

# explore all aboard

## locomotive breadth: a tour of the world's most beautiful train stations

### berlin

**HAUPTBAHNHOF STATION** // Overlooking Berlin's Bundestag // The ambitious plan was to build the largest crossing station for an integrated Europe and a symbolic center for a reunified Germany. In fact, this translucent, glass-and-steel mega-station, opened in 2006, links Berlin's north and south with the east and west for the first time. It also offers plenty of shopping and dining and a curving glass rooftop that stores solar energy. Equally impressive: four-level views of criss-crossing trains and loudspeakers you actually can hear.

### istanbul

**SIRKECI STATION** // Sirkeci // For nearly a century Sirkeci Station was the final stop of the Orient Express, a three-day journey originating in Paris. Those luxury trips ended in 1977, but the ornate Sirkeci remains a moving reminder of that bygone era and a perfect place to soak up 19th-century flavor. Visitors to the acoustically resonant main hall can see dazzling weekly performances of whirling dervishes or dine at the Orient Express Restaurant.

### japan

**KYOTO STATION** // Shimogyo Shichijo district // The ceiling soars 12 stories and its futuristic glass-and-steel design provides a powerful counterpoint to this ancient city's historical heritage. Opened a decade ago to commemorate the city's 1,200-year anniversary, Kyoto traditionalists have never warmed to it. But this ambitious structure is one of Japan's largest buildings, luring passengers and visitors with a shopping mall, movie theaters, restaurants, museums and an observation deck for spectacular city views.

### london

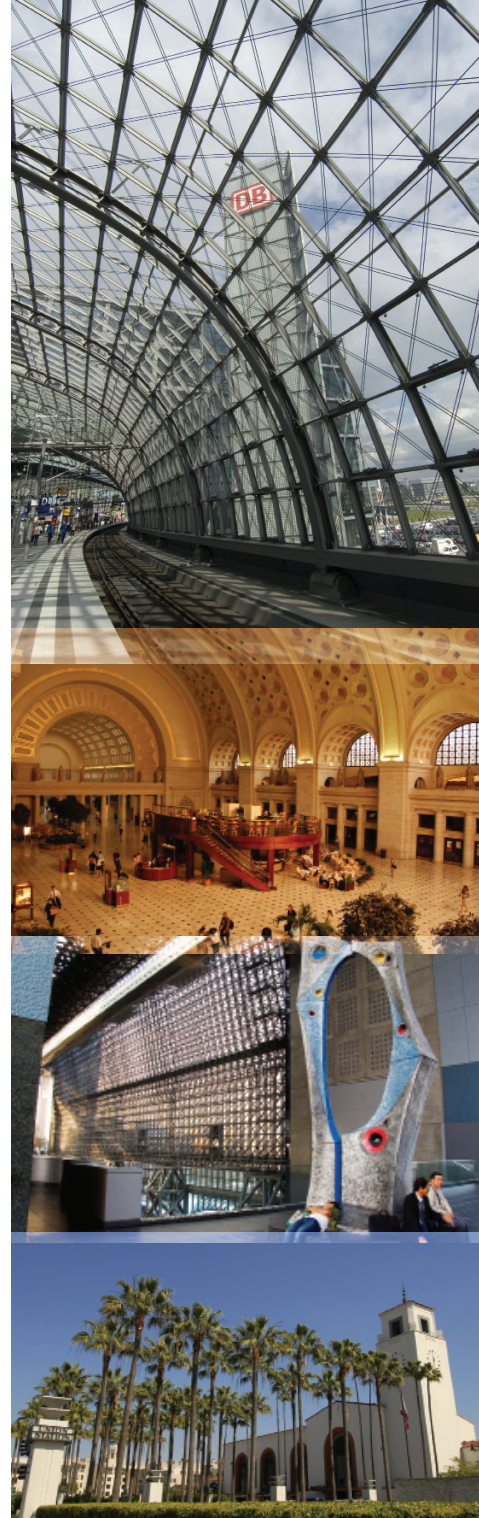
**ST. PANCRAS STATION** // Central London // A red brick Victorian masterpiece and a movie setting for Harry Potter and Batman, the glorious St. Pancras bears the fruits of an ongoing 800 million euro renovation and expansion. Now a terminus for the high-speed Eurostar trains to Paris and Brussels, visitors are flocking to the farmer's market and a full complement of shopping and dining, including a 270-foot champagne bar, Europe's longest. Talk about a reason to celebrate.

### los angeles

**UNION STATION** // Downtown, Alameda Avenue // Known as the last of the great railway stations, L.A.'s Union Station is a place for imagining. Opened in 1939, the cream-colored lobby combines Spanish Mission, Moorish and Art Deco styles to inspire romantic memories of the glamorous 1940s-era movie stars who arrived here from points east. Right next door: the festive Olvera Street, home to the city's oldest surviving buildings and a lively reminder of the city's rich Mexican heritage.

### washington, d.c.

**UNION STATION** // Columbus Circle // Forget the Washington Mall. The most visited site in this capital city is regal Union Station. And it's not just because the station packs more than 120 shops and restaurants and a nine-screen multiplex. This Beaux Arts masterpiece, completed in 1908 and restored 80 years later, is genuinely awe-inspiring: white granite Ionic colonnades and 100 sculpted eagles at the entrance and a soaring ceiling, white marble floor and three dozen Roman legionnaire sculptures in the Main Hall. Now that's monumental.



From top: Hauptbahnhof Station, Berlin; Union Station, Washington D.C.; Kyoto Station, Kyoto, Japan; and Union Station, Los Angeles.

## on location

Roland's CD-2e recorder is the fastest way to capture audio and render it to disc or memory card for storage or distribution — without hooking it up to a computer. With high-performance speaker, stereo mic, and built-in CD-R/RW drive, the portable device is a must-have for travelers, journalists, students and gadget hounds (\$700; rolandus.com).





## buyer's bible

Laura Morelli's *Made in France* and *Made in Italy* (2nd edition) are the perfect shopping companions. As the author provides insight into both countries' cultures and traditions, she directs you to the latest and greatest destinations for one-of-a-kind finds and artisanal crafts, from signature porcelains and pottery to culinary delights and one-of-a-kind handbags and designer items. Don't leave home without them (\$24.95; rizzoli.com).

## south beach beauty

Speaking of shopping, The DiLido Shops at The Ritz-Carlton, South Beach are to stores what Tiffany is to diamonds. The best in a pretty blue box. At Lincoln Road and Collins Avenue, the shops carry the **most exclusive brands** including a luxury travel planner, boutique fashions created by a handful of visionaries, luxury yacht sales and vacations, unique jewelers, designer-brand handbags and much more. For further information, call 305-672-5466.

