



**Jagger at 78: his health secrets**  
 Plus What to eat for a longer life

# Weekend

Travel  
 Starts on  
 page 37



**The lazy  
 camping guide**

25 sites with restaurants,  
 pubs — and even butlers

**Great train  
 journeys**  
 Europe by rail  
 this summer



**Drought proof**  
 How to protect  
 plants in a  
 heatwave



# Travel

Page

50

'Kauai is cloaked in lush jungle, with jagged mountain steeples framing deep gorges'

Helena de Bertodano visits Hawaii's coolest island



Brocken Railway, Harz mountains, Germany

## Europe's great train journeys

Take the sleeper to Milan, or ride to the Swiss Alps or Côte d'Azur. Rail expert **Mark Smith** (aka The Man in Seat 61) has eight great trips

For every kind of landscape, from Alpine peaks to gorgeous beaches; for great cities with incredible architecture and cutting-edge culture; for sheer variety of language, people and food — you can't beat an adventure across Europe. Especially if it's one by rail — romantic, exciting, with a sense of freedom and ease that flying or driving can't match. Coupled with the obvious benefits regarding environmental impact and airport chaos, it's no surprise more of us are considering a rail holiday this summer. And taking the train to Europe is a far more practical option than many travellers imagine, not only for reaching Paris or Brussels, but Spain, Italy,

Switzerland or Central Europe's imperial cities as well. You can reach Barcelona, San Sebastian, Cannes or Milan in a day from London St Pancras — have breakfast in London, lunch in Paris and dinner in Italy, Spain or the south of France. Or, with European sleeper trains experiencing a modest renaissance, you can hop on a comfortable evening Nightjet from Paris that will have you in Vienna by morning, breakfasted and showered.

Unlike planes, trains run city centre to city centre with no extra fees for luggage, and the journey is an integral, enjoyable part of the holiday. It does take more effort to book, but as with most things, a little extra effort means you get a lot more out of it. And it's affordable —



Glacier Express, Switzerland

a Eurostar to Paris or Brussels costs from £78 return, an onward ticket from Paris to Nice or Milan from £25 each way, and a couchette on the Paris-Vienna sleeper from £43.

As is the case with flights, most European inter-city train services are priced dynamically, with cheaper fares if you book ahead and avoid peak times. If you plan an extensive tour, an Interrail pass is worth considering, as it gives unlimited travel across most of Europe. But for most trips from the UK to a specific European destination and back — even with a stopover or two — advance-purchase fares are your best bet. Try these suggestions for brilliant flight-free holidays all over the Continent ▶

## Côte d'Azur, France

London, Paris, Cannes, Nice



Cannes, Nice, St Tropez, Monte Carlo... the Côte d'Azur never loses its glitzy appeal. You can reach the Mediterranean in a single day by train, taking the Eurostar to Paris Gare du Nord in 2h 20min, switching stations by taxi or Metro, then riding a double-decker TGV from Gare de Lyon to Cannes in as little as 5h 7min, or Nice in 5h 41min. Book an upper-deck seat for the best views.

The TGV races across France at up to 186mph on high-speed rails,



Place Massena, Nice

but takes the last bit from Marseilles to Nice at a gentler pace on the classic line along the coast. Passing Marseilles, you'll glimpse the Notre Dame de la Garde basilica on its hilltop and the infamous Château d'If — France's 16th-century Alcatraz, featured in Dumas' *The Count of Monte Cristo* — out in the bay. Between Toulon, Cannes and Nice, you'll skirt the coast past yacht-filled bays and rocky headlands. At Nice-Ville station you're 15 minutes' walk from the Promenade des Anglais.

If you'd rather not negotiate the French capital, the 11.04am Eurostar from St Pancras involves a convenient same-station change at Lille Europe to a direct TGV to Marseilles, from where another TGV will whisk you along the Med to Cannes (arriving at 10.06pm) and Nice (10.37pm).

There's a third option: the Paris to Nice overnight train has made a welcome return. Discontinued in 2017 along with many other French night trains, it resumed service in May last year, with four-berth first-class and six-berth second-class couchettes. You can depart London as late as 4.31pm, leave Paris at 9.20pm, sleep your way south and arrive in Cannes at 8.38am or Nice at 9.08am after a scenic run along the coast.

## Where to stay

The new Hotel Belle Plage in Cannes is a reworking of a classic 1930s building, with curvy



Nice, south of France

white interiors featuring canework and wood, and a rooftop restaurant (B&B doubles from £232; hotelbelleplage.fr). In Nice, the Hôtel La Pérouse is built into cliffs above the beach and the Bay of Angels, with a restaurant on a pretty patio and a pool (B&B doubles from £247; hotel-la-perouse.com)

## How to book it

London to Paris by Eurostar (from £78 return), then take a TGV from Paris to Nice, from £25 each way; or travel from Paris to Nice with a couchette, from £25 each way. Book the whole journey through theirainline.com or railurope.co.uk

See the world differently.



HURTIGRUTEN EXPEDITIONS

Travel this winter?  
Save up to  
**10%**

FROM DOVER  
TO DOG SLEDDING  
AND DANCING  
SKIES, DIRECT

Sail straight to Norway on the intimate  
MS Maud for winter 2023/24

Norway  
Expedition  
Cruise



Northern Lights Promise\*

Departures:  
September 2023 – March 2024

FROM  
ONLY **£ 3,700pp\***

Book now

Call 0203 733 6762 | Visit [hurtigruten.co.uk](http://hurtigruten.co.uk) | Contact your preferred travel agent

Terms and conditions: \*Save up to 10% on expedition cruises to Norway from Dover, departing October 2023 – March 2023. Bookings must be confirmed by the 31st July 2022. See [hurtigruten.co.uk/en/gb/expeditions/offers/seasonal-bookings-offer-norway](http://hurtigruten.co.uk/en/gb/expeditions/offers/seasonal-bookings-offer-norway) for full T&Cs. Prices include 12% off the Norway Doublet (to visit countries on the coast) and are per person, a 6 or 7 day cruise. Single voyage fees of charge – see [hurtigruten.co.uk/offers/only](http://hurtigruten.co.uk/offers/only) for full terms and conditions. From prices are quoted in GBP and are per person, based on full occupancy of cabin. Other subject to availability. © Jorge Mercedes/William Cheamy PA Wire.





## Spain by train

London, Paris, Nîmes, Perpignan, Figueres, Girona, Barcelona, Seville, Malaga, Valencia, Alicante



Take your pick of Spain's most popular destinations: Barcelona, Seville, Malaga and Alicante are all double by train. Even Ibiza and Mallorca can be reached flight-free by ferry. The 9.31am Eurostar from St Pancras arrives at the Gare du Nord at 12.47pm, with time for lunch at Le Train Bleu restaurant at the Gare de Lyon. After lunch, stroll across the concourse to take the 3.12pm high-speed TGV to Figueres, Girona and Barcelona. It's an impressive 200mph double-decker, an upper-deck seat gives the best views as the train powers down the Rhône Valley, crossing the river between Valence and Nîmes with the towering Château de Montfaucon to the right.

The train slows through Nîmes and Montpellier, passing vineyards and the hilltop cathedral at Beziers. Glimpse flamingos feeding in the shallows of the étangs (lakes) beyond Narbonne, where the tracks run over a narrow causeway and the train seemingly fords across the water. Just before Perpignan, look right for the stout, imposing 15th-century Fort de Salses, built by the Catalans but held by the French since 1642. At Perpignan the train joins the high-speed line to Barcelona and accelerates to 200mph, rounding the southern end of the Pyrenees with the 2,780m (9,120ft) peak of Mt Canigou dominating the skyline from Perpignan to Girona. The train reaches Figueres Vilafant (for the Salvador Dalí museum) at 8.56pm, Girona at 9.13pm and Barcelona Sants at 9.54pm. In Spain, that's still in time for din-



Park Güell, Barcelona

ner. From here you could take the 8.30am high-speed AVE to Seville (3h 34min) and Malaga (5h 40min, change at Córdoba), or one of the fast EuroMed trains along the coast to Valencia (2h 40min) and Alicante (4h 34min). Then again, you could set sail for Ibiza or Palma de Mallorca on an overnight ferry with comfortable cabins.

### Where to stay

The new ME Barcelona has a rooftop bar with Sagrada Familia views (B&B doubles from E202; melia.com). In Seville, Hotel Sacrista de Santa Ana, an 18th-century convent, has B&B doubles from E86; i-escape.com. Malaga is home to the grand converted Palacio Soletic (doubles from E153; palaciosoletic.com). In Valencia there's the Yours boutique hotel, sleek and white with a slim pool (B&B doubles from E102; thisisyours.es). Nobu Hotel Ibiza Bay has rooftop music events and doubles from E390 (nobuhotelibizabay.com)

### How to book it

London to Paris by Eurostar (from E78 return), then Paris to Figueres, Girona or Barcelona, from E50 each way. Barcelona to Seville, Malaga or Alicante from E30 each way (raileurope.com or thetrainline.com). Barcelona to Ibiza by ferry from E49 with a seat, E160 with a private cabin; Barcelona to Palma de Mallorca from E31 with a seat, E129 with a private cabin (trasmcd.com). The afternoon TGV from Paris to Barcelona runs until September 30.



Milan Central Station, Italy

## To Italy on the Red Arrow train

London-Paris-Lyons-Turin-Milan



Italy is a firm favourite for its historic cities, breathtaking lakes and beautiful coastal villages – and it's only a train ride away. Wave goodbye to London on the 9.31am Eurostar to Paris, hop in a taxi or take the Metro to Gare de Lyon, and relax over a coffee or something stronger in the bar of Le Train Bleu restaurant, still going strong as the world's most impressive station buffet since it opened in 1901.

You then have a choice of high-speed trains from Paris to Turin and Milan: SNCF's long-established TGV at 2.43pm or Trenitalia's all-new Frecciarossa (red arrow) at 3.16pm. Introduced in December, in direct competition with SNCF, the Trenitalia service from Gare de Lyon is a product of the steady – if slow – liberalisation of Europe's railways. The TGV is comfortable, but the Frecciarossa is newer and more glamorous, with standard, business and premium first class (called executive), featuring rotating captain's chairs at one end of the train, here a dedicated steward and serves a light meal, Italian coffee and prosciutto – all included in the ticket price.

Both trains center across rural France at more than 180mph on the high-speed line to Lyons, then slow down for a sedate ramble through the Alpine scenery on the classic route to Italy via Chambéry and Modane. The Frecciarossa reaches Turin in a leisurely six hours from Paris, while the

## More expert tips for booking a holiday by rail

### How to buy tickets

Each country's rail operator has its own ticketing and reservation system, and there's no magic website that sells tickets for every European route at the cheapest price. Two come close: railEurope.com and thetrainline.com, which connect to the systems of the UK's National Rail, SNCF in France, Trenitalia and Italo in Italy, Renfe in Spain, Deutsche Bahn in Germany, ÖBB in Austria and SBB in Switzerland. They charge the same prices as the operators' sites, with a small booking fee, and allow you to book a range of trips at once.

To make things even easier, you can buy tickets through Britain's specialist rail travel agencies, or get them to plan and book the whole trip. Try the Travel Bureau (rail-travel.co.uk), Trains Europe (traineurope.co.uk), Ffestiniog Travel (ffestiniogtravel.co.uk), International Rail (internationalrail.com) and Byway Travel (bywaytravel.com). They do charge a booking fee, and you'll sometimes find cheaper fares online. Get the lowest fares by booking as far ahead as possible; midweek is often cheapest. Check times for all European trains at German Railways online timetable (dbn.de/en).

### Travelling from outside London

From most British stations – if you're only travelling to London to travel internationally – you can book special tickets to 'London International CIV'. These have fewer time restrictions, making it cheaper to travel in peak periods. They can only be bought at stations, not online (check brfars.com) to see if your local one offers them. Show your international passport and let the clerk to use destination code 'LNE'.

### When to buy an InterRail pass

For these suggested itineraries (unless you choose to extend them) a point-to-point ticket will be best. But if you're travelling at short notice when cheap fares are gone, or to numerous destinations, if you want the flexibility to change a multistop route as you go, an InterRail pass can be better value. There are a variety of passes for adults, children (free if you buy an adult pass), youths (under 28) and seniors (60 or over), first or second class, and for different time periods. There are 15-day, 22-day and one, two, and three-month continuous passes, or 'flexi' passes giving four, five, seven, ten or 15 days of travel in one or two-month periods. Prices range from four days' travel in a month for E205 second class to three months continuous for E1,011 in first class (see interrail.eu). Global InterRail passes cover 33 countries and sit in a phone app. You must make and pay for reservations for some high-speed intercity trains and sleepers. Eurostar offers a limited number of special fares for InterRailers, so you just pay a booking fee of E26-E33 (see br-europe.com).

See Mark Smith's rail website, seat61.com, for more information

More great rail adventures

## 40 Travel

► TGV bypasses central Lyons and makes Turin in about 20 minutes less. But while the TGV stays on classic lines and takes 7h 6min to reach Milan's modern, uninspiring Porta Garibaldi station, the Frecciarossa picks up its hook on the Italian high-speed line and makes a grand entrance to the magnificent 1930s architecture of Milan Central in 6h 49min. If you're bypassing Milan, Turin is one of Italy's most elegant yet underrated cities — is the ideal point for an overnight stop. Make time for a wander there the next day before taking another Frecciarossa to Venice (in 3h 24min), Florence (2h 54min), Rome (4h 39min) or Naples (6h 23min).

Trenitalia's new service has one more trick up its sleeve — it stops in Lyons. If you find crossing Paris difficult or daunting, take the 1104pm Eurostar from London to Lille, then make an easy same-station change onto a TGV to Lyons Part Dieu, arriving at 5pm, in time for dinner and an evening stroll. Then pick up the morning Frecciarossa to Milan, leaving Lyons at the civilised hour of 9.33pm. After a scenic meander through the Alps you arrive in Milan Central at 2.07pm, with onward connections to almost anywhere in Italy.

#### Where to stay

In Lyons, Hôtel de l'Abbaye is a beauty, in the old presbytery of the St Martin d'Ainay Basilica, a ten-minute walk from Place Bellecour, one of the largest open squares in Europe (B&B doubles from £83; hotelabbayelyon.com). Turin is home to what might be the coolest eco-friendly hotel, NH Torino Lingotto Congress, in an old Fiat factory designed by Le Corbusier (B&B doubles from £83; nh-hotels.com). In Milan, Numastays has a group of chic apartments, ten minutes' walk from the central station (room only for up to four from £144; numastays.com)

#### How to book it

Take a Eurostar from London St Pancras to Paris, from £78 return (eurostar.com). Tickets from Paris to Turin or Milan are from £25 each way, from Turin or Milan to Florence or Venice from £17 each way, or to Rome or Naples from £26 (snf-connect.com; trenitalia.com)

## Grand capitals of central Europe

London, Paris, Vienna, Bratislava, Budapest, Prague, Krakow



Another new train appeared in December, making rail travel to Austria and central Europe easy. The Austrian operator ÖBB has been leading a revival of the trans-European sleeper train, and its new Paris-Vienna Nightjet is a prime example — the perfect choice for a no-fly tour of central Europe's grand capitals.

Take the 2.31pm Eurostar from London St Pancras to Paris Nord, then walk ten



Robber Railway, Harz, Germany

minutes to Gare de l'Est, perhaps stopping for a bite at the fashionable and aptly named Café Les Deux Gares.

The Nightjet for Austria leaves Gare de l'Est at 7.58pm on Tuesdays, Fridays and Sundays. The couchettes are ideal for families, with bunk-beds in four- and six-berth compartments; a light breakfast is included. In the two sleeping cars there are single, double and triple-berth compartments — some deluxe, with shower and toilet; others regular, with their own wash-basin and a shared shower at the end of the corridor. You're welcomed aboard with a small complimentary bottle of sparkling wine, and there's room service. Snuggle between crisp, clean sheets, reading by the glow of your berth light as steel wheel swishes on rail across France and into Germany. The next morning, somewhere near Salzburg, the attendant will convert your sleeper into a private sitting room and serve breakfast, before arrival into Vienna's impressive central station at 10.12am.

You'll probably want to spend time touring the Austrian capital's spectacular buildings and museums, but other great cultural cities are within easy reach. Train leave for Bratislava (stroll along the Danube) every hour, taking 1h 6min; for Budapest (grand cafes and a rooftop bar) every hour, taking 2h 40min; and for Prague (gothic cathedrals, palaces and squares) every couple of hours, taking 4h 5min. There's also a daily direct train to the Polish city of Krakow, taking about 5h 40min. With inexpensive trains linking all these cities, you can easily formulate a circuit.

#### Where to stay

The new boutique hotel Moons has smart black rooms opposite the central station in Vienna (room-only doubles from £62; moons.com). In Prague, the Julius has luxurious wood-panelled apartments designed by Matteo Thun & Partners set in a neo-Renaissance building (room-only doubles from £137; thejulius.eu). If you stop over in Paris stay at Hôtel les Deux Gares, the first hotel by the colour-savvy British interior designer

Luke Edward Hall (B&B doubles from £85; hotelleuxdeux.com)

#### How to book it

Eurostar from London to Paris. Paris to Salzburg or Vienna starts at £43 with a couchette, £95 with a two-bed sleeper or £139 with a single-bed sleeper. Vienna to Bratislava costs £9, to Budapest £17, to Prague £12 or to Krakow £28 (oebb.at)

## Scandinavian sleeper to Stockholm

London, Brussels, Cologne, Hamburg, Stockholm



In a vast museum in Stockholm stands one of the most remarkable exhibits you will ever see. The 17th-century warship Vasa sank in the city's harbour on its maiden voyage in 1628. Raised from the seabed almost intact in 1961, it's the only such vessel in the world so completely preserved, and alone merits a trip to the Swedish capital (£15; vasamuseum.se).

However, there's much more to see, and the rail journey to Sweden is about to get easier thanks to a new sleeper train service launching on September 1. Leave St Pancras on the 8.16am Eurostar to Brussels, before switching to the German Intercity



Casa Rural Erota-Barri, near Bilbao, Spain

Express to Cologne for an onward connection to Hamburg. The Swedish rail operator SJ's new sleeper service to Stockholm will leave Hamburg Altona at 9.55pm nightly, with cosy one and two-bed sleepers, some with toilet and shower, and four and six-berth couchettes. Procured by the Swedish government in response to the flygskam ("flight shame") movement, the SJ Euro Night will pass through Denmark using the Great Belt Fixed Link, crossing into Sweden over the Öresund Bridge and tunnel, arriving into Stockholm at 9.55am. From Stockholm you could travel around Sweden or further into Scandinavia.

#### Where to stay

Among Stockholm's many stylish options, Hotel Frantz hits the style spot with grey or pink rooms pepped with marble and velvet (B&B doubles from £102; hotelfrantz.se)

#### How to book it

Eurostar London to Brussels from £78 return. Brussels to Hamburg starts at £24 each way (bahn.de). Hamburg to Stockholm starts at £39 with a couchette, £69 with a bed in a two-bed sleeper or £143 with a single-bed sleeper (sj.se)



The Hungarian Parliament Building, Budapest

## Swiss Alps and the Glacier Express

London, Paris, Geneva, Lausanne, Zermatt, St Moritz



Summer meadows or winter snows? Both draw visitors to the Swiss Alps, and getting to Switzerland by train is quicker than you might think — 2h 20min from London to Paris then a high-speed TGV Lyria service to Geneva in 1h 12min, or to Lausanne in 3h 40min, Zermatt in 3h 55min or Zurich in 4h 30min.

For the Alpine resorts take an onward Swiss service from Geneva or Lausanne to Brig — from here, the narrow-gauge train follows the Matter Valley to Zermatt, the car-free resort at the foot of the imposing Matterhorn; or from Basel to Interlaken for local trains around Lauterbrunnen or Grindelwald; or from Zurich to Chur for the wonderful Rätische Bahn narrow-gauge railway to St Moritz, in the spectacular Engadin. All options offer stupendous mountain scenery, incredible easy-to-follow hiking trails, lake swimming and chocolate-box villages.

There's a great incentive to split your time between Zermatt in the west and the Engadin in the east — the journey between the two on the Glacier Express. Billed as the slowest express in the world,

with its panoramic sightseeing cars it can take a leisurely seven hours to cover the 180 miles, at an average speed of just over 24mph. But you won't care, because it's one of the most scenic Alpine train rides. Leaving Zermatt, the Glacier Express descends through the Matter Valley to Brig, dropping from 1,804m (5,920ft) to 650m above sea level. It follows the pretty Rhône Valley to Andermatt, before climbing over the windswept Oberalp Pass to Disentis, reaching 2,033m, the highest point on the line. After Disentis, the train snakes along the Rhine Gorge between the river and the steep valley sides. By Chur, the train is back at 585m, before climbing once more along the Albula Valley and across the iconic Landwasser Viaduct to St Moritz, ending the journey at 1,775m above sea level.

The Glacier Express has first and second-class carriages, and a catering car — for an extra cost lunch can be served at your seat, along with some superb (if pricey) Swiss white wine. Since 2019 the service has also offered an Excellence class, with just two seats across the width of the car so that everyone gets a window; there's



Villa Soro, San Sebastian

also a cocktail bar at one end of the carriage and a five-course regional menu with wine included, along with snacks, coffee and champagne.

### Where to stay

Break the journey with overnight treats — in Geneva try the Tiffany Hotel (8&B doubles from £169; tiffanyhotel.ch) or in Lausanne the Royal Savoy Hotel and Spa (8&B doubles from £375; royalsavoylausanne.com). The swanky SchlossHotel in Zermatt has CBD treatments in its spa (8&B doubles with spa access from £253; schlosshotelzermatt.ch), and there's colourful decor at Art Boutique Hotel Monopoli in St Moritz (8&B doubles from £214; monopoli.ch). The surrounding peaks are full of charming lodges, chalets, mountain huts and hotels — see mysvalps.com for accommodation ideas

### How to book it

Travel by Eurostar from London to Geneva, then from Paris to Geneva, Lausanne, Basel or Zurich from £25 return. The cheapest option for travel from any of these cities to an Alpine resort, and from Zermatt to St Moritz, is a Swiss Saver Day Pass, which starts at £45 if bought in advance. The Glacier Express carries a reservation fee of £42 in summer or £34 in winter for its regular carriages; travel in Excellence class requires a first-class Saver Day Pass, from £76 plus a £362 supplement (sbb.ch)

## San Sebastian and the Basque coast

London, Paris, Bordeaux, Hendaye, San Sebastian, Bilbao



Your target is San Sebastian on the Bay of Biscay, 12 miles from the French border. You can feast on pintxos, the famous Basque answer to tapas in the delightful old town, allegedly home to the highest concentration of bars in the world.

After taking the Eurostar, jump onto a high-speed train of the latest double-deck TGV Duplex type (with café-bar) from Paris Gare Montparnasse to Hendaye on the Spanish border — these run every few hours (taking 4h 40min). From Hendaye, little narrow-gauge electric trains operated by Euskotren run to central San Sebastian every half-hour (taking 37 minutes). Leave London at 9:11am and you could arrive at Hendaye at 6:47pm, and even make the 7:03pm Euskotren to arrive in San Sebastian at 7:40pm — there are later departures too. Or take your time: the Paris-Hendaye TGVs call at Bordeaux, an obvious stopover for a tour of claret country on the way. You might add Bordeaux, home of the Guggenheim Museum; buses between the two take 1h 20min, or there's a narrow-gauge electric train every hour taking 2h 35min (£5.50).

### Where to stay

In Bordeaux, Domaine de Raba has an indoor pool, three restaurants and a wine bar (8&B doubles from £147; mrandrsmstsmith.com). As Hendaye is a year-round beginner's surf destination, stay and give it a whirl at the Appara Surfcamp, with vintage caravans or teepees, sleeping two room-only from £38 (appara-surfcamp.com). San Sebastian's Villa Soro, a fashionably revamped art-deco villa with lawns, has 8&B doubles from £210 (hotelvillasoro.com). A 20-minute bus ride outside Bilbao, Casa Rural Erota-Barris is a Basque farmhouse with 8&B doubles from £65 (sawdays.co.uk)

### How to book it

London to Paris on Eurostar (from £78 return), Paris to Hendaye from £22 each way (book whole journey at railleurpe.com or thetrainline.com). Buy an Euskotren ticket to San Sebastian at Hendaye station for £2. Check times and fares at euskotren.es

## Harz mountains, Germany

London-Brussels-Wernigerode



The picturesque town of Wernigerode in the state of Saxony-Anhalt is the ideal base for exploring Germany's Harz mountains, and touring them by steam train is part of the fun. The Harzer Schmalspurbahnen (HSB; Harz Narrow Gauge Railways) runs an 86-mile network of metre-gauge railways around the Harz region, and many trains remain steam-hauled, using powerful tank engines built in the 1950s. Far from being restored, these lines spent decades shut away behind the Iron Curtain, and starved of investment they were simply never modernised. Now thriving, they mean a means of transport and a tourist attraction. The highlight is a steam-powered ride to the summit of the Brocken, the highest peak in the Harz mountains, some 1,141m above sea level. Shrouded in mist for much of each year, the Brocken has been the subject of myth and legend for centuries. The 5:01am Eurostar from London will get you to Wernigerode for dinner; the 11:04am departure arrives late evening.

### Where to stay

In Wernigerode, the family-run four-star Ringhotel Weisser Hirsch has 8&B doubles from £120 (hotelweisserhirsch.de) and is on the main square, or you can stay on the Brocken's misty summit, at the Brocken Hotel (8&B doubles from £129; brockenhotel.de)

### How to book it

Combine a Eurostar ticket from London to Brussels from £78 return (eurostar.com), with a German Railways ticket from Brussels to Wernigerode from £39 each way (bahn.de/en)