

Survival Guide

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LANGUAGE 442

Directory A-Z

Accommodation

There's accommodation to match every budget in Eastern Europe, from Soviet-era concrete behemoths, five-star luxury palaces and international hotel groups to rural campsites and homely grandmother-run private rooms.

Price Ranges

Price categories are broken down differently for individual countries – see each country for full details.

Reservations

- Generally a good idea in high season and can usually be made by phone or online.
- Hostels and cheap hotels fill up very quickly, especially in popular backpacker destinations such as Prague, Budapest and Kraków. Note that across the region there is also a shortage of good-value midrange accommodation options.
- Tourist offices, where they exist, may be able to make reservations on your behalf (some charge a small fee for

this service) but, in general, do not expect a Western European standard of service from tourist offices in Eastern Europe.

Seasons

- High season is typically in July and August.
- Rates often drop outside the high season – in some cases by as much as 50%.
- In business-oriented hotels in cities, rooms are most expensive from Monday to Friday and cheaper over the weekend.

Camping

There are many camping grounds throughout the region and they are all generally inexpensive. That said, a large proportion of the region's attractions are found in cities, where there are often no camping grounds. Most camping grounds near urban areas are large sites, intended mainly for motorists, though they're usually accessible by public transport and there's almost always space for backpackers with tents.

Many camping grounds in Eastern Europe rent small on-site cabins, bungalows or caravans for double or triple the regular camping fee; in the most popular resorts all the bungalows are usually full in July and August. Generally, camping grounds charge per tent, plus an extra fee per person.

The standard of camping grounds in Eastern Europe varies from country to country. They're unreliable in Romania, crowded in Slovenia and Hungary (especially on Lake Balaton), and variable in the Czech Republic, Poland, Slovakia and Bulgaria. Some countries, including Moldova and Belarus, have very few official camping grounds, but you can usually find somewhere to pitch your tent. Croatia's coast has nudist camping grounds galore (signposted FKK, the German acronym for 'naturist'); they're excellent places to stay because of their secluded locations, although they can be a bit far from other attractions.

- Camping grounds may be open from April to October, May to September, or perhaps only June to August, depending on the category of the facility, the location and demand.
- A few private camping grounds are open year-round.
- Camping in the wild is usually illegal; ask local

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