

# SOMME BATTLEFIELD TOURS LTD – MIDDLE EAST CONFLICT 2026 UPDATE

## *Fuel availability when undertaking or contemplating a Self-Drive Tour 2026*

*Hello, I thought it may be helpful to try and summarise my understanding of where we are with regards to the availability of fuel for those due to embark on a self-drive tour of the Somme and/or Ypres battlefields.*

### **Current Fuel Market Status**

At present, there seems to be no significant evidence of fuel shortages or panic buying in the UK, France, or Belgium. While fuel prices have risen globally, this appears to be naturally moderating consumption levels across the continent. We continue to monitor the situation closely, and currently, the supply chains at motorway service stations and local garages remain stable.

### **If fuel availability becomes constrained**

In the event that fuel availability becomes significantly constrained, or if panic buying emerges, clients undertaking a self-drive tour to France and/or Belgium are strongly advised to take reasonable and proportionate precautions. Such precautions should include ensuring vehicles are refuelled at regular intervals and avoiding allowing fuel levels to fall to low levels. Clients may also consider carrying a reserve supply of fuel, subject to applicable legal restrictions.

Whilst the information below is provided in good faith and believed to be correct at the time of writing, it should be noted that it is the sole responsibility of the driver of a vehicle to check and verify the most current regulations regarding fuel allowances, container types, and Eurotunnel safety requirements before setting off on a journey. We strongly recommend checking for updates from the UK Government (GOV.UK), LeShuttle, Health and Safety Executive, the AA, and the RAC prior to departure.

### **General guidance:**

#### Maximum Quantities:

In the UK it would seem that you may store/carry up to 30 litres of fuel in a vehicle, subject to the below provisions:

#### Container Types & Limits (UK):

Plastic Containers: Maximum 10 litres per container.

Metal Containers: Maximum 20 litres per container.

*Total 30 litres – which is most often sufficient to cover 240-300 miles!*

#### Labelling Requirements:

Containers must be specifically designed for fuel and clearly marked with the words "PETROL" and "HIGHLY FLAMMABLE" clearly displayed, as well as the capacity in litres, and an appropriate hazard warning symbol (the flame symbol).

#### France & Belgium

When travelling in France and Belgium, and the EU generally, there is no specific number of litres defined as a single hard limit in the code for private individuals, but the ADR (European Agreement concerning the International Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Road) applies with limits generally similar or higher than the UK, but always subject to local regulations and safety in the use and carriage of fuel containers.

#### General Safety:

Containers must be robust, leak-proof, and secured within the vehicle (typically the boot). Please leave a small amount of "headspace" (vapour space) at the top of the container – do not fill it to the absolute brim.

#### LeShuttle (aka Eurotunnel)

Please see next page screenshot taken from the LeShuttle [website](#), noting that the maximum permissible spare fuel limit is 30 litres if carried as 1 x 10 litres and 1 x 20 litres.

**Below** - LeShuttle spare fuel limits (see LeShuttle [website](#) for full details – and to click their link to ‘more details’).

The maximum safe allowable quantity of fuel (petrol or diesel) that can be carried in portable reserve containers on board the Eurotunnel shuttles, per vehicle, is as follows:

Container	Maximum size of containers	Maximum number of containers	Maximum total limit
Designed for use, fit for purpose <b>plastic</b> container	10 liters	3	<b>NO MORE THAN A TOTAL OF 30 LITRES</b>
Designed for use, fit for purpose <b>metal</b> container	20 liters	1	

### **Cancelling or rescheduling a tour**

We understand that global news can create uncertainty however, speculation regarding future fuel availability or price increases may not generally be considered valid grounds for a tour to be cancelled and a full refund to be given, or a tour to be rescheduled. Clients may wish to bear in mind that choosing to cancel their tour for these reasons may be subject to forfeiture of payments as outlined in our standard Terms and Conditions.

In the event that the UK Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) advises against all but essential travel to France and/or Belgium, you will be offered a choice between a full refund of your booking, or the option to rebook your tour to a future date, the choice being yours.

### **Some other additional tips...**

#### **The "Half-Tank" Rule**

Aim to top up whenever you approach half full. This gives you a good safety buffer if the next stations you encounter are closed or out of your specific fuel type (especially Diesel, which is currently seeing the most tension).

#### **Avoid "Discount" Stations**

Discount and other supermarket fuel outlets tend to be the first to encounter problems. You may have better luck at premium or independent stations along the motorways (*Autoroutes*) or nearby towns. You will pay a few pence more per litre, but they are more likely to have fuel - and may be shorter queues.

#### **Use Real-Time Apps**

Rather than guess where fuel may be found, may be use crowd-sourced data to see which stations are active whilst in France and/or Belgium:

In France: Use the official government site [prix-carburants.gouv.fr](http://prix-carburants.gouv.fr) or apps like Essence/Gasoil Now. They show real-time availability and prices.

In Belgium: Check [www.google.com/search?q=Carbu.com](http://www.google.com/search?q=Carbu.com), which covers both Belgium and Luxembourg.

#### **Be Wary of "Panic Buying" Restrictions**

As of early April 2026, the French government hasn't issued a nationwide ban on filling jerricans, but local Prefects have the power to do so at any time.

If you see a sign saying "*Interdit de remplir des jerricans,*" then just fill your car and not your empty containers.

James Power

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