



On the road again with the Roaming Pen

Roger Wheeler

As it's nearly Christmas many people have asked me to remind them of the many ways that of reducing the cost of travel that I listed last year. So to start with if you're over 60 then you should have a National Bus Pass, you can use this anywhere in England and that includes London. Taking a coach? National Express coaches offer Route 60 for those over that magic age and Fun Fares for those under that age, these both give a decent discount.

Taking the train? The following may seem complex - but it's not. All train companies - including Southern Trains (the same company that runs Brighton & Hove Buses) have to offer just three types of fare : Advance; Off-Peak and Anytime. We need only concern ourselves with the Advance. You can only buy these online or one of the One Stop shops either at the Old Steine or the One Stop Shop at the Station. Just ask for an Advance Fare to wherever you wish to travel - Eastbourne or Edinburgh, literally anywhere in the UK. You need to be reasonably flexible with your time of travel as they only allocate a limited number of cheap seats on every train. And you must travel on the train you have selected and you cannot break your journey. On the Southern Trains network these tickets cost a basic £3.00 per journey and are available for travel

anywhere regardless of distance on the entire Southern network; yes anywhere. You can buy an Advance ticket up to 24 hours before you travel, although the earlier you book the more chance you have. There are more Advance tickets available at weekends and less, predictably, during weekday rush hours.

For long journeys splitting your tickets is usually cheaper. For example if you want to take a train to, say, Bristol from Brighton, buy a ticket to Portsmouth, then one from Portsmouth to Bath and so on. You will be on the same train, you don't have to get off or change but it will be much cheaper than buying a direct ticket. Officially the ticket office or One Stop shop should offer these to you, but probably they won't.

Southern DaySave tickets are by far the best buy they are only available from One Stop Travel shop in the Old Steine or the Brighton Visitor Information Centre in the Royal Pavilion. You can buy them on a Brighton & Hove Bus, but they will automatically add £2.00 for PlusBus which gives you the cost of the bus to and from the station. A good saving if you don't have a National Bus Pass. You can't buy DaySave tickets at the One Stop Shop at Brighton Station or at the station ticket office.

Daysave tickets are by far the best way to travel anywhere on the Southern Trains Network, there are



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no restrictions apart from the usual Monday - Friday rush hour and cost £10.00. You can break your journey and travel on any train you like after 9.00. The Southern website is incorrect, stating, as it does, that you have to buy these seven days in advance - no, you can purchase these on the actual day of travel. Even better if you are a group of up to four people it costs just £20.00 - that's unlimited travel anywhere on their network for just £5.00 each. Travelling to London? Get yourself an Oyster Card, available from any Underground station for just £3.00, you then 'load' it with money and travel on any tube or bus for half price. Of course if you have a National Bus Pass you travel on the buses for free. You can improve on that if you're over 60 and travel frequently by train, get a Senior Rail Card, they cost £26.00 and are easily available online (they will give you one third off all train travel) then go to a Tube station with your Oyster card and have your Senior Rail Card loaded onto it. Then you pay half price plus a further one third discount on the tube. I hope this helps, I have put it all on my website www.theroamingpen.co.uk. You can see everything that I have been up to there too! Next time I will have some ideas of how to ensure a proper Christmas hangover.

Take it easy and happy shopping.



Money-saving David

David Campbell

Greetings once again my penny pinching pals!

Christmas is once again upon us (bah hum bug!!) and I for one am already skint. I blame the loose loins of my two brothers who have sired 9 wonderful yet present hungry children between them. Over Christmas and New Year we usually go out on the town more than most months. Unfortunately going to the wrong places can put a serious dent in your pocket so in this months column I have scouted out some of the best pub and restaurant deals to be had in the Brighton area.

Let's start with some great Happy Hour offers in Kemp Town itself. Happy Hour at the Tin Drum is from 3pm to 7pm and is valid every day apart from Saturday. Pints of Guinness, Stella and Becks are £2.50 and there are 2 for 1 cocktails to be had. If you are still up for it after that then pop along to the Sidewinder as their Happy Hour doesn't finish until 9pm every evening with a pound off pints of Kronenbourg, Strongbow and Fosters as well as cheap shots. Want to see some great bands but can't afford to pay? Check out The Ranelagh on Wednesday, Thursday and Sunday evenings especially if you enjoy the Blues, Rock or Country music. On Sundays get down to the Pav Tav. I go there regularly for their £4.99 roast with a pint deal and then I saunter over to Wetherspoons for a pint of Ruddles for a pound. Yes, one measly pound!!

If you fancy something with a Mediterranean flavour then check out More Bar on Trafalgar Street on the way up towards the station. They have free Salsa lessons on Wednesday evenings and some great offers on beer and wine all through the week.

There are also loads of 2 for 1 deals in Brighton's restaurants. Search for restaurant vouchers on Google and you will find vouchers for Strada, Giraffe, Browns, La Tasca, Zizzi, Las Iguanas, GBK amongst others which you then print off. Restrictions do apply so please check the small print. Look on my website www.moneysavingdavid.com for a

comprehensive list of current deals. My current favourite is the Orange Wednesdays deal at Pizza Express as it links up nicely with the Orange 2 for 1 cinema deal so you can go out with your partner, have a nice meal and both watch a movie for under £15. TIP - If you are not an Orange customer ask someone who is to text you with the promo code for the evening!!

Many restaurants boost their bills through increasing the price of drinks and for this reason I am a massive fan of Bring Your Own Bottle (BYOB). So, if you know you are going to be consuming loads of drinks then choosing a BYOB establishment is the way forward. I highly recommend E-Kagen above Yum Yum on Sydney Street in the South Lanes. Very basic interior but you can't beat the genuine Japanese food and the service by Mr and Mrs Sasaki is excellent. Also, nearly next door is Si Signore which does great no frills Italian grub. My two other favourite BYOB places are Sahara on Western Road which does Middle Eastern food and The Little Buddha at Seven Dials which is a Thai restaurant. Please ask before hand for corkage fees but you shouldn't be paying more than a quid per bottle.

Another way to get some great deal is though using on-line booking services where you can get up to 50% percent off the menu price. Look at www.toptable.co.uk and www.5pm.co.uk as well as www.lastminute.com. Also, if you are an XYZ magazine yellow wristband holder don't forget to bring it out as can bring significant savings across Brighton including 10 percent of the Guarana Bar in Sydney Street and 20% off food at the Varsity on the sea front. I use mine at The Thomas Kemp and Sidewinder regularly and get a pound off my pint every time I produce it. They aren't handing any more out now until 2010 but I have arranged with Andrew at XYZ magazine that the first 50 people to email him at info@xyzmagazine.co.uk will be sent one out.

That's it this month folks, but please email at david@moneysavingdavid.com to let me know your money saving tips. Remember, there is a £10 iTunes voucher for the tip of the month.

David is co-founder on www.moneysavingdavid.com