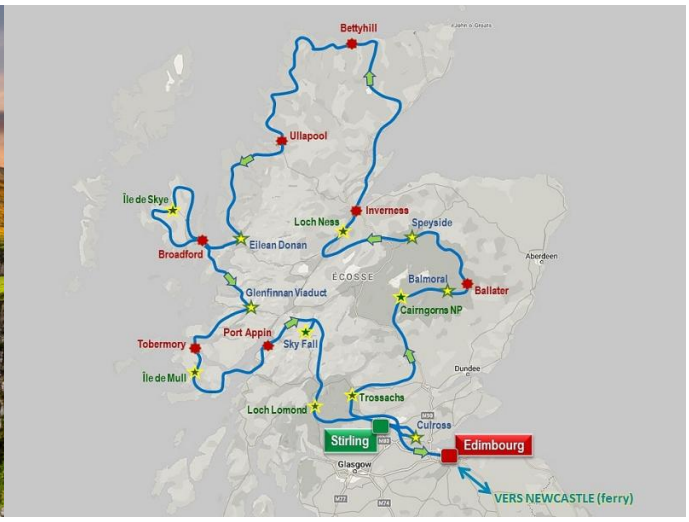
# Scotland

**Tour : motorcycle**

**14 days • 13 nights • 2450 km**

# Castles, Lochs & Scottish Isles






Head to **Scotland** for an extraordinary journey through the land of **Lochs**, **Clans**, **haunted castles**, **Harry Potter** and **single malts**! After an overnight **ferry** crossing between **Amsterdam** and **Newcastle** (GB), set course for **Stirling**, the **Trossachs**, **Cairngorms National Park**, **Speyside**, then **Inverness** and **Loch Ness**. Head into the **Highlands** and onto the **North Coast 500**, before the magnificent **Isle of Skye** and its neighbor **Mull** in the **Inner Hebrides**. After **Sky Fall Rd**, dear to **James Bond**, set course for **Edinburgh**, before returning by **ferry**.




## Day 1

Ride to the port of Amsterdam (Ijmuiden). Boarding on the ferry.

Late afternoon: ferry departure to Newcastle (UK) for an overnight crossing.

Dinner on board not included. Overnight on board in a standard cabin with porthole (twin beds / bunk beds / small double bed, subject to availability).

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## Day 2

Breakfast on board the ferry not included. Disembark in Newcastle.

Ride to Stirling. You cross Northumberland National Park, home to lakes, rivers, forests and green valleys, as well as part of the famous Hadrian's Wall, built by the Romans on the northern frontier of their territory.

The route follows pretty country roads, then reaches Linlithgow, whose castle lies in a magnificent setting. This is where Mary Stuart (future Queen of Scotland) was born and lived (in part). Paid visit.

Arrival in Stirling, west of Edinburgh. The town owes its reputation to the

royal gardens, but above all to its castle (paid visit).

Check-in at the hotel. Overnight in Stirling.

Note : if you prefer to fly to Edinburgh and rent a motorcycle locally, contact us (note: renting a motorcycle in Scotland is very expensive, except for models in the Royal Enfield range).

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## Day 3

Breakfast included. Today's stage offers great surprises along the way.

To start the day, make a small detour to the Fife peninsula to visit the lovely village of Culross. With its cobbled lanes and colorful cottages, Culross is a real gem! Nestled on the north bank of the Forth estuary, it has a unique atmosphere. Wander around Culross Palace, built in the 17th century, and up to the Cistercian abbey at the top of the village.

Then head to the scenic Duke's Pass road in the Trossachs National Park.

The route winds along a few lovely lochs, then climbs to the ridges of Cairngorms National Park (there's skiing here!). Pass through Balmoral, royal retreat of the British royal family since Queen Victoria. Paid visit.

Arrival in Ballater. Check-in at the hotel.

Overnight in Ballater.

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## Day 4

Cross the Cairngorms via the small Lecht ski station, then descend to the Spey Valley, famous among whisky lovers for hosting some of the best distilleries in Scotland!

Optional visit (and tasting, in moderation) at Glenlivet, Glenfiddish, Aberlour, or Cragganmore... You can even visit a cooperage.

After Ballindalloch Castle (and its lovely gardens), stop in Grantown-on-Spey, then head for famous Loch Ness.

Arrival in Inverness, at the mouth of the Ness. It's the 'capital' of the Highlands and the starting point of the famous North Coast 500, the Scottish Route 66...

Check-in at your hotel in the city center.

Overnight in Inverness



## Day 5

After a pretty small road punctuated by a short ferry crossing (not included), you begin your ride on the North Coast 500, considered the Scottish Route 66, even though it has nothing truly comparable with its American cousin...

The route temporarily leaves the NC 500 to dive into a region of remote moorland dotted with brochs, very ancient structures often surrounded by a partially buried settlement, also used as refuges for livestock and people.

The Picts, the Vikings, and later locals used them.

Back on the NC 500, ride to Bettyhill, home to a fascinating little museum dedicated to local culture and its clans.

Check-in at the hotel.

Overnight in Bettyhill (or nearby).



## Day 6

The route is far from straight. Cross Tongue Bay via the beautiful Tongue Causeway, which gives you the feeling of riding on water! After Loch Eriboll, the route takes you to Smoo Cave, a superb cave (paid visit).

You'll pass several gorgeous beaches, including Oldshoremore. A few lovely waterfalls too, before reaching Loch Assynt.

The route includes a short detour to the ruins of Ardvreck Castle on the shores of Loch Assynt. After the viewpoint at Strathy Point with its sea arch and lighthouse, you follow and cross the Kyle of Tongue, a shallow sea loch, then skirt and cross Loch Eriboll. Arrival in the small town of Ullapool, where we suggest riding out to the Rhue Lighthouse.

Check-in at the hotel.

Overnight in Ullapool (or nearby).



## Day 7

The roads are narrow but very beautiful: you'll likely meet a stray sheep or two. Follow Loch Broom and Little Loch Broom, then reach Gruinard and its magnificent bay. In Drumchork, the unusual Russian Arctic Convoy

Museum recalls a little-known WWII epic.

After the beautiful viewpoint at Inverewe, Loch Maree and its islands, you skirt the Beinn Eighe nature reserve, peaking at 1,010 m. The views over Loch Torridon are splendid, before Shieldaig. The road over Applecross is stunning, via the Bealach na Bà pass (626 m).

After a final detour to Eilean Donan Castle, one of the most photogenic in the country, head for the Isle of Skye in the Inner Hebrides: one of the jewels of Scotland!

Check-in at the hotel.

Overnight on the Isle of Skye (Harrapool, Broadford, or Portree, subject to availability).

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## Day 8

Leave early to explore this true gem—Skye: lava cliffs, sandy coves, castles and mountains, plus dream roads for motorcyclists!

Its landscapes have been used as sets for many films: Highlander, King Arthur, Stardust... Portree is the island's main town, very nice with its harbor and colorful houses. To the north, the Trotternish Peninsula features the small Quiraing massif. And the road crossing it from east to west... Sublime (featured photo)!

At the end of the world you'll find a small museum dedicated to island life. Don't miss Dunvegan Castle and its gardens, home to the McLeod family for 800 years.

The route takes you to Neist Point in the far west. The view over the isthmus and the now automated lighthouse is exceptional. For a little whisky tasting, head to the Talisker distillery, producing a peaty single malt straight from the stills!

Overnight on the Isle of Skye (Harrapool, Broadford, or Portree, subject to availability).

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## Day 9

Leave the island via the Armadale ferry (included). Crossing to Mallaig, then head to the Glenfinnan Viaduct, beloved by Harry Potter fans: the famous Hogwarts Express, with Harry, Hermione, Ron & co. on board, crosses it! It gets busy...

The West Highland Railway is still running between Glasgow and Mallaig. A nice idea if you return to the area...

Head for Kilchoan for another ferry crossing to the Isle of Mull (included). Disembark in Tobermory. The small 'capital' of the island (1,000 inhabitants) has an adorable Main Street by the water. You'll find bars, shops, and pretty houses with colorful facades. A great vibe!

Check-in at the hotel.

Overnight in Tobermory (or nearby, on the Isle of Mull, subject to availability).

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## Day 10

Hop on the bike to discover the Isle of Mull, including beautiful Calgary Beach. In front of you lies the Isle of Ulva and some splendid views.

The route follows Loch Na Keal along a lovely, narrow road carved between the hills and the sea. The island's highest peak (when visible) is Ben More at 966 m.

More superb lochs before reaching Duart Castle, perched on its spur overlooking the bay. Ride to Craignure to board the ferry to Oban (included).

Arrival in Oban after a 1-hour crossing. It's a mid-sized town and also the departure point for ferries to the Outer Hebrides (Harris, Lewis...). Ride to Port Appin in Argyle, facing a splendid bay.

Check-in at the hotel. Overnight in Port Appin.

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## Day 11

The route passes through Glencoe, a nice little town that is the gateway to the valley's peaks: a paradise for hikers. The Three Sisters viewpoint is sublime!

The route takes you in the footsteps of James Bond: you're now on the enchanting Skyfall Road, looking for Daniel Craig and Judi Dench along Loch Etive.

Backtrack and pass by the Glencoe ski area, then descend to Loch Lomond. Yes, yes—the one from the famous song! The road follows the loch to Tarbet, where cruises depart.

After some lovely country roads for this last Scottish stage, the route passes through Falkirk, which has a nice town center and a unique boat lift wheel, before reaching Edinburgh.

Check-in at the hotel. Overnight in Edinburgh.



## Day 12

Breakfast included.

With its palaces, cobbled alleys, Georgian buildings and magnificent castle, Edinburgh is truly a charming city!

Just the Royal Mile, the main artery linking the castle to Holyrood Palace, will leave you wide-eyed...

Along its 1,815 m (the famous 'Scottish mile'), you'll find dozens of alleyways ('closes') and inner courtyards ('courts'). Don't hesitate to get lost in one of them to soak up the city's medieval atmosphere. High Street is the most famous section, with St Giles' Cathedral, the Tron Kirk, shops, and a large number of restaurants and pubs.

Paid parking. Dinner and evening at leisure in Edinburgh. Overnight in Edinburgh.



## Day 13

Today's route is partly coastal to reach Newcastle.

Pass by the National Museum of Flight, one of the most fascinating of its kind, notably for the Concorde Experience (you can board the aircraft).

After Dunbar, a nice little harbor town, and the lovely cove of Cove Harbor, arrive in England at Berwick-upon-Tweed, then at the impressive Bamburgh Castle, perched on a rocky ridge facing the sea (paid visit).

Arrival at the ferry terminal in Newcastle.

Late afternoon: overnight crossing to Amsterdam. Dinner on board not included.

Overnight on board in a standard cabin with porthole (twin beds / bunk beds / small double bed, subject to availability). Breakfast included. Arrival in Ijmuiden (Amsterdam) the next morning.

# Accommodation