

EUROPE TOUR

LOCATION: EUROPE

DURATION: 4 WEEKS



WHO IS THIS PROGRAM FOR?

Europe has an allure few other places in the world can claim. From history buffs to fashionistas; gap year explorers to food lovers, this incredibly diverse continent has something for everyone! If you are at least 18 years of age, then a summer tour around Europe is just the thing for you!



WHERE IS IT RUN?

Explore the history and culture of the **Old World**, from the art and history of **Renaissance** Italian city states, via the high refinement of Viennese coffee houses, to the colour of **Barcelona** and the Romantic drama of the **French Alps**.

Shorter and cheaper flights and excellent infrastructure make trips to Europe a good bet for packing lots into a tighter budget. But that doesn't mean that travelling in Europe is less intrepid than going further afield. There are plenty of opportunities for fun and adventure, and you're sure to form fast and lasting friendships with the other travellers in your group.

We use trains to speed us safely and comfortably between cities so you have the maximum time exploring.

YOUR ITINERARY



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YOUR ITINERARY



LONDON: DAYS 1-2

London Baby! On arrival you will be met by your Gapforce Leader and transferred to your accommodation. In the evening enjoy a welcome dinner with the rest of your group.

You will have a full day to explore Europe's largest capital city and there is certainly no shortage of places to visit. Spend time at some of the city's great historical landmarks including:

- Big Ben
- Westminster Abbey
- Buckingham Palace
- St Paul's Cathedral or the Tower of London

Take a stroll through one of the many lush green parks, shop in **Covent Garden** or take in one of the many museums and galleries on offer.

PARIS: DAYS 3-5

Bonjour Paris! We travel from London to the coast then over the channel to France and onward to Paris - Europe's most elegant and romantic city. Check into our accommodation and enjoy a group dinner at a local restaurant.

Your second and third day in Paris are yours – take a stroll down the **Champs-Élysées**, climb up the **Eiffel Tower**, try a boat trip on the Seine, or visit one of the numerous art galleries and hidden-away gardens.

Make sure you leave time to visit the **Musée du Louvre**, one of the world's largest museums and home to the infamous **Mona Lisa**!

BARCELONA: DAYS 6-7

Continuing south we travel by high-speed rail through the rolling hills and wine region of France then across the stunning **Pyrenees** mountain range into Spain and the incredible city of Barcelona.

Spain's second largest city vibrates with life and there are no shortages of things to see and do – from **Antoni Gaudí**'s extraordinary church of the **Sagrada Família**, the winding alleys and ageing mansions of the postcard worthy **Gothic Quarter**, and the world-famous boulevard that is the **Ramblas**, you can check the box for these must-see Spanish sightseeing list.

YOUR ITINERARY



GAPFORCE ESCAPE DAY: DAY 8

The group has covered a lot of ground in the first week, so today is all about coming together and exploring an activity off the beaten track.

Subject to how the group is feeling, you will work with your leader to determine today's activity. From a relaxing afternoon at the beach or a visit to the mountains outside of the city, this is your chance to escape and recharge in preparation for week two!

CÔTE D'AZUR: DAYS 9-11

We get back on the road today as we head back over the Pyrenees and follow the coastline to the stunning **French Riviera**. Check into our accommodation in the beach town of **Nice**, our base from which to explore the glamour of **Monaco**!

The seashore that extends from **St-Tropez** to the French-Italian boarder is one of the world's great seaside destinations.

Rub shoulders with the rich and famous, marvel at the opulence at the famous **Grand Casino**, check out luxury yachts in the **Marina**, eat lunch at one of the many eateries, or spend the day people-watching at **Port Hercules**.

The Côte D'Azur is home to some of the most iconic spots in Europe.

FLORENCE: DAYS 12-13

Leaving France behind, we next cross the border into Italy and our first stop Florence, the capital city of **Tuscany**. For art lovers, Florence has no equal in Europe, one of the world's great architectural masterpieces, packed with palaces and art galleries.

Florence has plenty to keep you busy but you may choose to visit the nearby the city of **Pisa** and the world famous leaning tower. After your obligatory photo by the tower, spend the day enjoying this compact city with its vibrant cafe and bar scene and Renaissance piazzas.

YOUR ITINERARY



ROME: DAYS 14-15

No trip to Italy is complete without a visit to the city of Rome!

An ancient place packed with the relics over two thousand years old, you could spend a month here and still only scratch the surface. The **Colosseum**, and the **Forum** and **Palatine Hill** are just some of the amazing sights to explore.

Food and wine are also central to Roman social life and the hundreds of pizzerias, trattorias, restaurants and gelaterie that crowd the city. Make sure you take time to enjoy the eateries and soak up the atmosphere!

GAPFORCE ESCAPE DAY: DAY 16

As week two draws to a close, it's time for the second rest and relaxation day.

Subject to how the group is feeling today, you may explore activities like the countless beach resorts along the **Amalfi** coast, or head inland to enjoy the serene countryside.



YOUR ITINERARY



VENICE: DAYS 17-18

Venice is your next stop - one of Italy's top travel cities and a beautiful, romantic destination with many attractions.

Its small, traffic-free streets along the winding canals make for great walking. You'll find many magnificent churches and palaces, lively squares, and interesting shops. Venice actually consists of **117 bodies of land** connected by more than **400 bridges** over its **150 canals**.

The **Grand Canal** is like a main street, cutting through the centre of the city. Venice will leave you captivated; there is no other city on earth that compares.

VIENNA: DAYS 19-20

As we continue north we cross the border into **Austria** and to the capital of Vienna which is packed with imperial history. At the same time it has exciting contemporary museums, lively eating and nightlife scenes, and many quiet corners to explore.

You'll have two days here to further explore all that Vienna has to offer!

PRAGUE: DAYS 21-23

Prague is understandably becoming one of Europe's most popular tourist destinations.

The capital of the Czech Republic, Prague is situated in the heart of the country astride the **Vltava (Moldau) River**, and has a reputation as one of the most beautiful cities in Europe.

The city dates back hundreds of years and has a rich architectural heritage, ranging from Romanesque and Gothic to Renaissance and Baroque, which is remarkably well preserved having survived the Second World War fairly untouched.

Unsurprisingly, the historic city centre, with its maze of cobbled streets, countless old churches and courtyards, was designated a **UNESCO World Heritage Site** in 1992.

YOUR ITINERARY



BERLIN: DAYS 24-25

Since the fall of the **Iron Curtain**, no other city in Europe has seen more change than Berlin, the German capital.

The **two 'Berlins'** that had been physically separated for almost 30 years have become one, and the reunited city has become a cutting-edge destination for architecture, culture, entertainment, nightlife, and shopping.

After successfully uniting its own **East** and **West**, Berlin now plays a pivotal role in the **European Union**. But even as the capital thinks and moves forward, history is always tugging at its sleeve. Between the wealth of neoclassical and 21st-century buildings there are constant reminders, both subtle and stark, of the events of the 20th century.

AMSTERDAM: DAYS 26-27

With every justification, Amsterdam is one of Europe's top short-break destinations. It's a compact, instantly likeable city, that's appealing to look at and pleasant to walk around.

An intriguing mix of the parochial and the international, it has a welcoming attitude towards visitors and a uniquely youthful orientation, shaped by the liberal counter-culture that took hold in the 1960s.

LONDON: DAY 28

Time to make your way back to London for one final night before your European adventure comes to an end. Your tour ends after breakfast on day 29.



WHAT'S INCLUDED



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THE BASICS

- Pre-departure support
- Airport pick-up (from Heathrow only)
- Gapforce Expedition leader
- All accommodation for the duration of the trip
- 28 Breakfasts
- 14 group dinners
- Transfers between cities on the itinerary
- Two Gapforce Escape Days
- 24/7 UK emergency backup
- Return airport transfer (to Heathrow only)

NOT INCLUDED

- Flights
- Travel Insurance
- Visa & Vaccinations
- Spending Money for drinks, snacks, optional activities and personal items
- Lunches
- Dinners (except where specified above)
- Local transport and entrance fees to attractions (except on escape days)
- Tipping and gratuities

Please note that due to the nature of expeditions, prices, dates and itinerary may vary. Please call for details.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION





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ACCOMMODATION

You will stay in a variety of hostels with shared bathroom facilities throughout your trip: these will all be shared accommodation spaces with members of your Gapforce group.

MEALS

28 breakfasts and 14 group dinners are included in your program fee. All other meals are at your own expense. See suggested spending money for food and drinks below. In some cities, you will have the option to use kitchen facilities in hostels if you do not wish to dine out every night.

STAFF & SUPERVISION

You will be accompanied on your trip from start to finish by a Gapforce Expedition Leader. Gapforce is renowned for the select team of enthusiastic leaders who run our worldwide operations. We employ great people experienced in delivering inspiring and safe travel experiences, many of whom have graduated from our rigorous 3-month Expedition Leader Training.

While in each city, you and your fellow group members are free to explore the sights that are of most interest to you. Your group leader will be available to make recommendations of things to see and do to help you make the most of your time. With such limited time and the group all potentially wanting to see and do different things, your leader will not be able to accompany you to every attraction or provide a group tour at each location (if you would like a guided city tour, your leader can make some suggestions of local providers). The two escape days are two exceptions to this where everyone takes part in an organised group activity.

There will be times outside of scheduled group activities and travel when you are not under the direct supervision of Gapforce staff. During these times, your leaders will be in the vicinity but may not be able to intervene immediately in the event of an emergency and you are therefore expected to act responsibly and be safety minded at all times. For any times when they are not physically with you, your leaders will provide you with their contact details should you need their assistance.

FLIGHTS

Your arrival and departure city is **London**.

London has **5 international airports** as well as an international train station so the group meeting point will be at the hostel at **4pm**. For those who would like an airport pick up then a Gapforce staff member will be at **Heathrow airport at 2pm** and travel to the hostel. Full details with directions and contact details will be supplied in your pre-departure documents. For return flights home, if you would like airport drop off, please book your flight after 12pm from Heathrow airport on 29th Day of the program.

You are responsible for booking your own flights/transport to the start point of the trip. Information and advice about booking flights will be provided upon booking but please do not hesitate to contact us if you need further assistance. Do not forget to upload your arrival details on your personal pages before you go! Call us if you have any questions or need any advice.



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

TRANSPORT

You are responsible for getting yourself to and from the start/end point of the expedition. During the trip, Airport transfers from Heathrow airport are included. Intercity travel will be by train, and city transfers between train stations and accommodation will consist of a range of transport types, including public buses, trams, metro and taxis. After arrival at your accommodation in a new place, you will be responsible for your own travel within the city using the local transport system. Please give us a call for more information on individual journey details.

CLIMATE

June to August is the peak of summer in Europe with typically warm temperatures (sometimes up to 40 degrees Celsius) and clear skies. However, rain is also possible at times so you will need to come prepared.

The autumn months of September and October are slightly cooler, with average maximum temperatures of up to 30 degrees Celsius, but with the cooler temperatures comes a higher chance of the occasional rain shower. A recommended packing list will be provided in your pre-departure documents

INSURANCE

As a member of the **British Government's FCO Know Before You Go** programme we insist you have repatriation and medical insurance. So please check that your insurance will return you to your home country in the case of any type of emergency. We also recommend your policy includes cancellation cover.

MEDICAL

It is your responsibility to check with your own doctor or travel clinic which vaccinations are recommended for your expedition and we recommend you do this at least 2 months prior to the start of your program. You must also complete a Gapforce medical form and have it signed by your GP or Doctor to confirm you are fit to participate.

KIT

Upon booking you will be provided with a recommend packing list and you are welcome to call us with any kit related queries before you go!

SPENDING MONEY

Depending on the duration of your stay, we advise you budget for approximately £100 - £150 / \$150 - \$200 per week to cover items not included in the itinerary such as additional meals, drinks, snacks and optional activities. Please note this is a guideline only.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION



VISAS

It is your responsibility to fulfil passport, visa and other immigration requirements applicable to your program.

OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES

Any optional activities not included in the program fee that you choose to book with local activity providers will not have been risk assessed by Gapforce and you will therefore be outside the jurisdiction of Gapforce from the moment the activity begins until you return to the group. Check with your insurer beforehand that you are covered for that particular activity.

TRAVEL DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Gapforce always follows the advice of the UK Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) and will not run programs to a destination whilst the FCDO advises against travel for tourists.

At destinations that the FCDO considers to be safe, Gapforce will be implementing preventative measures aimed at reducing the risk of participants and leaders becoming infected. All group members will be expected to follow required safety protocols and instructions, however there will still remain a risk of exposure to the virus that could lead to infection or other consequences, such as periods of quarantine, during your program. By travelling on one of our programs, participants are confirming that they accept the risks of travel during this pandemic and will not hold Gapforce responsible if they become infected with the virus or if their program is otherwise disrupted due to Covid-19.

It is recommended that all participants have adequate insurance that covers them for covid-related incidents including medical cover, cancellation, curtailment and quarantine costs. Check you meet the entry requirements of the destination before travel. Any covid tests required before or during the program will need to be paid for by the participant if not provided free of charge by the State.



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