

Land's End to John o' Groats: Cycling the Google Route

In the summer of 2022, I embarked on an epic cycling adventure from Land's End, the southernmost point of England, to John o' Groats, the northernmost point of Scotland. I decided to follow the route suggested by Google Maps, which promised a challenging but rewarding journey through some of the most beautiful and varied landscapes in the UK.



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Route by Royston Wood

★★★★☆ 4.1 out of 5

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I had always dreamed of cycling from Land's End to John o' Groats, but it wasn't until I saw the Google Route that I finally decided to make it a reality. The route promised a mix of challenging climbs, breathtaking descents, and stunning coastal scenery. I knew it would be a tough challenge, but I was determined to complete it.

The Route

The Google Route from Land's End to John o' Groats is 1,062 miles (1,709 kilometers) long and takes most cyclists between 10 and 14 days to complete. The route follows a mix of quiet country roads, busy A-roads, and challenging mountain passes. It also includes several ferry crossings, including one across the Pentland Firth to the Orkney Islands.

The route is divided into 10 stages, each of which is between 70 and 100 miles long. The stages are as follows:

1. **Stage 1:** Land's End to Bude (72 miles)
2. **Stage 2:** Bude to Barnstaple (74 miles)
3. **Stage 3:** Barnstaple to Bristol (75 miles)
4. **Stage 4:** Bristol to Gloucester (75 miles)
5. **Stage 5:** Gloucester to Stafford (80 miles)
6. **Stage 6:** Stafford to Penrith (95 miles)
7. **Stage 7:** Penrith to Gretna Green (75 miles)
8. **Stage 8:** Gretna Green to Glasgow (70 miles)
9. **Stage 9:** Glasgow to Inverness (100 miles)
10. **Stage 10:** Inverness to John o' Groats (85 miles)

I decided to split the route into 12 stages, adding two extra rest days. This allowed me to take my time and enjoy the scenery, as well as to avoid burnout.

The Bike

For this adventure, I used my trusty Surly Long Haul Trucker, a steel touring bike that is known for its durability and comfort. I also invested in a set of Ortlieb panniers to carry my gear. I packed light, but I still had everything I needed for a self-supported tour, including a tent, sleeping bag, and cooking equipment.

The Journey

I started my journey from Land's End on a sunny July morning. I was full of excitement and anticipation, but also a little bit nervous. I had never cycled such a long distance before, and I wasn't sure how my body would hold up. However, I was determined to complete the challenge, and I set off with a smile on my face.

The first few days of the journey were tough. The hills were relentless, and the wind was strong. I was also struggling to get used to the weight of my panniers. However, I persevered, and I slowly started to get into a rhythm. As I cycled through the beautiful countryside, I started to forget about the pain and focus on the scenery. I was amazed by the diversity of the landscape, from the rolling hills of Devon to the rugged mountains of the Scottish Highlands.

One of the highlights of the journey was cycling through the Lake District. The scenery was breathtaking, and I couldn't believe that I was actually cycling through such an iconic landscape. I also enjoyed cycling through the Yorkshire Dales and the Cairngorms National Park. The scenery was stunning, and I felt like I was on top of the world.

Of course, there were also some challenging moments during the journey. I had to battle through strong winds, heavy rain, and even hail. I also had to climb some very steep hills. However, I never gave up, and I always

managed to find the strength to keep going. I was determined to reach John o' Groats, no matter how hard it was.

Finally, after 12 days of cycling, I reached John o' Groats. I was exhausted, but I was also incredibly proud of what I had achieved. I had cycled over 1,000 miles, and I had seen some of the most beautiful scenery in the UK. It was an experience that I will never forget.

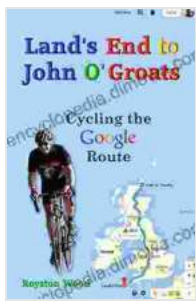
Tips for Cycling the Google Route

If you are planning to cycle the Google Route from Land's End to John o' Groats, here are a few tips:

- **Train for the journey.** Cycling over 1,000 miles is a big challenge, so it is important to train properly. Start by cycling short distances and gradually build up to longer rides. Also, make sure to practice cycling with panniers.
- **Pack light.** The less weight you have to carry, the easier the journey will be. Pack only the essentials, and consider using compression sacks to save space.
- **Be prepared for all types of weather.** The weather in the UK can be unpredictable, so be prepared for everything from sunshine to rain, wind, and even snow.
- **Take your time.** Don't try to rush the journey. Take your time to enjoy the scenery and the experience. I recommend splitting the route into 12 stages, adding two extra rest days.
- **Be flexible.** Things don't always go to plan when you are cycling long distances. Be prepared to change your route or your itinerary if necessary. I had to skip one of the stages due to bad weather.

- **Have fun!** Cycling the Google Route from Land's End to John o' Groats is an amazing experience. Soak up the scenery, enjoy the challenge, and make memories that will last a lifetime.

Cycling from Land's End to John o' Groats was one of the most challenging and rewarding experiences of my life. I saw some of the most beautiful scenery in the UK, and I pushed myself to my limits. I am so glad that I decided to take on this challenge, and I would recommend it to anyone who is looking for an adventure.



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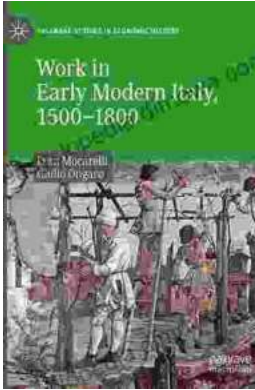
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