

What's new this month

WELCOME

Following the start of the new winter timetable period on December 15, we have been able to complete updates for most of our tables, particularly those in Sweden and Italy which were only partially updated in our Winter edition. We have also started the process of rechecking all other tables and making any necessary adjustments to reflect confirmed timings.

CAR-CARRYING TRAINS

2020 running dates for the Optima Tours car-carrying service between Villach and Edirne have been added to Table 1.

INTERNATIONAL

Train 23/24 Paris – Moskva is diverted to run via Saarbrücken instead of Strasbourg and Karlsruhe. Until January 16 the service actually calls at Saarbrücken but from January 17 it runs without any public stops between Paris and Frankfurt (Table 24).

The overnight service between Praha and Zürich (EN50466/50467) will be affected by engineering work during the periods February 15 to March 27, April 4 to 16 and April 23 to May 19 (Table 52).

GREAT BRITAIN

Last month we reported that TransPennine Express would be operating a reduced service on the Liverpool – Manchester – Leeds – Newcastle – Edinburgh route until early January (Table 188). In its latest update, the operator has indicated that the amended service will now continue until January 24 so readers intending to use trains along this route until this date are advised to confirm timings beforehand.

SPAIN

We have received provisional timings for services that will use the new stretch of high-speed line which by-passes Tarragona before joining the existing Barcelona – València main line a few kilometres west of Salou. The line is expected to open on January 13 and the proposed new timings on the Barcelona – València – Alacant route are included in a special version of Table 672 on pages 582 and 583. Trains using the new link will save around 25 minutes compared to current schedules with a typical Barcelona to Alacant journey taking just 4 hours and 30 minutes.

We are also awaiting timings for the new *Avant* service between Sevilla and Granada (Table 673).

Owing to heavy rainfall, the classic line east of Leida has been damaged and is not expected to reopen until July 2020. Replacement bus services are running Lleida – Reus and Lleida – Sant Vicenç de Calders (Table 652).

SWEDEN

The Swedish section has now been fully updated with schedules valid until June 21.

GERMANY

The temporary closure of the main line between Sachsendorf and Halle (to allow major route upgrade work to take place) was originally planned to end at the December timetable change. However, problems encountered in the Köthen area means that this section of line will now remain closed until March 31. Therefore, until the work is complete, all IC trains between Magdeburg and Leipzig will continue to be diverted via Dessau whilst regional services are replaced by bus between Sachsendorf and Halle. Unfortunately, timings shown in Table 866 of our Winter edition were based on the original work schedule and so these should only be used for journeys from April 1. In this edition we have included a special version of Table 866 on page 566 with revised timings valid until March 31.

HUNGARY

Engineering work will affect services in Tables 1200 and 1225 from mid-January to April 6 and April 30 respectively. The tables have therefore been updated with the amended schedules.

TURKEY

The Göller Express between Izmir and Isparta has been retimed by up to 60 minutes in both directions (Tables 1572 and 1587).

RAIL PASSES

There are changes to the Interrail and Eurail pass schemes from January 1, 2020. Firstly Estonia and Latvia join both schemes and are now included in the Interrail and Eurail Global passes (making 33 countries covered) as well as having their own One Country Passes. Note that Lithuania joined at the beginning of 2019 so all three Baltic States are now represented.

A further change is that the 3 days *within one month* Global Passes have been replaced by 4 days *within one month*. Official prices in euros have been held at the 2019 level for all other periods of validity, and in fact there has been a slight reduction in Youth prices for the Global pass. Full details are shown in our European Rail Passes pages on pages 563 to 565.

BEYOND EUROPE

This month's Beyond Europe section features India and will be found on pages 570 to 581. All tables have been rechecked although we have only found a few minor timing changes.

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