Besançon Viotte, the traditional city centre station. The Lille - Besançon TGV also uses the new line and is extended to Mulhouse. Since Mulhouse and Basel are now served by trains in Table **370** via Dijon, Paris trains in Table **390** via Strasbourg no longer extend beyond Colmar.

Other new services of note in the area are the shuttle between the two Besançon stations (Table **370a**), and a new Lyon - Besançon - Belfort service via the old line (Table **378**). Many tables have been renumbered as a result of the restructured services.

In fact this year there are significant changes throughout France, with many services being completely revised. SNCF claim that 85% of the timings have changed, partly to cater for a massive reconstruction programme, and also in order to provide more easily remembered 'clockface' timings where appropriate. Some regions have also increased the number of local trains on offer.

The changes are numerous, and only a few can be mentioned here. Several tables have also been restructured to make the best use of space. For example, Table **260** now covers Paris to Amiens, with Amiens - Boulogne - Calais moving to Table **261**, whilst Arras - Hazebrouck local trains now have their own table numbered **264a** (previously part of **266**). In Table **257** there are more through trains Lille - St Quentin, avoiding the need to change at Douai or Cambrai.

A slightly controversial change is the withdrawal of the *navette* shuttle trains between Orléans and Les Aubrais, although more local trains run directly to Orléans. Another notable change concerns the Paris to Clermont Ferrand trains which will now depart from Paris Bercy instead of Gare de Lyon. For those not in a hurry, Paris Bercy to Dijon trains now continue to Lyon every two hours taking five hours as opposed to

two hours via TGV train! In Table **299** we have finally found room to list departures from Nantes to the coastal resorts of Pornic and St Gilles Croix de Vie.

The short international link between the French town of Annemasse and Genève Eaux Vives (Table **366a**) has been cut back due to a project to upgrade the line. The new terminus in the suburbs of Genève is Chêne Bourg, which has been reopened for the purpose and is located a short walk from tram route 12. Replacement buses are also running between La Roche sur Foron via Annemasse to Eaux Vives.

Finally, one of the Lille - Strasbourg TGV trains in Table **391** is extended to and from Mulhouse, giving two alternative direct routes between these cities (the other via Dijon as mentioned earlier).

Because of the large number of changes, some were still being finalised as we went to press and further changes will no doubt follow. In particular, the large amount of overnight engineering work means that some overnight and early morning trains will not be able to run on certain dates.

BELGIUM

Brussels - Maastricht trains now terminate at the border station of Visé. Passengers are required to change either here, or more conveniently, at Liège Guillemins for the hourly local service into the Netherlands (Tables **400/436**).

NETHERLANDS

The main changes in the Netherlands are found on the main line between Amsterdam and Dordrecht via Den Haag and Rotterdam. A 15 minute regular interval semi-fast service operates via Haarlem (the hourly Amsterdam - Vlissingen service is now part of this pattern and so does not now call at Schiphol). Two faster services operate between Amsterdam and Rotterdam calling at Schiphol and Den Haag HS only (one of which is the existing hourly Amsterdam - Brussels service). The Amsterdam - Schiphol - Rotterdam - Breda *FYRA* service continues to operate every 30 minutes via the high-speed line. See Table **450** for full details of the revised service.

One further alteration is the extension of services between Schiphol and Lelystad to run from/to Den Haag Centraal on Mondays to Saturdays. This provides a useful through service from Den Haag to Amsterdam Zuid, Almere and Lelystad (see Table **458**).

ITALY

Only a small amount of information was available from Trenitalia as we went to press and passengers are advised to recheck their timings locally before travelling.

SPAIN

New timings from December 11 for most long-distance and express trains are shown in the tables, although some local trains remain subject to confirmation. Due to an increase in line speed to 310 km/h between Madrid and Lleida, all non-stop trains between Madrid and Barcelona now take just two hours and 30 minutes. A pair of early morning *AVE* trains which ran four times a week between Madrid and Barcelona have been withdrawn.

With the opening of the new high speed line between Santiago de Compostela and Ourense, five pairs of *Avant* services have been introduced between Santiago de Compostela and Ourense on Mondays to Fridays, with two pairs at the weekend, extending to A Coruña twice a day (Table **680**). Additionally the daily Talgo services between Madrid and A Coruña have been accelerated by up to 58 minutes.

DENMARK

The bridge over the Storstrøm, which links the islands of Sjælland and Falster, is currently the subject of emergency repairs. A much reduced service is currently in operation with most trains from København terminating in Vordingborg, and a shuttle service working over the bridge to Nykøbing F (Table **720**). International trains to/from Germany continue to operate. This situation is expected to continue into the new year so intending passengers are advised to consult local information.

DSB First currently operates the *Kystbanen* service between Helsingør and Malmö (Table **703**), but this is due to be transferred to Veolia (VEO) in December.

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SWEDEN

New operator Skandinaviska Jernbanor (*SKJB*) will start a service between Stockholm and Göteborg (via Västerås) this month, initially with a solitary service in each direction (Table **740/56**). Opening of the Botniabanen is still awaited; it is not now expected before August 2012.

Fast trains are now classified 'Snabtbåt', and shown in our tables as 'S'. This has replaced the *X2000* branding to reflect that Statens Järnvägar (Swedish State Railways) has recently introduced a second type of express unit, the X55.

GERMANY

The line between Berlin and Cottbus was partially closed for track upgrade work between May 2010 and September 2011 to enable an increase in line speed to 160 km/h. The full benefit of this upgrade will be noticed from the December timetable change with journey times between the two cities reduced by approximately 20 minutes. A further change will see the Cottbus - Berlin route joined with the Berlin - Wismar route to produce a lengthy regional through service with an overall journey time of over four hours! See the revamped Table **837** for full details.

On a less positive note the main lines between Berlin Wannsee and Berlin Charlottenburg will be closed for the whole timetable year. This will affect services on the Magdeburg - Brandenburg - Berlin route (Table **839**) and Dessau - Berlin (Table **847**). The hourly fast regional service between Magdeburg and Berlin continues to operate with a diversion between Brandenburg and Berlin (not calling at Potsdam or Berlin Wannsee). Other services terminate at/start from Berlin Wannsee with S-Bahn connections available to/from central Berlin.

The IC service between Koblenz and Luxembourg has been reduced from 4-5 services in each direction to just two. The through ICE service between Trier and Berlin is a further casualty.

Tables **904** and **905** which previously showed long distance/ regional services respectively between München and Nürnberg have been revamped. Table **904** now shows the complete service between München and Nürnberg via Ingolstadt with Table **905** showing those services running via Augsburg. The network of regional services to the south-west of München (Table **935**) sees some significant change for the first time in many years. Some of the tables in this area have been altered to reflect the new service patterns.

Periods of engineering work remain commonplace throughout Germany and, as always, brief details of known changes are included in the shaded panel on page 367. This page also includes a number of late changes which have not yet been incorporated into the tables.

AUSTRIA

A new private operator *Westbahn* starts operating regular services on the Wien - Linz - Salzburg route using brand new 200 km/h double-deck electric units. These services have their own fare structure and ÖBB tickets are not valid. Timings will be found in Table **950**. To make room for these services, local trains between Linz and Passau have been moved to an expanded Table **962**. ÖBB have withdrawn a small number of IC trains between Wien and Salzburg but continue to operate 2-3 trains an hour along this route including the hourly *Railjet* service between Wien and Salzburg taking just 2 hours 45 minutes.

The service between Wien and Graz/Villach (Table **980**) will see a gradual increase in the number of services operated by *Railjet* trains during 2012. Six services in each direction between Wien and Graz are *Railjet* operated from December 11, with many others converting from April 15. There is currently only one return Wien - Villach service operated by *Railjet*, but the number will increase from July 15.

It was reported earlier this year that services on the Salzburg - Selztal - Graz route (Table **975**) may be reduced to just three return journeys and that the Innsbruck - Graz through train may also be withdrawn. The good news is that the Innsbruck - Graz train has survived. However, there are now only three daily return EC/IC Salzburg - Graz trains with the other services downgraded to 2nd class only ordinary express trains (*Schnellzüge*) operating only on certain days of the week.

There have been a few amendments to the structure of the Austrian section. The Wien - Graz service has been incorporated into an expanded Table **980**, which also now includes the Graz - Klagenfurt express bus service. The Wien - Wien Flughafen table has been renumbered **985** (previously **979**) and the Wien - Retz - Znojmo service now has its own table, **983** (previously part of **982**). The service between Wien and Krems an der Donau has been moved from Table

990 to an expanded Table **991**. The Wiener Neustadt - Fehring service is yet another mover, previously **983**, now **995**. Finally, the Danube shipping table has moved from **959** to **999**.

POLAND

At the time of going to press, Polish Railways had only issued their new timetable until February 29, and therefore all timings from March 1 will be subject to confirmation. Many routes are affected by engineering work with extended journey times.

The once a day Warszawa - Chelm direct service has been withdrawn but the twice weekly *InterRegio* service between Warszawa and Lublin has been extended to Chelm (Table **1055**).

CZECH REPUBLIC

Services on the Praha - Ostrava - Žilina axis have been revised, and a much needed extra page for this section has allowed expansion of Table **1160**. Included in this table is the full Regiojet service between Praha and Havířov via Ostrava operated by Student Agency, although the introduction of certain journeys is likely to be delayed. *SuperCity* Pendolino trains are concentrated on the Ostrava route with certain journeys extended across the Slovakian border to Žilina. An interesting extension westwards sees an SC train serving the small spa town of Františkovy Lázně on Saturdays, reaching there by way of Plzeň and Cheb.

Other changes include the introduction of a second through train between Praha and Linz (Table **1132**) and the withdrawal of the through sleeping cars from České Budějovice and Brno to Košice.

SLOVAKIA

Space has been found to expand the Bratislava - Nitra table (**1177**) whilst Student Agency's *Regiojet* trains are due to take over the Bratislava - Komárno service (Table **1171**) from March 4.

HUNGARY and ROMANIA

There are changes to the Budapest - Arad services (Table **1280**). One of the Budapest - Timișoara trains has been withdrawn, but the Budapest - Sibiu *Transsylvania* now conveys a portion for Timișoara in replacement.

SLOVENIA and CROATIA

This winter will see Slovenian Railways' ICs trains break new ground, with one Ljubljana - Maribor service extended to the Austrian border town Spielfeld-Straß (Table **1315**).

The Croatian timetable sees the reintroduction of the mid-day train pair between Zagreb and Rijeka, followed in summer by the seasonal Zagreb - Split service. Both were withdrawn last year but now make a welcome return.

RUSSIA, BELARUS AND UKRAINE

Having announced in last month's Newslines that the Ukraine Government had decided to follow Russia and Belarus in scrapping daylight saving time and moving to permanent 'summer' time, we learnt just hours after going to press that the decision had been reversed. This means that until March 25 (when most countries put their clocks forward), Russia and Belarus will be a further hour ahead of its western neighbours (including the Ukraine) than hitherto. As information on the revised train times is limited we have left many times as they are, in particular those between Russia and the Ukraine, so changes of up to an hour are likely on any cross-border services.

SHIPPING

Shortly before we went to press, SeaFrance was placed under the control of Administrators, although the intention is for commercial activities to resume as soon as possible (Table **2110**).

BEYOND EUROPE

This month it is the turn of **Africa and the Middle East** (pages 564 - 575) whilst the January edition will include principal services in **India**.

NEXT MONTH

As well as updates to the schedules, the January edition will contain our annual **Sample Fares** feature.

HAPPY CHRISTMAS
from Thomas Cook Publishing