

Photo: The Camping and Caravanning Club

Trouble free travel

Exploring Europe in your motorhome needn't be difficult; use one of the travel services below to find the ultimate in holiday pleasure

When it comes to travelling in a motorhome, many of us are daunted by language barriers, breakdown cover, or even jumping on a ferry (for help, see our Ferry Guide elsewhere in this issue), but with so many companies and clubs offering assistance on even the most trivial of travelling matters, organising a trip abroad should be a breeze.

Below is a collection of travel services aiming to make it easier for you to holiday in Europe – whether you want your trip fully arranged or just want a helping hand.

It's also worth having a look on the specific country's tourist information web site (just type the country into google). You'll also find a list of these in this month's Services & Supplies Directory towards the back of the magazine. Also take a look at www.e-traveleurope.com and www.visiteurope.com, which, among other sites, have information you may find invaluable for your overseas trip.

Caravan Club

Tel: 01342 316101; Web: www.caravanclub.co.uk

Letting a respected club take the strain of arranging an overseas motorhome tour is reassuring and relaxing. This members-only travel service provided by the Caravan Club offers a ferry booking service,

which often has good discounts and up-to-date availability information. The club also has over 200 sites dotted throughout Europe and a range of inclusive holidays with a pre-arranged itinerary for you to choose from. Reliable overseas holiday insurance can also be provided through the club (Red Pennant).

Even if you're just after some general information about where to book and how to arrange a trip abroad, the club can help.

Look out for the seasonal Escape brochures.

Camping and Caravanning Club's Carefree Travel Service

Tel: 08451 307701

Web: www.campingandcaravanningclub.co.uk/travelabroad

Carefree is the overseas travel service from the Camping and Caravanning Club, which offers advice on summer and winter camping to its members.

From an online booking system to ferry crossing discounts, campsite pitches, helpful brochures and even guided European tours to countries including Morocco, Iceland & Faroe Islands, Italy, Greece, Switzerland and Germany, you can use the information as little or as much as you want. You can even get your hands on Europ Assistance travel insurance and a pre-paid currency card through the club.

1 At a vineyard with Exclusive Wine Tours 2 Travel Morocco with Desert Detours 3 Tour Iceland & the Faroe Islands with the Camping and Caravanning Club 4 Travel Morocco or Tunisia with Blue Camel Tours

The Carefree Summer Camping 2011 brochure contains a wide selection of European and worldwide tours, general information on touring abroad, listings of ferry crossings out of the UK including special discounts for club members and a selection of sites across Europe. The brochure is also free of charge.

If you're looking to travel in the colder months, take a look at the Carefree Winter Sun Camping brochure, which includes all the information a motorhome travelling abroad in the winter could need – plus it'll fit perfectly in your 'van's glove box. It does cost £10, but this is refunded if you book a holiday with the club.

Alan Rogers Travel Service

Tel: 01580 214000; Web: www.alanrogers.com/travel

Alan Rogers is known for its campsite reviews and guides and this one-stop-shop travel service offers pitches in France and Spain on over 100 campsites, all inspected and selected by the Alan Rogers Guides. Prices are based on campsites' own 'at the gate' prices, with a £45 booking fee (regardless of how many sites you visit).

This service also has great offers including free child places on many sites, ferry crossings with 'vans priced as cars on many trips and secure bookings.

Camping Cheque

Tel: 01580 214021; Web: www.campingcheque.co.uk

Also sitting under the Alan Rogers umbrella, this off-peak touring scheme offers over 600 sites across 29 countries in Europe, including UK and Ireland, all at the same price of £13.95 per night, including electric hook-up.

On top of this, special offers are also available such as fourteen nights for eleven, making your nightly rate even cheaper. The scheme also offers a directory of all the sites included in its scheme, membership cards and discounted ferries.

Call the number above for a free European road map, giving the details on how to save up to sixty per cent on your holiday.

Eurocamp Independent

Tel: 08448 440440; Web: www.eurocampindependent.co.uk

Eurocamp Independent is the sister company of Eurocamp and offers a bespoke pitch and ferry reservation service for the independent motorhome.

With around 100 European campsites to choose from, great-value ferry-inclusive packages, tailor made insurance and English speaking couriers on most sites, this service is here to make it easy for you.

Eurocamp Independent even lets you know about any special activities to look out for at campsites, such as free sessions in the relaxation area at Domaine de Massereau in the Med or the new mini golf course at Camping Atlantique in Brittany.

Select Sites

Tel: 08444 069876; Web: www.select-site.com

Part of the Eurocamp Independent empire, Select Sites offer



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almost 200 campsites, spread across twelve European countries. The service even covers pitch reservations, inclusive ferry or tunnel crossings and holiday insurance, plus any overnight stops, a rally service, expert advice and even a comprehensive travel pack with maps, GB stickers and any relevant documentation needed.

With over 23 years experience in getting campers to the continent, Select Sites offers friendly advice, quality campsites and great value for money.

Go online to get the 2011 brochure with information about all the sites.

Touring Cheque

Tel: 08448 444111; Web: www.touringcheque.co.uk

Touring Cheque is the 'low cost, low season, go as you please' choice from Eurocamp Independent. All of the campsites involved in the scheme (over 150 in twelve countries) will accept a touring cheque (costing just £12.95) in exchange for a pitch for two people and their motorhome, including electric hook-up.

Also, look out for the inclusive ferry crossing deals and special offers such as fourteen nights for the price of ten.

Exclusive Wine Tours

Tel: 07950 629694; Web: www.exclusivewinetours.co.uk

Exclusive Wine Tours is a family-run company providing escorted motorhome tours around the wine producing regions of France, including the Loire, Chateauf-neuf-du-Pape, Champagne and Bordeaux – perfect if you're a lover of great wine, great food and driving through beautiful countryside. As part of a small group you will visit a selection of vineyards, châteaux and wine producers, stopping for a taste and even staying overnight at some.

Ferry crossings, campsite fees and hook-up, meals with wine, tastings and tours, full-use of an experienced tour guide, plus an information pack with maps are included in the cost.

GB Privilege

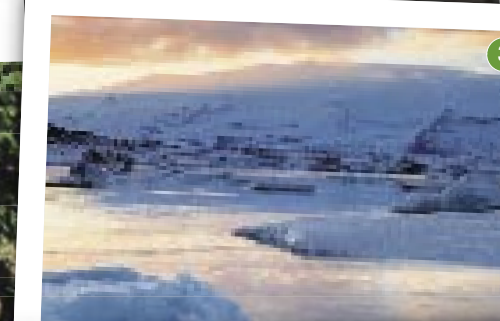
Tel: 01953 789661; Web: www.gbprivilege.com

With 27 tours taking place over 2011, running until October, there's sure to be a tour suited to your taste and budget, from dog-friendly trips through Germany to a polar bear tour in the US. You can opt for a fully escorted service or simply dip in and out using the information you need, meeting the guide at pre-arranged points.

GB Privilege splits its tours into five categories: Standard, Premium, Value, Short Breaks and Exotic tours – which one you choose will determine how much is arranged for you and also how long you travel for (take a look at the web site for more details).



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Desert Detours

Tel: 0034 658 988 841; E-mail: info@desertdetours.com;

Web: www.desertdetours.com

Desert Detours run twenty to 30-day fully supported tours to Morocco departing every month throughout the year. Five separate tour routes cover most of Morocco, including the High Atlas, Cedar Forest, Imperial Cities, Atlantic Coast and of course the Sahara Dunes. Support en-route includes two assistant vehicles, full time Moroccan staff and a qualified tour mechanic.

In addition to the popular Classic tour, it also runs a range of Discovery tours offering the opportunity to visit places such as the Tizga Pass, the vast Al-Wahda Lake and the Imshil Marriage festival.

Desert Detours will take care of all paperwork, ferry and camping costs, as well as supplying a comprehensive 50-page Moroccan guide and itinerary.

Perestroika Tours

E-mail: info@mir-tours.com; Web: www.mir-tours.de

This German tour company has offered English-speaking tours for twenty years and this year has two planned: a 28-day tour from Moscow to St Petersburg and an 80-day tour from North Africa to Turkey (the closing date for the latter was in November 2010 so contact the operator for 2012 dates).

Perestroika Tours will handle the organisation and booking, while the fee for your visa, camping fees and information packs are included in the price. During the tours some sightseeing activities and meals are included, but leisure days are also scheduled.

If you speak German, why not have a look at the other tours the company have planned?

Nordic Detours

Tel: 0046 706 666 111; E-mail: info@nordicdetours.com;

Web: www.nordicdetours.com

Nordic Tours has offered English-speaking tours since 2009 and offers three tours: nineteen days in the Baltic Countries (Estonia, Latvia and

FUEL PRICES (courtesy of AA Fuel Price report November 2010)

Country	Currency	Local currency per litre		UK pence per litre	
		Unleaded	Diesel	Unleaded	Diesel
UK	Pence	119.0	123.0	119.0	123.0
Austria	Euro	1.19	1.13	101.39	95.62
Belgium	Euro	1.38	1.19	117.03	101.22
Bulgaria	Leva	2.18	2.28	94.72	99.06
Czech Republic	Czech Koruna	31.70	30.60	109.41	105.62
Denmark	Danish Krone	11.19	10.06	127.44	14.57
Estonia	Kroons	17.65	18.00	99.25	101.22
Finland	Euro	1.43	1.18	121.54	100.03
France	Euro	1.46	1.27	124.26	107.68
Germany	Euro	1.42	1.26	120.86	106.92
Greece	Euro	1.51	1.31	128.08	111.25
Netherlands	Euro	1.57	1.26	133.18	106.75
Hungary	Forint	342.00	329.00	105.53	101.52
Ireland	Euro	1.31	1.25	111.34	105.90
Italy	Euro	1.37	1.25	116.78	105.90
Latvia	Lats	0.77	0.78	92.56	93.16
Lithuania	Litas	4.04	3.62	99/49	89.15
Luxembourg	Euro	1.14	1.00	96.89	84.99
Malta	Euro	1.22	1.12	103.69	95.19
Norway	Norwegian Krone	12.75	12.10	132.58	125.82
Poland	Zloty	4.55	4.35	98.17	93.86
Portugal	Euro	1.36	1.16	115.84	98.76
Slovakia	Euro	1.25	1.13	106.24	96.04
Slovenia	Euro	1.23	1.19	104.45	101.31
Spain	Euro	1.15	1.08	97.74	91.79
Sweden	Swedish Krona	12.93	12.61	117.23	114.33
Switzerland	Swiss Franc	1.64	1.75	102.74	109.63
USA	US Dollars	0.764	0.84	47.76	52.57

Lithuania), nineteen days in Finland and Russia, and a twenty-day tour around Sweden.

The programmes include a detailed travel plan with sat nav coordinates ('vans travel in small groups rather than in convoy, meeting at campsites and attractions along the way), necessary documentation arrangements (the visa application fee for the Russian tour is not included), an English-speaking travel guide, some meals, all camping fees including hook-up and some attractions.

Ferry crossings are not included in the cost but Nordic Detours does offer help and assistance, with the possibility of group rebates.

Blue Camel Tours

E-mail: info@bluecameltours.com; Web: www.bluecameltours.com

Blue Camel Tours offers a Moroccan tour, a Tunisian Tour and a tour around the Pyrenees for motorhomers. With a maximum of ten 'vans on each tour the idea is to travel independently or with one or two others, meeting the rest of the group at the campsite in the afternoon.

Each tour is led by an English-speaking Swiss tour leader and the price includes pre-tour checks, return ferry crossings, all campsite charges (including hook-up), passport formalities, a map, detailed schedule, tourist attractions and a photo CD of the best images from the trip.

Red Funnel Camping Packages

Tel: 08448 442688; Web: www.redfunnel.co.uk/camping

For a great-value short break holidaymakers can take advantage of a wallet-friendly offer to the Isle of Wight from Red Funnel, which starts from just £109 for five nights.

The offer includes a standard pitch at a wide choice of parks including electric hook-up and vehicle travel with Red Funnel from Southampton to East Cowes. Dog lovers can bring their pet free of charge. Plus you can grab a ten per cent discount voucher at Southampton's Towsure store to pick up any last minute supplies, with each confirmed booking.

To book or request a copy of Red Funnel's 2011 camping, caravan and motorhome leaflet, use the contact details above. ■

