

What's new this month

There have been various updates in this month's edition of the *European Rail Timetable*, particularly in the Italian section which has now been fully updated with summer amendments.

To ensure our readers who prefer the printed version of our timetable can keep up to date with the latest timetable developments, we have included, on page 560, extracts from our news pages that appeared in the July 2017 digital edition.

ROUTE OF THE MONTH

This month our regular travel correspondents, Nicky Gardner and Susanne Kries, start their journey in Cheb, an important railway hub in the west of the Czech Republic close to the German border. After a brief exploration of this bustling station, they join an express train service to Praha and are treated to some delightful Bohemian scenery during the three hour journey to the Czech capital. Turn to page 34 for some hints on what to look out for when travelling along the route and the latest timings can be found in Table 1120.

INTERNATIONAL

Timings of Eurostar's ski services for the 2017/2018 season have been received and Table 9 has been updated accordingly.

Eurostar is proposing a series of trial services between London and Amsterdam from the mid-December timetable change, although full details are still to be confirmed. From March 26, 2018, the plan is to operate two scheduled daily services in each direction (Table 18).

Low-cost *Izy* services between Paris and Brussels have been reduced to one pair of services daily, with an extra journey added on Fridays and Sundays. Most of these services run with two TGV sets coupled together with each set numbered separately, hence the two train numbers shown for each train in Table 18a.

Additional stops in Austria, at Bischofshofen, Kirchberg in Tirol and Jenbach, have been added to the Nice – Moskva *Trans-European Express* service (18BJ/17BJ) and timings have been added to Table 25.

NETHERLANDS

The line between Schiedam and Hoek van Holland was temporarily closed earlier this year for conversion to light rail operation and integration into the Rotterdam Metro system. The work was originally expected to take around five months to complete, but a number of unexpected issues means the return to rail operation will now be delayed by a few months. Although no revised completion date has been given, some reports indicate the line may not now reopen until early next year. Please note that timings of the replacement bus service have recently been amended as shown in updated Tables 15a and 497.

SWITZERLAND

It has been brought to our attention by our friends at *hidden europe* that *Gothard Panorama Express* services, which run over the traditional Gotthard Pass route, require payment of a supplement (Table 550a).

ITALY

Further updates have been made this month to our Italian tables and all local services have now been rechecked following the schedule change on June 11. Readers are reminded that there is a substantial amount of engineering work taking place throughout the country during the currency of this timetable period, and are advised to check local information before travelling (see last month's *Newslines*, repeated on page 560, for further details).

SPAIN

Engineering work in the Vigo area (Table 680), which is expected to continue until April 2018, means *Alvia* 4275 Madrid – Pontevedra terminates at Vigo, with a bus running forward to arrive Pontevedra at 1420. On Mondays to Fridays the return *Alvia* 4354 starts from Vigo with a connecting bus service departing Pontevedra at 1515. This work also affects *Reginal Exprés* services 12538 and 12455 which serve Vigo Urzáiz instead of Vigo Guixar and Redondela AV instead of Redondela de Galicia (a change of train at Pontevedra is also required).

Euskotren services between San Sebastián/Donostia and Bilbao (Table 686) no longer serve Bolueta or Atxuri stations in Bilbao. Instead they are routed through a new city tunnel, sharing tracks with Bilbao metro line 3. The new terminus is Matiko (formerly known as Ciudad Jardín), but for interchange with Bilbao Abando (the main line station) it is better to use Casco Viejo station. This is shared with metro lines 1 and 2, and is situated about 400 metres across the river from Abando broad gauge terminus (or one stop on the metro).

GERMANY

We have been made aware that engineering work in connection with the opening of the high-speed line between Erfurt and Ebersfeld in December is currently having a major effect on long-distance and regional services between Nürnberg and Lichtenfels and that this will continue until August 27. All long-distance trains in Table 851 are being diverted between Nürnberg and Naumburg and so are not able to serve intermediate stations between those points (certain trains may also be cancelled south of Leipzig). Regional trains, particularly those in Tables 875 and 876, are also subject to partial bus replacement. Unfortunately, timing variations are complex and are subject to change during the work meaning it is not possible for us to show the revised timings. Therefore, readers intending to travel in the affected area during August are strongly advised to check timings locally.

Many long-distance journeys are affected by projects to upgrade the network at various locations around Germany, particularly during the summer months. As alluded to in the news item above, it is not possible for us to show all temporary variations in the German tables, but we do include a summary of the most significant changes in a special panel on page 367. Readers travelling in Germany are advised to consult this panel to see if their journey may be affected. Please note that this list is not exhaustive and other alterations may occur, predominantly at weekends and during holiday periods.

SERBIA-MONTENEGRO

Following completion of engineering work between Beograd and Lajkovac, services between Beograd and Bar recommenced running by the direct route via Valjevo and Požega on July 15. The twice weekly through cars between Budapest and Bar, conveyed in train 1136/7 *Panonija*, have also resumed but only second class seating coaches will be available this summer (Table 1370).

TURKEY

The latest phase of the Baskentray project, the ongoing modernisation of the rail network around Ankara, has resulted in some amendments to Turkish high-speed schedules. Table 1570 has been updated with the latest timings. It is also worth noting that the local service between Polatli and Sincan (which we do not show in our tables) has also been temporarily suspended.

BEYOND EUROPE

This month's Beyond Europe section covers three areas: India (from page 568), South-East Asia, Australia and New Zealand (from page 580) and North America (from page 592). Please note that the Indian pages are the same as those shown in last month's digital edition with no further updates.

All tables in the South-East Asia, Australia and New Zealand section have been checked and updated based on the latest available information. In South-East Asia we have found that Indonesia has seen the most alterations since this area was last included in the Summer edition. The section covering Viêt Nam now includes a new table, numbered 6112, showing services between Hanoi and Ha Long.

In Australia, both of Queensland Rail's *Tilt Trains* will be back in service from August 28 meaning a full *Tilt Train* timetable can once again be provided with considerably reduced journey times between Brisbane and Bundaberg/Rockhampton. The two electric tilting train sets have been undergoing extensive refurbishment which has meant some services have had to be operated by traditional trains since October 2014 with extended journey times. Table 6330 has been updated with both the current timings and new schedules from August 28. In the state of Victoria, V/Line is introducing new services and amended schedules from August 27. Unfortunately, full details were not available in time for inclusion this month although we understand there will be extra services in Tables 6360, 6380 and 6385. In Western Australia, TransWA has introduced new timings for services shown in Table 6405.

The North American section includes numerous changes since it last appeared in the Summer edition. Amtrak is also embarking on a series of infrastructure upgrades around New York Penn station which is having an impact on service levels in that area until September 1. To enable us to show the changes to North-East Corridor services during this period, we have included a special version of Table 9215 which can be found on pages 606 and 607. Changes that affect other tables are explained in the relevant footnotes. VIA Rail of Canada has also issued some amended schedules and all affected tables have been updated accordingly.