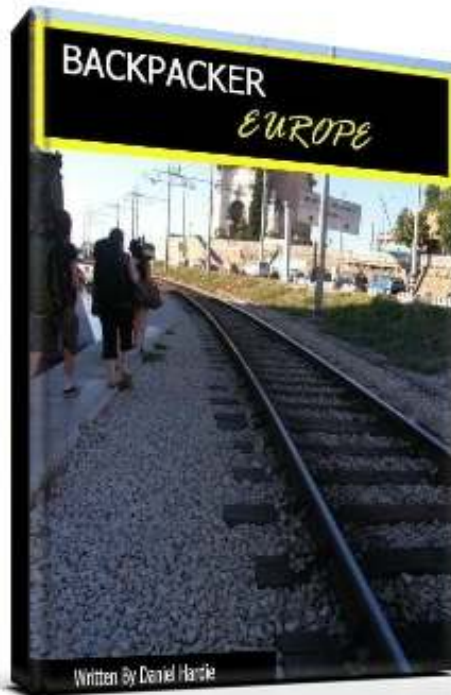


# *Backpacker Europe*

*Everything a Backpacker Needs to Know!*



Written By Daniel

[www.BackpackerEurope.com](http://www.BackpackerEurope.com)

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# Introduction

Hi there and welcome to Backpacker Europe. My name is Daniel Hardie, creator and author of this eBook and its website [www.backpackereurope.com](http://www.backpackereurope.com).

So you've decided to take the leap and explore the unknown! First of all well done! I truly believe that everybody needs to get out there in the world to see the sights, experiences & discover different cultures, not to mention meeting other people along the way.

I was in the exact same boat as you not so long ago. I was excited, nervous and very anxious. I had never travelled solo anywhere before and this time I was going with just a one way ticket, half way across the world. I was overwhelmed by everything that I had to organise before I left, which just added to the intensity of my anxieties.

Fortunately I had a lot of friends who had travelled and backpacked Europe before me and I was able to get the advice and information that I needed to start. We all had very different experiences and travelled to different parts of Europe and no doubt your trip will be as unique as the next.

As I mentioned earlier I was in the same boat as you, so I completely understand how you're feeling. It is a big decision and a life changing experience. This experience however is very rewarding and you will have memories that will last a life time. In saying that I must congratulate you on taking this very important step -Finding out all the information that you will need to backpack Europe, it shows me that you are serious and determined.

From this eBook you will learn many different things including visa information, bank accounts, working overseas, safe travel, preparations, group tours vs independent travel, where to stay, how to get around, destination guides and much more. When it comes to backpacking, the more information you can find out before you depart the better.

Before we get stuck into the eBook, let me tell a little about my story...

# My Story

We all have different reasons for wanting to travel but for me I had gone straight into full time work from the time I finished school.

By the time I turned 21 I was starting to feel restless, I felt like my life had become too routine so I had to do something to shake it up.

I had always loved travel and when my friends said they were planning on going to Europe at the end of the year, something had clicked and that



was to travel over with them and then stay over there for year or so by myself.

I started my trip in Rome flying over by myself to meet up with a friend who was on an exchange student program. This was fantastic because I didn't have to worry about accommodation straight away.

All up I spent about 6 weeks in Italy, basing myself in Rome staying with my friend and in hostels but I also travelled out to Pisa, Florence and the birthplace of bolognese sauce (Or Ragu), Bologna.

From Rome I caught a short flight over to Paris and spent just under a week here, meeting up with a whole bunch of people who were also travelling Europe at the same time as me. I spent a few weeks with these guys and went up to visit their families for Christmas in Holland. Being so close to Germany we hired a car and spent New Year's in Berlin which was one of my favourite cities throughout my trip and then onto Amsterdam.

It was then time for my friends to go back home and I was then on my own. I flew over to London to start looking for work but my money was starting to get thin.

Thankfully I was able to find a great job in an office full of like minded backpackers like myself. Basing myself in a small apartment in Camden Town, I was actually able to have short trips throughout Europe. Whether

that was for a three day weekend or longer, I was still able to visit these other countries.

These shorter trips included Scotland, but not to Edinburgh where everyone else goes to. I actually flew into Aberdeen and got a rural bus out to a village in the Highlands called Braemar. This is where my surname (Hardie) apparently originates from.

So I figured I have to get out there and see the castle and the village. It felt great getting out into the Highlands and to a place that hardly anyone has either heard of or travelled to, especially not from Australia.

The next trip was to Hungary, which was most definitely one of my top destinations as well. The people, culture and cuisine was amazing here and the best thing was that I had locals to show me around, people I met in a hostel in Rome.

Other trips included a long weekend in Dublin to visit another friend of mine who had been living over there and to Madrid to visit another person I had met in a hostel. The flights were cheap to get around and accommodation was reasonably priced, making these little getaways inexpensive.

While I didn't get to discover the entire countries in depth on these short trips I was able to experience at least one of the cities.

My favourite trip throughout the year was a 10 day sailing cruise around the Croatian Islands. We started in Split and got on a ship that left with a fleet of twenty or more other boats. I had the choice between the Greek Islands and Croatia but had chosen the latter because it was less travelled and I was certainly impressed.

That was my trip in a nutshell, I had met many different people from all over the world and there were many other experiences that I had.

It was a life changing experience for me and even though I'm back home now it's a memory I will never forget.

# Preparation

As the old saying goes ‘If you fail to prepare, prepare to fail’ and this certainly rings true when it comes to backpacking. Not only will you need to prepare yourself with legal requirements, information about your destinations, where to stay and how to get around etc. But you will also need to prepare yourself mentally and emotionally.



This is especially true if you are planning on backpacking for an extended amount of time, as there will be times that get hard, frustrating or even lonely.

You may get homesick or certain plans may not work out the way you intended. One example of this would be not

being able to find work in time.

I’m not trying to scare anyone off here, but I do believe it is important to get yourself in the right frame of mind before you travel. You will undoubtedly hit forks in the road along your journey. Perhaps arrangements will change, or you may lose a booking or run in to fraud on your credit cards etc.

These situations can be tough so maintaining the right frame of mind will help and prepare you for anything that may arise while you are backpacking Europe.

I personally believe that you should see the entire trip as one big experience. Think about it for a second, you are leaving the comfort of your home, family and friends to go out into the world to travel, explore and discover things you would not have normally which is why the entire trip is such a rewarding experience in the end.

From my experience, I had many hiccups along the way. When I arrived at my first hostel they had overbooked and had no beds for me so I had to search the city for an available hostel, but I had met some really fun people in the other hostels, so turned out to be a positive.

Another time I had tried using an ATM (Cash Machine) but the bank had stopped my card and all I had in my wallet was 1 Euro, thankfully I found an internet cafe so I could get just one email off which was received and processed by the bank. In the end though I was still able to get money out and enjoy my trip.

These were just a few of the dramas I faced in Europe but I viewed them all as experiences – nothing more, nothing less. We will cover a lot of these situations throughout this guide, so what I really want you to take away from this section is this;

‘Know that everything is an experience and it is all part of the backpacking adventure. Whether it’s a good or bad experience, we learn from it and move on with the challenge’.

Another experience you may have to overcome is home sickness. At times it is difficult being away from your friends and family, especially when you see all there Facebook updates of celebrations, engagements, birthdays, babies being born and so on. This happens to just about everyone, but if you can push yourself through it, it will be worth it.

It is important to have goals set for your travels, perhaps to just prove to yourself that you’re independent, or maybe you don’t want to come home until you have travelled to at least 20 countries. Whatever the goal is make it important to you! Because when you are faced with any challenges you can reflect on that goal which will hopefully pull you through the lonely or hard times. It certainly worked for me.

Some of my friends decided they wanted to backpack Europe as well so they saved up all their money for the trip. But once they had arrived they realised that it wasn’t what they had expected.

They hated the fact they didn’t know anyone over there and the work they were doing, as well as missing their friends back home. Unfortunately this person only lasted two weeks overseas before coming back home, so if she had prepared herself mentally she could have enjoyed her trip.

Whatever experiences you have over there just be sure to learn from them and enjoy the journey. When you arrive home you will at least have an interesting story to tell. Being prepared mentally and emotionally for the trip is very important and could be the thing that makes or breaks your travel goals.

So at the very least just ask yourself if you are prepared and willing to take the journey first.