

DIY Hybrid: Using Day Tours and Self-Guided Packages in Europe

Hybrid travel uses organized tours, day guides, and self-guided packages to jump start your independent travel. No matter how you go about it, creating your own itinerary will enhance your travel experience:

- Focus on your personal interests
- Control your budget
- Book with your flight and hotel preferences in mind
- Learn more about your destination through research and private guides
- Travel beyond the crowds
- Flexibility: Go where you want, when you want, for as long as you want

As long as we're here...

Move toward more independent travel by building your own itinerary using these resources:

1. Small Group and Self-Guided Tours

Find affinity groups sharing your interests, or set out on a managed, self-guided experience.

Trusted Housesitters. While you are likely to be stuck in one spot while you are sitting, the experience of living in a neighborhood or countryside is unforgettable. Read [How to Become a House Sitter](#).

Biosphere Expeditions. Volunteer and learn while seeing the world. Europe and Africa projects available. Read [Volunteering in Africa with Biosphere Expeditions](#).

Wandering Earl Tours. Small groups, unique destinations. Tom traveled with them to Uzbekistan.

BikeTours.com. At your own pace, with reliable support. Read [Planning Your First Europe Bike Tour](#), and related stories.

Exodus Travels. Adventure and responsible outdoor travel from soft to vigorous, self-guided or in small groups, around the world. Read [Hiking in Catalonia](#) or [Biking in Brittany](#).

Adventure Travel Trade Association members. We've valued the mission of this organization and dedication of its members. Browse their tour operator membership by country.

Elective Study Abroad. Concentrated small group courses, in a format that allows flexibility for self-guided afternoons and time to explore the destination. Read [Reinventing Study Abroad for Adults](#).

Ireland in Focus. An example of a small group leaning into special interests, in this case crafts and heritage. Read [Things to See in Ireland](#).

2. Local Guides, Day Tours, and DIY Travel Tools

For independent travelers, adding knowledgeable local guides and experiences will elevate your travel experience.

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Local Tourist Offices. Many cities offer inexpensive walking tours daily. A great place to start, and when you ask questions, one thing leads to another.

Context Travel. Absolutely top-notch guides, experts in their respective fields. Worth the premium pricing.

Walks/Take Walks. Worthwhile walking tours.

Viator. A good way to handle ticketing and guides all at once to popular sites.

Get Your Guide. Book things to do, attractions and tours.

The TrainLine. This is what we use for all our train ticketing.

Eurail. Choose passes for one country or multiple countries. We plan as we go.

Devour Tours. Food and drink tours in Europe and USA

Walk Eat Spain. Best food tours in Madrid.

Ancestry travel. Follow your nose or your family lore; who knows where it may lead? Read [Finding My Ancestors in Skåne, Sweden](#), and [Finding My Uncle's Grave: Ardennes American Cemetery](#).

3. Organized Tours

Consider any organized tour or cruise a jumping off point. Some we've worked with include:

Viking Cruises. Explore regions you haven't visited before. Use their flight booking services to extend your dates and adjust your arrival and departure cities.

4. Other Resources

A few newsletters and booking tools we use to manage our own travel.

Daily Drop. Free or pro options to access best travel deals.

Thrifty Traveler. Subscribe to get cheap flights and maximize points and miles.

Faye Travel Insurance. Yes, we always carry travel insurance, including medical.

DiscoverCars. Cars for hire in Europe and around the world. DiscoverCars compares rates across companies.

REI. For all that good travel gear, and small tour ideas, too.

Triplt Pro. Keep track of all your travel plans in one handy app, from flights, to hotels, to trains and tours.

Note: this reference guide contains some affiliate links, and we may be compensated if you make a purchase after clicking on the links.