

TRAVEL
TRANSPORT

LUXURY ON RAILS

Savour the romance of slow travel
aboard these new luxury trains this summer.

PALLAVI PASRICHA

Discover legendary routes along which traders once traversed in the east, landscapes that vary from the lush green countryside to the stark vastness of the Saudi desert and pristine rainforests of Malaysia, from the comfort of your gilded luxe cabins aboard new luxury trains that revive the golden days of slow travel with a new layer of opulence. While some are already on track, others will launch in the coming months. Get set to turn back the clock.



Dream of the Desert, Saudi Arabia

If crisscrossing lush green countryside is the first thing that comes to mind when you think of a train journey, then board the Middle East's first five star luxury train to uncover a dramatically different landscape – the mystique of endless stretches of brown and red sand. The Dream of the Desert will depart from Saudi Arabia's capital Riyadh and go through some gorgeous terrain and natural sites which are expected to include Hail region, a UNESCO world heritage site. The itineraries are being finalised as it debuts towards the end of next year.

Taking inspiration from what lies beyond its windows, the train, which has 34 suites will reflect the aesthetic

of the desert while paying homage to Saudi culture and craftsmanship. It will all come with a touch of glamour -- think sandy and beige tones offset by shades of gold; intricate wood carvings, woven textiles and wood panelled walls. The reception lounge is designed like a traditional majlis, a communal sitting room in a Saudi home. Art pieces and photographs of Saudi cultural sites will adorn the corridors. When it comes to dining, the chefs will curate local and international cuisines. The train, a collaboration between Saudi Arabia Railways and Italy's Arsenale group, is being launched as the country steps up its game to woo tourists.

Dream of the Desert is Saudi Arabia's first luxury train with 34 luxury suites on board (Extreme left)



●● Launching by the end of 2026
<https://arsenalegroup.com/en/dream-of-the-desert-en/>
The itineraries are being worked on



**TRAVEL
TRANSPORT**

There are two gorgeous dining cars at Britannic Explorer (Right); Meals are curated by award-winning British Chef Simon Rogan (Below)



Britannic Explorer, United Kingdom

Come July and explore a slice of the English countryside, whether it is the rolling hills of Wales, the shimmering coast of Cornwall or the peaks and serene water bodies of the Lake District in the country's first luxury sleeper train by the Belmond Group. Starting from London, it will glide along these three regions offering either three or six night journeys. Besides 15 plush, oak panelled suites, it has three grand suites that come with double beds, marble bathrooms and personal butler service.

The experience will be quintessentially English all the way—from a typical afternoon tea to meals crafted by award-winning British Chef Simon Rogan. They will be served in two dining cars where soothing cream and green interiors reflect an English country garden. When you want a tippie, head to the Observation car—the train's social hub—stocked with artisan gins and craft beers or choose a cocktail mixed with botanicals inspired by Victorian apothecaries. Depending on the route you are traversing, stroll in a lavender meadow, hike, swim, party at a Cotswolds pub, or attend a gala dinner in a 15th century mansion in Oxfordshire when the train halts. And while on board, take time out to indulge in relaxing therapies and massages in the Wellness Suite.



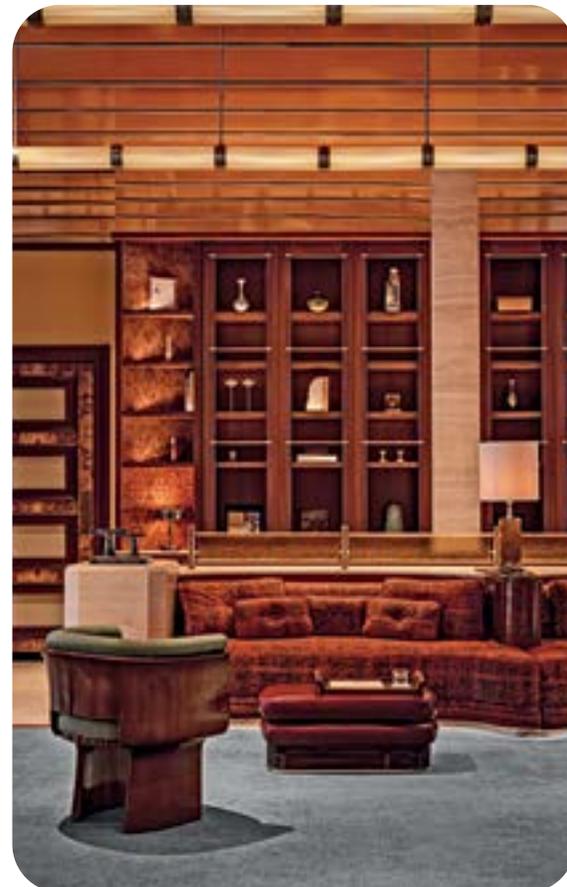
Trains will run from July 2025
www.belmond.com/trains/europe/uk/britannic-explorer/
 The train offers seven itineraries varying from 3 to 6 nights

La Dolce Vita Orient Express, Italy

Chug along with the gentle rhythm of the Italian countryside or the country's stunning southern coastline ensconced in a luxury cabin that evokes memories of the world's most famous train that once traversed Europe. The La Dolce Vita Orient Express, Italy, made its debut in April with a run from Rome to the medieval hilltop town of Montalcino along the "Tastes of Tuscan Vineyards" route. It is the first of six trains that will wind along towns like Venice, Siena, Matera and the shores of Sicily for one or two nights offering eight itineraries. This luxury train fleet is not just reviving a legacy, it is redefining the world of slow travel from the moment you step into the plush La Dolce Vita lounge at Roma Ostiense station.

With its design inspired by 'the sweet life' (la dolce vita), the train's 12 deluxe cabins come with double beds, carpeted floors and wooden beamed ceilings. In its 18 suites, lounge on a sofa or armchairs as you watch Italy disappear in a blur from your window. For a more opulent experience, check into the signature La Dolce Vita suite. Sip the best wine from the region you are traversing as singers belt out Italian numbers and dine on crisp linen laid out with the finest porcelain on a menu curated by three-Michelin-starred chef Heinz Beck with local culinary traditions in mind.

Launched in April 2025
<https://www.orient-express.com/la-dolce-vita/>
 The train runs along eight different itineraries varying from 1 to 2 nights



- Top to Bottom: There are two dining cars on board offering cuisine from East Asia; One of the train itineraries goes through a national park; Southeast Asia's first Dior spa is on this luxury train



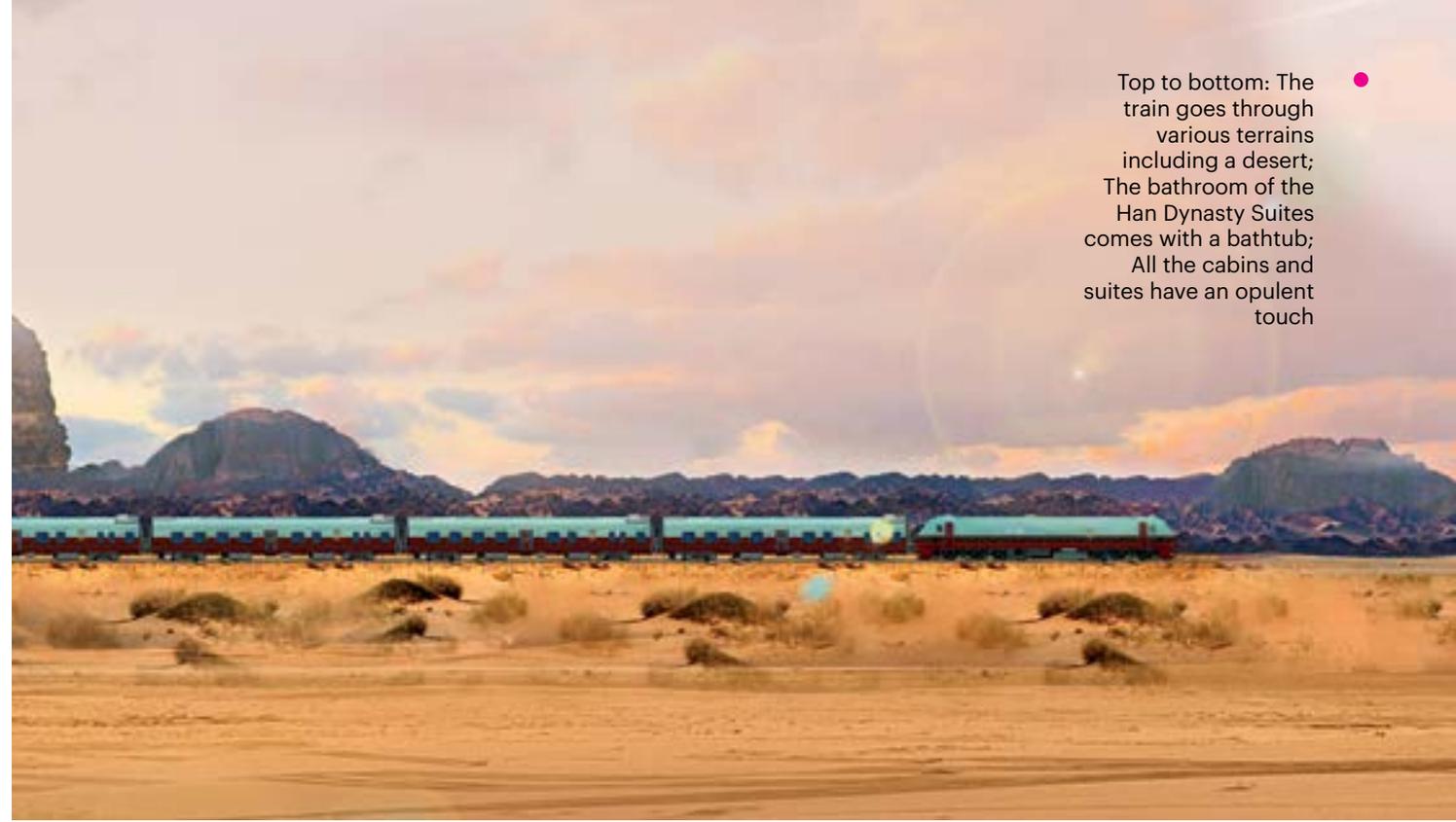
**TRAVEL
TRANSPORT**

**Eastern & Oriental
Express, Malaysia**

You wouldn't have experienced South East Asia like this before. Winding its way from Singapore to Malaysia's tropical jungles, islands and small towns, the luxury Eastern and Oriental Express was relaunched last year after the pandemic. While its trademark green and gold exterior is unchanged, the interiors have been given a facelift and it has added two new seasonal routes to the six itineraries it offers. On 'Wild Malaysia,' the hero stop is the Teman Negara National park, one of the world's oldest rainforests which one explores in open jeeps, hoping of course to sight the endangered Malayan tiger. The other new route - Essence of Malaysia - goes through Kuala Lumpur, Langkawi and Penang allowing time for activities like snorkelling.

During the three nights on the train, spend time in revamped cabins, suites and two Presidential Suites that come with cherrywood panelling, silk fabrics and patterned carpets. Dine on sumptuous East Asian cuisine prepared by chef Andre Chiang in the two beautiful dining cars. The train's social heart is the gorgeous Piano Bar where performers entertain passengers as they sip wine or a signature cocktail in crystal glasses. The pampering does not end here - when there is time to spare, head to Southeast Asia's first Dior spa on a train. Done up with the brand's iconic Toile de Jouy motif, it offers five treatments in two rooms. But the journey's best moments may well be just sitting back in the Observation Car to enjoy the train's gentle rhythm as picturesque rice fields and small towns roll by.

●● **Relaunched** in February 2024
<https://www.belmond.com/trains/asia/eastern-and-oriental-express/>
 The train offers six itineraries - five are for 3 nights and one is for 6 nights



● Top to bottom: The train goes through various terrains including a desert; The bathroom of the Han Dynasty Suites comes with a bathtub; All the cabins and suites have an opulent touch



**Golden Eagle Silk Road
Express, Asia**

For centuries, merchants plied the ancient Silk route in horse and camel driven caravans. Starting next year, explore some of those legendary trails in the lap of luxury on board the new Golden Eagle Silk Road Express via three different itineraries. Take a 22 day journey from Beijing to Tashkent in Uzbekistan that will cross historic cities like Samarkand and Bukhara, a 13 day journey from Urumqi to Lhasa in Tibet. Whatever you choose, ancient cultures will unravel. In its two restaurant cars—Western-style and Chinese-style—the smallest details scream sophistication. The luxury quotient will go up many notches for those checking into the Han Dynasty Suite that comes with a bottle of Dom Perignon champagne, a separate living room and dining table. The Observation Car is the perfect place to watch the landscape rolling by and when you want to unwind with a cocktail or wine, head to the Bar Car where tunes from a grand piano fill the room each evening.

●● The train will launch in 2026
www.goldeneagleluxurytrains.com/trains/golden-eagle-silk-road-express/
 The train will have three itineraries varying from 12 to 22 days