

Errol NH Motorcycle Riding Guide

Two scenic day rides from Errol – plus ideas for building Errol into a longer New England motorcycle tour.

Use this guide as a starting point: choose one ride for a shorter stay, follow both days, or add nearby scenic routes to create a longer trip through northern New Hampshire and western Maine.

Traveling by sports car? While this guide was created with motorcycle riders in mind, the scenic road loops and suggested stops can also be enjoyed as a sports-car tour.

DAY 1	DAY 2	TOURING THROUGH
Great North Woods & Dixville Notch Loop	Grafton Notch & Height of Land Loop	Use Errol as an overnight stop between scenic regions

Presented by Errol Motel

132 Main Street, Errol, NH 03579 | 603-482-3256 | errolmotel@gmail.com

Why Base a Motorcycle Ride in Errol?

Errol sits at the meeting point of Routes 16 and 26 in New Hampshire's Great North Woods, putting riders within easy reach of Dixville Notch, the Connecticut River valley, Thirteen Mile Woods, western Maine, Grafton Notch and the Rangeley Lakes region. The result is a rare combination: two very different full scenic loops can begin and end in the same small town.

The routes below are designed as touring itineraries, not timed schedules. Approximate mileage is provided only where it is supported by published scenic-route sources; stops, traffic, construction, weather and riding pace can change the length of the day.

Choose Your Ride

Classic northern New Hampshire	★ Great North Woods & Dixville Notch Loop
Mountains, lakes and two-state riding	★ Grafton Notch & Height of Land Loop
Shorter outing	Ride Route 26 through Dixville Notch and return to Errol
Another shorter outing	Ride Route 16 south through Thirteen Mile Woods and return to Errol
Longer motorcycle tour	Use Errol as the overnight link between White Mountains, western Maine and northern NH routes

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Day 1 – ★ Great North Woods & Dixville Notch Loop

Approximate loop distance: 120 miles. New Hampshire's official Great North Woods scenic-drive route follows essentially this same circuit; starting in Errol simply changes where you enter the loop.

ROUTE FROM ERROL

- Take NH Route 26 west from Errol through Dixville Notch to Colebrook.
- In Colebrook, take US Route 3 south along the Connecticut River corridor toward Groveton.
- In Groveton, take NH Route 110 east through Stark toward Berlin.
- From Berlin, take NH Route 16 north through Milan and Thirteen Mile Woods back to Errol.

This is a true loop: leave Errol through Dixville Notch and return from the south along Route 16.

Why This Ride

The official New Hampshire route highlights the curving, scenic Route 26 section through Dixville Notch, the Connecticut River corridor, Stark and its covered bridge, Berlin, Milan and the forested ride through Thirteen Mile Woods. We recommend it as a first ride because it introduces several landscapes of the Great North Woods without requiring a long out-and-back.

Optional Stops

- Dixville Notch – Mountain scenery and a natural photo stop along Route 26.
- Lake Gloriette / Balsams area – A scenic pause while passing through Dixville.
- Colebrook – A practical stop for fuel, food or a break before heading south.
- Stark Covered Bridge – A classic North Country photo stop on the Route 110 portion of the loop.
- Thirteen Mile Woods – Enjoy the final stretch along the Androscoggin River before returning to Errol.

SHORTEN THE DAY

For a shorter ride, take Route 26 from Errol through Dixville Notch toward Colebrook, turn around when you are ready, and return the same way. You still get the signature mountain section without committing to the full loop.

Day 2 – ★ Grafton Notch & Height of Land Loop

Approximate core loop distance: about 122 miles. A Maine regional planning/touring source documents this Bethel-Rumford-Oquossoc-Errol-Grafton Notch circuit as a 122-mile loop. Starting in Errol simply changes the starting point.

ROUTE FROM ERROL

- Take NH/ME Route 26 east and south from Errol through Upton and Grafton Notch toward Newry/Bethel.
- Take US Route 2 east toward Rumford/Mexico.
- Take ME Route 17 north toward Oquossoc, passing Coos Canyon and the Height of Land area.
- At Oquossoc, take ME Route 16 west toward the New Hampshire line and continue to Errol.

Riders who want to visit the village of Rangeley can add a side trip from Oquossoc on Route 4 and then return to Oquossoc before taking Route 16 west to Errol.

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Why This Ride

This two-state loop combines two officially recognized scenic areas. Route 26 passes through the Grafton Notch scenic byway, while Route 17 is part of the Rangeley Lakes National Scenic Byway. Motorcycle riders have also recommended the Errol-Rangeley-Route 17-Grafton Notch combination for its scenery.

Optional Stops

- Grafton Notch State Park – Mountain scenery and several short roadside nature stops.
- Screw Auger Falls – A popular short stop directly associated with the Grafton Notch byway.
- Coos Canyon – An easy break along the Route 17 portion of the ride.
- Height of Land – The signature Route 17 overlook across Mooselookmeguntic Lake and the surrounding mountains.
- Oquossoc – The junction where Route 17, Route 4 and Route 16 bring the loop back toward Errol.
- Rangeley – An optional side trip for lunch, coffee or time by Rangeley Lake.

SHORTEN OR EXPAND IT

For a shorter day, ride Route 26 from Errol into Grafton Notch and return. To make the day longer, add Rangeley from Oquossoc before returning to Errol on Route 16.

Riding Through? Make Errol Your Overnight Stop

Errol does not have to be the beginning and end of your motorcycle trip. Its location at Routes 16 and 26 makes it a natural overnight stop between several of New Hampshire and western Maine's best-known scenic riding regions. Arrive through one scenic area, spend the night, and leave through another.

Coming From the White Mountains

Riders touring the Kancamagus Highway, Crawford Notch or Pinkham Notch can work north through Gorham and Berlin, then follow Route 16 through Milan and Thirteen Mile Woods to Errol. New Hampshire's official White Mountains scenic-drive guidance specifically connects Route 16 through Pinkham Notch and Gorham with the Great North Woods route.

Coming From Western New Hampshire or Vermont

The Connecticut River Byway carries riders north to Littleton. From there, riders can continue on Route 135 toward Lancaster and Groveton, where they can connect with the Great North Woods route toward Colebrook and Errol.

Coming From Western Maine

From Bethel/Newry, Route 26 runs north through Grafton Notch and directly to Errol. Motorcycle route sites specifically feature this road as part of a Grafton Notch-Errol touring loop, making it a natural arrival route for riders coming from Maine.

Coming From Rangeley

From Oquossoc and the Rangeley Lakes region, Route 16 heads west through remote lake-and-forest country to Errol. Riders can then continue the next day toward Dixville Notch, Colebrook, Berlin or the White Mountains.

A GOOD MULTI-DAY STRATEGY

Instead of trying to ride every northern route in one day, use Errol as the reset point: arrive from the White Mountains or Maine, park for the night, then leave the next morning through Dixville Notch or another scenic direction.

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Rider Planning for the Great North Woods

Fuel & Breaks

Top off before leaving Errol and plan fuel stops before committing to long remote stretches. Services become less frequent once you leave the larger towns, and business hours can change seasonally.

Wildlife

Moose and other wildlife are part of riding in northern New Hampshire and western Maine. Reduce speed and increase scanning in low-light conditions, especially near wetlands and forest edges. Avoid assuming an empty-looking road is wildlife-free.

Weather & Temperature

Conditions can change quickly across mountain notches and higher elevations. Carry layers and rain protection even when the forecast in Errol looks comfortable and expect temperatures to differ from one part of a loop to another.

Cell Service & Navigation

Cell service may be limited in remote portions of the route. Download your route before leaving, carry a backup map or GPS option, and do not rely on having a signal at every junction.

Road Conditions & Construction

Pavement conditions, construction and seasonal maintenance can change from year to year. Check current New Hampshire and Maine road conditions before riding and adjust the route rather than relying on an older ride report.

Daylight & Fatigue

These are scenic touring routes, not timed challenges. Stops at overlooks, waterfalls, fuel and meals can add significant time. Leave enough daylight for the return and shorten the route if weather, fatigue or road conditions make that the better choice.

Crossing State Lines

Day 2 crosses into Maine, so riders should follow the traffic and motorcycle laws that apply in each state.

BEFORE YOU LEAVE

Check weather, road construction, fuel range and your planned stops. Download the route for offline use and tell someone which loop you are riding if you will be traveling alone.

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Make Errol Your Motorcycle Base

Errol Motel is a small, family-owned motel in the center of Errol, positioned at the junction of the roads used in both featured rides. For riders, that means you can finish a full scenic loop, park for the night, and start in a different direction the next morning without relocating your lodging base.

We have on-site parking and welcome motorcycle riders and groups. Restaurants, groceries, fuel and outdoor supplies are nearby, making Errol a practical stopping point whether you are staying for one night or using the motel as the base for several days of riding.

ERROL MOTEL	RESERVATIONS
132 Main Street Errol, New Hampshire 03579	603-482-3256 errolmotel@gmail.com errol-motel.com

Reservations are made directly by phone or email.

Ride the North Country. Rest in Errol.

Riding Resources & Route Sources

New Hampshire Great North Woods Scenic Drive

Official description of the approximately 120-mile Great North Woods circuit used for Day 1.

<https://www.visitnh.gov/things-to-do/scenic-drives/great-north-woods>

New Hampshire White Mountains Scenic Drives

Official route-planning information for the Kancamagus Highway, Crawford Notch, Pinkham Notch and connections north.

<https://www.visitnh.gov/things-to-do/scenic-drives/white-mountains>

Rangeley Lakes National Scenic Byway

Official scenic-byway information for Routes 17 and 4 and the Height of Land overlook.

<https://www.recreation.gov/gateways/13813>

Grafton Notch Scenic Byway

Official Maine scenic-byway information for Route 26 through Grafton Notch toward the New Hampshire border.

<https://nsbfoundation.com/sb/grafon-notch-scenic-byway/>

Rangeley Lakes Scenic Drives

Regional route ideas confirming the Route 17 - Route 2 - Route 26 - Errol - Route 16 circuit.

<https://www.rangeley-maine.com/attractions/rangeley-sightseeing/driving-tours/>

Rider Perspectives

Motorcycle Roads - Grafton Notch / Errol Loop

Motorcycle-specific route reviews and rider feedback for Route 26, Errol and Route 16.

<https://www.motorcycleroads.com/motorcycle-roads/maine/the-grafon-notch-93-mile-woods-loop>

Errol Motel is not affiliated with or endorsed by the organizations listed above. Routes, road conditions, business hours and access can change. Verify current conditions before riding.