

PRESS RELEASE

“TRAVEL DIFFERENTLY, TRAVEL DEEPER”: EURAIL TO INSPIRE THE CHINESE TRAVELLERS WITH UNIQUE UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE RAIL ITINERARIES

- **Unique project co-funded by the European Union is part of a major campaign designed to attract Chinese tourists to explore lesser-known UNESCO World Heritage Sites in Europe**
- **Dedicated inspirational [online and mobile content](#) created to inspire and engage Chinese travellers with tailor-made rail itineraries**
- **Asia is the second largest Eurail sales region in the world, contributing to 36 percent of the global market share**

Utrecht, The Netherlands, 4 September 2018 – On the occasion of the 2018 EU-China Tourism Year, Eurail has partnered with National Geographic and Travelport to create a diverse selection of unique cultural heritage rail itineraries to inspire the Chinese travellers and engage them in experiential, cultural travel. The consortium is working in close cooperation with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) to encourage Chinese visitors to “travel differently, travel deeper” and has developed cultural itineraries in a dedicated [microsite](#). The itineraries are fully accessible using a Eurail Pass, a single rail Pass that allows travel between over 40,000 railway stations across 10,000 destinations in 28 different countries in Europe.

The project is part of a major “EU-China Tourism Year” campaign co-funded by the European Commission in collaboration with the European Travel Commission (ETC). It is designed to attract tens of thousands of tourists from China to Europe in 2018 and 2019. This project aims to inspire travellers to discover off the beaten track destinations for a more balanced tourism industry.

The microsite, tailored to the Chinese travellers, can be visited on Eurail.com’s website, the official sales channel for the Eurail Pass, at the following link: www.eurail.com/zh/visiteuworldheritage/inspiration. Here, travellers can find inspirational content and directly purchase their travel Passes. The microsite also embeds the [UNESCO platform for World Heritage and travel](#)—guiding travellers to the most unique and authentic travel experiences, recommended by local experts and curated by National Geographic.

The itineraries have been designed to enhance lesser known UNESCO heritage sites and destinations away from the well-travelled hotspots in Europe. All the journeys, developed together with UNESCO and National Geographic, reflect the depth and diversity of the European culture, and are based on extensive research and testing with tour operators and travel writers. The journeys reflect four themes – Ancient, Romantic, Royal and Underground Europe – and link some of the most remarkable World Heritage Sites across the European Union.

Commenting on the project, Carlo Boselli, General Manager for Eurail Group G.I.E., the company behind the Eurail Pass, said: *“One of the most authentic ways to experience Europe is by train, as it allows visitors to reach both famous attractions and remote picturesque villages with ease to better enjoy the landscapes rather than worrying about directions.”* Mr Boselli continues: *“We appreciate that the Asian travel preferences are rapidly evolving, avoiding the major tourism destinations and attractions for less*

visited places. One of the fastest-growing markets, China is key for Eurail, and we are happy to have the opportunity to stimulate the Chinese travellers to learn more about Europe's diversity offering them a selection of authentic experiences that resonate with their new travel behaviours."

Cat Hai Chiem, Business Development Manager at Eurail.com, adds: *"After more than six years of active presence on the Chinese market, we have gained valuable insights on the behaviour of the Chinese travellers - for instance, they are more digital oriented compared to other markets, with more than 80% of Chinese Internet users accessing the web via their smartphones. By combining our knowledge with the expertise of our partners in this consortium, we have developed a mobile-friendly solution that will definitely enrich their travel experience – from inspiration to booking."*

Frank Biasi, Director of Digital Development and Travel, Maps Division at National Geographic, said: *"National Geographic takes its Chinese audience deeper into the culture and history of the places we visit. Our social followers are curious and want to go further, exploring the world in new and surprising ways. We're thrilled to use our Chinese social platforms to share these new rail journeys with curious and adventurous travellers to help them discover and experience Europe's outstanding World Heritage via the European Union's exceptional rail network."*

Over 300,000 Eurail Pass holders travelled in Europe in 2017, and Asia is the second largest Eurail sales region in the world, contributing to an impressive 36 percent of the global market share. For Chinese Eurail Pass holders, Italy is the first most appealing destination in Southern and Mediterranean Europe, the Czech Republic is the most visited destination in Central and Eastern Europe, and Denmark the most visited country in Northern Europe.

Eurail Passes can be booked up to 11 months in advance and used to travel in up to 28 European countries. For more information, visit www.eurail.com/cn or the official Eurail Fliggy store <https://eurail.fliggy.hk/>.

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About Eurail (www.eurailgroup.org | www.eurail.com)

Eurail train passes are synonymous with borderless rail experience throughout Europe, providing multi-destination train travel across the continent. With just one rail pass travellers of all ages have the ability to travel in and through up to 28 different European countries, and access extra benefits and discounts along their journey. Established in 2001, Eurail Group G.I.E. is the organisation dedicated to the management of Eurail and Interrail products, for both non-European and European residents respectively. Owned by over 35 railway and shipping companies, Eurail Group G.I.E. and Eurail.com, the official sales channel of Eurail and Interrail Passes, partner with hotels, transport companies and attractions to offer additional special benefits to all Interrail and Eurail Pass holders across Europe.

About The World Heritage Journeys (visitworldheritage.com)

The World Heritage Journeys in the European Union project aims to inspire people to experience Europe's unique cultural heritage through thematic trans-European itineraries. By including iconic as well as lesser-known World Heritage sites, the project aims to encourage people to travel more regionally, and enjoy the 'hidden gems' that these destinations have to offer, all year round. In turn, it aims to alleviate the pressure on the World Heritage sites that are currently experiencing high volumes of visitors at peak seasons and locations. The World Heritage Journeys in the European Union project is made possible by a Preparatory Action grant to UNESCO from the European Commission, Directorate-General for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SME (DG GROW).

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