



# AESU

2026 GRAD TRIP DESTINATION SPOTLIGHT:

## LONDON, U.K.

### WHEN WILL YOU HAVE FREE-TIME?

**TOUR DAY 1 - Fly to London**

**TOUR DAY 2 - London Arrival day: FREE AFTERNOON**

- AESU group airfare typically lands early morning, transfer to hotel to hold luggage usually late morning.
- Welcome Orientation & Pub Crawl (est. start 6pm at hotel).
- Included meals: *Breakfast (in-flight)*

**TOUR DAY 3 - London Full Day: FREE AFTERNOON + EVENING**

- Morning city tour typically finishes at Tower Bridge approx 12-1pm.
- Today you will have **1-DAY GROUP TRAVEL CARD** for London public transportation.
- Included meals: *Breakfast*

### RECOMMENDED PRE-BOOKING:

- [London Eye](#)
- [Westminster Abbey](#)
- [Churchill War Rooms](#)
- [St. Pauls Cathedral](#) (viewing platform)
- [Shakespeare's Globe Theatre tour or show](#)
- [Sky Garden Rooftop Bar](#) - FREE
- [West End shows](#) or visit the TKTS booth at Leicester Square for same day tickets

### POPULAR 'LAST MINUTE' ATTRACTIONS:

- [British Museum](#) - FREE
- [National Gallery](#) - FREE
- [Tate Modern Museum](#) (viewing platform) - FREE
- [Imperial War Museum](#) - FREE
- Abbey Road Crossing
- Platform 9 3/4 at King's Cross Station

### EXPLORE, EAT, SHOP:

- Relax outside at Kensington Gardens + Hyde Park or take in the view from Primrose Hill
- Dine or shop in Soho & Covent Garden, even make a reservation for afternoon tea
- Shop on Oxford Street or visit a famous department store such as Harrods, Liberty or Selfridges
- Visit local markets & food vendors such as Borough Market, Camden Market, 'Portobello Road' in Notting Hill or Shoreditch's 'Brick Lane' & 'Old Spitalfield Market'
- Sample traditional British food & drink like fish & chips with mushy peas, meat pies, Pimm's Cup or a local ale
- Take a stroll along the River Thames & capture the iconic sights from Parliament to Tower Bridge

### MISC. TIPS:

- Contact-less/credit card pay is extremely popular in London, you will most likely not need GBP cash here
- Stop by a supermarket (Tesco, Sainsbury's, MS Food, etc) for water bottles, snacks, etc. for the tour days ahead
- Familiarize yourself with a map of London & the local transportation here: <https://tfl.gov.uk/maps>



2026 GRAD TRIP DESTINATION SPOTLIGHT:

# PARIS, FRANCE

## WHEN WILL YOU HAVE FREE-TIME?

### Tour Day 4 - Paris Travel Day: **MINIMAL FREE TIME**

- Groups travel by Eurostar train and are expected to arrive in Paris early afternoon. Upon arrival, guided city bus tour embarks en route to hotel check-in. Brief turn-around time until evening events: French Brasserie Dinner followed by Seine River cruise.
- Included meals: *Breakfast, Dinner*

### Tour Day 5 - Paris Full Day: **ENTIRELY FREE DAY**

- Optional morning visit to Fragonard Perfume museum & shop with Tour Director or entirely free day.
- PAID OPTION: Moulin Rouge Caberet show in late evening (show starts approx. 11pm).
- Included meals: *Breakfast*

## WHAT PASSES WILL I HAVE? *Passes will be distributed by your Tour Director upon arrival in Paris. Keep with you at all times.*

PARIS METRO CARD - will provide access to the Paris metro system (zones 1-3)

## IMPORTANT PRE-BOOKING LINKS:

**LOUVRE MUSEUM:** time reservation is mandatory - [reserve here](#)

**PALACE OF VERSAILLES:** time reservation is recommended - [reserve here](#)

**EIFFEL TOWER:** can wait in line for day-of visit or purchase advance tickets here to skip the line - [purchase tickets here](#)

**CATACOMBS:** advance booking recommended, available 7 days in advance - [learn more](#)

## ADDITIONAL FREE-TIME IDEAS:

- Have a bird's eye view of Paris from atop the ARC DE TRIOMPHE, visit the impressionist wonders inside MUSEE D'ORSAY, view the mural-size Monet water lilies in MUSÉE DE L'ORANGERIE or step inside one of the most complete collections of rayonnant Gothic stained glass windows at SAINTE-CHAPELLE & so much more - all accessible \*without\* time reservations
- Visit the famous SACRE COEUR BASILICA & explore the artists' neighborhood of Montmartre
- See the NOTRE-DAME CATHEDRAL
- Pick up some classic literature at the famous SHAKESPEARE & CO Bookstore or the book vendors along the Seine
- Walk through the TUILERIES GARDEN or enjoy sitting on a sunny park bench in the LUXEMBOURG GARDENS
- Shop along the CHAMPS-ÉLYSÉES and sample French Macarons at Ladurée or Piere Hermé
- Grab lunch in the neighborhoods of St. Germain or the Latin Quarter - often buzzing with students and young locals
- Sample local delicacies like ecargots, a croque monsieur sandwich, a sweet or savory crepe, or a Kir cocktail

## MISC. TIPS:

- Your first chance to obtain Euros by cash exchange or ATM will be at the train station departing London for Paris on tour day 4. Fees here are expected to be rather high - we suggest visiting a ATM near hotel after check-in.
- Familiarize yourself with a map of Paris & the local transportation here: <https://www.ratp.fr/en/plans>



2026 GRAD TRIP DESTINATION SPOTLIGHT:

# BRUSSELS & AMSTERDAM

## WHEN WILL YOU HAVE FREE TIME?

**Tour Day 6 - Paris - Brussels - Amsterdam travel day: LUNCH BREAK + EVENING FREE TIME**

- Group departs Paris early morning by motor coach and stops in Brussels, Belgium for a lunch break (approx. 2 hours). Upon arrival in Amsterdam check in to hotel, collect transportation card & quickly depart for evening canal cruise. Free evening.
- Included meals: Breakfast

**Tour Day 7 - Amsterdam full day: FREE AFTERNOON**

- Morning excursion to Dutch countryside with visits to local cheese farm and wooden shoemaker plus bike ride exploring Edam (approx. 9am-2pm). After, return to Amsterdam city center for free-time (roughly estimated 3-6pm) before group dinner of Dutch specialties.
- Included meals: Breakfast, Dinner

## WHAT PASSES WILL I HAVE?

2-DAY AMSTERDAM TRAVEL CARD - unlimited access to local transportation in Amsterdam

## BRUSSELS FREE-TIME IDEAS:

- See Grand Place UNESCO World Heritage Site (Brussels's city center), the naughty Mannequin Pis statue, the Royal Palace of Brussels and enjoy time to souvenir shop
- Sample a local dish like Moules & Frites, a Belgian waffle, french fries, Belgian chocolate, or a Belgian-brewed beer

## AMSTERDAM'S HARDEST TO GET TICKET:

**ANNE FRANK HOUSE:** online tickets are released 6 weeks in advance every Tuesday at 10am CEST. This ticket is likely to sell out the same day it is released online. If you want to visit, we recommend marking your calendars for the online ticket release. Note there is no option to wait in line for same-day tickets. Optimal time to book would be between 3-6pm CEST on your full day in Amsterdam. If booked earlier, you may miss the Dutch countryside excursion or if booked later you may miss the group dinner however, this is up to traveler's discretion. [See details](#)

## AMSTERDAM PRE-BOOKING LINKS:

**VAN GOGH MUSEUM:** online pre-booking mandatory. Often sells out approximately a week prior to visit date, sometimes last-minute tickets available. Note there is no option to wait in line for same-day tickets. [Purchase tickets here](#)

**RIJKSMUSEUM:** Museum of Dutch masters such as Rembrandt, Vermeer and Van Gogh. Online ticket mandatory, but typically no issue with same-day booking. [Purchase tickets here](#)

**HEINEKEN EXPERIENCE:** Online ticket mandatory, but typically no issue with same-day booking. [Purchase tickets here](#)

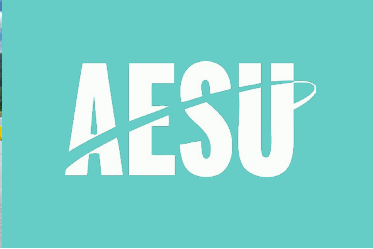
**XTRA COLD ICE BAR:** Online ticket mandatory, but typically no issue with same-day booking. [Purchase tickets here](#)

## AMSTERDAM FREE-TIME IDEAS:

- Eat, drink, shop in bustling areas of Dam Square, Rembrandtplein, or Leidseplein
- Try the local delicacies: Bitterballen, Stroopwaffles, Frietjes, Poffertjes, herring or Kibbeling fish & more!
- Enjoy Amsterdam's urban greenspace at Vondelpark or walk along the 400 bridges linking the city center

## MISC. TIPS:

- For travel days with more bus/train time, it is nice to have pre-downloaded books, audio books or movies on your mobile devices, as well as comfort items like a neck pillow or blanket. Card games are also always a good idea!
- Download or print out quick language guides to practice your French, Dutch, German, Italian or Greek - even if just your 'please' & 'thank you's'!



## 2026 GRAD TRIP DESTINATION SPOTLIGHT:

# GERMANY + AUSTRIA

### WHEN WILL YOU HAVE FREE TIME?

#### **Tour Day 8 - Amsterdam - Cologne - Heidelberg: FREE EVENING**

- Early morning departure by motor coach, brief morning stop in Cologne (approx. 1 hr), drive to Rhine River Valley, embark on mid-day Rhine River cruise (approx 1.5 hrs), drive to Heidelberg, visit Castle of Palatine Elector, check-in to hotel, free evening. Included meals: Breakfast (hot lunch available for purchase on cruise or purchase snacks in Cologne).

#### **Tour Day 9 - Heidelberg - Rothenburg - Munich: FREE EVENING**

- Morning departure by motor coach, stop in Rothenburg ob der Tauber for brief morning free time & group lunch at local Gasthaus, drive to Munich, check-in to hotel late afternoon & enjoy free evening. Included meals: Breakfast, Lunch

#### **Tour Day 10 - Munich: FREE AFTERNOON**

- Group makes a morning excursion to Dachau Memorial Site & returns to city center (est. 1pm) for a free afternoon until group dinner this evening. Included meals: Breakfast, Dinner

#### **Tour Day 11 - Munich - Salzburg - Austrian Alps: FREE TIME IN SALZBURG**

- Morning departure by motor coach, stop for interactive salt mine visit en route to Austria, stop again in Salzburg for afternoon free time (roughly estimated 1-4pm), drive onwards to Austria Alpine Region, check-in to hotel, group dinner at Alpine hotel. Included meals: Breakfast, Dinner

#### **Tour Day 12 - Austrian Alps : ENTIRELY FREE DAY or Optional Rafting Activity**

- This day is entirely free or you can participate in the paid optional white water rafting excursion, expected duration 6 hours (est. 12-6pm). Included meals: Breakfast, Dinner

### GERMANY:

- In **Cologne**, you can enter the world's largest gothic cathedral - [The Cologne Cathedral](#) & for a small fee, you are able to climb the Cathedral tower 533 steps to viewing platform. With close proximity to the train station, you might take this opportunity to visit the ATM or currency exchange, purchase snacks for the travel days ahead, or enjoy a coffee.
- In **Heidelberg**, you will have a free evening to explore the 'City of the Student Prince.' We suggest taking in the view from 'Old Bridge' over the river Neckar then seeking out the Church of Holy Spirit located at 'Marktplatz' - an open square lined with restaurant options. Kulturbrauerei or Vettlers Alt Brauhaus are popular group choices for local German fare.
- In **Rothenburg**, you can explore this medieval city by foot - even walk upon the city walls. Check out the glockenspiel (cuckoo clock) in the city center 'Marktplatz' & maybe make a visit into one of the largest Christmas shops in the world!
- In **Munich**, see 'Marienplatz' the city's center & city hall building with famous glockenspiel, enjoy the green oasis of the English Garden (don't forget to see the surfers at 'Eisbachwelle' or stop by the outdoor beer garden at the Chinese Tower), schedule a tour of the [FC Bayern Munchen Stadium](#) or visit any of Munich's renowned museums: [NS-Dokumentationzentrum](#); [Haus der Kunst](#); [BMW Welt/Museum](#); [Residenz Museum](#); [Pinakothek Art Museums](#) and more!

### AUSTRIA:

- In **Salzburg**, explore 'Old Town' & your favorite Sound of Music sights such as Mirabell Gardens & Castle, The Salzburg Cathedral, or maybe catch a tour of the [Salzburger Festspiele](#). Shop along Getreidegasse - here you will find [Mozart's birth house](#) & Redbull World Store. Time permitting, you may have the chance to hop on the funicular for bird's eye view of the city & visit the [Fortress of Salzburg](#).
- In the **Austrian Alps**, your Alpine hotel front desk will be able to provide you with hiking suggestions and maps of the area for exploration on your own. Hotel may offer a variety of spa services and may be equipped with a fitness center.



2026 GRAD TRIP DESTINATION SPOTLIGHT:

# VENICE + FLORENCE, ITALY

## WHEN WILL YOU HAVE FREE TIME?

### Tour Day 13 - Austrian Alps - Venice: **FREE AFTERNOON**

- Early morning departure by motor coach, arrive to Venice area early afternoon. Short boat ride to Murano for glass-blowing workshop & gift shopping then another short boat ride to Venice for a free afternoon (roughly estimated 2:30-6:30pm). Tour Director typically assists in scheduling gondola rides. Estimated departure from Venice by 7:00pm, return to bus, arrive to mainland hotel for check-in & single night stay.
- Included meals: Breakfast

### Tour Day 14 - Venice - Florence: **FREE AFTERNOON, NIGHT**

- Morning departure by motor coach, arrive to Florence (expect to only drop bags at hotel) and start your walking city tour (approx 2-3:30pm) upon arrival. Free afternoon until group meets for Florentine dinner, free night.
- Included meals: Breakfast, Dinner

### Tour Day 15 - Florence full day: **ENTIRE FREE DAY or optional Chianti excursion**

- This day is entirely free or you can participate in the paid optional Chianti excursion that will include transportation to & from the Tuscan countryside, snacks, and local wine tasting (approx. 10am-3pm).

## VENICE:

Most travelers do not make any reservations or bookings for Venice, rather use the free time to enjoy some Italian food, refreshment and dessert, to shop and to explore the famous canals and landmarks like the Rialto Bridge, Canale Grande, Saint Mark's Basilica and Campanile, Doge's Palace, Bridge of Sighs, and more.

## FLORENCE:

Museums and cathedrals in Florence can typically be attended same-day by waiting in line, however, purchasing time-slotted tickets in advance (even a few days prior to visiting) can be advantageous for skipping lines at these popular destinations:

- [Uffizi Gallery](#) - most famous work: Botticelli's Birth of Venus (note closed Mondays)
- [Accademia](#) - most famous work: Michelangelo's David (note closed Mondays)
- Cathedral of Santa Maria del Fiore - free to enter, however, you will need a ticket to access [Brunelleschi's Dome](#)
- [Basilica of Santa Croce](#)

Additional popular areas to explore in Florence:

- Piazza Michelangelo - overlooking view of Florence, great for sunsets
- Palazzo della Signoria - central square, site of the original David statue
- Ponte Vecchio - city's most famous bridge, lined with shops and vendors

## MISC. TIP:

- To enter any cathedral in Italy, it is customary to cover shoulders & knees. You may want to bring a shawl or pants with you to cover up otherwise you may be denied entry.



## 2026 GRAD TRIP DESTINATION SPOTLIGHT:

# ROME, ITALY

### WHEN WILL YOU HAVE FREE TIME?

#### Tour Day 16 - Florence - Rome/Vatican City: **FREE EVENING**

- Morning departure by motor coach, stop for lunch break en route to Rome, arrive in Rome early afternoon (est. 1-2pm) & immediately embark on guided city tour (on foot & by bus), arrive at hotel early evening (est. 5pm), check-in, free evening.
- See on guided tour (time/weather permitting): Caesar's Forum, Circus Maximus, Palatine Hill, Colosseum (from outside only), Arch of Constantine, St. Peter's Basilica in Vatican City
- Included meals: Breakfast

#### Tour Day 17 - Rome full day: **FREE MORNING & AFTERNOON**

- This day is entirely free until group meets for pizza party dinner in evening.
- Included meals: Breakfast, Dinner

### WHAT PASS WILL I HAVE?

**48-HOUR ROMA PASS:** full use of Rome's public transportation system, free access to first museum/archaeological site (we use this together on guided tour to enter the Roman Forum), dedicated booking arrangements and additional discounts. *The provider of Roma Passes is in the process of updating their products. Above information is subject to change and will be updated as details are received.*

**HOW TO BOOK ENTRY TO THE COLOSSEUM:** visit the official [Colosseum website](#) and select your desired date + time (we suggest Tour Day 17, full day in Rome). When selecting your ticket, scroll to the last option "RESERVATION OF ADMISSION FOR ROMA PASS HOLDERS, 2.00€." Add to cart & check-out. Here you will be prompted to enter your information - the name and surname request-ed is you (the Roma Pass holder). Make your payment & select to print at home (or save this ticket electronically to your mobile device).

### MOST POPULAR FREE TIME RESERVATION:

**VATICAN MUSEUMS & SISTINE CHAPEL:** Must purchase a ticket to enter, pre-booking highly recommended as tickets often sell out. There are a variety of tickets offered - general admission, guided tour, etc. May be possible to wait in line the day of visit, however entry is not guaranteed. Suggest booking on morning of Tour Day 17, full day in Rome - [reserve here](#)

### ADDITIONAL FREE TIME IDEAS:

- Walking sights (free): Spanish Steps, Trevi Fountain, Piazza Navona, Ciampo del Fiore, Piazza del Popolo, Trastevere
- Rome has over 100 museums - you may want to visit one of the following: Galleria Borghese; Capitoline Museums; Castel Sant Angel; National Etruscan Museum of Villa Giulia; Doria Pamphili Gallery; Historical Museum of the Liberation. Or explore the Pantheon, and other sites!
- Don't forget the amazing food! Try traditional Roman dishes like Cacio e Pepe or Carbonara pasta and of course gelato too!

### NOTE ON DEPARTURE (FOR TRAVELERS LEAVING FROM ROME):

- For those travelers who purchased airfare via AESU, your pre-paid travel arrangements to the airport (private mini bus or taxi cab) will be organized by your tour director, however, your Tour Director will travel on with the group to Southern Italy on your departure day.
- For travelers who made their own flight arrangements, you may seek the advice of your Tour Director or hotel concierge to make your departure arrangements.
- Last chance to show your appreciation to tour director & bus driver with suggested gratuity.



2026 GRAD TRIP DESTINATION SPOTLIGHT:

# SOUTHERN ITALY & GREECE EXTENSION

## WHEN WILL YOU HAVE FREE TIME?

**Tour Day 18 - Rome - Pompeii - Overnight Ship to Greece:** Early morning departure by motor coach, guided tour of Pompeii Archaeological Site (approx. 9:30-11am), followed by free time for lunch. Afternoon bus ride to ferry port, board ferry for evening departure. Hot dinner options available on ship. Included meals: Breakfast

**Tour Day 19 - Greece travel day/Poros arrival:** Overnight ship typically arrives in Greece 12-1pm, group boards their motor coach for drive from arrival port to Galatas with pit-stop for lunch at Corinth Canal before arriving for the boat taxi to Poros hotel. Late afternoon check-in and free-time before group dinner. Included meals: Breakfast, Dinner

**Tour Day 20 + 21 - Poros full days:** Two entirely free days in Poros. Travelers can enjoy one free day of bicycle rentals and may participate in the optional water sports (schedule varies). Group dinners both evenings. Included meals: Breakfast (day 20 +21), Dinner (day 21)

**Tour Day 22 - Poros-Athens:** Early morning departure by boat taxi and ferry (approx 1.5 hrs) to port of Athens. Meet motor coach and make short drive to city center. Begin guided tour of Acropolis and Athens. Arrive at hotel early afternoon for check-in/ bag-drop. Afternoon free time for lunch & exploring. Group farewell dinner at local taverna with traditional entertainment! Included meals: Breakfast, Dinner

**Tour Day 23 - Travel Home:** Morning check-out, travel to airport. Included meals: Breakfast

## FREE TIME RECOMMENDATIONS:

### POROS:

- Enjoy the amenities offered at the hotel! Pool access, beach lounge chair rentals at discounted price, beach restaurant & bar, wellness services, and friendly concierge/reception desk.
- Explore the town of Poros: take a walk up to the Clock Tower Poros for some great island views, or enjoy the countless cafes, restaurants, bars and shops that line the harbor. You will also find convenience stores, post office, bank and ATM here.

### ATHENS:

- On our bus ride from the Acropolis tour to the hotel, expect to stop & see the original Olympic Stadium, along with the Athens National Gardens, Syntagma Square and the Greek Parliament building and more. Witness the change of guards at Parliament every hour on the hour.
- You may want to enjoy a nice lunch and wrap up any last minute gift-shopping or share a cheers with new friends at one of Athens' many rooftop bars. Head to either Monastiraki square or Plaka district.
- Athens is also full of museums, over 70! The most popular are either the [Acropolis Museum](#) or [National Archaeo-logical Museum](#).

## NOTE OF DEPARTURE:

- For those travelers who purchased airfare via AESU, your pre-paid travel arrangements to the airport will be organized by your tour director. Typically there is a large group transfer bus departing early morning. For very early departures, pre-paid taxi arrangements will be made.
- For travelers who made their own flight arrangements, you may seek the advice of your Tour Director or hotel concierge to make your departure arrangements. Space permitting, you can pay a 'go-show' rate to ride the group bus transfer to the airport.
- Last chance to show your appreciation to tour director & bus driver with suggested gratuity.