Classic Paris to Istanbul Journey on the Venice Simplon-Orient-Express

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Overview

The Highlights

- The *Venice Simplon-Orient-Express* itself, with lovingly restored 1920s-era cars, five-star dining and stellar service;

- Stays at exclusive, five-star hotels in Budapest and Bucharest;

- Romania’s Peles Castle, built in 1883 and considered one of Europe’s finest royal palaces;

- Budapest city tour, including Danube cruise and lunch at a local restaurant;

- City tour and private dinner in Bucharest;

- Sumptuous four-course dinner each night on the train, including cheeseboard, coffee, tea and petit fours;

- Musical events throughout;

- A perfect blend of three overnights on luxury train and two nights in deluxe hotels;

- The ambience of the train's lounge car, with live pianist in the evenings;

- Wine and champagne included during meals (Drinks in the bar car, as well as premium wines, champagne and liquors are at additional cost. Grand Suite guests also get free-flowing champagne in their cabins and complimentary drinks in the bar car);

- Private transfers to/from station/hotel in Paris; shared small group transfers in Istanbul to/from station/hotel (Grand Suite guests have private transfers in both cities).

The Tour

The Paris to Istanbul journey (or vice versa) is THE most exclusive and glamorous way to celebrate a milestone anniversary or birthday.

This six-day luxury rail voyage from Paris to Istanbul or from Istanbul to Paris on the *Venice Simplon-Orient-Express* (*VSOE*) is a true 'trip of a lifetime'. Travel through seven countries in elegant style.

This iconic journey is more inclusive than ever before. Enjoy private transfers in Paris, small group transfers in Istanbul (Grand Suite guests have private transfers in both cities), and included wine and champagne during meals (Drinks in the bar car, as well as premium wines, champagne and liquors are at additional cost). Grand Suite guests also get free-flowing champagne in their cabins and complimentary drinks in the bar car.

Itinerary

Day 1: Board VSOE in Paris

Your private driver meets you at your hotel and transfers you to the station today for a mid-afternoon departure.

Board the gleaming blue and gold carriages of the *Venice Simplon-Orient-Express* at Paris' Gare

de l’Est station. After being greeted by your personal steward, settle into your private cabin. Later, enjoy a delicious gourmet dinner in one of the beautiful restaurant cars and perhaps linger in the bar car before retiring to your cabin for the night.

Overnight on board.

Day 2: Hungary

Relax and enjoy the sublime scenery as the *Venice Simplon-Orient-Express* travels into Hungary. Continental breakfast is served in your cabin, and a delicious three-course lunch will be taken in one of the opulent dining cars.

On arrival in Budapest, your local guides will be waiting to escort you by coach to a five-star hotel for an overnight.

In the evening, enjoy a cocktail reception and dinner on the River Danube.

Day 3: Budapest

After breakfast at your hotel, the day starts with a guided tour of the Hungarian Parliament Building, which was famously inspired by London’s Houses of Parliament.

Reboard the train in the late morning and enjoy lunch as you glide through the picturesque countryside. In the evening, head to Bar Car ‘3674’ for enticing cocktails and charismatic conversations. Linger over a delectable dinner as the train travels towards Romania.

Overnight on board.

Day 4: Peles Castle; Bucharest

Savor continental breakfast in your cabin as the train glides into Romania and approaches the mountain town of Sinaia. Alight to board a coach for the short journey to Peles Castle, the fairy-tale palace built by Romania’s King Carol as his summer retreat. The very first Orient Express passengers visited this beautiful residence in October 1883, at the King’s personal invitation. We recommend comfortable shoes and a sweater for your visit.

Rejoin the train and continue towards Bucharest, enjoying a delicious brunch on the way.

On arrival in the Romanian capital, our local guides are on hand to escort you to your hotel, the Athénée Palace. Later, prepare for an enchanting dinner with musical entertainment at a private venue.

Day 5: Bulgaria

This morning, rejoin the *Venice Simplon-Orient-Express* as the train travels south across the Danube and into Bulgaria. After another fabulous lunch on board, this afternoon a stop is made at the delightful seaside resort of Varna on the Black Sea coast, where you alight for an aperitif on a private estate.

An unforgettable dinner is served as the train crosses the ancient Thracian Plain. Celebrate your last night on board the *Venice Simplon-Orient-Express* with a drink in the bar car while enjoying the resident pianist.

Overnight on board.

Day 6: Istanbul

Continental breakfast is served in the comfort of your cabin as the train approaches Turkey. A stop is made at the border crossing point of Kapikule for customs formalities. After a special Turkish-inspired lunch on board, the *Venice Simplon-Orient-Express* arrives in Istanbul at the end of a fascinating and unique journey across seven countries and cultures.

Complimentary small group transfers to city center hotels in Istanbul upon arrival (Grand Suite guests have private transfers included).

Reverse itinerary

Day 1: Board VSOE in Istanbul

Complimentary small group transfers are included today from your hotel to the train station. (Grand Suite guests will be transferred privately).

Late afternoon, step aboard the gleaming blue and gold carriages of the *Venice Simplon-Orient-Express* as the train departs Istanbul. Dinner is a sumptuous affair, prepared on board by our skilled chefs and served in one of the beautifully restored dining cars. Afterwards linger in the Bar Car, listening to the pianist play the baby grand, before retiring for the night.

Overnight on board.

Day 2: Bucharest

Begin the day with continental breakfast served in your cabin as the train winds its way through Bulgaria and into Romania. Soak up the scenery rolling by your window as you enjoy a delicious lunch in the dining car.

Soon afterwards the train arrives in Bucharest. Transfer to your Bucharest five-start hotel for a one-night stay.

There's time to refresh before heading out to a private venue to indulge in a lavish Romanian dinner with musical entertainment — always a highlight of the journey.

Day 3: Peles Castle

This morning rejoin the train and relax over lunch in one of the dining cars as the train journeys towards the mountain town of Sinaia.

There, board a coach for the short journey to Peles Castle, the Neo-Renaissance palace built by King Carol as his summer retreat. You're following in historic footsteps: the inaugural *Orient Express* passengers visited the castle at the King's personal invitation in October 1883.

Return to the train in the late afternoon for a leisurely journey towards Hungary. A delectable dinner and captivating night await.

Overnight on board.

Day 4: Budapest

On arrival in Budapest, enjoy a short orientation coach ride through the city followed by a panoramic cruise along the Danube, soaking up the city's graceful architecture and timeless beauty. A lunch of Hungarian specialties is served before you are escorted to your 5-star hotel.

In the afternoon, explore the capital at leisure. Beguiling highlights include imposing Buda Castle, the famous thermal baths, and botanical gardens.

In the evening, prepare for an enchanting dinner at a private venue.

Day 5: Hungary

Take a leisurely morning to explore the city at your own pace.

Reboard the train in the late morning and enjoy lunch as you glide through vineyards and forests of Hungary. A final fabulous dinner, curated by our visionary chef, is served to celebrate your last night on board. Relax in Bar Car '3674' listening to music as you swap stories with new-found friends.

Overnight on board.

Day 6: Paris

Linger over a French breakfast in your cabin as the train travels through Switzerland. Soon, we reach France and, thrillingly, the vineyards of Champagne. Here, ambassadors join the train and guide you through a wonderful champagne experience.

Afterwards, a sumptuous farewell lunch is served. When the train pulls into Paris, disembark, taking your unique memories with you.

Your private transfer driver will meet you at the station and transfer you to your Paris hotel for a seamless end to your adventure.

Dates & Prices

2027 Dates

May 31 - June 5
June 7 - June 12
October 1 - October 6
October 8 - October 13

ACCOMMODATION	Double	Single	Deposit
Historic Twin	From €20,940	From €41,880	35%
Suite	From €46,780	From €93,560	35%
Grand Suite	From €73,080	From €146,160	35%
L'Observatoire	From €140,000	From €280,000	35%

New for 2027: Prices are in Euros . View approximate exchange rates.
Prices are per person.
Pricing varies based on availability and date. Prices are subject to change daily. Contact us to confirm pricing and availability for your desired departure.

More

All meals and off-train tours included except where noted. Traditional gratuities to train staff not included.

This iconic journey is more inclusive than ever before. Enjoy private transfers in Paris, small group transfers in Istanbul (Grand Suite guests have private transfers in both cities), and included wine and champagne during meals (Drinks in the bar car, as well as premium wines, champagne and liquors are at additional cost).

Grand Suite guests also have the following amenities included: private check-in, private transfers to/from train station, complimentary designer bathrobes, all-suite accommodation at hotels in Bucharest and Budapest, free-flowing Champagne on board, complimentary drinks in the bar car, private off-train excursions, and meals that can be served in your suite if you desire maximum privacy. Each Grand Suite includes a private bathroom with shower, washbasin, and toilet, living area with space for private dining, and a sofa which can be converted into an additional bed in the evening.

See a full description of the Grand Suites and other *VSOE* accommodations.

Read More

Alert: These journeys typically sell out about a year in advance. Contact us to ASAP to reserve your cabin.

We are happy to arrange any pre- or post-tour extensions.

Suggested tour extensions:

- Pre- or post-tour stay in Paris with visit to Louvre, Eiffel Tower, and Musee d'Orsay with private guide.

- Pre- or post-tour 3-night stay in Istanbul. Visit Hagia Sophia, Blue Mosque, Cistern, nostalgic tram, and spice market with private guide.

- Cruise opportunities from Istanbul abound. Please inquire.