

ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS

US and Canadian tourists must carry proof of citizenship. **A valid signed passport with an expiration date at least six months beyond the tour return date is required.**

ETIAS travel authorization will come into effect starting in the first half of 2025. ETIAS is a completely electronic system that will monitor visitors who do not already require a visa to enter the Schengen Zone. ETIAS's main function is to protect against potential security threats. The application process will include filling out a short online form and paying a fee of €7. Once obtained, an ETIAS is linked to a traveller's passport and is valid for up to three years or until the passport expires, whichever comes first. If you are travelling to more than one Schengen Zone country, you will identify the country you will travel to first. You will then be free to travel anywhere else within the Schengen Zone for a maximum of 90 days. You may read more about ETIAS on the EU official website [here](#).

CURRENCY, ATM MACHINES & CREDIT CARDS

CASH: The Euro (€) is the legal currency of the countries we will be visiting except for Switzerland. The currency of Switzerland, which is not a member of the European Union, is the Swiss Franc (CHF). If you want to check current rates at the time of travel a good website to use is <http://www.xe.com/ucc/>. You will be given opportunity upon arrival in each country to exchange cash for local currency or withdraw funds from an ATM.

ATMS: ATMs are prevalent in your destinations. Check with your bank for more specific details about using ATMs or ABMs such as the network your bank supports, PIN numbers, etc.

CREDIT CARDS: Visa, MasterCard and American Express are the most widely used credit cards. Use may be restricted in small businesses, such as open marketplaces and street vendors. Credit cards should be protected by **RFID-blocking sleeves** so they cannot be scanned, and your payment information stolen. You can find RFID-blocking sleeves at most luggage stores. Do not use your credit card in questionable shops and never let your card out of your sight. Non-essential cards can be left at home. It is recommended to bring your driver's license in case you are asked for additional photo ID, and your health card in case of an emergency.

Before leaving home, we encourage you to consult with the bank that has issued the credit cards and debit cards you will be using as you travel. Today banks have a variety of fraud detection systems so we advise you to be sure you will be able to use your cards. You should also have an out-of-country contact phone number available in case any cards are lost or stolen.

LANGUAGE

The European Union has 21 official languages; however, there are many other lesser-known languages spoken as well. English is widely spoken.

COMMUNICATION

Internet: There will be opportunity to access the internet while on tour, as most hotels have wifi available. If you wish to access the internet while away from your hotel, you may consider purchasing an eSIM to connect to local networks in your destination. [Airalo](#) is a recommended eSIM provider.

Phone calls: North American cell phones are not automatically equipped to make international calls. If you plan to make phone calls or send text messages while on tour, please check with your phone provider for direction and pricing.

TIME ZONES

Europe is 6 hours ahead of Eastern Standard Time (EST). Therefore, when it is 3:00 p.m. in Europe, it is 9:00 a.m. (EST) in Ontario and Pennsylvania.

CLIMATE & CLOTHING

The climate in Western Europe is generally pleasant without extremes in temperature. The temperatures are similar to those in Southern Ontario or Pennsylvania. At this time of year, you can expect mostly pleasantly warm temperatures, with average afternoon highs of 19°C / 66°F, but light rain is common, interspersed among sunshine.

In the evening, the temperatures usually drop about 5 to 10 degrees so a sweater or light jacket would be appropriate. The elevation also can have an impact. In general, expect warm and sunny days, and be prepared for cloudy, wet days as well. Bring a folding umbrella in case of rain.

Plan to take a variety of casual clothing that is easy-care, comfortable and doesn't show the dirt. Be able to dress in layers so that you can

peel off or add as the temperature changes. A good pair of walking shoes is necessary.

ELECTRICAL CURRENT

The electrical current in Europe is 220 volt - 50 cycles alternating current (AC), whereas in Canada and United States it is 110 volts, AC 60 cycles. Wall outlets in Europe take Continental-type plugs, with **two round prongs**.



Additionally, in Switzerland, you will encounter plugs with **three round prongs**.

Multi-voltage appliances (shavers, hairdryers, curling irons, etc.) are generally available at larger department stores. However, if your electrical appliance is *not* designed to operate on either 110 or 220 volts by the flick of a switch, you will also need a converter. Converters and adapters should be available at major department stores, electronic shops or stores that specialize in selling luggage.

But before you purchase a converter, be sure to check the label on your appliance. Some appliances never need a converter. **If the label states 'INPUT: 100-240V, 50/60 Hz' the appliance can be used in all countries in the world.** This is common for chargers of tablets/laptops, cameras, cell phones, and toothbrushes.

CULTURAL CONSIDERATIONS & EXPECTATIONS

Public toilets usually charge a small fee, so it is important to have coins available. Also, be prepared to pay for water at restaurants.

Contrary to North American culture, tipping at meals is typically not expected. Tips for group meals are included in your tour fare, but when dining on your own, small tips are appreciated but not necessarily expected.

Notes about hotels:

- Hotels in Europe are not always equipped with air conditioning, as Europe generally does not experience the same extreme summer heat as North America.
- If staying in a double room, you can expect two twin beds pushed together, as opposed to one queen.
- Not all hotel rooms will be as spacious as in North America. European interiors are generally very efficient and make the most out of the space. This is often out of necessity, as many hotels were once buildings used for other purposes (ie. not originally designed as a hotel).

WATER PURITY

It is safe to drink the tap water in Europe and eat fresh produce after it has been washed.

MEDICAL & VACCINATIONS

Inoculations are not required if you are traveling directly from the US or Canada. Routine booster immunizations (e.g. Tetanus-Diphtheria, Polio, etc.) should be up to date.

It is advisable to take along enough prescription medicine for the whole tour and a

written prescription from your doctor for each medicine. If any of your medicines contain habit-forming drugs or narcotics, take precaution to avoid misunderstanding by properly identifying all drugs. Do not remove the drugs from their original containers and carry only the necessary quantity. These safeguards could save you considerable trouble.

PROTECTING YOURSELF

Before you leave on your tour remove any unnecessary cards from your wallet and leave them at home. Photocopy your passport ID page and any credit or debit cards (both sides) that you plan to take with you. Keep a copy separate from your wallet for quick reference should your cards be lost or stolen. Leave a photocopy with friends or family at home.

Pickpockets are more common in Europe than in North America, especially in public spaces like airports and train stations. Carry billfolds in the front inside pocket of a jacket or front pants pocket as opposed to your back pocket. Consider a money belt (obtainable at AAA stores, for example) for excess cash. Beware of a common pickpocket ploy which is to announce that pickpockets have been observed in the area. People instinctively touch their pockets to check and the pickpockets then know where you keep your valuables.

SUGGESTED RESOURCE LIST

The following resources will provide a good orientation for the tour.

Anabaptist History

- Anabaptist Essentials by Palmer Becker. Herald Press, 2016.
- Becoming Anabaptist: The Origin and Significance of Sixteenth Century Anabaptism by J. Denny Weaver. Herald Press, 2012. (An excellent overview of both history and theology, with relevance for today.)
- Furgge by Katherina Zimmerman. Masthof Press, 2017. (*Die Furgge*, as it was originally titled in 1996, is a novel about the persecution of the Anabaptists in Switzerland in the early 18th century that is based on archival and historical research of the Emmental and the people who lived there, like Madleni Schilt and Christen Hirschi. The story has a contemporary frame that is told by a musician who, during a retreat from a demanding life in Zurich, discovers this hidden history from an elderly teacher. The shadow of the local mountain—die Furgge—today known as the Hohgant, looms over the text as both a hiding place for the persecuted and a symbol of home.)
- Stories: How Mennonites Came to Be by John D. Roth. Herald Press, 2006.
- Mennonite Tourguide to Western Europe by Jan Gleysteen. Herald Press, 1984. Reprinted by Masthof Press. Please check www.masthof.com or your church library.
- Conrad Grebel, Son of Zurich by John L. Ruth. Herald Press, 1975.
- Pilgrim Aflame by Myron Augsburg. Herald Press, 1967. (Historical novel on Michael Sattler.)
- The Broken Chalice by Myron Augsburg. Herald Press, 1971. (Story about people in Friesland - fictionalized history.)
- Night Preacher by Louise Vernon, Herald Press. (Fictionalized story of Menno Simons for children.)
- Anabaptist Portraits by John Allen Moore. Herald Press, 1984.
- The Life and Thought of Michael Sattler by C. Arnold Snyder. Herald Press, 1984.
- The Golden Years of the Hutterites by Leonard Gross. Herald Press, 1980.
- The Anabaptist Vision by H.S. Bender. Herald Press, 1944.
- Anabaptism: Neither Catholic nor Protestant by Walter Klaassen. Conrad Press, Waterloo, Ont., 1973.
- An Introduction to Mennonite History by Cornelius J. Dyck. Herald Press, 1981.
- Anabaptist History and Theology: An Introduction by C. Arnold Snyder. Pandora Press.
- Profiles of Anabaptist Women: Sixteenth-Century Reforming Pioneers edited by C. Arnold Snyder and Linda Huebert Hecht.
- Menno Simons: Places, Portraits and Progeny by Piet Visser and Mary Sprunger.
- Testing Faith and Tradition: Global Mennonite History, John A. Lapp, editor. Good Books, 2006.

History

- Anne Frank: The Diary of a Young Girl. Translated from the Dutch by B.M. Mooyaart.
- Schindler's List by Thomas Keneally. (True story of prison camp Direktor Oskar Schindler, who saved more Jews from the gas chambers than any other single person during WW II.)

Films

- The Radicals (1990) – Dramatic true story of the early Anabaptists, Michael and Margaretha Sattler.
- Schindler's List (1995) – Story of one man's success in saving Jews from the gas chambers.
- The Diary of Anne Frank (1984).
- Anne Frank Remembered (1996) – Oscar-winning documentary; reconstructs her life and legacy, from her early childhood to her death in the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp just weeks before the Third Reich fell. Film includes actual footage of Anne and her family, as well as interviews with people who personally knew her.
- The Hiding Place (1975) – Story of how Corrie Ten Boom's family built a secret compartment in their home to hide Jews.

Travel Guides

- The Best European Travel Tips by John Whitman.
- Lonely Planet - Western Europe.
- Frommer's Europe.
- Europe 101 - History and Art for the Traveler by Rick Steves and Gene Openshaw. John Muir Publications, 1994 – this book carefully ties each style of art to its historical era.

Your local library will have an excellent variety of resources for your specific interest.