



THE WESTERN EUROPE OVERLAND GUIDE

Routes. Camps. Gear. Good decisions.

FOR CARS, SUVs, 4x4s AND CAMPERVANS

12 COUNTRIES • ROUTE AND CAMP PLANNING • CHECKLISTS

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[SAMPLE PREVIEW](#)

Use this guide alongside the Western Europe Road Trip Guide for road rules, tolls and city zones.

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WHO THIS IS FOR

You can travel independently without a specialist vehicle. A well prepared ordinary car on public roads and authorised campsites is a valid overland trip. Choose rougher routes only when both your vehicle and the route permit them.

The country notes are planning prompts, not permission to camp or drive a track. Verify the current local rules, signs, closures and landowner requirements for the exact place before arrival.

Wikiloc, Gaia GPS and OsmAnd

SAMPLE PREVIEW

Use them to discover and navigate a route, then verify motor access elsewhere.

Wikiloc, finding ideas

- Search by activity and read the route date, photos, comments, length and elevation. A recent record is more useful than a route uploaded years ago.
- A Wikiloc track shows where a user recorded or planned a journey. It is not an official ruling that every segment is legal, open or suitable today.
- Inspect the whole line for gates, protected areas, fords and sections that may be footpaths. Save promising points, then check the authority and on-site signs.

Gaia GPS, planning layers

- Build a route and compare the available mapping layers, satellite imagery and terrain before committing to a remote leg.
- Download maps for the route and enough surrounding area to cover a detour. Check whether offline routing data is included in the app version and download.
- Save waypoints for fuel, water, the last turn-around and both overnight options.

OsmAnd, offline navigation

- Download the country or regional maps before departure and import a GPX route or plan one in the app.
- Check the vehicle routing profile and route details, then inspect alternatives when the app proposes an unpaved or restricted way.
- A rendered road or access tag can be incomplete or out of date. Use official sources and signs to decide whether to drive.

ONE TRACK, THREE JOBS

A community route suggests a possibility; a detailed map explains the terrain; the relevant authority, landowner and current signs settle access. Keep a paved fallback.

App guides

Wikiloc route discovery

<https://www.wikiloc.com/>

Gaia GPS route and offline-map help

<https://help.gaiagps.com/hc/en-us/articles/9067661557399-How-to-Use-Gaia-GPS>

OsmAnd route planning help

<https://osmand.net/docs/user/plan-route/>

Water crossings

SAMPLE PREVIEW

The cover shows my Range Rover in a ford, but a photograph cannot show the risk on another day.

Decide whether to cross

- ☐ Confirm that vehicle use of the crossing is authorised and the exit is open. Look for a bridge or paved alternative first.
- ☐ Check official river and weather warnings. Rising, fast or flood water is a reason to turn back; a submerged road may be washed out.
- ☐ From a safe place, assess the depth, current, bottom, entry and exit. Do not wade on foot into dangerous water to test it.
- ☐ Check the exact vehicle's handbook for its wading limit and any preparation. That published limit is not a target, especially with current, uneven ground or a loaded vehicle.

If it is a permitted, known shallow ford

- Use the vehicle's specified mode if fitted, and keep a steady, controlled pace without stopping in the water. Follow the manufacturer's instructions.
- Keep doors and windows closed, never attempt to restart an engine that stalls in water, and seek safe professional recovery.
- Afterwards, check braking response at low speed in a safe place and inspect for water intrusion, loose underbody parts or contaminated fluids as appropriate.

FLOOD WATER: TURN BACK

A flooded road is not an overland challenge. Government and fire services advise against driving through it because depth, current and the road beneath cannot be trusted.

Country notes: France to Luxembourg

SAMPLE PREVIEW

A starting point for research, not permission to enter a track or spend the night.

FRANCE

Combine secondary roads and designated camping or motorhome areas. Check local parking, protected-area access and seasonal mountain equipment before leaving the road network.

START WITH: service-public.fr / parc-national.fr

BELGIUM

A compact country for short stages. Forest and nature areas have specific access rules; confirm any vehicle route or overnight place with the local authority.

START WITH: wallonie.be / vlaanderen.be

NETHERLANDS

Plan official campsites or recognised overnight areas; watch width, cycle traffic and restrictions near dunes and protected areas.

START WITH: government.nl / [municipality website](#)

LUXEMBOURG

Use legal roads and designated overnight accommodation; protected landscapes are best explored on foot from a lawful parking place.

START WITH: guichet.public.lu