

Scenario: A 10-Day European Trip

See: underanewsun.com/vat-refunds-save-money/

Don't leave money at the airport

ESTIMATED REFUND — THIS TRIP

~ \$777 USD

~ €650 equivalent · after processor fees

Spend ~\$6,700 across four countries — like getting one of your purchases for free.

For illustrative purposes only. Actual amounts vary.

Spain	~ €130 (~\$153)
France	~ €150 (~\$177)
Switzerland	~ CHF 70 (~\$82)
Italy	~ €310 (~\$365)
Total (est.)	~ \$777 USD

- Physical goods you take home only — never services, hotel stays, or meals
- Processors (Global Blue, Planet) take a cut — expect ~10–15% of purchase price back
- Ask for your refund form at checkout — refunds are never automatic
- Goods must be unused, tagged, and accessible in your luggage at customs



ES SPAIN
First Stop
21% VAT · No minimum threshold
¡Hola, tío / tía!
Custom shoes €500
Jacket €600

SPENT
€1,100 (~\$1,294)

QUALIFIES?
✓ **Both qualify**
No minimum threshold

EST. REFUND
~ €130 (~\$153)

FORM
ERD (Electronic Reimbursement Document)
SYSTEM / WHERE
DIVA kiosks at departure point

WHERE / WHEN DO I VALIDATE?
At your EU exit point: Italy. Your Spanish forms travel with you and are stamped with all other EU forms on departure.

FR FRANCE
The Threshold Trap
20% VAT · Min. €100 per store
Salut, mon ami / amie !
Handbag €700 + Perfume €500
X Scarf €80 (separate store)

SPENT
€1,280 (~\$1,506)

QUALIFIES?
✓ **€1,200 qualifies**
X €80 scarf — below €100 min.

EST. REFUND
~ €150 (~\$177)

FORM
BVE (Bordereau de Vente à l'Exportation)
SYSTEM / WHERE
PABLO kiosks — France only

WHERE / WHEN DO I VALIDATE?
At your EU exit point: Italy. Qualifying French forms travel with you. Italy stamps manually — PABLO kiosks only exist in France.

CH SWITZERLAND
Non-EU — Separate System
8.1% VAT · Min. CHF 300 per receipt
Grüezi, Fründ!
Luxury watch
CHF 1,000

SPENT
CHF 1,000 (~\$1,178)

QUALIFIES?
✓ **Qualifies**
Separate Swiss claim

EST. REFUND
~ CHF 70 (~\$82)

FORM
Ausfuhrdokument (Export Certificate)
SYSTEM / WHERE
Global Blue / Planet — Swiss border

WHERE / WHEN DO I VALIDATE?
■ At the Swiss border — BEFORE leaving Switzerland. Cross without validating and the refund is gone.

IT ITALY
Your EU Exit Point
22% VAT · Min. €70.01 (since Feb 2024)
Ciao, amico / amica!
Gold chain €1,800
Leather jacket €700

SPENT
€2,500 (~\$2,942)

QUALIFIES?
✓ **Both qualify**
Above €70.01 minimum

EST. REFUND
~ €310 (~\$365)

FORM
Fattura (standard invoice + passport)
SYSTEM / WHERE
OTELLO — Agenzia delle Dogane

WHERE / WHEN DO I VALIDATE?
Here — Italy. Your Spanish, French, and Italian forms are all processed together in a single customs stop. Allow generous time — queues vary.

THE EU EXIT POINT RULE

When visiting multiple EU countries, validate all EU tax-free forms together at the customs office of the last EU country you depart from. You cannot process EU forms in an earlier country — validation only happens at your final EU departure point.

■ NON-EU COUNTRIES ARE SEPARATE

Switzerland, Norway, Turkey and others run entirely separate VAT systems. Handle their refunds at their own borders before leaving — they cannot be processed at your EU exit point. Leave without claiming and the refund is gone.