

EuroTrip

Reviewed by

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One of the things I enjoy about writing these reviews is that I get to watch films that wouldn't normally necessarily be on my radar. *EuroTrip* (2004), directed by Jeff Schaffer has tacky teen movie written all over it, and my expectations were not high. But, boy, was this fun. I laughed, I cringed - and I can't get the brilliant 'Scotty Doesn't Know' theme song out of my head (worth the price of the rental alone).

So these four kids decide to go backpacking around Europe. Scotty is dumped by his two-timing girlfriend at the high school graduation party. But he has this cute penfriend in Berlin who he wants to meet. Cooper is his sex-starved buddy. Jenny and Jamie are twins. They all want to get laid (this IS a teen movie), except perhaps Jamie, who's a bit of a guide book geek. Their journey takes them from London to Paris, Amsterdam, Bratislava, Berlin and finally to Rome. On the way, they behave like dumb Americans and everyone else acts like their very worst national stereotype (or the director's not always accurate idea of that stereotype). The movie's tag line is: "No actual Europeans were harmed in the making in this film."

It's up to you whether you are offended by this. Of course not all Dutch people are into kinky sex, nor are all Brits foul-mouthed racist football hooligans breaking bottles on each other's heads, or all Eastern European lorry drivers' unkempt pissheads who haven't slept for three days. Nor, for that matter, do all American teenagers think "Paris is practically a suburb of London" or get high on cookies with absolutely no hash in them whatsoever. And if France is summed up by ten-mile queues outside the Louvre and nudist beaches full of sex-starved men, well, why not? It's a comedy. The caricatures are just that – caricatures, and the American kids play perfect deadpan from nonsensical start to nonsensical finish.

You can't have a teen movie without t & a, so naturally there are one or two scenes with teenage boys ogling bare-breasted women. But there's also quite a bit of male nudity – most of it in the hilarious nudist beach episode. The boys drop their trousers and run joyfully over the dunes – only to be greeted by hundreds of naked men of all nationalities and ethnicities. Not gay, but desperately hoping some women will turn up. "Ugh," says Scotty, "there are no nude girls, just guys like us looking for nude girls." Jamie consults his Frommer's bible: "... however, during the summer months, all the European women are chased away by gawking male tourists" Then Jenny turns up and the nude 'Zombies' move in ... Oh, it is so silly, but how can you not laugh?

Other memorable 'gags' in this movie include the 'robot' mime artist fight outside the Louvre, the turning of Sheena Easton's Nine to Five into a Man U football song, and the entire 'What-can-we-do-with-one-dollar-83-cents-in-Bratislava?' episode. Then there's the Euro-pop-trash soundtrack, including Ca Plane Por Moi, a heavy metal version of 99 Red balloons, My Generation in French, Frankie Goes to Hollywood, The Guinness Boys...

A little guilty trash every now and then does you good, I say. After all, they can't all be four-hour subtitled marathons about watching the paint dry on the canvas of a nude model.... (Watch this space).

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