







Perched at the most northerly, wind-swept tip of mainland Britain, Caithness and Sutherland might feel like the end of the world, but it's just the start of our epic expedition.

After an overnight stay in the royal residence of the Castle of Mey (listen out for the sounds of a famous piper...), and a quick stop at John O'Groats, you'll head west – joining a stunning stretch

of the North Coast 500 to see what the Grenadier feels like on one of the most scenic driving roads anywhere on earth.

With the peaks of the legendary Munros to your left, and the crashing waves of the northern seas to your right, you'll travel across one of Britain's last great wildernesses. Look out for sea eagles soaring over the water, and look inland for glimpses of the most northern remnants of the Caledonian Pine Forest.

After Eriboll Estate – home to a world-famous conservation, rewilding and regeneration project – we'll turn

south, through Europe's largest expanse of blanket bog. Next stop: the Duke of Westminster's Reay Forest Estate, a place with special importance to INEOS chairman Sir Jim Ratcliffe thanks to its award-winning Atlantic salmon and brown trout conservation project.

Here you'll drive along an exclusive off-road route, with plenty of challenging terrain so you can push the Grenadier to the max. The day's final few miles will take you over the photogenic Kylesku Bridge, arguably the most famous manmade fixture on the NC500, before an



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overnight stop at the Kylesku Hotel.

On day two we'll turn back inland to Alladale Wilderness Reserve – one of the most remote areas in the Highlands – and down to Ross-shire. There, we'll head across the top of the 300-metre-wide Orrin Dam and onto a 17-mile off-road route across the Fairburn & Erchless estates. Finally, we'll drive east towards the mystical Black Isle and into Inverness, the cultural capital of the Highlands.











**Leaving Inverness, our expedition** heads to the heather-clad uplands of Drummossie Muir, site of the Battle of Culloden - the last ever pitched battle fought on British soil, on 16th **April 1746.** 

From here it's southwards to Dava Moor, a bleak expanse of open moorland covering more than 100,000 acres, dotted with the remains of farmhouses and cottages abandoned in the Highland Clearances – the illfated experiment to move whole communities to make way for extensive sheep farming.

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list of film and television productions, including

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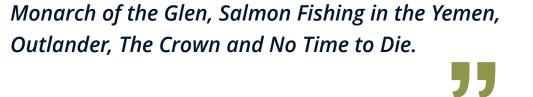
Grenadiers head off-road through the estate, your surroundings may feel oddly familiar. Ardverikie has been the go-to location for a long list of film and television productions, including *Monarch* of the Glen, Salmon Fishing in the Yemen, Outlander, The Crown and No Time to Die.

Next, we'll reach Fort William and follow the A82 up through Glencoe, an imposing valley carved out by glaciers and volcanic explosions. Guarded either side by daunting peaks including the majestic Three Sisters (look for a lone piper in the layby), the road









From the moors we'll continue south; the ancient, snow-capped Cairngorms growing ever larger on the horizon. Entering the National Park we'll travel down the A9, alongside the spectacular River Spey, the world's most famous salmon-fishing river, and into whisky country – look out for distilleries along the way.

At the southwestern corner we'll reach the 45,000-acre Ardverikie Estate, straddling the Cairngorm National Park and the Lochaber region with the Nevis range to the south. As our

winds and rises, finally emerging onto the high Rannoch Moor and nearby Glen Etive, better known as the road from *Skyfall*.

After an overnight stop at the Kingshouse Hotel, on Day 2 we'll venture further south, with fast, sweeping roads carrying us around Loch Fyne, and finally to Loch Lomond, one of the UK's largest expanses of open water. On its shores lies our final location – the village of Luss on the Luss Estate, homeland of Clan Colquhoun for more than 600 years.





# MOVIE MAGIC

Ardverikie is one of the oldest and most famous of Scotland's great estates, and its stories stretch back into the mists of time – this is a place of clan warfare, Caledonian kings, murder, mystery and movie magic.

At the heart of the estate, in the middle of Loch Laggan, is King's Island, named after Fergus the Great – the original King of the Scots who came here from Ireland more than 1,500 years ago. He was said to have feasted on the island after hunting, and you can still see the stone walls of the ancient lodge.

In fact, several early monarchs are said to have been buried on the island. And in more recent royal history, Queen Victoria and Prince Albert spent three weeks at Ardverikie in the summer of 1847 on their very first visit to the Highlands – the Queen even commissioned a painting of herself on the estate to commemorate the occasion.

She wasn't the only one to be drawn here by the picture-perfect landscapes – Ardverikie's beautiful surroundings have made it a top choice as a filming location. The estate has long been a star of the silver screen, with scores of movies, TV shows and commercials being filmed here. So as our expedition meanders along you'll quite literally be driving through a film set, including the settings for many fictional stunts and battle scenes.

Most recently, Ardverikie Castle, the 19th-century baronial home and hunting lodge, starred in Netflix hit *The Crown*, where it doubled as Balmoral Castle – Queen Elizabeth II's much-loved Scottish home. The estate also appeared in *Mrs. Brown* (starring Dame Judy Dench as Queen Victoria), Salmon Fishing in the Yemen (starring Ewan McGregor), The Outlaw King (featuring Chris Pine as Robert the Bruce), Black Widow (the car chase took place along the lochside) and Outlander (where the estate played host to warriors on horseback). Even Bond came to Ardverikie, for high-octane vehicle stunt scenes in No Time to Die.

For behind-the-scenes stories, talk to our expert INEOS Drive Team – many of them helped with the 4x4 driving on these and other productions at Ardverikie, ferrying cast and crew across the very tracks and trails you'll be driving in the Grenadier.

But despite the Hollywood history, nature is the real star of the show here. The River Pattack and Loch Laggan support some of Europe's rarest breeding birds – including ospreys and black-throated divers – and visitors to Ardverikie also regularly observe red squirrels, pine martens and of course golden eagles and hen harriers on the open hill. So keep your eyes peeled, and your binoculars at the ready.

### STAGE 2 POIS

#### SCOTTISH SKIING

Glencoe Mountain Resort is the oldest of Scotland's five alpine ski areas – the first ski tow was installed in 1955. The resort is still actively operating, and in summer months transforms into a downhill mountain bike centre.

#### KINGSHOUSE HOTEL

Our overnight stop is at the Kingshouse Hotel, scene of the Glencoe massacres in 1962, where an estimated 30 members of Clan MacDonald of Glencoe were killed by Scottish government forces, allegedly for failing to pledge allegiance to the new monarchs, William III and Mary.

#### **RIVER SPEY**

Widely considered to be the most famous salmon fishing river in the world, and one of the most important and productive salmon rivers in the UK, the Spey's fast flowing streams and deep holding pools make it ideal for fly fishing (with strict catch-and-release laws in place). Fishing on the River Spey generates around £15m per year and supports more than 400 jobs.

#### LAGGAN BEACH

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As well as being a filming location for various movies and TV shows, the south end of Laggan Loch – on the Ardverikie Estate – is also home to the largest freshwater beach in Britain.

#### **DAVA MOOR**

This empty stretch of moorland has a dark history of social engineering and highland clearances – evidenced by the many abandoned crofts and cottages above Grantown, left behind by residents who were forced from their homes (often emigrating to America) by brutal landlords in the 18th and 19th centuries, to make way for large-scale farming.





From the elegant Schloss Roxburghe hotel, via the majesty of Floors Castle – the largest inhabited castle in Scotland – our expedition traverses the legendarily lawless 'Marches' and 'Debatable Lands', into a lost world including the endless pines and vast peat mires of Kielder Forest.

After a muddy off-road workout the convoy picks up speed on some fast-flowing roads, crossing the border into England (look out for Hadrian's Wall and the silhouette of the Yorkshire Dales in

the distance) – to our overnight stop on the shores of Ullswater in the worldfamous Lake District.

From there, we continue south through England's first – and largest – national park, over the top of Kirkstone Pass and across to Wrynose and Hardknott Passes, described by the BBC as the wildest roads in England. With a gradient of one-in-three (33%), Hardknott also counts as the joint-steepest road in the UK, and back in the day it must have felt like a real slog for the garrison of the

Roman fort at the top.

We then start to drop down, running parallel to Coniston Water, famously the location of many water speed record attempts, including four by Donald Campbell, who met his end having just achieved 320 mph (515 km/h) in 1967. From there it's a short run to the Burlington Slate Mine – the site of some of the most extreme off-roading of the whole trip.

Continuing south, across a few miles of ancient Cavendish lands, our

expedition meets Morecambe Bay where – if the weather and tides permit – a group of Grenadiers may be able to attempt to drive across the Bay itself. Following an old stage-coach route, this ancient crossing – described as the 'most dangerous highway in Britain' – stretches for several miles across the sands at ultra-low tide.

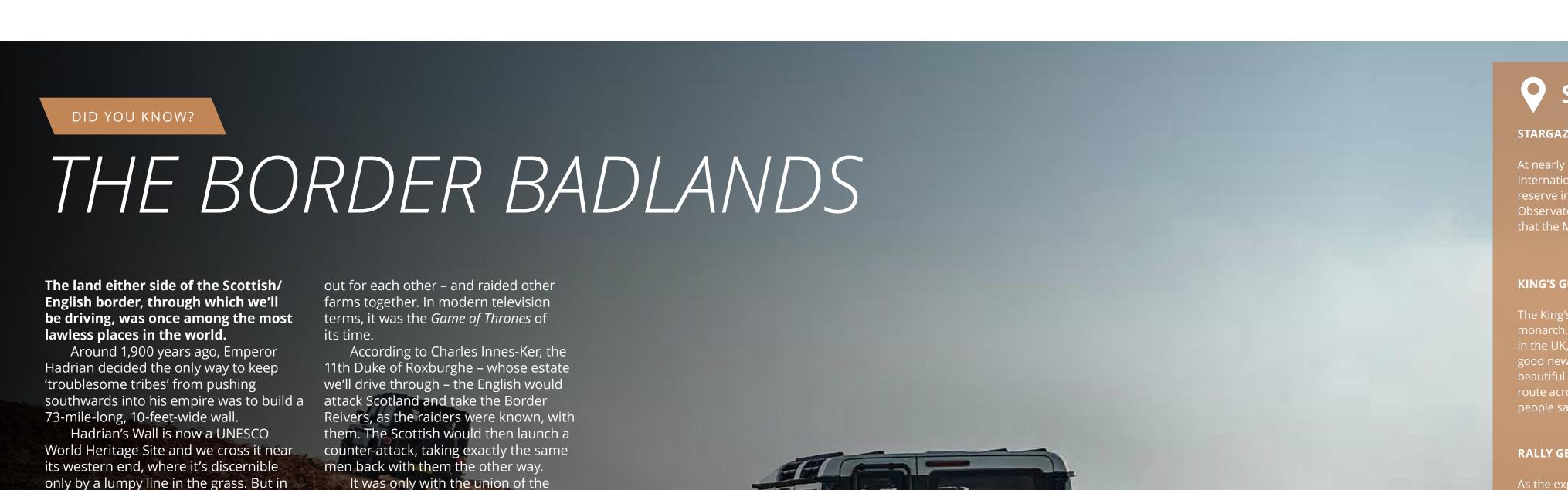












out of more civilised southern lands. In more recent times (by European historical terms, anyway), these wild lands were known as the Marches, or the town of Hawick chose rugby as their Debatable Lands, neither covered by the law of Scotland or England. A viciously violent culture of raiding developed. It was natural for families to band together into clans for protection, and they looked

the hillier centre section, it still stands tall,

with huge forts and camps – a testament

to the efforts required to keep what the

Romans referred to as 'the barbarians'

crowns of Scotland and England that peace came to these lands. Although the Duke has another theory – that it was actually the invention of rugby that finally took the reivers' minds off killing each other, or anyone else within range.

He may be right too. When the small winter sport over football (rugby being considered "manlier and more congenial to the Border nature"), it was a good day for Scottish rugby – Hawick RFC has produced no fewer than 61 players for the national team so far...

### STAGE 2 POIs

#### STARGAZING IN KIELDER FOREST

At nearly 580 square miles, the Northumberland International Dark Sky Park is the second largest dark sky reserve in Europe – and home to the spectacular Kielder Observatory. On a clear night here, the sky can be so dark that the Milky Way can cast shadows on the ground.

#### KING'S GUIDE TO THE SANDS

The King's Guide to the Sands, or when there's a female monarch, the Queen's Guide, is one of the more ancient jobs good news is that you do also get the free use of a rather beautiful 700-year old cottage overlooking the treacherous route across Morecambe Bay that it is your job to guide

#### RALLY GB HISTORY IN KIELDER FOREST

As the expedition passes through Kielder Forest you'll be driving in the tyre tracks of rallying royalty – over many decades the Kielder stages have played host to the world's greatest drivers, from WRC events to the British Rallying Championship. The Forest itself is the largest manmade woodland in England, while Kielder Water is the largest manmade lake in northern Europe.

#### HERDWICK SHEEP

You'll see a very particular breed of sheep, the Herdwick, as you drive through the Lake District. Legend has it that the Vikings brought them with them in the 9th century, and they are certainly among the hardiest of beasts, being able to survive for up to three days completely buried in snow by eating their own rather wiry wool. The lambs are almost completely black, with the female 'yaws' and male 'tups' turning brown and then grey as they get older. Very slowgrowing, rather small and therefore commercially tricky to rear, their meat is highly prized in many London restaurants

#### **BURLINGTON SLATE**

The quarries of Burlington Stone, still run by the greatgreat-great granddaughter of the Earl of Burlington who ounded the company, have provided stone for some of the nost prestigious architectural projects across the world for hundreds of years. Westmorland Green, and the bluer slate of Kirkby Quarry (our 4X4 playground), are hundreds of millions of years old but now are found on buildings from Tower Bridge to the State Bank of Texas.





The Chiltern Hills might only be 30 miles northwest of London, but the ancient chalk hills and beech woods that our expedition drives through, and the landed estates that stretch across them, often feel like they are in an entirely different country, and indeed different age.

Marlow, where we start, sits next to one of the loveliest stretches of the River Thames, and our overnight stop there might have two Michelin Stars, but it hasn't forgotten that it is, at its heart, still an English country pub.

From there, we head just up the road to the first of the English country estates that make the area feel more feudal fiefdom than commuter belt. Stonor Park is one the area, to the Wormsley Estate, which is one of the principal homes of a rather more recently famous family, the Gettys.

Spectacularly beautiful and astonishingly secluded, even by the standards of the area, and principally still a private home, certain areas have been opened up occasionally to the public as the setting for some of the world's most magical operatic performances, and possibly no less magical cricket matches. The bits of the estate that our Grenadiers will take us on remain resolutely private, however.

Our final country estate of the day is just up the road in West Wycombe. This is the largest of the three estates, and the home of Sir Edward Dashwood Bt. It is still a sporting estate, and contains some of the country's

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of the oldest family homes still lived in anywhere in the world today. Now the home of the Honourable William and Lady Ailsa Stonor, it has been lived in by their family for more than 850 years. The Grenadiers have a challenging route to traverse across their deer park, which is all that is left of a huge estate that the Roman Catholic Stonors had to sell to pay the fines levied after Henry VIII turned England into a Protestant country.

From there, we have a short drive on the narrow lanes, which still characterise

top game and clay-shooting. We will sample the latter as we cross the land and find our way out onto the M40, and back into the real world of 2022.

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## THE GRENADIER PUB

Our expedition ends where the Grenadier story began, at a public house on the cobbled backstreets of Belgravia. Wilton Row is a secluded mews where time stands still – tucked away from the hustle and bustle of modern London, it's lined by colourful cottages and shaded by trees as tall as houses.

Halfway down the cul-de-sac stands The Grenadier. Originally built in 1720, it was reputedly used as the officers' mess for the senior infantry regiment of the British Army, and located in a courtyard of their barracks. It was opened to the public in 1818 as The Guardsman – and subsequently renamed in honour of the Grenadier Guards' heroism in the Battle of Waterloo.

Some of the best ideas happen over a beer. And indeed, it was on this very spot – at the bar of the Grenadier – where the idea for a 21st century off-roader was born, when INEOS chairman Sir Jim Ratcliffe decided to create a proper 4x4, built from the ground up. He would name it after the pub.

The Grenadier has long enjoyed a reputation as one of the most haunted hostelries in London, and once featured in a guide to London's Top 10 ghostliest pubs. While its upper floors were used as the officers' mess its cellar was reserved as a drinking and gambling lair for the common soldiers. Here, a young subaltern is said to have been caught cheating at cards, and his comrades punished him with such a savage

beating that he didn't survive to drink his next pint.

In memory of the young soldier – named Cedric – visitors to the pub tack banknotes to the ceiling in an attempt to release him from his debt, although poor Cedric seems forever trapped in these four walls. Although the year he died is not known, it's thought to have been in September, the month when the pub experiences an annual peak in supernatural activity.

Being tucked away in an upmarket district of London, the Grenadier has hosted all sorts of A-list locals. In the past it's said to have been frequented by the Duke of Wellington and even King George IV. Even today it continues to attract royalty – Prince William has been known to pop in for a pint, and even the Queen of Pop herself, Madonna, has visited.

With its brass fittings, oak panelling and pewter tankards, the Grenadier is as traditional as pubs come. The Boot Room is your typical public bar with wellworn barstools, assorted ephemera on the walls, and that ceiling papered with banknotes by punters from all over the world – there's more currency here than a branch of Travelex. The backroom – the Wellington – is rather more plush with guilt-edge mirrors and chestnut red chesterfield-style seating.

And so, as our cross-country expedition comes to an end – and with the pub itself now under INEOS ownership – is there any better place to raise a glass to the Grenadier?



### STAGE 4 POIS

#### **RED KITES**

As you drive through the Chiltern hills and the Wormsley Estate, look out for soaring red kites overhead. Once extinct in England and Scotland, the birds were reintroduced on this very site in 1989 (chosen because of the security already in place for the Getty family), and the population is booming again, with around 1,800 breeding pairs across the UK.

#### **WORMSLEY'S CRICKET PITCH**

It was Mick Jagger who introduced Sir Paul Getty to cricket, when they lived next to each other in London. Little could he have imagined that inviting his neighbour round to watch the test match on TV would lead to the building of what Henry VIII. is widely recognised as the prettiest cricket ground in England – designed by the Head Groundsman of the The Oval.

#### **TUDOR DEER**

Stonor Park is famous for its fallow deer herd, which can often be viewed in the parkland around the house. The herd is one of the oldest in existence – fallow deer have been here since the reign of

#### THE HELLFIRE CAVES

Just across the valley from our off-road routes on the West Wycombe estate is the entrance to the Hellfire Caves, home of the legendarily debauched meetings of the Hellfire Club in the mid-1700s. Founded by Sir Francis Dashwood, the club was widely held to perform spectacularly obscene parodies of religious rites.

#### THE GRENADIER GUARDS

The Grenadier Guards, after which the pub is named, is an elite regiment of the British Army. Dating back to the 1650s, the regiment was permitted to wear 16inch tall bearskin caps after meritorious service at the Battle of Waterloo in 1815. A select group of Grenadier Guards were pallbearers for Her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II's funeral.



