How to Plan a 2-Week Europe Trip

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Plan a two-week Europe trip that fits your budget and energy: route, rail, bookings, documents, packing and a realistic daily pace.

Things you will need

- Valid passport (valid 6+ months beyond return date)
- Travel insurance policy
- Credit and debit cards (notify bank of travel)
- European power adapter (Type C, E, or G)
- Portable phone charger and power bank
- Comfortable walking shoes
- Layered clothing for varying climates
- Travel-size toiletries (under 100ml for carry-on)
- Basic first-aid kit and prescription medications
- Language phrasebook or translation app
- Travel journal or notebook
- Physical and digital copies of all bookings
- Multi-currency travel card or money belt
- Reusable water bottle
- Sunscreen and travel-size moisturizer

Setting Your Travel Foundations

1. **Define Your Travel Style and Goals**
   Start by clarifying what kind of European experience you want.
2. **Set a Realistic Budget**
   Break your total trip cost into categories: flights, accommodation, food, intercity transport, activities, insurance, and a contingency fund.
3. **Choose Your Travel Season**
   Europe's climate varies dramatically across regions and seasons.
4. **Determine Your Trip Duration**
   Two weeks gives you enough time to visit 3-5 cities without feeling rushed, but you must be realistic about travel time between destinations.
5. **Secure Travel Insurance and Documents**
   Comprehensive travel insurance is non-negotiable for a two-week Europe trip — it covers medical emergencies, trip cancellations, lost luggage, and theft.

Choosing Your Route and Destinations

6. **Research European Destinations**
   Create a shortlist of European countries and cities that match your travel style and budget.
7. **Map Out a Geographic Route**
   Plot your shortlist on a map and identify a logical geographic path that avoids backtracking.

8. **Prioritize Must-See Landmarks**
   List the top attractions in each city and rank them by must-see, nice-to-see, and skip.
9. **Balance City and Nature Experiences**
   A great Europe trip blends urban exploration with natural scenery.
10. **Check Visa and Entry Requirements**
    Verify visa requirements for every country on your route.
11. **Create a Flexible Route Map**
    Finalize your route on a visual map with estimated travel times between cities.

Booking Flights and Accommodation

12. **Find the Best Flight Deals**
    Search for flights using aggregators like Skyscanner and Kayak with flexible date views to find the cheapest days to fly.
13. **Choose Airport Entry and Exit Points**
    Pick primary and backup arrival and departure airports based on your route.
14. **Book Accommodation Strategically**
    Choose accommodation based on location, budget, and trip style.
15. **Consider Alternative Lodging Options**
    Beyond hotels, explore vacation rentals, apartment hotels, and family-run B&Bs for a more authentic experience.
16. **Reserve Key Attractions and Tours**
    Pre-book tickets for must-see attractions and popular tours before you leave home.
17. **Confirm All Bookings**
    Review every booking confirmation — flights, trains, hotels, tours, and insurance — and save them all in one digital folder or travel app.

Planning Your Itinerary and Transportation

18. **Plan Daily Activities**
    Sketch a rough daily plan for each city: morning activity, lunch spot, afternoon exploration, and evening dinner or show.
19. **Research European Train Networks**
    European trains are the most comfortable and eco-friendly way to travel between cities.
20. **Book Intercity Transport**
    Book intercity trains as early as possible — popular routes like Paris to Nice or Munich to Venice fill up and prices rise.
21. **Plan City Transportation**
    Research public transport systems in each city before you arrive.
22. **Build a Day-by-Day Schedule**
    Create a detailed day-by-day itinerary in a spreadsheet or travel planner app.
23. **Add Buffer Time and Rest Days**
    Insert buffer days between major travel segments and after long sightseeing days.

Preparing for the Trip

24. Pack Smart for Europe

Pack light and versatile — a two-week trip should fit in a carry-on and a small personal item.

25. Prepare Finances and Currency

Notify your bank of your travel dates to avoid card blocks, and carry at least two credit cards from different networks.

26. Learn Basic Local Phrases

Download a language learning app like Babbel or Duolingo and spend 15 minutes daily learning basic phrases for each country on your route: hello, thank you, please, where is the bathroom, and how much does it cost.

27. Finalize Documents and Copies

Make two physical and digital copies of every important document: passport, visa, insurance, vaccination records, hotel bookings, and train tickets.

28. Create a Trip Journal

Start a travel journal before you leave — it becomes the most precious souvenir of your trip.

Sources

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2. IATA Travel Centre
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