

The Guardian



10 of the best railway hotels in Europe: readers' travel tips

A friendly welcome and comfortable bed are just the tonic after a long journey: our tipsters know the best hotels near stations from the Med to the Tirol

Guardian readers

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Winning tip: Seaside rooms, France

Cerbère is the last village in France before Spain on the Mediterranean coast. It's a quiet seaside resort with an international train station and two amazing hotels. The first is the stunning 1930s art deco **Hotel Belvédère**, which is styled like an ocean liner. Declared a historic monument in 2002, it is perched over the rail track, it has now reopened with rooms to let. They used to play tennis on the roof, and the original cinema is still there. On the other side of the village is the 1950s-built hotel **La Vigie**, which has fantastic views thanks to its clifftop setting.

. *Hotel Belvédère du Rayon Vert, apartments from €95 room-only, belvedere-cerbere.fr; La Vigie, doubles from €97 room-only, hotel-lavigie.com*

Bernard Phelan

Your carriage awaits, Amsterdam



Train Lodge, Amsterdam

After a long train ride to Amsterdam, my favourite place to stay is **Train Lodge**, right by Amsterdam Sloterdijk station (four kilometres west of Centraal station), which was built from former Zurich-Rome sleeper train carriages. The ambience is vibrant and relaxed, the beds very comfortable and it offers a central base to explore the city. A good breakfast is served for an extra €6, and there's a choice between shared and private rooms. If you are travelling in a big group, you can even book an entire carriage. Wifi and bed linen are included, and the hostel has bikes for hire.

. Dorm beds from €29, private compartment for six from €179 room-only, trainlodge.com

Irene

Rooms with character, Porto



Hotel Peninsular

Hotel Peninsular is across the street from Porto's main station, Porto São Bento, and is brilliant value. It's a wonderfully gloomy, traditional old Portuguese hotel, full of heavy dark mahogany furniture and fittings to match. With helpful staff, a small restaurant and clean, comfortable reception and bedrooms, it's bang in the centre of town for restaurants, river, attractions and bus and rail services. Being massive it usually has rooms, even in high season. A real find.

. Doubles from €36 B&B, booking.com

Lyn Perry

By Gare du Nord, Paris



Whistler hotel

A stone's throw from Gare du Nord, the **Whistler** has a golden age of train travel theme, with carriage-style seating and vintage suitcases, which gives the hotel a real boutique feel. The lobby even displays a real departures board for Gare du Nord. Thankfully, the bathrooms are nothing like those on a train and were fantastic. The basement of the hotel contains a hammam, which was a welcome treat after a day cooped up on a train. Upon check-out, the clerk informed me that the hotel also offers a day booking at a reduced price for travellers with long waits between connecting trains.

. Doubles from €109 room-only, whistlerparis.com

Christianne

Tirolean stopover, Austria



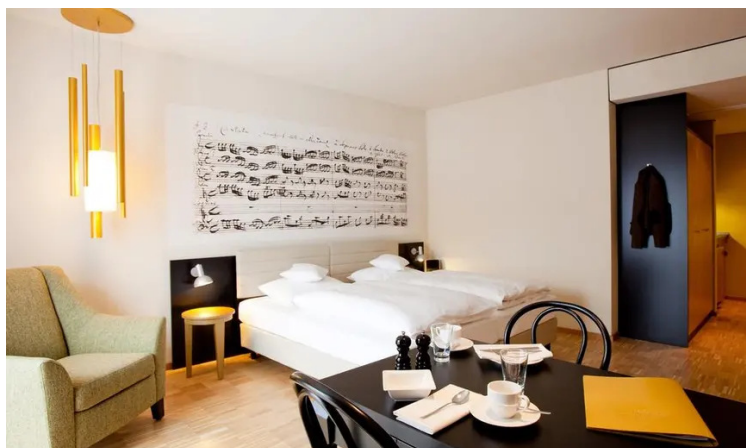
Hotel Stadt Kufstein

We needed a Munich night stop on the way home from Rome, but the hotel prices there were sky-high. So we decided to get off the train 90km short of the city at Kufstein in the Austrian Tirol, a delightful small town surrounded by mountains and well stocked with hotels and restaurants. We stayed at the **Hotel Stadt Kufstein**, which was clean, calm, cool and central. We ate well and reasonably at the friendly Restaurant Bar Ambiente (ambiente-kufstein.at). After an excellent breakfast, we strolled back over the River Inn to the station, catching a commuter train for the hour-long ride to Munich and connecting perfectly with our journey home.

. Doubles from €140, room-only, hotel-stadt-kufstein.at

Martin Purser

Bach-themed hotel, Leipzig



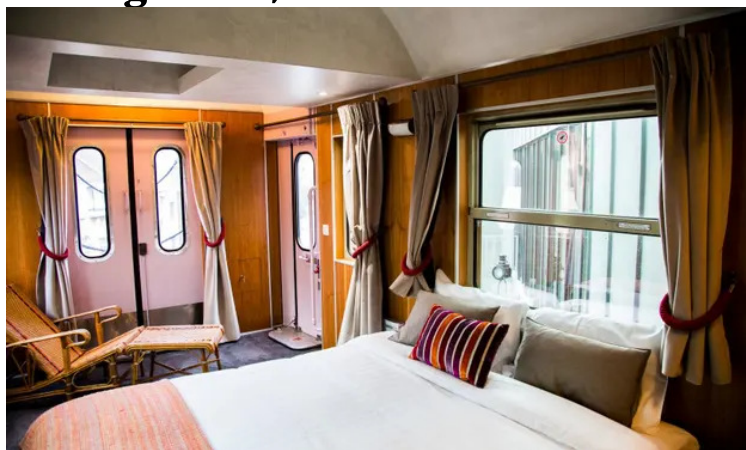
Bach14

If you exit Leipzig's cavernous Hauptbahnhof and walk in a straight line for 10 minutes you'll arrive at **Bach14** (alternatively get the S-Bahn one stop to Markt and your walk is one minute). It's a small apartment hotel housed in one of the city's oldest buildings and, as the name suggests, it has a bit of a thing for Johann Sebastian Bach (who lived in Leipzig from 1723 until his death in 1750), from its musical score wallpaper to the restaurant's lighting resembling organ pipes. The hotel opens on to the listed Thomaskirchhof square, and its outdoor sitting area is the perfect place to have a coffee and take in the musical performances that frequently take place on the cobblestones.

. Doubles from €113, room-only, bach14.arcona.de

Keith Rathbone

Carriage suite, Brussels



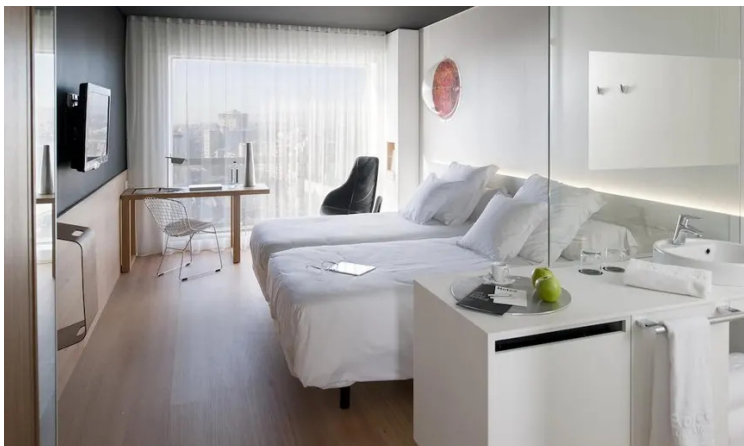
Train Hostel

If your Eurostar to Brussels hasn't quite quenched your thirst for trains, continue a short distance north of the centre to Schaerbeek station, home to the brilliant Train World museum. Just a short walk away, you'll find the **Train Hostel**, with its themed accommodation. Budget options are available, with sleeper cabin compartments, but the star of the show is a rooftop suite in a train carriage which overhangs the street below, where you can recreate the romance of a night on the rails with the luxury of a double bed and a hotel bathroom.

. Train cabin from €39, private room from €53, suite from €153, trainhostel.be

Rhiannon

Above Sants station, Barcelona



Barceló Sants

The space theme at the **Barceló Sants** hotel, built over the main station, was a great hit with our kids. They loved the bridge of the Starship Enterprise outside the lifts and the R2-D2 model; we loved the images of Keir Dullea who starred as the main astronaut in 2001: A Space Odyssey. Rooms were modern and clean, and panoramic windows gave views over downtown Barcelona.

. Doubles from €89 room-only, barcelo.com

Matt Pryor

Cinque Terre base, Genoa



Grand Hotel Savoia

My friends and I wanted to trek Italy's Cinque Terre, so we needed a nearby base to which we could retreat after long days of hiking. The **Grand Hotel Savoia**, a five-star luxury spa hotel right by Genoa's Piazza Principe station did the trick. We zipped over to the Cinque Terre region on the high-speed train, then explored beautiful Genoa in the evenings. The hotel has a stately feel: gilded mirrors, beautiful vintage furniture, a stylish bar you can imagine Hemingway propping up. The restaurant served superb local cuisine: *trofie* pasta with Genovese pesto in a grilled parmesan nest - *magnifico*!

. From €118 room-only, grandhotelsavoiaigenova.it

Sarah

Rail and rivers, Switzerland



Hotel Albula & Julier

The friendly, family-run **Hotel Albula & Julier** sits at the confluence of two rivers just a short walk from the train station in Tiefencastel in the mountainous Graubünden region of south-east Switzerland. Trains run frequently along this Unesco-listed line between swanky St Moritz and Chur, one of the oldest towns in the country. Also stopping here all year round are the Glacier and Bernina Express train lines. From the hotel's panoramic dining room, you can spy the trains above you through the trees, especially at night. The Albula & Julier offers comfortable and affordable accommodation, with good food and a warm welcome.

. Doubles from £100 B&B, albula-julier.ch

Paul

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