



European Travel Information

You are about to embark on an exciting and enjoyable travel experience.
Please read this information carefully before you depart for your trip.

Luggage Restrictions

On this tour you will be allowed one personal checked item and one personal carry-on item. Consult your airline's website for up-to-date restrictions on the weight and dimensions for carry-on and checked items. Standard airline regulations state that checked luggage be no more than 50 pounds and 62 linear inches (L+W+H).

If your carry-on item is a musical instrument within the allowed measurements, you may or may not be allowed to bring a small second carry-on item, depending on individual airline policies on the date of travel. Please ensure that your carry-on does not contain sharp objects (scissors, nail clippers, etc). Liquids, gels, lotions or similar items in containers must not exceed 3.4 ounces/100 ml and must fit comfortably in a quart-size, clear, plastic, zip-top bag if in carry-on luggage. There is no volume limit to these items if they are in checked luggage. All prescription medications needed during the tour should be packed in your carry-on luggage. Do not lock your suitcase or checked instrument case, as customs agents must be able to open it. Do not pack film in your checked luggage, as security x-ray machines will damage it.

What to pack

Casual clothing is appropriate for the majority of your tour. Your director will review your required tour and performance attire. You will need comfortable walking shoes and a sweater for evenings and cooler days.

Helpful items to bring

Clothing for churches: Certain churches require that visitors' knees and shoulders be covered

Comfortable walking shoes

Sweater: For evenings and cooler days

Windbreaker or waterproof jacket

Collapsible umbrella

Toiletries: Soap and shampoo bottles provided at hotels are very small. We suggest you bring your own.

Plastic bags: For wet washcloths or dirty clothes

Money belt: Worn underneath your clothes to protect valuables and passport

Passport photocopy: Make copies of the first inside page of your passport (photo and signature). Carry one copy separately from your passport, and leave one copy at home.

Departure Day

Upon arrival at the airport, assemble as a flight group and form a line to check in.

Before check-in, each passenger must have:

- 1. Airline Ticket:** If you are not provided a paper ticket or an individual E-ticket receipt, this means you are part of a group E-ticket record and individuals will not need any paper documentation to check in.
- 2. Passport:** You are responsible for your passport at all times. Your passport must be valid up to six months after your return date.
- 3. Luggage Tag:** Attach a Gateway luggage tag to your checked luggage, clearly labeled with your contact information.

During check-in, the agent will give you:

- 1. Luggage claim check:** Keep this until you claim your luggage at your final destination. Please ensure that the airline has checked your luggage through to your final destination.
- 2. Boarding pass:** This lists your flight number, departure gate, boarding time and departure time. If your itinerary includes multiple flights, you may receive two or more boarding passes. Be sure to keep your boarding passes where you can find them when boarding your flight.

After check-in, proceed through security to the boarding gate. All personal items are subject to search.

Seat Assignments

Airlines are responsible for your seat assignments. Gateway cannot honor seat requests. After the plane has taken off, you may switch seats with other members of your group. Passengers with special meal requests are advised to not switch seats. We do not recommend switching seats during the boarding process.

Frequent Flyer Numbers

Most airlines have a frequent flyer program. Once you know on which airline you are traveling, you may sign up for their frequent flyer program online. If you already have a frequent flyer number for the airline on which you are flying, you must present it to the agent upon check-in. Keep your boarding passes. After the tour, if the airlines do not credit your frequent flyer miles, you will need your boarding pass(es) to prove that you traveled on the flights.

Connecting Flights

Many international connections require passengers to pass through security to get to connecting flights. If you have a connecting flight, your luggage will be checked through to your final destination. On your journey to Europe, you will not claim any luggage at any connecting point. On your return journey, you will clear customs and identify your checked luggage upon your first entry point into the United States. Airline officials stationed in the customs area will then re-check your luggage for your final connecting U.S. flight(s).

Customs and Immigration in Europe

When you arrive in Europe, you must clear immigration and customs. In European airports, follow signs that read “Non-EU Residents.” The officer will ask for your passport and may ask several other questions such as, “How long will you be staying?” and, “Is your trip for business or pleasure?” At your final destination, you will pass through customs after claiming and inspecting your luggage. Upon arrival at your final destination, continue to baggage claim and wait with your group for your luggage. Before leaving baggage claim, carefully check your baggage and/or checked instruments for damage. If an item is damaged or lost, you must file a claim with the airline before departing the baggage claim area.

Tour Manager, Guides, Drivers

Gateway Tour Manager: In order to ensure a smooth and successful tour, Gateway sends a Gateway Tour Manager with every European group. Your Gateway Tour Manager will be responsible for the overall operation of the tour, ensuring that you receive everything included in your trip package.

European Tour Leaders: In non-English-speaking countries, Gateway provides a full-time English-speaking European tour leader(s). These leaders are responsible for communicating with local vendors and performance venues and for handling translation duties as required.

City Tour Guides: Guided city tours in major cities are narrated by trained, licensed local city guides.

Motorcoach Drivers: Your driver’s primary responsibility is to safely provide transfers while on tour. European countries maintain strict regulations for the number of driving and resting hours allowed per day. To ensure on-time departures and proper luggage loading by your driver, please deliver your luggage to your respective coaches at the time requested.

Hotel

Room Assignments: Your group leader will assign rooms in advance. Please do not switch rooms without permission.

Room Size: Hotel rooms in Europe tend to be smaller and less furnished than those in the United States.

Amenities: Many hotels have hair dryers and wi-fi is becoming increasingly available but likely not free of charge and available only in the hotel lobby. Wi-fi may not be available or free of charge at your hotel.

Porterage of luggage: Unless otherwise advised, Gateway does not include portage of luggage on tour. Group members are responsible for handling their own luggage throughout the tour. Should you require assistance with your luggage, please advise Gateway prior to your tour.

Elevators: Though most European hotels have elevators, or “lifts,” they tend to be smaller than U.S. elevators. Passengers assigned to rooms on lower floors may wish to take the stairs to speed up the check in and checkout process.

Foreign Currency

While most of Europe uses one currency, the Euro, several European countries still have their own currency. Before departure, you may exchange dollars for foreign currency at either a bank or airport. Once overseas, you may exchange money at the arrival airport, a bank, or your hotel. The exchange rate will fluctuate on a daily basis. Each time you exchange currency you will likely pay a commission. Even if you plan to use cash cards or credit cards to make purchases, it is a good idea to have the local currency on-hand for small purchases as some establishments may not accept cards or may require a minimum purchase.

Cash & Credit Cards

ATMs are readily available in most European countries. They will accept most major cash cards and provide the local currency at the current exchange rate. Contact your bank prior to departure to alert them of your travel details so that your foreign purchases are not blocked and for verification of applicable fees or surcharges. Credit cards are accepted at many major stores and larger restaurants, and usually provide the best exchange rate.

General Money Safety

As in any large city in the U.S., theft and pick pocketing is a possibility in European cities. Please take the following precautions:

- Use your hotel safe when available.
- Do not keep all of your cash and credit cards in the same place.
- When you are traveling as a group, be aware of the people around you. Pick pocketing can go easily undetected in the cover of a large group.

Electricity

Europe is on 220/120-volt system, while the United States is on a 110/120 system. Converters and European adapter plugs are necessary to operate American appliances. Most devices have built-in converters so you may only need an adaptor. If you plan to use electrical appliances such as an electric shaver, hair dryer or curling iron, you may need an electrical converter in addition to an adapter.

Telephone Calls

Phone calls from Europe to the United States are very expensive. If you plan to use your mobile phone on tour, be sure to check with your provider about international data and phone charges. Many companies charge roaming fees if you don't turn off your data. Most travelers can utilize wi-fi calling with their personal device.

Tour Timings

Timing Itineraries: Before departure you will receive a timing itinerary that provides approximate times for daily events on tour. It is important to understand that actual times will vary as your tour progresses.

Daily Timings: Every day on tour, your Gateway Tour Manager will provide the next day's timings. Every time a stop is made on tour, your Gateway Tour Manager will announce the next departure time.

Promptness: To maintain scheduled appointments, and out of respect to your fellow travelers, it is important to be on time for every departure.

Vital Medicines and Illness

If you take a prescription drug, be sure to bring a sufficient supply for the entire trip. Carry your prescription drugs with you and not in your checked luggage. You should also carry your written prescription separately, in case you lose your supply. If you feel ill during the tour, please immediately notify your tour leader or chaperone. We recommend that you consult the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (www.cdc.gov) for vaccination recommendations for your particular destinations.

Meals

Please advise your group leader of any special dietary requirements prior to departure. Breakfast will be provided daily. Please review your final itinerary for the number of dinners included.

Breakfasts – There are three main types of breakfast:

- 1. Continental breakfast:** In larger cities and throughout some countries, a continental breakfast will often be served, consisting of rolls, juice and coffee.
- 2. Supplemented Continental breakfast:** Certain Continental breakfasts may include rolls, cold cuts, cereals, juices and coffee.
- 3. Full breakfast:** In certain cases, hot items such as eggs, ham, sausages, and potatoes may be provided.

Dinners – Most group dinners will have a set menu, usually including a soup or salad, main course, and dessert.

Beverages – Beverages may be available at an additional charge, which will be collected at the end of the meal. When ordering water, you may be asked whether you want it with or without “gas” (carbonation). There will be a charge for bottled water.

Culture

Part of the enjoyment of traveling to another country is immersing yourself in the culture. Remember that you are a guest and that your attitude and behavior reflect on your country.

Language

School children in most European countries are required to study English for at least six years. Though English is spoken in most hotels and tourist areas, you may meet people who do not speak English.

Trip Etiquette

Motorcoaches: Please do not bring any messy foods on the coach and remove all waste from the coach each time you disembark. We also ask that you keep the two front seats opposite the driver available for guides and Tour Managers. Gateway does not require that you rotate seats on the motorcoach during your tour. However, we do suggest that you take different seats on a daily basis, so that your fellow passengers will have an opportunity to sit at different locations on the coach.

Hotels: Please respect other guests' needs and keep volume levels to a minimum.

Special dress codes: Pay careful attention to signs and postings, as some places do not admit persons with bare shoulders, shorts or immodest clothing. Your tour leaders will advise when to be prepared for such situations.

Public restrooms: Most European cities charge for use of public restrooms. Use facilities in museums or at a restaurant before exiting.

Taking Pictures

There will be many wonderful opportunities to take pictures. There will be times, however, when it is impossible to stop the motorcoach for a perfect picture. If a photo stop is made, take your photographs quickly and return to the motorcoach to remain on schedule. Please check at each location if picture taking is allowed as some places forbid it or ask for a donation to take pictures.

Gratuities

Servers: All tips are included with your group meals. For meals or services during free time, note that restaurant staff and taxi drivers in most European cities do not expect tips. If you prefer to tip, rounding your bill up to the nearest Euro or tipping at 10% is a good rule of thumb.

European Tour Leaders and Drivers: Unless otherwise advised, tips for European tour leaders and motorcoach drivers are included.

City Guides: Unless otherwise advised, tips for city guides are included.

Currency: Gratuities should be given in local currency.

Returning to the United States

At some point on your return to the United States, you will declare the purchases you made overseas and are bringing back to the United States. You will clear customs at your first entry point into the United States. Upon arrival, you will pass through Immigration and present your passport. After claiming your luggage, you will present your Customs Declaration Form to a Customs Officer. You may be required to pay a duty.

Have A Great Tour!