

What's new this month

WELCOME

Welcome to the Summer 2018 edition of the European Rail Timetable which includes updated schedules for most countries valid until December 8. The most notable exception is our Italian section which is only valid until June 9. We will, of course, check and update all our Italian tables as soon as schedules are confirmed (although only minor changes are expected).

This expanded edition also includes the latest versions of all eight Beyond Europe sections, together with our **Rail Extra** feature with 13 pages of useful transport based information presented on a country by country basis (including details of many popular tourist railways). Our regular Rail Passes feature is also expanded to include details of many domestic rail passes, as well as Interrail and Eurail products.

As is now customary in our printed editions, we have included (on page 582) a copy of the timetable news that appeared in last month's digital edition.

ROUTE OF THE MONTH

Over many years our regular travel correspondents, Nicky Gardner and Susanne Kries, have described a wonderful array of journeys across the European continent (and occasionally beyond) in our Route of the Month feature. However, this month's article, which describes a number of delightful routes passing through Switzerland's Lavaux region, marks the end of the current series.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank Nicky and Susanne for sharing their travel experiences with our readers over the past few years. Hopefully the articles have provided inspiration for many readers to follow in their footsteps. This month's article will be found on page 36 and offers a description of the various rail routes which wind their way through the Lavaux region together with a few useful tips for those wishing to linger for a few days in the region.

INTERNATIONAL

The Leo Express service between Praha and Kraków is now expected to start running at the end of June. The service is formed by extending train **1361** Praha – Bohumin to Kraków on Fridays and Sundays with **1356** returning on Saturdays and Mondays (Table **99**).

Due to engineering work on sections of the high-speed route between Brussels and Amsterdam, services are expected to be amended on four weekends in September and three in November (Table **18**).

The Sofia to Halkalı (Istanbul) and return services are both retimed from June 1 to October 1 with the journey time extended by approximately one hour. During this period the through couchette car operates between București and Istanbul and extra time is required to attach or detach this portion during the Dimitrograd stop (Tables **61** and **1550**).

We have made various changes to our International section, mainly to avoid duplication. Table **12**, which previously showed journeys between London and Brugge/Liège, has been deleted. Passengers travelling on Eurostar to Belgian destinations beyond Brussels should consult Table **10** and the relevant table in the Belgian section to plan their journey. Tables **15** (London – Amsterdam) and **18** (Paris – Amsterdam) have been combined to form a revised Table **18** covering all international connections London/Paris – Brussels – Amsterdam. As the table number **15** is now available we have allocated it to the London – Amsterdam rail-sea-rail table, formerly numbered **15a**.

GREAT BRITAIN

There have been significant alterations to various services throughout Great Britain following the summer timetable change on May 20.

With electrification of the Preston to Blackpool North line now complete, Virgin Trains has introduced four through services in each direction between London Euston and Blackpool North on Mondays to Fridays. Three services are also provided each way on Saturdays: two from London and one starting from Birmingham New Street northbound, whilst in the opposite direction all three services from Blackpool head to London. We have added Blackpool North to Table **154** to clearly show these new journey opportunities.

A completely new timetable has been introduced on the Great Northern, Southern and Thameslink routes following the opening of the Canal Tunnel link in north London which connects Finsbury Park station with the underground platforms at London St Pancras. This means that many suburban services that previously ran to and from London Kings Cross will now be diverted to run via central London and on to destinations in the south of England. Our Tables **103** and **185** show a selection of these trains, including a brand new service between Cambridge and Brighton and direct trains between Peterborough and Horsham, both of which also serve Gatwick Airport.

As a result of the major revision to Thameslink services, there has also been a recast of East Midlands Trains services between London and Sheffield/Nottingham with some journeys taking longer than before, particularly southbound (Table **170**).

East Midlands Trains and Cross Country services via Derby will be affected by major track and resignalling works at Derby station from July 22 to October 7. The work will be carried out in phases and during certain periods many trains will be unable to call at Derby station (various replacement bus services will be provided instead). To help readers plan journeys during this period we have provided a summary of service alterations in a special panel on page 117.

There have also been significant alterations in the north of England too. The service on the scenic Settle to Carlisle line has been recast and has gained an extra journey on weekdays and two extra trains on Sundays (Table **173**). The timetable between Leeds and Morecambe has also been amended with an additional return journey provided every day of the week (Table **174**). The Cumbrian Coast line between Barrow in Furness and Carlisle benefits from a vastly improved Sunday service with seven through trains in each direction along the length of the route (Table **159**). Previously there were only four services in each direction on the northern section of the route.

There has also been a major reshuffle of services operated by Trans Pennine Express. All fast Liverpool trains now run via Manchester Victoria and Newton-le-Willows (which is the quickest route between Manchester and Liverpool) meaning Trans Pennine Express services no longer operate via Warrington Central. Services to and from Manchester Airport are also now routed via Manchester Victoria and make use of the recently opened Ordsall Chord so that Manchester Oxford Road and Piccadilly stations can also be served (Table **188**). Another notable change is that services between Manchester and Scotland all now run non-stop between Manchester Piccadilly and Preston (Table **154**).

Finally, the East Coast Main Line franchise will be taken over by the Department for Transport from June 24 and will operate under the brand name London North Eastern Railway (LNER).

FRANCE

The section of high-speed line bypassing Nîmes will be used by a limited number of passenger trains for the first time from July 7 and they will also be the first to serve the new Montpellier Sud-de-France station, located approximately five kilometres south-east of the city centre. Initially, one TGV, one Ouigo and two Intercités in each direction will call at the new station (no longer serving Nîmes or Montpellier Saint-Roch). Timings of trains operating via the new route will be found in Table **355**.

Ouigo, the low-cost TGV operation, will expand further from July 7 when certain regular TGV services radiating from Paris Est will switch to the Ouigo brand. Two daily services in each direction on the Strasbourg route are affected, together with a single daily train pair on each of the Metz and Nancy routes. Ouigo services can only be booked on the internet so passengers wishing to use these particular services will need to book their journeys on the Ouigo website. Table **390** has been updated to clearly show which services are changing from July 7.

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What's new this month (continued from page 5)

ITALY

New schedules come into effect from June 10. Information was unavailable at press date, although only minor changes are expected. However, readers should be cautious of any exception dates if travelling on or around public holidays, or during August.

Services serving the Lombardy and Swiss Ticino regions have benefitted from the recent opening of the new cross border route via Stabio. A two-hourly service between Chiasso and Milano Malpensa airport has been introduced and is shown in a restructured Table 592.

SPAIN

A new railway station has been constructed in Huelva, located 500 metres to the east of the old station. However, timings of trains serving the city remain unchanged (Tables 660, 671 and 677). Travellers intending to connect with bus services to and from Ayamonte should note that the distance between the new railway station and the bus station has increased to approximately 1700 metres and so should allow extra time to make their connection (Table 676).

Spanish Railways has introduced a new pair of *Avant* services between Zamora and Madrid on Mondays to Fridays (numbered 4194/4195) which call at Medina del Campo AV and Segovia AV (Table 680).

SWEDEN

Many tables have been updated this month following receipt of further information.

During the summer period (June 25 to August 19) engineering work will force the closure of Stockholm Central station to services entering the capital from the south, notably affecting both Malmö and Oslo services. Most trains will instead start and terminate at Stockholm Södra with the remainder using Flemingsberg station. Passengers wishing to travel from or to the city centre will need to use the suburban services of operator SL for which an additional ticket will be required.

NORWAY

There will be major engineering work taking place in the Oslo area affecting many services from June 23 to August 5. The routes affected include Oslo – Halden – Göteborg (Table 770), Oslo – Kristiansand – Stavanger (Table 775) and Oslo – Sandefjord – Skien (Table 783) on which buses replace trains for part of the journey in the Oslo area. The Oslo – Bergen route (Table 780) will also be affected with trains diverted between Bergen and Hønefoss (not calling at Drammen).

A significant development in Norway is the opening of a new direct alignment between Larvik and Porsgrunn later this year. Journeys to and from Skien will be up to 30 minutes quicker from September 24 with rail services operating through to Skien throughout the day, replacing the bus services which currently run between Larvik and Skien for much of the day. The timings currently shown in Table 783 are those valid until September 23 and we will publish details of the accelerated services closer to the opening date.

GERMANY

There are numerous projects to upgrade railway infrastructure currently underway or planned during the current timetable period, resulting in considerable disruption to services at various locations. We have included some of the more significant alterations but unfortunately we do not have the space in the German section to show all timing variations. However, for major alterations over an extended period we have included some special versions of our regular tables. A summary of some of the more notable alterations will be found at the start of the German section, on page 369. Please note, however, that this list is not exhaustive and it is always advisable to check timings before travelling in Germany, particularly at weekends and during holiday periods.

CZECH REPUBLIC

The two-hourly EuroCity trains in Table 1100 have been retimed between Praha and Dresden, with later departures from Praha and earlier departures from Dresden. Timings are now aligned with the Praha – Ústí nad Labem – Karlovy Vary – Cheb trains giving an hourly non-stop service between Praha and Ústí at the same minutes past each hour. All services between these points are now shown in Table 1100.

HUNGARY

Budapest to Esztergom has a revised timetable from May 20 with trains twice hourly on every day of the week. On summer weekends three trains each way continue to call at Budapest's railway museum (Vasútmúzeum). Details are in Table 1299.

Istria, the seasonal Budapest to Rijeka and Koper train (Tables 89 and 1230) will serve Budapest Keleti rather than Déli this summer and will be routed via Balatonfüred and Tapolca.

As usual, services in the Lake Balaton area are increased during the high-summer season and timings valid from June 16 to August 26 are included in Tables 1220, 1225 and 1232.

BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA

Bihać will be reconnected to the rail network on July 1 when a new night service from Sarajevo commences. The route closed to passenger traffic in the winter of 2012. Unfortunately, schedules are not yet available (Table 1350).

SERBIA and GREECE

Train 334/335 *Hellas* Beograd – Thessaloniki will continue to operate during the summer, but only between Beograd and Gevgelija. It had originally been intended that the train would run throughout to Thessaloniki at weekends, with a bus connection on Mondays to Fridays, but transport to and from Greece's second city will now be provided by a bus connection on a daily basis (Table 1380).

ROMANIA

Summer updates for Black Sea coast services (Table 1680) are now incorporated into our tables.

UKRAINE

The weekly Kharkiv - Baki train (Table 1977) has been extended to serve the Ukrainian capital, leaving Kyiv on Mondays and returning from Baki on Saturdays.

ESTONIA

From May 22 journey times are extended between Tallinn and Tartu due to engineering work, as shown in Table 1880. This also affects Tallinn – Valga timings and the one good rail connection which existed at Valga for Riga to Tallinn journeys is not currently possible. Of course, the Riga – Tallinn journey is much quicker by road anyway, and bus services are shown in Table 1800.

BEYOND EUROPE

In this expanded Summer edition of the European Rail Timetable we have included all eight of our Beyond Europe sections. A list of the areas covered and their locations within the timetable will be found on page 583. The Africa and Middle East section has been fully updated this month, whilst the other sections have only limited updates since they last appeared in the regular monthly editions.

There are a number of changes in the Israel section due to ongoing electrification work in connection with the construction of the new express line between Tel Aviv and Jerusalem (which is expected to open before the end of 2018).

In countries that observe Ramadan, travellers should also be aware that schedules are subject to alteration until June 15.

In the United States of America, work on the Empire Connection route and Spuyten Duyvil Bridge means the *Empire Service*, *Ethan Allen Express*, *Adirondack*, and *Maple Leaf* trains will all be rerouted from New York Penn Station to Grand Central Terminal from Saturday May 26 to Monday September 3. The *Lake Shore Limited* is also affected as it will only operate between Boston and Chicago for the duration of the work – passengers travelling from/to New York will be required to use the *Empire Service* which connects with the *Lake Shore Limited* at Albany-Rensselaer. Table 9210 shows full details of the amended service during this period (timings of the *Lake Shore Limited* are shown in Table 9235). Amtrak has also issued its summer timetable for the *Pacific Surfliner* route, details of which will be found in Table 9320.

We have made some adjustments to our South Korean tables so we can show high-speed services between Seoul and Gangneung. Details of these will be found in Table 9975. Previously this table number was allocated to the Seoul to Chuncheon service which is now shown in Table 9983. We have also included details of the Korail rail pass in the South Korean heading.