



Vanlife in Europe: the best countries for converted vehicles

By Floriane

Looking for a destination with your vehicle for your **next road trip in Europe**? You've come to the right place!

Having visited **a number of European countries** with our motorhome, we can already tell you that in some countries it's very easy to find a bivouac for the night, park for the day, do your services (water, oil change...) while in others it's not so easy.

So, in this article, we're going to give you **the most suitable countries**, in our opinion, for vanlife!

How many European countries have we visited by car?

We made two long camper trips with our family and visited **13 countries** in Europe:

- [10 months in a motorhome in Southern Europe](#), from August to June, here's the list of countries visited **Portugal, Spain, Italy, Greece, Bulgaria, Romania, Hungary, Austria and Germany**.
- 4 months in [Scandinavia](#), here is the list of countries crossed from May to August: **Denmark, Sweden and Norway**

We also explored a number of regions in France, including [Brittany](#), the northeast and the area around Lyon.

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We're planning a trip to England and Scotland this summer. We'll update this article when we get back. If you'd like to find out more about us, take a look at our article "[Who are we?](#)", where we tell you a bit about our life!

Itinerary Northern Europe - *Map on TravelBoast*

Our top countries in Europe for vanlife

Obviously, we didn't visit every European country with our vehicle, so we're going to take a look back at the countries we visited with our motorhome. Please let us know in the comments if you have any other countries to add to our list:

- **Sweden (*visited in May and August*)** is our **favorite country**. The driving is comfortable, and it's one of the only countries in Europe where I (Floriane) have driven. Even in the middle of summer, we managed to find great spots in forests, around lakes, on the east coast, all to ourselves!

Another important point for vanlife is that Sweden applies a policy of "**Allemansrätten**", which translates as the **right of access to nature**, allowing everyone to enjoy nature freely. However, this right is subject to certain conditions. Avoid parking too close to dwellings, and always leave the premises as you found them.

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It is also forbidden to park in **national parks** or on **private roads**, where the owner determines the traffic regulations. Prohibitions are generally well indicated.

We recommend a [road trip to southwest Sweden](#), or a stay in [Stockholm](#), the capital of the northern countries.

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- the **roads are wide** and pleasant
- Swedish driving
- many **wild spots**
- quiet and clean
- many service areas

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- **weather** even in summer!
- **mosquitoes** and **vampire midges** in Lapland

Swedish forest and lake

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Next to a public sauna

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Bohuslan Coast

- **Greece** (*visited in January, February and March*): during our 3 months in Greece, we never had any trouble finding a bivouac, and in the Peloponnese, we were often **“wheels” in the water**.

This is where we found the most beautiful places to sleep. It's worth noting that we were there in the middle of winter, so it may not be as easy to park everywhere in high season. Don't hesitate to send us your feedback in the comments section.

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 - spot in the water
 - calm in winter
 - weather even in winter
 - the Greeks are adorable
- - few places for service

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- **Spain (*visited in August and September*)** Spain (visited in August and September): outside the Mediterranean coast, between Valencia and the Spanish border, there are many nice spots, including dedicated areas with free services (emptying, water and sometimes electricity).

In August, we crossed the north of Spain, and were pleasantly surprised by how few people there were. It might be a good idea to explore **this area during the summer school vacations.**

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| - equipped, free service areas | - numerous prohibitions on the Mediterranean coast |
| - numerous bivouacs | - noise, we had to leave a spot at 1am around Barcelona, as our parking lot turned into an outdoor nightclub... |

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- Norway (*visited in June and July*) : this country follows the same policy as Sweden, but it's mountainous, so there's little space for parking, and pitches are often on the side of the road. Even though we found some nice bivouacs, we were a little disappointed by the crowds (even though we were contributing to them) in some areas, notably between [Stavanger](#) and [Bergen](#) and on the [Lofotens Islands](#), where we saw a lot of no overnight signs. Some areas, such as [Senja Island](#) in the north, are somewhat spared.

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We strongly recommend a road trip in Norway to explore the [fjords around Bergen](#) or [Geiranger](#), as well as the many magnificent hiking trails ([Preikestolen](#), [Trolltunga](#)...).

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| - Cleanliness of spots | - Roadside spotlights |
| - Numerous service areas, some of which are even equipped with cleaning machines. | - Small parking lots |

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- **Bulgaria and Romania:** these two countries are ideal for motorhomes, with few restrictions. It's worth noting, however, that the spots aren't always very clean and there aren't many places to do services.
- **Denmark:** we easily found spots in the Danish countryside. For [Copenhagen](#) we booked a campsite.

We did not stay in Austria long enough, as we only explored Vienna, as well as parts of Hungary and Germany, to be able to provide detailed feedback based on firsthand experience.

European countries less suited to life in a converted vehicle

- **Italy** (*visited in October and November*): this is one of our favorite European countries, the historic sites are magnificent and the food is always very good. However, we found the driving sporty, especially around [Naples](#), and we were a little stressed about leaving our vehicle around certain towns.

Another point is that we didn't always sleep very well, and some evenings we were treated to loud music right next to our vehicle, even in less urbanized areas such as near the [archaeological site of Pompeii](#).

We really recommend doing Italy by **train** or **rental car**, without your belongings inside.

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| - the country is magnificent | - Driving, especially in southern Italy |
| - the food is excellent | - Insecurity, as you can read on |
| - visit southern Italy in October and | Park4night there are thefts from |
| November to enjoy the peace and quiet of | vehicles. |
| the area | - Noise on some bivouacs |

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- **Portugal, Slovenia and Croatia:** wilderness bivouacs are forbidden, so if you stay in these countries for a long time, your budget may be considerably higher. We paid €50 for a night's camping in Cascais, west of Lisbon. We advise you to check this point before your road trip, as laws may change.
- On the Spanish Mediterranean coast between **Valencia and the Spanish border**, there are numerous parking bans, even for the day.

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Don't hesitate to share your feedback in comments on these or other countries to help future travelers find what they're looking for! See our other vanlife articles in the ["Travel practice"](#) section!

Don't hesitate to ask us any questions here or on [Instagram](#).

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