

TRAVEL AND HOSPITALITY

Orient Express lends locomotive to 'Mission: Impossible' crew

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The company is taking viewers behind the scenes in a new activation, showing off its role in what it calls "practical filmmaking." Image credit: Orient Express

By EMILY IRIS DEGN

International hotel, river cruise and rail company Orient Express is stealing the show on the silver screen.

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For the newly-released blockbuster, *Mission: Impossible Dead Reckoning Part One*, the company built a replica of its historic, art deco-era trains. Orient Express is taking viewers behind the scenes in a new activation, showing off technical know-how and creative spirit just in time for the film's premiere.

"The *Mission: Impossible* team has taken the use of trains as locations to a whole new level," said Simon Pielow, cofounder of [Luxury Train Club](#), Swindon.

"We have enjoyed for some years providing trains, carriages, and rail facilities such as stations for movies and more, but we acknowledge that *Mission: Impossible Dead Reckoning* has hugely raised the bar!"

Making the mission possible

Engaging in what it calls "practical filmmaking," Orient Express worked with director and writer Christopher McQuarrie to bring adventurous storytelling to life.

With minds set on having the last hour of the film set on a vintage locomotive, the filmmaking team and the rail company came together to create a train for the job. In a 150-second video, Orient Express gives consumers, moviegoers and travel fans alike a glimpse at the process that went into it.

Orient Express takes viewers behind the action

"When we started talking about this movie in terms of a sense of adventure, an action sequence on a train was something we'd always wanted to do," says Mr. McQuarrie, in the video.

"We wanted to build upon the previous films and apply all of that knowledge to something practical and real, and bring this train sequence to another level," he says. "There was not a surplus of trains available to be wrecked.

"We had to build the train if we wanted to destroy it."

Upon request, the Orient Express engineers made an exact copy of the famous luxury trains that carried affluent guests in the early 1900s.

The finished product set the tone for key scenes in the *Mission: Impossible* movie, with each car specifically designed for the plot, and stunt doubles and actor Tom Cruise performing fights on its roof as it barrelled down the tracks in Norway.



Tom Cruise and stunt doubles fought on the Orient Express roof, the train specially built for the movie. Image credit: Orient Express

Though used as an elaborate setting and prop for the film, the train was completely functional and was conducted on working railroad tracks in the fjord-speckled country. Inside, actors including luxury favorite Vanessa Kirby ([see story](#)) played out their parts of the narrative, walking, running and fighting through twinkling passenger seating, shining kitchens and gold-gilded dining cars as the Orient Express moved at 60 miles per hour through Nordic valleys outside.

As mentioned, the purpose of building a new train entirely was so that the locomotive could be destroyed for the film's ending sequence.

The crash scene was shot in a quarry in the United Kingdom, a track built off a cliff for the train to barrel off of. With such a precarious task, the filmmakers only had one chance to get the shot.

Multiple cameras were deployed, as a helicopter took angles overhead. If the train fell into the rocks below without it captured well, the destruction would be for naught.



Lenses were placed all over the vintage-inspired train in the effort to capture its demise. Image credit: Orient Express

This level of old-world filmmaking is unique amongst the movie magic of computer-generated images, calling back to Hollywood's westerns and golden era films of old.

"Everything you're seeing in this spectacular train sequence is done to invest the audience in these characters," says Mr. McQuarrie, in the video.

"We could only do it with a team like this and an actor like Tom."

All aboard

Orient Express is no stranger to the big screen ([see story](#)), but its feature in the *Mission: Impossible* franchise marks a new milestone for the brand.

Other luxury names have showed up in the series before, including German automaker BMW, which had a role to play in the 2015 release, *Rogue Nation* ([see story](#)). Now, as train travel picks up as a trend ([see story](#)), it is Orient

Express's time to shine.

Starting in 2025, a year after *Dead Reckoning Part Two* is planned to premiere, modern voyagers will be able to experience the same train model for themselves.



For the sake of storytelling, the Orient Express train was destroyed viewers can see for themselves in theaters, the movie out this week. Image credit: Orient Express

The company is inviting travelers aboard 17 original Orient Express cars from the 1920s and 1930s. Like the train used for *Dead Reckoning Part One*, the vehicles are adorned with time-period-appropriate decor, now updated with contemporary luxury design codes.

The cars, historically known together as the "Nostalgie-Istanbul-Orient-Express," are the work of architect Maxime d'Angeac, a former collaborator of French fashion and leather goods house Hermès and French beauty brand Guerlain. Mr. d'Angeac fittingly is a fan of storytelling, as guests will be able to tell from the theatrical touches put on the *Mission: Impossible* inclusion.

Though there are still a few years to go before luxury travelers can come aboard the vintage vehicle, for now, fans of the brand can head to theaters to see the train in action.

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