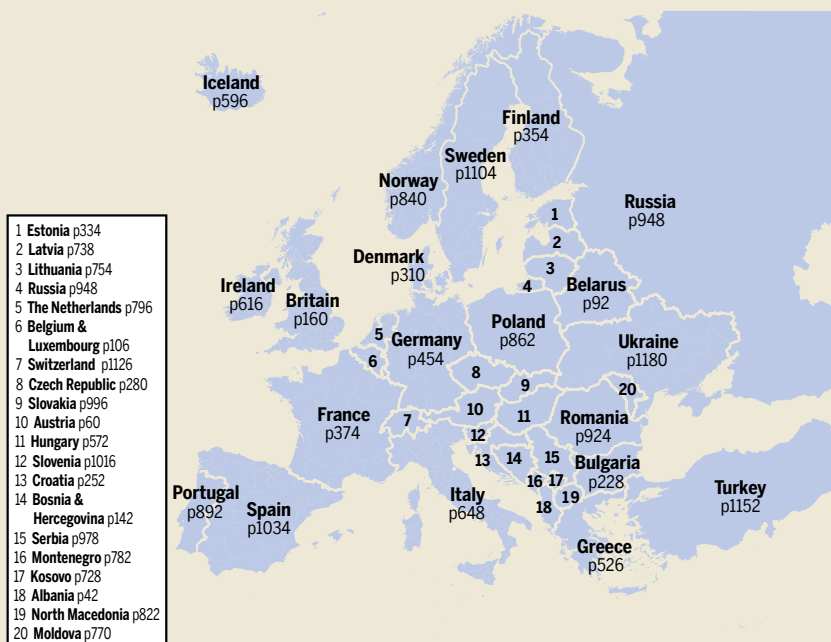




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Itineraries



5
WEEKS

First-Time Europe

If this is your first visit to Europe you'll want to experience as many of its famous cultural cities as possible – this is where your dreams become reality.

London is calling. The former capital of a huge empire is a city of massive museums, regal parks and electrifying nightlife.

Take the Eurostar to **Paris** and prepare to be seduced by the Eiffel Tower, Versailles and the Louvre. The art theme continues in **Amsterdam**, where you can admire works by Van Gogh and Rembrandt. Next travel to cosmopolitan, hedonistic **Berlin** in Germany where you can see the remains of the wall.

Prague in the Czech Republic is a city of intangible medieval magic. **Budapest** could be Prague's twin, offering refined music and a youthful nocturnal scene. **Vienna** is known for its gilded coffee bars.

Time to hit southern Europe. Start in glorious **Venice** with its canals and gondoliers, jump on a train to the Renaissance time capsule of **Florence**, and then proceed to **Rome**. Leapfrog southern France to Spain, stopping in **Barcelona** where Gaudí meets Gothic, before having a grand finale in **Madrid**.



Mediterranean Europe

Think Europe doesn't do beaches? Think again – it does, but with lashings of culture on the side, as you'll find during this romp along its southern shores.

Fly to Spain and claim your sun-lounger at one of Europe's warmest year-round beaches in **Málaga**. Follow the coast up to **Valencia** next, the culinary home of paella. Pay homage to Catalonia in **Barcelona**, where you can soak up the seaside ambience of Gaudí's city. Cross the border into France, then beach-hop along the Côte d'Azur to **Nice** with its palm-lined seafront. Take the twisty coastal corniches to beguiling **Monaco** and, afterwards, spend a day or two inland in the beautiful villages of **Provence**.

Return to Nice and take the train southeast to historic **Rome**. Continue south to energetic **Naples**, walk through ill-fated **Pompeii** and explore the narrow footpaths and ancient staircases of the precipitous Amalfi Coast. Cross Italy to understated **Bari**, from where you head across the Adriatic by ferry to the Croatian pearl of **Dubrovnik** with its spectacular city walls.

Bus it south through Montenegro and Albania. Pause at the walled town of **Kotor** in the former and the white crescent-shaped beaches of **Drymades** in the latter.

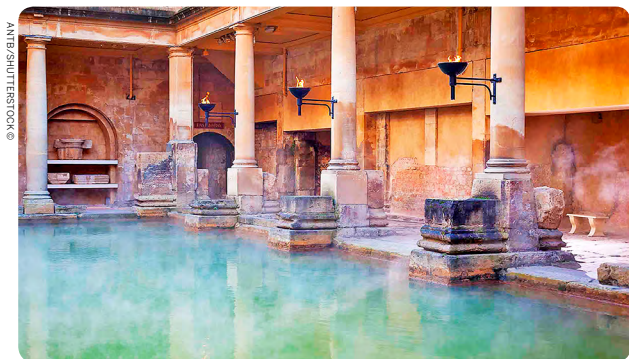
Greece's Ionian Islands are next and the best is **Corfu**. Take a ferry to **Patra**, from where you can get a bus on to venerable **Athens**, capital of the ancient world. Move on to the port of Piraeus for an island-hopping expedition of the Cyclades, dreamy islands that include sophisticated **Mykonos**, laid-back **Paros** and volcanic **Santorini**. When you've had enough of Greek salads, set sail for Turkish port Kuşadası from lush, mountainous Samos.

Visit ancient **Ephesus**, one of the greatest surviving Graeco-Roman cities. Travel by bus north along the Aegean coast to the ruins of Troy and **Çanakkale**, the base for visiting Gallipoli Peninsula. Finish in beautiful, chaotic **Istanbul**.



Top: Whirling dervishes, Istanbul (p1156), Turkey

Bottom: Roman Baths (p191), Bath, Britain





From London to the Sun

Combining the best of both worlds, this itinerary begins with the urban powerhouse of London and ends with soaking up the sun in Spain and Portugal.

Enjoy several days in **London** for museums, galleries and clubbing, then take a train to **Bath** to appreciate Roman and Georgian architecture. Save time on the way back for **Oxford**, the fabled university town.

Back in London, take the Eurostar from grand St Pancras station to **Brussels**, the ethnically diverse headquarters of the EU.

The Eurostar will whisk you southwest to romantic **Paris**. Having dipped into the City of Light's cultural sights and gourmet delights, make side trips to the **D-Day beaches** north of Bayeux and the iconic abbey of **Mont St-Michel**, which reaches for the sky from its rocky island perch.

Head south by rail, stopping at lively **Toulouse**. Detour to the fairy-tale fortified city of **Carcassonne**. Cross into Spain, pausing at supercool **Barcelona**, where you can indulge in avant-garde Spanish cuisine.

Zip north to Basque seaside resort **San Sebastián**, with its envelope-pushing food scene, and then to the curvaceous Museo Guggenheim in happening **Bilbao**. Turn south, making a beeline for energetic **Madrid**, for some of Europe's best bars. From here plan day trips to **Toledo**, the so-called 'city of three cultures', and enchanting **Segovia** with its Roman aqueduct.

Continue south to **Granada** to explore the exquisite Islamic fortress complex of the Alhambra. Continue your Andalusian adventures with the one-of-a-kind Mezquita of **Córdoba**, before dancing flamenco in **Seville**. Get the bus to Portugal's captivating hillside capital **Lisbon**, where you can eat custard tarts by the sea. Finish in the wooded hills of **Sintra**, home to fairy-tale-like palaces and gardens.

4
WEEKS

Scandinavian & Baltic Highlights

Three weeks is sufficient for the classic sights of northern Europe, though you can easily spend longer. Extra time allows detailed exploration and side trips to quieter places.

Start in Danish capital **Copenhagen**, the hipster of the Nordic block. Make day trips to the cathedral and Viking-boat museum at **Roskilde**; 'Hamlet's' castle Kronborg Slot at **Helsingør**; Denmark's second but no-less-trendy city **Aarhus** with its incredible art at ARoS Aarhus Kunstmuseum; and the country's top tourist attraction, **Legoland**.

Take the train to charming **Stockholm**. Sweden's capital spills across 14 islands with Gamla Stan the oldest and most beautiful. Side-trip to university town **Uppsala**, Sweden's spiritual heart, and spend the night. Creative and happening **Gothenburg**, the country's second city, has interesting galleries and museums, including a great one for kids.

It's a 3½-hour bus ride to **Oslo**, where you can check out Munch's work in a stunning setting. Norway's capital has plenty of museums and galleries, plus the iconic Oslo Opera House.

From Oslo, take the long but scenic 'Norway in a Nutshell' rail day trip to **Flåm** and ride the world's steepest railway that runs without cable or rack wheels. Continue by boat and bus along the stunning Sognefjord – Norway's deepest fjord – to **Bergen**. Admire this pretty town from a cable car and explore the quayside Bryggen district of historic buildings. From Bergen take a side trip to the mighty 20km-long emerald-green **Geirangerfjord**.

Return to Stockholm for a cruise circuit of the Baltic. First stop in quirky, design-diva **Helsinki**, a great base for exploring the natural wonders of Finland.

Wind up proceedings in the Baltic States starting in **Tallinn**, the charming Estonian capital where the Old Town is a jumble of turrets, spires and winding streets. Next is Latvia's gorgeous art nouveau **Riga** followed by Lithuania's capital **Vilnius**, the baroque bombshell of the Baltics.



MAZAR/SHTUTOCK ©



SEAN PAVONE/SHTUTOCK ©

Top: Great Synagogue (p577), Budapest, Hungary

Bottom: Acueducto (p1051), Segovia, Spain

4
WEEKS

The Alps to the Balkans

If you fancy visiting gorgeous towns on the shores of brilliant-blue lakes surrounded by turreted Alpine peaks, followed by a sojourn through the capitals of Eastern Europe, then head to Switzerland and jump on this itinerary.

Start with a few days in the spectacular **Swiss Alps**, ideal for hiking in summer and skiing in winter. Visit the oft-overlooked Swiss capital of **Bern**, and sophisticated, lake-side **Zürich**. Take the train to the top of Jungfrau (it's Europe's highest station) before heading down to visit lovely **Lucerne** where candy-coloured houses are reflected in a cobalt lake.

Turn east into Austria next, where, on the banks of the Danube, you'll find elegant **Vienna**. Track south into Slovenia, pausing by emerald-green **Lake Bled** and nearby but much less-developed **Lake Bohinj** with the picturesque Julian Alps as the backdrop.

Time to decamp to Croatia's **Dalmatian coast**, a holiday paradise of sun-dappled islands, limestone cliffs, ancient towns and Mediterranean cuisine. Aptly named **Split** on the Adriatic displays an interesting split between tradition and modernity, and guards Diocletian's Palace, one of Europe's most incredible Roman ruins. Further south, the walled marble town of **Dubrovnik** is heavy with history and tourists. Inland and across the border in Bosnia and Hercegovina lies **Sarajevo**. Forget its grisly recent past, this is a city on the rebound and a good place for winter activities, especially skiing.

Travel east through Serbia, stopping off in gritty but lively **Belgrade** to experience its famous nightlife and explore historic Kalemegdan Citadel. Then take a train to the relaxed Bulgarian capital of **Sofia** with its cityscape of onion-domed churches and Cold War-era monuments.

A train zips you through the mountains to Bulgaria's loveliest town, **Veliko Târnovo**, laced with cobbled lanes and surrounded by forested hills. Finish off in seaside **Varna**, your base for Black Sea beaches, archaeology museums and enormous parks.



Eastern Europe Today

Forget the stereotypes of the grim and grey 'Eastern Bloc' of the early 1990s – this half of Europe is one of the most dynamic and fast-changing places in the world.

The natural starting point is **Berlin**, once a city divided but now a veritable music, art and nightlife mecca.

Cross the now nonexistent iron curtain to Poland's capital **Warsaw**, a vibrant city that's survived all that history could throw at it and was meticulously restored after WWII. Further south is beautiful **Kraków**, the preserved royal capital which miraculously was spared destruction in WWII.

Cut across Slovakia into the Czech Republic and another remarkably intact medieval city: **Prague**, which has one of Eastern Europe's most romantic historical centres.

Moving back east, you'll encounter the Hungarian capital, **Budapest**, where you can freshen up at the thermal baths.

Romania had to wait a long time for its place in the sun, but it has come, especially in dynamic capital **Bucharest** with the world's largest parliament building.

For another side of Romania, make a beeline for **Transylvania** where you can sharpen your fangs at 'Dracula's' castle in **Bran** and enjoy the gorgeous old towns nearby.

Head north into western Ukraine where epiphanies are rife in charming **Lviv**, whose cityscape, like Kraków's, miraculously survived WWII. Continue on to bustling Ukrainian capital **Kyiv**, one of the former Soviet Union's more pleasant metropolises, before journeying into the past on a train to **Minsk** in Belarus to see how things were under communism.

Take another train to modern-day supercity **Moscow**, where the imposing Kremlin and adjacent Red Square are guaranteed to strike you with awe. Finally, head north to the old imperial capital of **St Petersburg**.

Behind the Scenes

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We love to hear from travellers – your comments keep us on our toes and help make our books better. Our well-travelled team reads every word on what you loved or loathed about this book. Although we cannot reply individually to your submissions, we always guarantee that your feedback goes straight to the appropriate authors, in time for the next edition. Each person who sends us information is thanked in the next edition – the most useful submissions are rewarded with a selection of digital PDF chapters.

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THIS BOOK

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Sights

- Beach
- Bird Sanctuary
- Buddhist
- Castle/Palace
- Christian
- Confucian
- Hindu
- Islamic
- Jain
- Jewish
- Monument
- Museum/Gallery/Historic Building
- Ruin
- Shinto
- Sikh
- Taoist
- Winery/Vineyard
- Zoo/Wildlife Sanctuary
- Other Sight

Activities, Courses & Tours

- Bodysurfing
- Diving
- Canoeing/Kayaking
- Course/Tour
- Sento Hot Baths/Onsen
- Skiing
- Snorkelling
- Surfing
- Swimming/Pool
- Walking
- Windsurfing
- Other Activity

Sleeping

- Sleeping
- Camping
- Hut/Shelter

Eating

- Eating

Drinking & Nightlife

- Drinking & Nightlife
- Cafe

Entertainment

- Entertainment

Shopping

- Shopping

Information

- Bank
- Embassy/Consulate
- Hospital/Medical
- Internet
- Police
- Post Office
- Telephone
- Toilet
- Tourist Information
- Other Information

Geographic

- Beach
- Gate
- Hut/Shelter
- Lighthouse
- Lookout
- Mountain/Volcano
- Oasis
- Park
- Pass
- Picnic Area
- Waterfall

Population

- Capital (National)
- Capital (State/Province)
- City/Large Town
- Town/Village

Transport

- Airport
- Border crossing
- Bus
- Cable car/Funicular
- Cycling
- Ferry
- Metro station
- Monorail
- Parking
- Petrol station
- S-Bahn/Subway station
- Taxi
- T-bane/Tunnelbana station
- Train station/Railway
- Tram
- U-Bahn/Underground station
- Other Transport

Routes

- Tollway
- Freeway
- Primary
- Secondary
- Tertiary
- Lane
- Unsealed road
- Road under construction
- Plaza/Mall
- Steps
- Tunnel
- Pedestrian overpass
- Walking Tour
- Walking Tour detour
- Path/Walking Trail

Boundaries

- International
- State/Province
- Disputed
- Regional/Suburb
- Marine Park
- Cliff
- Wall

Hydrography

- River, Creek
- Intermittent River
- Canal
- Water
- Dry/Salt/Intermittent Lake
- Reef

Areas

- Airport/Runway
- Beach/Desert
- Cemetery (Christian)
- Cemetery (Other)
- Glacier
- Mudflat
- Park/Forest
- Sight (Building)
- Sportsground
- Swamp/Mangrove

Note: Not all symbols displayed above appear on the maps in this book

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**Steve Fallon**

Hungary A native of Boston, Massachusetts, Steve graduated from Georgetown University with a Bachelor of Science in modern languages. After working for several years for a daily US newspaper and earning a master's degree in journalism, his fascination with the 'new' Asia led him to Hong Kong, where he lived for over a dozen years, working for a variety of media companies and running his own travel bookshop. Steve lived in Budapest for three years before moving to London

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**Mark Elliott**

[Belgium, the Netherlands](#) Mark Elliott had already lived and worked on five continents when, in the pre-Internet dark ages, he started writing travel guides. He has since authored (or co-authored) around 60 books including dozens for Lonely Planet. He also acts as a travel consultant, occasional tour leader, video presenter, speaker, interviewer and blues harmonicist.



OUR STORY

A beat-up old car, a few dollars in the pocket and a sense of adventure. In 1972 that's all Tony and Maureen Wheeler needed for the trip of a lifetime – across Europe and Asia overland to Australia. It took several months, and at the end – broke but inspired – they sat at their kitchen table writing and stapling together their first travel guide, *Across Asia on the Cheap*. Within a week they'd sold 1500 copies. Lonely Planet was born.

Today, Lonely Planet has offices in Franklin, London, Melbourne, Oakland, Dublin, Beijing and Delhi, with more than 600 staff and writers. We share Tony's belief that 'a great guidebook should do three things: inform, educate and amuse'.

OUR WRITERS



Alexis Averbuck

Iceland, Italy (Rome), France Alexis has travelled and lived all over the world, from Sri Lanka to Ecuador, Zanzibar and Antarctica. In recent years she's been living on the Greek island of Hydra and exploring her adopted homeland; sampling oysters in Brittany; and adventuring along Iceland's surreal lava fields, sparkling fjords and glacier tongues. A travel writer for more than two decades, Alexis has lived in Antarctica for a year, crossed the Pacific by sailboat and

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OVER MORE
PAGE WRITERS

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