



NC500 Scotland

7 day Itinerary

Scotland is full of exciting, interesting and historical places to visit so it can be hard to know where to start! So why not start with the NC500. This incredible road trip takes you 500 miles around the north coast of Scotland through some of the most spectacular scenery in the world – there's no wonder they call it the Scotland Route 66.

Starting at Inverness, the clockwise circular route heads west, snaking its way along the rugged coastline, following the northern edge of the Scottish mainland before turning south at John O'Groats and heading down the A9 to complete the loop back to Inverness.



Highlights

- Edinburgh
- Moray Firth
- Inverness
- Dornoch
- Dornoch Beach
- Glenmorangie Distillery
- Wick
- Ben Bhraggie
- Dunrobin Castle
- Castle Sinclair
- John O'Groats
- Dunnet Head
- Durness
- Balnakell Beach
- Smoo Cave
- Kylesku Bridge
- Ullapool
- Applecross
- Victoria Falls
- Beakach na Ba
- Rodue Falls
- Blackwater Suspension Bridge

The NC 500 route





Day 1

Edinburgh Depot to Moray Firth

Location Description:

Total Drive Time: 2 hours 44 mins

Distance: 153 miles

When you pick up your motorhome from our Edinburgh Depot, our friendly team will spend time with you making sure you have all the information you need to set off on your adventure.

There is so much you can do between Edinburgh and Inverness but for your first day, we want to get to the start point of the North Coast 500 as soon as we can. You'll take the M8 out of Edinburgh following the signs for Stirling M90 continuing all the way to Inverness on the A9.

Now you've got you are at your first stop, it's time to set up camp for the night. There are couple of campsites the other side of the Moray Firth, which will locate your motorhome in the right place to see the dolphins the following day.



Places to visit

Explore Elgin

Discover Elgin's past and present as you explore its historic streets. Dating from the early medieval period, Elgin has been a bustling town for centuries, with stories and history around every corner.

Elgin, Moray, IV30 9BX

www.morayspeyside.com/visit/elgin

Nelson's Tower

Built in 1806 as a memorial to Admiral Nelson, the top deck of Nelson's Tower offers stunning panoramic views. To the north you'll see the glittering Moray Firth and the distant hills of Caithness.

6 Clovenside Rd, Forres IV36 3BT

www.forreshheritage.co.uk/nelsons-tower



Local Campsites

Fortrose Bay Campsite



Open April to October
x50 Pitches

One of the best places to view dolphins, in their natural habitat, in Scotland.

Tariff:

From £17.00 Dogs allowed.

Address:

Wester Greengates, Fortrose, Ross-Shire, IV10 8RX

Tel: 01381 21927

Email: fortrosebaycampsite@gmail.com

Findhorn Bay Holiday Park



Open all year round
x50 Pitches

Overlooks the beautiful Findhorn Bay and is a short walk from the Moray Firth.

Tariff:

From £26.00 Dogs allowed.

Address:

The Park, Findhorn, Forres, IV36 3TY

Tel: 01309 690203

Email: reception@findhornbayhp.com

All prices and campsite information is subject to change without notice.



Day 2 Inverness to Dornoch



Location Description:

Total Drive Time: 1 Hour

Distance: 45 miles

Having been behind the wheel of your motorhome the previous afternoon, you might want a slower start to your day.

You can walk to Chanony Point, which is famous for dolphin spotting. This really is an experience not to be missed and crowds of people congregate on the beach to watch this spectacle. The best time to see the Moray Dolphins is approximately 1 hour after low tide.

Why not stop off at Glenmorangie Distillery where you can take a guided tour and perhaps buy a bottle of their single malt to take back home with you.

Dornoch Cathedral sits proudly in the middle of the town square. Around the square there is Dornoch Jail and some lovely little boutique shops and cafes.

No trip to Dornoch would be complete without visiting its amazing beach. Its golden sands stretch as far as the eye can see and it is possible you may see some more dolphins or seals.



Places to visit

Glenmorangie Distillery

Amidst the golden barley fields that border the Royal Burgh of Tain, lies the Glenmorangie Distillery where you will journey through all stages of our whisky creation.

Glenmorangie Distillery, Tain, IV19 1PZ

Website: www.glenmorangie.com

Tel: 01862 892477

Dornoch Cathedral

The Cathedral is a 13th Century Parish Church set in the heart of the Royal Burgh of Dornoch.

Dornoch Cathedral, Church Of Scotland, Dornoch, IV25 3SH

www.dornoch-cathedral.com

Tel: 01862 842263



Local Campsites

Durnoch Caravan & Camping Park



Open March to October
x120 Pitches

Can be found next to Dornoch's award winning beautiful golden beaches.

Tariff:

From £27.00 Dogs allowed.

Address:

Dornoch Caravan & Camping Park, The Links, Dornoch, Sutherland, IV25 3LX.

Tel: 01862 810423

Email: info@dornochcaravans.co.uk

Dornoch Firth Caravan Park



Open all year round
x60 Pitches

Peaceful, family-owned holiday park in the heart of the Scottish Highlands.

Tariff:

From £27.50 Dogs allowed.

Address:

Dornoch Firth Caravan Park, Meikle Ferry South, Tain, Ross-Shire, IV19 1JX.

Tel: 01862 892292

Email: reception@findhornbayhp.com

All prices and campsite information is subject to change without notice.



Day 3 Dornoch to Wick



Location Description:

Total Drive Time: 1 hour 25 minutes

Distance: 63 miles

It's now time to stretch your legs, so drive your motorhome a little bit further up the north coast route to Golspie and park at the Highland Wildcat Trails. Choose whether to shred on your mountain bike or don your hiking boots to climb Ben Bhraggie.

The views from the top are quite spectacular and on a clear day both the West and the East coast of Scotland can be seen.

In the afternoon visit Dunrobin Castle built in the style of a French chateau. You can take a tour inside the castle, wander round the gardens and even take in a falconry display.

On route north to Wick you'll pass through the village of Brora, which also has an amazing beach. Brora Golf Course runs the length of the beach and sheep and highlands cows are regular visitors to the fairways.



Places to visit

Dunrobin Castle

Dunrobin Castle is the most northerly of Scotland's great houses and the largest in the Northern Highlands. Dunrobin Castle is also one of Britain's oldest continuously inhabited houses.

Golspie, Sutherland, Scotland, KW10 6SF

Website: www.dunrobincastle.co.uk

Tel: 01408 633177



Local Campsites

Wick River Campsite



Open June to October
x90 Pitches

Your perfect base from which to explore the NC500 & surrounding area.

Tariff:

From £17.00 Dogs allowed.

Address: Wick River Campsite, Riverside Drive, Wick, Highlands, KW1 5SP

Tel: 07563 388826

Email: info@wickcampsite.co.uk

Inver Caravan Park



Open all year round
x120 Pitches

Inver Caravan Park, Dunbeath, Caithness, which is considered to be 'beyond the highlands.

Tariff:

From £20.00 Dogs allowed.

Address:

Inver Caravan Park, Houstry Road, Dunbeath, Caithness, KW6 6EH

Tel: 01593 731441

Email: rhonagwillim@yahoo.co.uk

All prices and campsite information is subject to change without notice.



Location Description:

Total Drive Time: 2 hour 35 minutes

Distance: 91 miles

Castle Sinclair Girnigoe is a must see if you've stopped at Wick and a definite highlight. Although in a ruined state it is stunning and very atmospheric. As well as the castle itself, there is the option to walk down to either the mini stacks or the beach.

Next stop, John O'Groats, the end of the route north. Get your selfie next to the mileage sign post. For wildlife lovers you may spot birds nesting in the cliffs and if you're lucky you might also spot seals at the bottom of the cliffs.

If you want to tick the most north point of the mainland off your bucket list, then take the 10-minute diversion off the main road to Dunnet Head.

From there head north west to your destination for today, Durness. Take time to enjoy the amazing scenery on route and stop off at points along the north coast for photo opportunities.

Places to visit

Castle Sinclair Girnigoe

What a stunning clifftop setting. Don't forget your camera because the stretch of coastline around the castle is a favourite site for dolphins.

Castle Sinclair Girnigoe, Wick, KW1 4QT

John O'Groats Signpost

The iconic John O'Groats is probably one of the most photographed signs in the UK.

John o' Groats, Wick KW1 4YX





Local Campsites

Dunnet Bay Club Campsite



Open March to November
x120 Pitches

In the dunes right on the edge of a long sandy beach.

Tariff:

From £19.50 Dogs allowed.

Address:

Dunnet Bay Club Campsite, Dunnet, Thurso, Highlands, KW14 8XD

Tel: 01847 821319

Sango Bay



Open all year round
x120 Pitches

Camping on the cliff tops above award winning beaches.

Tariff:

From £15.00 Dogs allowed.

Address:

Sango Bay, Durness, Sutherland, IV27 4PZ

Tel: 07838 381065

Email: stay@sangosands.com

All prices and campsite information is subject to change without notice.



Location Description:

Total Drive Time: 1 hour 55 minutes

Distance: 68 miles

You can walk to Balnakeil beach, an expanse of near white sand and dunes. On your way back, stop in at the Balnakeil Craft Village where local artists and businesses sell unique pieces. There is also a chocolatier, Cocoa Mountain, who not only sell amazing chocolate, but the best hot chocolate we've ever tasted.

No trip to Durness would be complete without a visit to Smoo Cave. The first chamber is enormous and is Britain's largest sea cave. You can access the second chamber via a wooden walkway, where you will see the impressive waterfall cascading in through the opening in the ceiling.

Leaving Durness, you are now heading down the north west coast of Scotland where the scenery becomes more rugged. Stop at the viewpoint to the north of the Kylesku Bridge for some fantastic photo opportunities. Keep your eyes open for stags on the hills nearby. Not long after the Kylesku Bridge you have a choice whether to continue down the A894 straight to Ullapool.



Places to visit

Smoo Cave

Smoo Cave is a large combined sea cave and freshwater cave in Durness in Sutherland, Highland, Scotland.

Smoo Cave, Durness, Sutherland, IV27 4QB

Tel: 01971 511 492

Balnakeil Craft Village

The craft village is currently home to a range of local artists & businesses including a chocolatier, hairdresser, art galleries, paintings & prints, ceramics, woodwork, glass work & more unique crafts.

21E Craft Village, Balnakeil, Durness, Lairg IV27 4PT

Website: www.balnakeilcraftvillage.weebly.com



Local Campsites

Broomfield Holiday Park



Open March to November
x120 Pitches

Set on the banks of Lochbroom in Ullapool, looking out to the Summer Islands and Hebrides.

Tariff:

From £24.00 Dogs allowed.

Address:

Broomfield Holiday Park, West Lane, Ullapool, Scotland, IV26 2UT

Tel: 01854 612020

Email: sross@broomfieldhp.com

Ardmair Point Caravan & Camping Park



Open all year round
x120 Pitches

Renowned for its tranquil setting and breathtaking views across Loch Kanaird and Ben Mhor Coigach mountain ridge.

Tariff:

From £18.00 Dogs allowed.

Address:

Ardmair Point Caravan & Camping Park, Ardmair, Point, Ullapool IV26 2TN

Tel: 01854 612054

Email: park@ardmair.com

All prices and campsite information is subject to change without notice.



Location Description:

Total Drive Time: 2 hour 13 minutes

Distance: 85 miles

From Ullapool continue your route south and then take a right along the A832, stopping at the Corrieshalloch Gorge viewpoint. Continue your route west past Little Loch Broom and Gruinard Beach, where there's campervan parking available if you want to stop for a picnic.

If you enjoy gardens, then you must stop at Inverewe Gardens just before Poolewe. Inverewe is a botanical garden run by the National Trust and has a vast array of flowers, plant and trees.

Once you reach Shildaig, you can either turn right and head along the coast route towards Applecross or continue down to Tornapress and tackle the famous Bealach na Ba route. This is a stunning route, but if you are in any way a nervous driver, do not take this second option. There is a campsite at Applecross, as well as several places to wild camp and the Applecross Inn is worthy of a visit for food or a small refreshment.



Places to visit

Beinn Eighe National Nature Reserve

These woodlands and mountains are home to a range of quintessentially Scottish wildlife such as pine martens, eagles, red deer, crossbills and divers.

A832, Achnasheen IV22 2PD

Website: www.nature.scot

Tel: 01445 760258

Victoria Falls

The water tumbling down the falls comes from Beinn Eighe, the impressive bulk of mountain to the south of the loch.

Victoria Falls, Achnasheen IV22 2HW

Website: www.forestryandland.gov.scot



Local Campsites

Applecross Campsite



Open March to November
x120 Pitches

The campsite itself is handily located on the road that slaloms down towards the village from the mountain pass.

Tariff:

From £15.00 Dogs allowed.

Address:

Applecross, Strathcarron, Ross-Shire, IV54 8ND

Tel: 01520 744268

Email: enquiries@visitapplecross.com

All prices and campsite information is subject to change without notice.



Day 7 Applecross to Inverness and onwards to Edinburgh

Location Description:

Total Drive Time: 4 hour 50 minutes

Distance: 231 miles

We're now on the last leg of the North Coast 500. Like your arrival at Applecross, you have the choice of returning via the Applecross coast route or the Bealach na Ba. Once back on the A896 / A890 continue onwards towards Achnasheen and the A832. This joins up with the route from Kinlochewe.

Not to be missed is a stop at the Rogie Falls just south of Garve. Take a walk down to the Blackwater River and suspension bridge to see these amazing waterfalls surrounded by forest. If you're lucky you may even see wild salmon leaping upstream.

All good things must come to an end, but there's still some tremendous scenery to see on your route back to Edinburgh. To break up your journey, we recommend stopping at the House of Bruar where you can grab a coffee, have a toilet break and browse through the extensive high class highland shops. They have dedicated motorhome parking, but not overnight.



Places to visit

House of Bruar & Falls

Located directly on our doorstep here at the House of Bruar, the Falls of Bruar have been recognised as a spectacular local beauty spot for over 200 years.

Pitagowan, Blair Atholl, Pitlochry PH18 5TW

Website: www.houseofbruar.com

Tel: 01796 483236