

Great Rail Records

We've challenged our specialists to come up with, what they believe, are a few train facts that the countries they specialise in can be proud of. Whilst they made every effort to validate these "facts", there may be a few rail enthusiasts who may beg to differ! Here's the world of rail, according to Audley:

Longest rail journey *the Trans-Siberian, Russia*

From Moscow in European Russia to the Siberian port city of Vladivostok is a mammoth 9,302 kilometres (5,780 miles) - the longest rail journey in the world, taking seven days of travel through the frozen taiga forests.

Fastest train *the Shanghai Maglev, China*

Linking downtown Shanghai with Pudong International Airport, the Maglev train covers the intervening 30 kilometres (19 miles) in just 8 minutes, and with a top speed of 501 km/h (311 mph). This is the world's fastest train.

Highest passenger railway *the 'Three Miles High' journey from Lima to Huancayo, Peru*

Although the train's schedule is irregular, the 335 kilometres journey from Lima to Huancayo is the world's highest passenger rail journey, with the highest point as it passes Ticlio at 4,829 metres above sea level.

Southernmost rail journey *the 'Train to the End of the World', Argentina*

This is a narrow-gauge tourist train that travels from Ushuaia in southern Argentina to Tierra del Fuego National Park, a total journey of 1hour 40 minutes.

Most expensive rail journey per kilometre *the Hiram Bingham, Peru*

Cuzco to Machu Picchu service, although you do get some fine food and entertainment on board.



Devil's Nose, Ecuador



'Train to the End of the World', Argentina



Shanghai Maglev, Pudong airport

Longest rail tunnel *Honshu and Hokkaido island, Japan*

Japan boasts the world's longest rail tunnel connecting Honshu with northerly Hokkaido island. At approximately 33 miles long it beats the Channel Tunnel by around 2 miles.

Longest straight track *The Indian Pacific, Australia*

No other rail journey traverses so many different terrains in one country, from the spectacular Blue Mountains and the green and gold Sun Belt of Australia, through the Red outback and across the world's longest length of straight railway track, 478 kilometres through the stark and desolate Nullarbor Plain.

Biggest engineering challenge *The Devil's Nose, Ecuador*

The Devil's Nose section of the Quito to Guayaquil railway in Ecuador, is arguably the world's most difficult rail engineering challenge. Constructing the track is a feat that involved cutting a series of switchbacks into a sheer wall of rock, which allowed the train to climb a gradient of 1-in-18 from 1,800 to 2,600 metres, by going forwards then backwards up the tracks.

Oldest locomotive *The Fairy Queen, India*

The Fairy Queen (1855) is the world's oldest locomotive in working order and runs a regular service from Delhi to Alwar. A short drive to Sariska National Park allows the lucky passengers aboard this comfortable train the chance to catch a glimpse of the mighty Bengal Tiger.