Let’s go there by land not air

Warning: Might take longer. Might cost much much more (or less). Includes adventures.

“Weekend break in Barcelona – see you on Wednesday”
“Taking a bath in the pacific. Back in 3 weeks.”

Gunnar Thöle, energie@ruup.de
Who?

- Dipl.-Ing. Gunnar Thöle
- HVAC planning, climate protection in local communities
Vehicles

- Trains
- Ferries
- Buses (just to bridge gaps or as last mile – too slow, can’t sleep)
Your most important tool

- Night trains
- Will adjust to your level of comfort – and available money.
- Contrary to popular belief these still exist.
Tools

- Reiseauskunft.bahn.de
- Seat61.com
- Aferry.com
- The lazy option: Train travel agency
  - http://www.die-bahnprofis.de/
- Your local rail station ticket counter
- A credit card
- A really good visa agency
Easy: In western Europe, not France or UK

Germany, Poland, Czech Republic, Austria, Switzerland, Italy, Belgium, Denmark, Netherlands, Luxembourg, Liechtenstein

• Go to reiseauskunft.bahn.de
• enter your start and destination
• If starting from or going to Germany – just buy your ticket online right there.
• Add busliniensuche.de – also has a few trains ("Flixtrain" affiliates)
Specials:

• Travel involving the Czech Republic should be bought from cd.cz – much cheaper!
• Travelling a lot? Get an Interrail pass.
• ICE sprinter – equivalent to TGV/RENFE
  – (nearly) non-stop high-speed travel on trains
  – Hamburg-Köln/Frankfurt
  – Berlin-München/Frankfurt
Let’s go skiing tomorrow.
Find a connection from Gransee station to Mayrhofen (Zillertal).
What time could we hit the slopes?
Medium difficulty: Night trains for longer trips. Or UK.

- Great for central / eastern Europe.
- DB canceled all it's sleeping trains. But there are others. Know them:
  - Berlin-Malmö (-Stockholm)
  - Berlin-Vienna/Budapest/Przemysl (for connection to Kiev)
  - (Moscow-)Berlin-Frankfurt-Paris
  - Hamburg/Dortmund-Vienna
  - Berlin/Hamburg-Zurich
  - Munich-Venice
  - Munich-Zagreb/Rijeka
  - Hamburg-Lörrach
  - (Paris-)Berlin-Minsk-Moscow
  - Hamburg-Innsbruck
Night Trains in Europe, 2019

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UK: Trains through the tunnel

• From Paris, Brussels, Amsterdam. Schedules on reiseauskunft.bahn.de
• Can be bought from every station.
• Eurostar behaves like an airline – quite a nuisance. Be there at least 30 Minutes earlier.
• Night option “Dutch Flyer”:
  – Train to Rotterdam
  – Night ferry to Harwich
  – Train to London (…, Cambridge, …)
Ex-UdSSR

- Russia, Belarus, Ukraine, Baltic states, Kasachstan, Usbekistan, Mongolia, more
- Trains are mostly old but very comfortable, very safe. No russian needed, but helpful.
- Just buy tickets online at pass.rzd.ru
- Western european train companies can sell a few, but not all trains there.
- Visa trouble...
The Belarus situation

- No border control Russia-Belarus
- Russia wants Visas from everyone
- Belarus does not → Russia is afraid
- Travel across Belarus-Russia border is illegal for foreigners, possibly except Three sisters border post (but that has no trains).
- Non-Stop travel on the direct (Paris/Berlin-)Warszawa-Moscow trains seems to be OK. Still needs transit visa for Belarus.
- Travel to Belarus only is not affected.
- Travel via Kiev currently possible, depending on Ukraine-Russia war. Don't, if you are Russian or Ukrainian and male and not old
- Travel via Baltic states possible, but more difficult due to trains on weekend only.
- Nicest, safest, slowest: Ferry to Helsinki, Train to Moscow.
Planning this

- Pick the night part first
- Add connecting trains afterwards
- Then buy ticket
  - Try to have only one ticket
Practice: Take a bath in the pacific

• Where is the pacific? Do I need an actual warm, sunny beach?
• Find a city on the pacific in a country from the Medium category.
• Go and try getting a schedule. Where do you get tickets? Try to create split tickets at Warszawa.
Weekend break in Barcelona

- Find the schedule on reiseauskunft.bahn.de
- Try to include a night train into it (Via Basel)
Really hard

- China (easier than you think), Iran (again possible), Armenia, Tibet, Vietnam (easy but takes very long), Saudi-Arabia, Dubai (impossible for Westerners!), most of Africa, ...

- Read up on seat61.com
Hard but worth it: Istanbul

- Finally possible again!
- You can still take the Orient Express route.
- Make your way to Sofia, daily train to Istanbul from there.
- In Summer: Make way to Bucarest, daily carriage to Istanbul from there.
- Fancy options from Istanbul:
  - Iran
  - Armenia, Aserbaychan, Georgia (soon)
  - Hopefully later: Syria
  - Greek Islands
Hard: Asia

- Involves the transsiberian railroad
- See seat61.com
Impossible: The Americas

- US and Canada have actually useful train systems. But getting there...
- There is scheduled ferry service across the Atlantic. It is called Queen Mary 2 and is extremely expensive.
- In spring and autumn go for repositioning cruises.
- Last resort: Take ferry to Seydisfjördur, take bus to Reykjavik, fly from there.
Seems hard, is really easy

- North Korea
  - Gransee-Pyjonmgjang, change at Berlin Hbf and Moscow
Your destination!

- Ask if help needed.
- Prove me wrong. Please!