

# Chunnel Crossing



GERARD RAYMOND goes underground to Paris.

OK, YOU WON'T SEE Tom Cruise battling evil helicopters from the roof of the train, nor will Vanessa Redgrave be sitting beside you plotting world domination on a laptop. But crossing the English Channel on the sleek blue, white, and yellow Eurostar is a thrilling experience in its own right—and without doubt the most relaxing way to travel between London and Paris. Imagine: no airport schlepp, no waiting for fogged-in airplanes.

In London, catch the Eurostar at Waterloo Station. Get a first-class coach fare if you can and lean back in a roomy window seat

pulls into the Gare du Nord, a central terminal from which you can connect with most Metro (subway) lines in Paris; the Louvre and the Cathedral of Notre-Dame are practically within walking distance.

*Eurostar offers 12 London-Paris round trips daily, and six between London and Brussels. Round trip first-class adult fares from \$310; "standard," or second-class, from \$178. For reservations and info call 800-EUROSTAR.*

(no hassling about seat belts), sip your complimentary champagne, and before you know it you're coursing through the green fields of Kent. It's 75 minutes to the English coast, but you'll never see the water: The Eurostar zips through the 23-mile-long Chunnel buried 140 feet below the sea bed. At 100 mph, it takes a mere 19 minutes. By this time, first-class passengers have been served a decent meal. Second-class refreshments come from a food trolley or one of two restaurant cars (think Amtrak).

Once in France, the Eurostar races toward Paris at 186 mph. Flashes of the countryside fly past, and soon the basilica of Sacre Coeur on Montmartre rises up on the horizon—*et voilà!* Paris, a mere three hours after leaving London. The Eurostar

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