

Travel

Photography Primer



Peter Eastway

INTRODUCTION



In many ways, the travel photographer needs to be a master of all disciplines because the craft of travel photography can cross so many borders!

And it has never been easier to take great travel photographs. It's easy to travel to distant locations, easy to stay

in comfortable accommodation, and easy to get well exposed, sharply focused images with the latest cameras.

However, it's never been more difficult to stand out from the crowd!

Everyone is a travel photographer and everyone has a travel album or portfolio to show you. And, boy, are they proud of their photography, even if the photos were only taken with their mobile phone.

Part of the enjoyment of being a travel photographer is sharing

your images with others. Part of the challenge is convincing people your photos are worth looking at!

To get people to look at our travel photographs and enjoy the experience, we have to create images which are a step above the average. We need to search out unusual places, exotic subjects and creative techniques. We need to create images that not only record a travel scene, but impart a feeling or an emotion. What was it like to be there? What did we feel as we stood there, taking the photograph? How can we share that feeling with the people at home?

The challenges of travel photography are more exciting than ever and the opportunities stretch out as far as you're prepared to go.

There are lots of things to consider as travel photographers, so I've put together a series of newsletter posts on travel photography with some of my favourite travel photographs - with the intention of giving you some useful suggestions and hopefully a little inspiration for your own travel photography as well.

Peter Eastway

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PLAN A PROJECT FOR YOUR TRAVEL PHOTOS

One of the main reasons people buy a new camera is to photograph a trip or a holiday – to take travel photos. But after the trip, what will you do with your photos? How will you share them with family, friends and social media?

Most of us will post a few photos on the internet here and there, but if you've taken time and effort to capture great shots and edited them carefully, turn them into a project.

Projects can be as simple as posting a single photo per day, or a set of 5 or 10 photos per trip. And although you can post them 'live' as the trip unfolds, you could also post them after you've

returned as a series for people to follow – social media posts don't have to be live.

Depending on the type of travel you're photographing, you could produce a photo book or a slide show video – the Big Five Wildlife of Africa, Skiing in the Dolomites, Inside the Dzongs of Bhutan.

By creating a project with a theme, your photographs will work better together. There's no need to limit yourself to one project and it's a great idea to start the projects before you leave, so you can work towards an outcome while you're travelling.



This is a grab shot taken as the three women walked along the path, using a wide-angle lens. I must have looked a bit strange running after them as I needed to get quite close. The reason for the photo? The clothing, of course, typical throughout much of Bolivia, certainly in the Altiplano.

WILL YOU SHOOT PERSONAL, DOCUMENTARY OR FINE ART?

We all travel for different reasons. Many of us travel for multiple reasons.

A trip might be a great opportunity to take a break with the family and generate a portfolio of images for camera club competitions or a portfolio on your website.

You don't have to travel with a single purpose, but thinking about what you want to do with your photographs before you travel will help ensure you come home with sufficient photos to complete the project.

For instance, if you wish to create a series of 12 artistic

landscapes, you have a definite goal. No point thinking about this after you return with only 6 suitable candidates.

And even if your primary aim is an artistic portfolio, this doesn't mean you can't be capturing contemporary photos of your trip – the airport, the restaurants, the hotels – that can be turned into a scrapbook travel album.

While it's good to have specific aims in mind, it's equally important to be open to new opportunities that arise, so shoot lots. Lots and lots! You don't have to use all the photos you take, but you can't use photos you didn't take.

F 6.4 @ 1/85 sec, ISO 3200



On an early morning walk before breakfast in Kashan, Iran, we dropped into a bakery to watch the bakers at work. They were delighted to have the attention and one posed for his portrait while the other kept the oven busy. Early morning walks in new locations are a great source of material.

WILL YOU MAKE A VIDEO PRESENTATION?

As social media increasingly favours video presentations, it doesn't mean we have to give up on stills and 'move with the times'.

There are many ways of creating a video presentation or slide show of still images with zooms and pans that can produce a cinematic feeling.

On the other hand, most of our cameras can capture both stills and video, so why not be open to the opportunities that are better captured with video?

For instance, the rise and fall of seals on sea ice under an ocean swell; the cascading action of a massive waterfall hurling itself

over a precipice, or the mesmerising movements of a tribal dance recorded with the hypnotic beat of a drum.

While these can be photographed as well, sound and motion can add another dimension. We're not suggesting you switch from stills to videos, rather think about how the two could merge in a presentation.

And even if you decide not to use the video you capture immediately upon your return, you never know when it can be useful. Sometimes the sound track attached to the video makes a great background or accent for a slide show. You just never know.

F 1.4 @ 10/40 sec, ISO 400



Are your photographs literal depictions of travel or documentary representations? The choice is yours. This is a composite image where the central Baining fire dancer is a straight capture, but the observing dancers either side have been added from other exposures in order to more completely tell the story of the dancing performance. Papua New Guinea.

WRITING A TRAVEL JOURNAL

For many of us, our cameras produce a visual travel journal, so it's understood that not all photographers feel a need for writing up a journal at the end of each day.

However, when it comes to working on your travel project, these notes can be incredibly useful.

The notes don't have to be included in the project. They might just be ideas for framing an exhibition, designing a book or music to search out for an audio visual.

However, travel is more than just the pictures, it's the experience and sometimes things happen on a trip that can't easily be photographed. It could be a story related by an elderly

farmer photographed by the side of the road or a joke one of your fellow travellers shared. Maybe it's a recipe you grabbed from a restaurant, historical details about a location or directions on how to get back to a special location.

Photography is all about images, but to produce something that really attracts attention, often you'll need to do a little more. In the past, it was good enough to take a well exposed photograph, but smart phones have changed all that. Notes and ideas from a travel journal can make your project more interesting and exciting in many different ways.

F 2.8 @ 1/3 sec, ISO 1600



Khiva, Uzbekistan, is a world heritage site that is visited by many locals, giving international tourists the opportunity to photograph the local's own culture. And, as we're all tourists, they generally don't mind the cameras. Still, it pays to be discreet and just let things happen. This moment was photographed in a mausoleum with a very wide-angle lens. I like the thoughtful expressions on the women's faces.

WHY CAPTIONS ARE IMPORTANT FOR TRAVEL PHOTOGRAPHY

While they say a picture is worth 1000 words, as a photographer you don't necessarily have much control over which 1000 words unless you help your viewers along with a caption.

A uncaptioned photograph of an iceberg might suggest Svalbard in the Arctic to some viewers, whereas a caption stating the photograph was taken in Antarctica makes things clear.

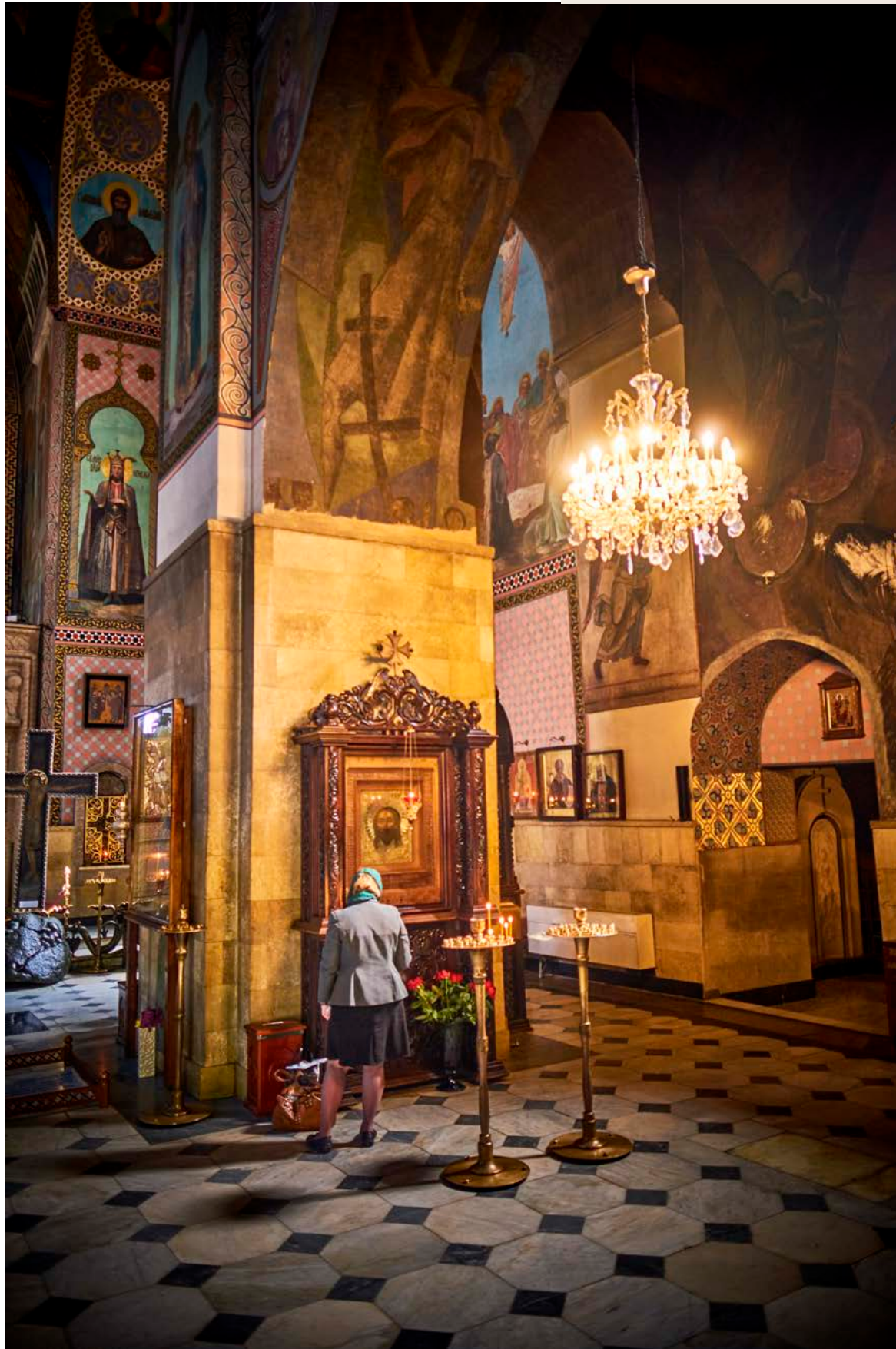
Captions don't have to be extensive. Nor is there much point writing a caption that describes what is clearly seen in the photograph. Rather, a caption might provide location, date and details surrounding the subject.

For instance, you might caption the iceberg as being in Paradise Harbour, Antarctica, 2022. Or a blurred photography of a monk dancing in Bhutan might state just that - Monk dancing in celebration, Jakar Dzong, Bhutan.

Nature photographers often add further information about their subject and location, perhaps describing the behaviour that might not otherwise be apparent.

One suggestion: if you're going to be poetic with descriptive captions, be aware that a poorly phrased caption can do more harm than good. If in doubt, fewer words are better.

F 1.4 @ 1/45 sec, ISO 400



Different countries and establishments have different rules regarding photography. This cathedral in Tbilisi, Georgia permitted photography inside as long as there weren't services being held.

DON'T FORGET TO PHOTOGRAPH YOUR SHIP / CAR / TRAIN

How many times have you travelled and not taken a single photo of your chariot (or car, ship, train, plane etc)?

We photograph a light aircraft on the tarmac either before or after a flight because most of us don't do these flights every day, but what about your rental car or the bus? Or the train at the station, the ship at dock? These photographs might never be artistic masterpieces, but they can add to a travelogue or documentary style project.

If you're doing a road trip, then a photo of the group standing around the car can be a great finishing photo. On a voyage to one of the Poles, almost everyone photographs the ship from the zodiac when they're out on the water, but what about a few photos of the zodiac as well?

And for a longer trip, including your 'chariot' at a number of different locations or in different weather conditions can be a recurring motif throughout a project (think book or slide show).



The Greg Mortimer in Antarctica. A voyage on a ship certainly requires at least one or two photographs of the ship itself. It might not form part of an artistic album, but it certainly should be a part of your travel diary.

DON'T FORGET! MAKE AN EQUIPMENT LIST

As travel photographers, we're reminded not to take too much with us because a heavy camera bag will literally weigh us down and a tired photographer with a sore shoulder or back is less likely to be out in the world taking photographs.

However, if you're going to leave something behind, let's make sure you do it intentionally by creating a list of essential equipment.

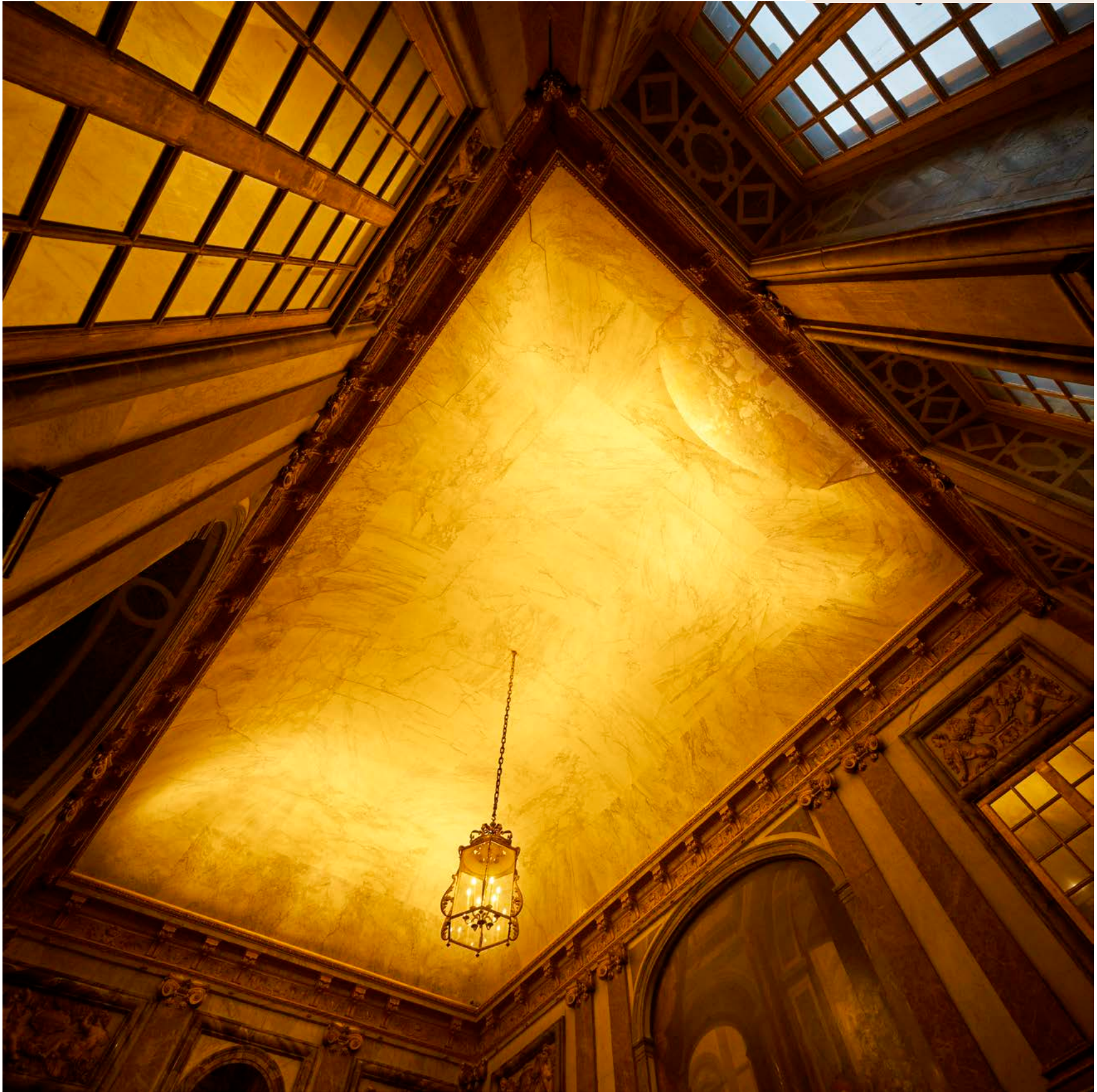
I keep my travel list on my phone in a notepad app. It's nothing fancy, just a list of what I need to take. In fact, the list has more than what I will take on any one trip, but by listing everything I have, I can consider whether I really need it or just want it.

The list is broken into categories – medium format, mirrorless, drone, video, computer, clothing, accessories. In the mirrorless

category, I will include two camera bodies and all my lenses, but when I'm packing, I might just take one body and a selection of lenses. Importantly, this list includes spare storage cards, extra batteries, battery charger, filter holders, filters, tripod, tripod head, tripod feet – everything I might need and that I can't afford to forget!

Before a trip, I put together what I think I'm going to need and then I pull out my list and double check. It's amazing how often I forget sensor cleaning equipment or extra cables for my backup drives. And each trip, I find myself adjusting the list to take into account new gear – or equipment I simply no longer need to carry around.

F 5.0 @ 1/60 sec, ISO 1250



A ceiling? Travel photography is all about sharing things that are different to back home. Someone from Europe mightn't give this ceiling a second glance, while a traveller from Australia where the architecture is generally less ornate may find it very interesting.

CABIN BAGGAGE – DO YOU FEEL LUCKY?

Photographers like to carry their expensive and vulnerable cameras and lenses with them, which means cabin luggage on an airflight. We'd rather not consign any equipment that could be broken into our checked luggage because – well, you've seen how bags can be thrown around as baggage handlers struggle to keep up with a motorised conveyor belt! Sometimes bags land on the trolley with a bump.

Unfortunately, there are weight limits for cabin baggage, depending on the airline and your class of travel. For many of us, it's a 7 kg limit, or perhaps 10 kg. In smaller planes, the weight isn't as much of an issue as the size because the overhead compartments are very small. Before you fly, find out what the limitations are so you can pack accordingly.

Can you get your cabin bag under 7 kg? Or maybe it's 10 kg? Some photographers take much more than this and hope the check-in staff don't weigh their bag, but if they do, what's going to happen? And if your checked luggage has already gone, what will

happen to your heavy cabin bag? In my experience, the camera bag is taken away and carefully (I'm told) put elsewhere on the plane. I haven't had any issues, but I have been very concerned at the time.

These days, I try to keep within the limits. I take a backpack which is smaller than it needs to be so as not to promote interest. For extra gear, I use bubble wrap, foam inserts and clothing and put it in a second backpack which goes into my checked luggage. So far, everything has survived, but it's a risk.

Another option is a hard case with lots of foam padding, checked as a second bag (and potentially extra costs). The equipment will be safe, but when I've put these bags through, the check-in staff have cautioned me about having valuables inside – so that tells me something!

The only safe solution is to travel within the guidelines – unless you feel lucky!

F 9.0 @ 1/640 sec, ISO 50



Careful framing and cropping after capture keep the architectural lines correct., Wendover, Utah, USA. And to ensure the buildings look fully rectilinear, the transform tools in Capture One/Lightroom have been used.

IF YOU COULD ONLY HAVE ONE LENS FOR TRAVEL?

It's a photographer's nightmare having to choose a single lens for a trip. Immediately we think about all the shots we might miss because we don't have a super wide-angle or our long telephoto is left behind. And there's no doubting there will be limitations with just a single lens.

But there are some solutions, if not perfect.

A mid-range zoom is the choice made by most people, because this is their standard workhorse lens and they already own one.

However, before signing off on a 24-105mm lens, why can you only take a single lens? If it's weight and size, then even a 24-105mm f4 zoom might be too large and you may find yourself needing a compact zoom, say an 18-45mm or a 35-70mm.

Compact zooms are fine, image quality is great, but you're

missing out on shallow depth-of-field.

On the other hand, if the reason for a single lens is you can't easily or safely change lenses (working in windy deserts, out on a polar zodiac), or you won't have time (working quickly), then maybe you can stretch the budget and look for a long range zoom lens, like a 28-300mm or even an 18-400mm. Some of these lenses are quite large because they have a generous f2.8 aperture, but others with an f4-6.3 aperture range can be much lighter and smaller. It is these lenses that might solve your problem.

Now, if you need something wider, you can always stitch together several images. And if you need something longer (more telephoto), then you can probably crop, especially if you have a camera with plenty of pixels!

 F 4.0 @ 1/125 sec, ISO 1000



There are always key times in a trip when the elements come together and a successful photographer learns over time to recognise them – and to make the most of them. Don't skimp on shooting – take as many photos as you need to and then some more because you never know when you might capture something special – like the look on these monks' faces in Bhutan.

IF YOU COULD ONLY HAVE TWO LENSES FOR TRAVEL?

Okay, so this question could go on forever, but there are times when travelling that it's not practical to carry a large camera bag full of gear. For instance, on a zodiac you're better off having two cameras and being able to shoot without changing lenses (in case of splashes or inclement weather). Or when you're doing a long trek for a few hours, days or weeks, one camera with a spare lens might be all the space you have or weight you want to carry. What do you take?

For me, I'm looking to capture photographs that are a little different to the standard travel snap. 'Standard' used to mean something shot with a 35-70mm lens, but these days it would include a 28mm wide-angle on a smart phone.

So, if I use focal lengths that are different to the masses, that might give me a head start in capturing something that stands out and I can always crop an image or stitch a few frames together in a pinch.

So, I'm going super wide and super long. For super wide, I use a Fujifilm 8-16mm wide-angle zoom (APS-C size sensor), or I used to

use a Canon 11-24mm (full-frame sensor). At their widest settings, I find these lenses are great for interiors and massive sky shots, while at their longest setting, they aren't too wide for general purpose shooting.

At the other end, my new best friend is a Fujifilm 150-600mm zoom. It's lighter and smaller than my 200mm f2.0, and while not quite as sharp, I can make up for any shortcomings with a little extra sharpening. Using an APS sensor, this lens is the equivalent to a 225-900mm telephoto and I have to say, shooting at 600mm (900mm) is wonderful for both landscape and wildlife.

Downsides? Yes, I confess that 150mm is a little too long for some subjects and so a 70-200mm (full frame) might be a more sensible choice if wildlife isn't a part of your itinerary.

On the other hand, forcing yourself to use longer focal lengths can definitely mean you come home with some different shots and, given you have only two lenses, it doesn't matter which two, you will always be missing out on something!

F 2.8 @ 1/4 sec, ISO 125



Sometimes even the widest lens can't fit everything in, so the solution is to stitch two or more images together. This is one of the many amazing ceilings found in Uzbekistan.

THE THREE BEST LENSES FOR TRAVEL PHOTOGRAPHY

These days, it's not too hard to purchase a camera system that is relatively lightweight and compact, so taking three lenses with you on a trip is easy enough. But which three lenses?

The 'safety' set would be something like a 16-35mm wide-angle zoom, a 24-105mm standard zoom and a 70-200mm or 100-400mm telephoto zoom. This covers all eventualities – or put another way, you're covered for anything that crops up.

So, is that the answer? Is that the perfect outfit? Certainly, there are other lenses you could consider, such as an ultra wide-angle zoom (like an 11-24mm) and a super long telephoto (e.g. a 100-500mm). These lenses were considered if you could only take two lenses with you and you were looking for something different, but these lenses could also add bulk and weight to your kit.

As you add lenses into your arsenal, you also need to consider the weight and what you'll feel like towards the end of a busy day on the move. Generally, the trick for travel photography is to travel

as lightly and compactly as possible.

Another approach is to consider the type of photography you're wanting to shoot on your travels. If you're on a trip to Africa to photograph wildlife, a better set of lenses might be a 16-35mm, a 70-200mm and a 100-150mm. On a trip to Bhutan where you're photographing people, often in dim interiors, a 50mm f1.4 or an 85mm f1.8 might be more useful than the 24-105mm. Sure, you don't have the versatility of a zoom lens and you don't necessarily need a wide aperture for low light (given the high ISO settings we can use), but think about the beautiful bokeh you can achieve in your portraits.

My approach is to work as though I had only two lenses plus one extra. This means an ultra wide-angle zoom and as long a telephoto zoom as I can afford or carry. Then I choose the extra lens based on the special projects I might want to shoot along the way – and often this is a wide aperture 35mm, 50mm or 85mm.

F 1.2 @ 1/250 sec, ISO 200



My 'third' lens is often a 50mm f1.4 or 85mm f1.8. For the Fujifilm X-T4, it was a 56mm f1.2 (similar to an 85mm) and at the widest aperture, the shallow depth-of-field produces a beautiful bokeh. An Iranian gentleman in Isfahan.

THE BEST PORTRAIT LENSES FOR TRAVEL PHOTOGRAPHY

Like so many things in photography, there's no single answer for every eventuality. With travel portraiture, a single lens simply isn't going to cut it. For instance, if you're shooting environmental portraits on the street, then a 24mm or 35mm lens might be needed to allow you to get in close to your subject.

On the other hand, if you're shooting from a distance, a 70-200mm will let you frame closely, while travel portraits with the permission of your subjects can be shot with a 50mm or 85mm, depending on how much background you want.

When shooting portraits with standard zoom lenses, even at f2.8, the depth-of-field isn't that shallow, so my preference is to use a prime lens, like a 50mm f1.4 or an 85mm f1.8. Used wide open (at their maximum aperture), the bokeh is beautiful. Note, you don't need the professional 50mm f1.2 or 85mm f1.4 lenses; while the quality is simply breathtaking, they are also considerably bigger and heavier and perhaps the difference isn't quite sufficient to justify. Packing the right set of lenses is always a matter of compromise.

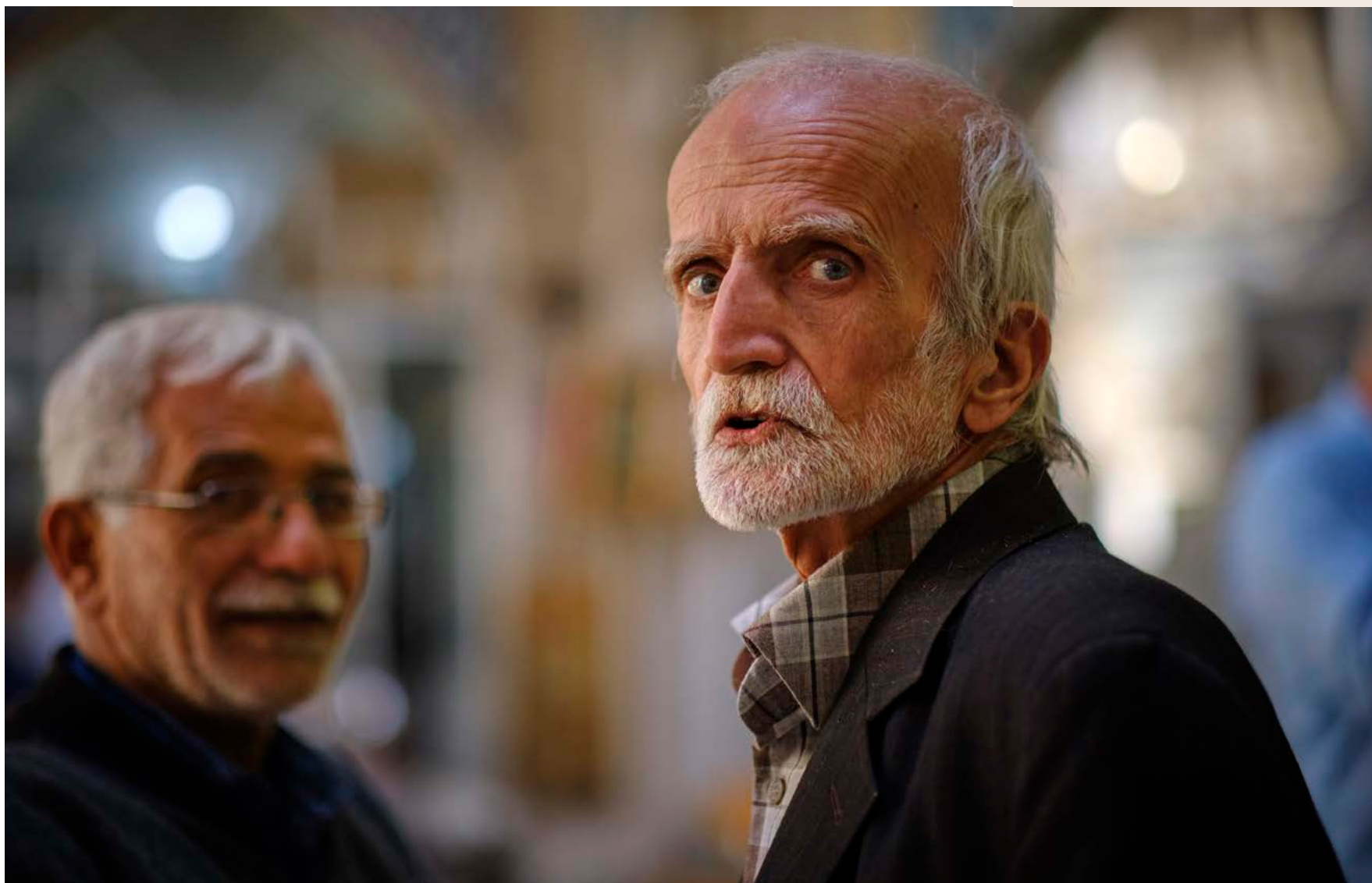
Other portrait primes to consider are the 35mm f1.4 and a 105mm f1.4, although the latter will be a big lens and perhaps a little too heavy.

If you know you're doing a lot of portraiture, don't forget a telephoto with a wide aperture, such as a 200mm f2.0 or a 300mm f2.8. Although the aperture isn't as wide as a 50mm f1.2, for example, in terms of shallow depth-of-field, the longer focal length makes up for it and when you're working in close to your subject, not only can you fill the frame, the background is thrown beautifully out of focus.

However, these are big, heavy lenses so you have to be sure of what you want to shoot – and carry around.

If portraiture is your thing, a kit of three or four prime lenses with portraiture in mind isn't a silly option. You're not going to be completely limited when it comes to shooting other subjects, such as landscapes, while if portraiture is your thing, you're using exactly the lenses you need to.

📷 F 1.4 @ 1/250 sec, ISO 320



You can see how shallow depth-of-field highlights the subject and throws the background out of focus. The further away the background from the subject, the greater the 'out-of-focus' effect (called 'bokeh'). It's a specialised technique requiring wide-aperture prime lenses, but it's true similar results can be achieved in post-production as well. It's up to you!

SHOOTING TRAVEL AND WILDLIFE? WHAT'S THE BEST LENS?

One of the pleasures of using a super-telephoto lens with a wide f2.0, f2.8 or f4 aperture is the super shallow depth-of-field and the bokeh (blurry bits) on the background. While the differential focus effect might not be very obvious when your subject is a fair distance away, the closer your subject, the stronger the distinction becomes.

If you're on an African wildlife safari, shooting from a vehicle, a lot of your subjects will be a long way off and so whether you're using a super-telephoto or one of the new long zooms (like a 100-500mm or 150-600mm), it will make very little difference to the end result.

This assumes both lenses produce sufficiently sharp results and that there's enough light or you can push your ISO up to maintain a sufficiently fast shutter speed. It's only when an animal comes in nice and close to the vehicle that the differential focus effect becomes more strongly evident.

Now, for a wildlife photographer, there's possibly no decision to be made: take the super telephoto lens. In fact, take two super-telephotos like a 300mm f2.8 and a 600mm f4! But for the general photographer combining both travel and wildlife, I'd suggest one of the new zooms is a better bet because it's lighter and it gives you a range of focal lengths.

While an African 4WD might be kitted out with tripod heads on the side of the vehicle, hand holding a super telephoto on the deck of a ship quickly tires you out. Younger readers with gym memberships can ignore this advice.

For the rest of us, if we're shooting all day, every day for a couple of weeks, then a lighter camera outfit will make the travelling that much more enjoyable!

And the good news is that when your wildlife subjects come in close, the zoom lenses will still create a beautiful bokeh effect and you can zoom in a little longer to enhance it if you want to!

 F 5.6 @ 1/2000 sec, ISO 1600



Cruising along the Yacuma River in Bolivia in a narrow canoe, caymen and alligators sprinkled along the banks, a large super-telephoto could have been used, but would have been cumbersome in comparison to the smaller 100-400mm zoom lens used to capture this egret.

RAIN COVERS AND SHOWER CAPS FOR TRAVEL PHOTOGRAPHERS

Whenever I take a rain cover for my camera, it doesn't rain. But if I travel to a desert region, where it hasn't rained for 50 years and I leave my rain covers behind, it pours!

Okay, so maybe I'm exaggerating a little. And maybe we don't need a rain cover to save our cameras from a sprinkle of rain. Most modern cameras have a plethora of dust and moisture seals, as do the lenses, so a little rain is probably more of an inconvenience than a problem. The main thing to remember is to wipe the water droplets off the front lens element (although if you're using a lens hood, you're probably pretty safe).

For more persistent rain, or if you're on a trek or a walk with no chance to dry out a damp camera between shoots, then prevention is indeed better than attempting a cure. A rain cover is a great accessory for travel photography – which invariably includes landscape and wildlife work from time to time. And it

should be light and compact, so not an issue in terms of additional weight.

A look on photo retailer websites will reveal a range of different rain cover designs and sizes. Some of the more elaborate units will certainly do a great job, but as a travel photographer we're probably looking for a small, simple affair. A tube of plastic material with a tie or two will do the job, assuming it is large enough.

And you don't even have to buy a camera cover when a plastic bag (assuming you can still find them) is probably good enough.

Friend Mike Langford put me onto the best free accessory in the universe: the shower cap found in most hotel bathrooms. While both Mike and I might struggle to explain to hotel management why we need a shower cap at all, there's no doubting one makes a great camera cover and I always keep one or two in my camera bag.

📷 F 8.0 @ 1/80 sec, ISO 35



Driving along in a bus in the rain in Iceland, this scene didn't look like much to the local guide who had seen it many times before, but for an Australian it was new and different! On overcast days, the light might be a little flat and dull, but with the right post-production, you can often transform the capture in to a very acceptable travel photo.

CAMERA STRAPS - KEEPING YOUR CAMERA READY FOR TRAVEL

There's not much point keeping your camera tucked safely away in your camera bag or backpack as a travel photographer (unless you're in transit or visiting a place where you're certainly not going to be taking photographs – one can't be too absolute in these days of social media commentary)! If something interesting happens, there's a good chance you'll miss it while you're fumbling around with a zipper and turning the power on.

Assuming as a travel photographer our desire is to capture the best moments that reflect a location's culture and customs, we need to respond quickly while walking the streets, wandering through a market or visiting a landmark.

First thoughts are to have our camera around our neck or over our shoulder. In practice, we're often anticipating action before it happens, so the camera could already be in our hands with the power turned on. The point is, a comfortable camera strap is a good investment.

There are other options, too. A wrist strap for a small and light camera might be even quicker and easier to use, allowing you to keep the camera in your hand all the time. (And a comfortable camera grip assists here as well).

If you have two cameras, a double camera strap or camera harness system can evenly distribute the weight and keep both cameras ready. And there are belt and camera bag quick-release systems that let you keep your camera out of your camera bag and attached to your person, ready for action.

The point to consider when shooting travel, is that the photos that matter are usually very fleeting and if you're not ready, you'll miss the key point of the moment. Keep your camera ready at all times and a comfortable camera strap is a good place to start.

The only exception to this rule is in locations where pick-pockets and street theft are an issue. A camera in your camera bag might be better than no camera at all!

F 5.0 @ 1/550 sec, ISO 200



My camera was already in my hand shooting the courtyard of a mosque in Tashkent, Uzbekistan. Out of the corner of my eye, I could see a person walking from behind, so it was just a matter of waiting for her to walk into the frame. Infrared capture.

DO YOU NEED A TRIPOD FOR TRAVEL PHOTOGRAPHY?

As a landscape photographer, there's a strong argument for using a tripod, but when it comes to travel, the case is not clear cut.

Sure, travel photographers shoot landscapes and probably to get the best possible landscape exposure, a tripod would be useful.

However, if carrying a tripod restricts your movement for capturing other aspects of your trip – such as portraits, interiors, documentary – then maybe your tripod is best left at home.

In a travel context, you can often leave a tripod behind in the hotel or vehicle, so taking one with you on the trip is easy enough. I have a small, lightweight tripod which isn't as stable or as functional as I'd like for landscape photography, but it's much easier to work with when travelling. Maybe the answer is a compromise tripod for your travel work, too.

The other option is to say no tripod. If tripods serve two main purposes, to keep the camera stable and to slow yourself down so you can frame carefully considered compositions, perhaps these purposes are incompatible with travel photography. Certainly

you don't want to be slowing yourself down when shooting in the street and if you're worried about camera shake, use different camera settings. If you're unwilling to change your aperture, you can usually increase your ISO setting without a significant compromise. When you think about it, if you set a fast enough shutter speed, there's no need for a tripod at all.

So, what about shooting landscapes and wildlife with telephoto lenses? When it comes to landscape, just ramp up the ISO setting so you're shooting at 1/1000 second or more and, along with image stabilisation, you should have perfectly sharp images. For wildlife, tripods and gimbals are generally used for the large super-telephotos because they're too heavy to hand-hold for long periods – perhaps you need to compromise with a monopod or take a lighter telephoto zoom instead?

When it comes to equipment, travel photographers often find themselves making the most of what they have brought with them, comfortable in the knowledge that if they had brought everything, they wouldn't be able to carry it!

📷 f11 @ 108 seconds, ISO 50



If part of your style is shooting landscapes with long exposures, to blur the water and clouds, then you will probably need a tripod. Yes, on occasion you can find a fence post or a rock on which to rest your camera, but really, if this is part of your approach to photography, a tripod is essential, even if you don't carry it with you on every outing. Leifdefjorden, Svalbard.

BEST CAMERA SETTINGS FOR TRAVEL PHOTOGRAPHY?

I see a lot of different approaches to camera skills on the many photo tours I do, so if you're comfortable with your approach, there's no need to change. If it's not broken, you don't need to fix it.

Having said that, current cameras offer us many options that make capturing a great exposure that much easier. Personally, I generally use aperture priority exposure control because I want to control depth-of-field as much as possible. This means the camera sets the shutter speed and, by selecting Auto ISO, the sensitivity as well.

In the Auto ISO controls, you can usually set a minimum shutter speed and, depending on what I am shooting, this will vary from 1/30 second to 1/500 second. For a lot of street and documentary work, I find a little subject or camera movement adds to the emotional content of the image, so I'm not looking for absolute sharpness. However, if I do need a blur-free subject (for instance, for wildlife or sport), then I can set a faster shutter speed in the Auto ISO function.

Most cameras have image stabilisation and I keep this turned on. It won't freeze the action of a moving subject, but it will keep my camera still and reduce camera shake. Auto ISO and image stabilisation have really transformed how we shoot indoor and low light travel situations.

For autofocus, I'm usually set to continuous AF as my subjects are generally moving or I am, and face-recognition can be really useful. I'm not afraid to set a high frame rate as well if I think it will help capture the absolutely best nuance of expression or gesture. Sure, it means I have more photos to edit at the end of the shoot, but that's a positive for me if it gets me the result.

Finally, no matter how you have your camera set, chances are something will happen and you want a different set up – quickly! Most cameras have custom function settings. For instance, on my Fujifilm X-H2, have C1 set for animals, C2 for birds, C3 for general travel and humans, C4 for landscape. If something arises, I can quickly set up the camera with the turn of the command dial.

Chances are your camera can be set up in a similar fashion.

 F 11.0 @ 1/4 sec, ISO 35



A lot of travel photography doesn't require specific camera settings, rather the type of travel photograph you're taking (a portrait, a landscape, wildlife) determines the most appropriate set up. Blenheim, South Island, New Zealand.

SHOOTING AERIALS AT KEY TRAVEL LOCATIONS

Many professional travel photographers aim for at least one aerial shoot at each destination, assuming it is in the budget. And if it isn't in the budget (if there is a budget), then a drone can assist (assuming the location permits drones – not all countries or locations do).

If the aim of your travel project is to return with a portfolio of images that depict a variety of perspectives, then getting up into the air is a no brainer. It will make an impact on your audience, whether it's a travel brochure or a travel diary.

It's also a great way to see and understand the location you're shooting, bringing together the relative landmarks and putting them into context. The aerial perspective remains interesting and attractive, despite the fact we're all getting used to aerial photographs and video clips. Until we grow wings, this is likely to remain the case.

So, how do you get up into the air? The answer is simple if

you have a drone and droning is permitted. Just getting up and above important landmarks will give you images with a different perspective.

Without a drone, you could look for a skyscraper or a tall mountain to give you an overview, but this advice isn't particularly helpful in many flat locations.

The remaining option is to hire a plane, helicopter or balloon. And while photographers love shooting with doors off, if you use a floppy lens hood, it's possible to shoot through many aircraft windows and get excellent results. This will possibly keep the price of your flight down and certainly make your pilot happier (I've yet to meet a pilot who loves removing and attaching doors).

If possible, pick a good time of day to shoot. Often this is early morning or late afternoon, but to be honest, even midday photos from the air can look excellent – the weather is probably more a consideration than the time of day.

F 8.0 @ 1/30 sec, ISO 120



Middlehurst Station in New Zealand is a remarkable location, especially when seen from higher viewpoints. In this case, a drone was used early one morning as the sun was rising to give an overview of the station and the Awatere River as one of its borders.

PHOTOGRAPHING TRAVEL FROM THE HIP

The term 'photographing from the hip' describes taking photographs without looking through the viewfinder, perhaps holding the camera down near the hip, getting in close and shooting away.

Over the years, many documentary photographers have used this approach to great effect, especially in situations where a photographer with a camera might not be welcome. Of course, if you did get caught, it could be an awkward situation and it's not recommended unless you can run really quickly!

These days, there aren't many situations where a camera isn't expected or accepted. Everyone has a camera on their phone and everyone is taking selfies, so photography is rarely a problem.

And if things are a little delicate, then perhaps your phone is actually the best camera to use if you're super keen about taking photos, because it's small and not threatening.

Of course, there are also situations where perhaps the polite thing to do as a traveller is to put your camera away and respect your hosts' desire not to be photographed.

But back to shooting from the hip.

Why are these photos so engaging? I think it's because of the unusual angle, sitting down in amongst the crowd and pointing up towards the action. Everyone takes eye-level photos, so a lower angle is different and more exciting. Now add in a wide-angle lens and you can get in close to your subject, filling the frame with the activity and emotion of the scene.

Certainly, a wide-angle lens is what you want to use, preferably with a small aperture so you have lots of depth-of-field. Now you don't have to worry too much about focusing, but you'll still need to practice getting the angle right.

Perhaps this is another occasion when David Oliver can spit chips because I suggest putting your camera onto a high frame rate and 'hosing down' your subject. It's not something Cartier-Bresson ever did, but then again, he never had a camera that shot at 30 frames per second!

Shooting from the hip is an acquired skill, but it can pay dividends by producing some unusual travel photographs, especially in crowded locations like markets, festivals and on the street.

 F 3.2 @ 1/160 sec, ISO 400



I noticed the young monks running between the kitchen and the temple in between classes, so knowing roughly where they were heading, I was able to hold my camera at my hip and pan with them as they ran by. Paro Dzong, Bhutan.

DO YOU NEED FLASH FOR TRAVEL PHOTOGRAPHY?

You don't need flash for travel photography!

Okay, so now I've offended some readers, but I stand by my comment: you don't NEED flash for travel photography, but you may choose to use it.

Modern cameras have such great ISO sensitivity that there are few places you can't shoot without flash. There's always enough light to capture something. Sure, at ISO 6400 you might have a little noise to deal with, but this can be satisfactorily addressed in post-production or, like me, you may actually think the noise adds to the image's appeal.

The advantage of not using flash in a travel situation is that you don't change the ambience with a sterile 6000K burst of blue light! If your aim is to photograph a travel environment as it is, then an on-camera flash is not going to maintain the ambience. Sure, used

on low power, off camera and maybe with a colour gel, flash could fill in the shadows and retain the overall lighting, but generally speaking, the shadow slider in Lightroom etc. can do much the same. Rarely do you need flash.

On the other hand, I've been known to travel with flash and love shooting portraits with it. Creating a formal photography session with one or two flash units and using the locals as subjects is great fun and creates images with a difference.

You can also use flash in daylight, underexposing the background and emphasising your subject, but whether this is the best way to truly capture a travel location is up for debate.

What I like most about not shooting flash when travelling is that it's one less piece of equipment to carry and recharge! And for my approach to travel photography, I can get by without it.

 F 8.0 @ 1/100 sec, ISO 50



On one trip to Bhutan, I took a portable studio flash outfit, including a large umbrella. When the opportunity arose, I'd look for a suitable location and ask permission to photograph the local Bhutanese. I confess, it was much easier to shoot with available light.

USEFUL FILTERS FOR TRAVEL PHOTOGRAPHY

My approach to travel photography is to keep things simple. Not using filters means I can react quickly (not fumble around looking for a filter) and I can also adjust my images in post-production, so I don't find myself needing much in the way of filters for travel photography.

Having said that, a UV or Skylight filter can be helpful as a protective filter. Both the UV and Skylight filters make next to no difference to your exposures and were more a solution for film photographers wanting to avoid too much blue in their exposures.

Many photographers would leave them on their lenses permanently and they have become a *de facto* filter which the camera store will sell you when purchasing a new lens.

So, while I would suggest they won't improve your exposures, the protective attributes are certainly worthwhile as it's much cheaper to replace a scratched filter than a scratched front lens element.

One filter that can do things that post-production can't is the polarising filter. I usually take one with me on trips as it can be very useful for emphasising or reducing reflections. If you're shooting water, a polariser can let you look below the water surface, or through a store window without reflections.

I rarely use a polariser for darkening blue skies, especially not with wide-angle lenses, as the darkening effect is not uniform and you end up with uneven transition effects.

Neutral density filters, on the other hand, are useful. If you use a wide aperture lens, an ND filter can reduce the light so you can still shoot wide open in bright sunshine (normally you have to close your lens down a few stops to ensure correct exposure).

And stronger ND filters can be used along with a tripod to blur the sea and clouds – so there's always a spot for a couple of ND filters in my travel kit.

📷 F 11 @ 1/30 sec, ISO 50



Lake Oberon in Tasmania (and many other lakes in the area) is coloured with tannin, creating a rich red hue. A polarising filter was used to remove the specular reflections from the surface of the water, allowing the viewer to see through to the bottom of the lake.

WHAT IS THE BEST CAMERA DESIGN FOR TRAVEL PHOTOGRAPHY?

Over the years, the one thing I've learned about camera designs and features is not to assume I know it all. While a particular design or feature might be of little interest to me, for another photographer it could be the very reason a camera is purchased.

And travel photography covers such a wide range of different disciplines, it's difficult to know what a camera might need to do, except to say it should do it all.

On this basis, you'd have to say that a mirrorless or DSLR camera is the best fit for travel, being versatile enough to shoot just about every subject, plus accepting an extensive range of lenses and accessories.

When it comes to full-frame sensors, the smaller APS-C size or the Micro Four Thirds, does the sensor size actually matter? While you might prefer a larger sensor (and technically, a larger sensor should perform better than a smaller one), in practice I see very little difference. Not that I am directly comparing one with the

other, rather the travel images I have seen taken with all these sensors can be fantastic. More important is the light and the exposure, so rather than worry what size the sensor is, perhaps the real question is how large and heavy is your camera choice and accompanying lenses?

Younger and fitter photographers can cart around any of the modern camera outfits without a care in the world, while others gaining a few years may prefer a smaller and lighter outfit so they can enjoy the day and not complain about a sore back in the evening.

There is also a small range of all-in-one or compact cameras. The really small ones are ideal for travel when you have severe weight and luggage restrictions, while those with a long zoom lens can be very convenient – although at the risk of betraying my earlier comment, perhaps more suited to a traveller who casually takes photographs, rather than a photographer who is travelling!

 F 5.6 @ 1/250 sec, ISO 2500



If wildlife photography is part of your travel itinerary, then you need to take your usual wildlife kit for sure. Long lenses and perhaps tripods for staking out your subject are essential for wildlife work and, having spent all that money to travel to a location, there seems little point going there without your full camera outfit. Heron, Yacuma River, Bolivia.

SHOULD STILL PHOTOGRAPHERS SHOOT VIDEO FOR TRAVEL?

Stills and video are very different disciplines. I don't think it is possible to do both of them easily, but if you're very comfortable as a stills photographer, I think there's room to investigate video as a way of sharing your stills photos further or better.

As stills photographers, what we probably don't want to do is create a documentary masterpiece of our travels. To match the production values of what we find on YouTube (the good ones) can require a lot of effort and I fear that focusing on a video in this way could take us away from our primary goals of capturing stills.

It could also take us away from enjoying the travelling – travel photography can include cultural and location experiences as well. Don't miss out on these by focusing on too much video.

Having said that, being open to capturing certain times and moments with video makes a lot of sense. Some experiences when filmed have a dimension that is not available as a single capture, so if you can capture these moments on video – a calving glacier, a ceremonial dance, an albatross coming into land – what can you do with this material?

One answer is to create a slide show (e.g. for YouTube) and combine your stills with video footage – and maybe a great sound track or even a voice-over. It doesn't have to replace your prints or your photo albums, but it's another way to share your travel images and your experiences.

And one that I think can be a lot of fun.

 F 5.6 @ 1/1600 sec, ISO 160



Photographing a calving glacier, you might not be able to see any difference between the falling ice and the stationary ice behind. You're better off waiting for the splash for a still photograph – or shoot it with video which makes the action very clear. Lilliehookbreen, Svalbard.

SHOULD YOU SHOOT BOTH STILLS AND VIDEO WHILE TRAVELLING?

Many if not most mirrorless cameras have a separate button next to the shutter release to record video. It makes it incredibly easy to shoot both stills and video in quick succession. And sometimes video records an event or location more appropriately than a still image, so why not?

However, shooting both stills and video creates a compromise. When I photographed a whale swimming around our ship in Antarctica, I shot both stills and video. The silvery body just below the surface of the water looked fantastic as a still, while the swish of the tail breaking the water as the whale dived was best recorded with video.

But it's not always so straightforward. There were other times when I was shooting video that I wished I was able to capture a still, and vice versa. Sure, you can take a video frame and turn it into a still, but the quality is probably not going to match a still.

Do you need all that quality? Possibly not, because if your stills are destined for a travel album, a video still is probably quite good enough.

As I develop a little more experience with video, I have more respect and admiration for cinematographers and video producers and their particular craft. I know the shutter speeds I use are not the best, my focus ebbs and flows and possibly my image isn't as stable as it could be, but on the other hand, the video footage I record adds to the stories I am able to tell.

For me, the video is an adjunct to my still photographs. Stills still rule, but video can lend a hand. And if you practise shooting both, you don't need to make a decision while on location about what you'll do with the material, but if you don't shoot any video, then there's no decision to make anyway.

Give it a go!

📷 F 7.1 @ 1/2000 sec, ISO 1250



This is Mike the Minke. No, not every whale we see is given a name, but Mike hung around the ship on and off for a good 5-6 hours, during which time there were ample opportunities to shoot both stills and video. Not all situations permit this flexibility, rather it's a matter of being open to the opportunities as they present themselves.

WHAT IS THE BEST CAMERA BAG FOR TRAVEL PHOTOGRAPHY?

Is there such a thing as a perfect camera bag for travel photography?

The type of photography you're doing while travelling could have a big impact – the bags needed for Antarctica are quite different to those when taking a tour around Bhutan. So, let's discuss a general purpose bag for general purpose travel photography.

My preference is for a backpack design, mainly because it keeps the weight evenly distributed across my body. I have too many old friends who after a lifetime of professional photography with a camera bag slung over one shoulder are suffering the consequences! Of course, I'll probably suffer different consequences (when I get old), but I find a backpack is the most comfortable design – and comfort when travelling is very important, especially if you're out and about all day for several weeks on end.

A downside of the backpack design can mean you have to take the backpack off and put it down to change lenses or swap

cameras. In a crowded market environment, this might not be easy, while a camera bag slung over the shoulder would make lens changing much simpler.

On the other hand, using a one or two camera strap (like those from Black Rapid) can solve your camera access issues, while some backpack designs can be swung around your waist to give access without having to take them off your body (e.g. MindShift BackLight series from Think Tank).

One thing you shouldn't do is take the largest bag you can find and put in as much gear as you have. A lighter camera bag will keep you shooting longer and let's face it, you will hardly use half the gear in a crowded camera bag anyway (although you're sure to miss the lenses you leave out at some stage).

And when packing your camera bag, leave enough room so you can put away your gear no matter which lenses are attached to the camera body. If you have to change lenses to pack your gear away, your camera bag is too small – certainly for travel.

F 8.0 @ 1/125 sec, ISO 100



The first time I saw this beached shipwreck was on a ferry ride between Longyearbyen and Pyramiden, but we couldn't stop, so I was delighted when on a later Aurora Expeditions voyage around Svalbard, we made a landing here at Skansabukta. It's one of my favourite travel photographs.

DOES THE ISO SETTING MATTER FOR TRAVEL PHOTOGRAPHY?

Camera technology has advanced so much over the last two decades that all cameras can shoot at ISO 100 (or their native setting) up to at least ISO 1600 without there being any discernible difference. And in many cases, you can shoot at ISO 102,000 and still get great shots.

Should you?

At the risk of over-simplifying the issue, ISO doesn't matter. The only thing you need to worry about is capturing the moment and keeping the subject suitably sharp.

Some travel photographers are after a perfect landscape, so ISO is important. Their optimum result will be captured at ISO 100 (or their camera's native setting), but if they are travelling light without a tripod and the light is low, there may be no option but to choose a higher ISO setting. In my opinion, it's better to capture a sharp landscape at ISO 1600 than a blurred one at ISO 100.

The same theory applies to any subject you're photographing where sharp subjects are required, but when it comes to travel, a little movement in your subject might be quite acceptable. You may find yourself turning auto ISO off so you can force a slightly slower shutter speed. Just as a little movement in a travel photograph can add, rather than detract, so can a little ISO noise add to the patina of a travel location.

I photographed Bhutan 10 years ago at ISO 6400. When you looked at the files at 100%, there was lots of noise to behold, but I can't remember a single person telling me the noise was unacceptable.

Strong subject matter and modern cameras have essentially made the ISO question obsolete. Use auto ISO and concentrate on the aperture and shutter speed settings as these will have a more substantial impact on your travel shots.

 F 2.0 @ 1/200 sec, ISO 5000



When you first looked at this photograph, did you think, 'Oh, what a pity the ISO was set so high'? I'm going to guess that of more impact was the subject matter, the strong colour and great window light. Don't worry about ISO settings anymore as any ISO setting will get you great travel shots. Bhutan.

WHAT ARE THE BEST CAMERA SETTINGS FOR TRAVEL PHOTOGRAPHY?

The best camera settings for travel photography are the ones that get the best shot, so let's make this question easier by defining 'travel photography' as being ready for any eventuality while on the street or on the road.

Theoretically, a fully automatic exposure setting is the one to use because the camera takes care of everything. However, consider the aperture and shutter speed. If your subject requires more or less depth-of-field, you may choose to use aperture priority so you can control the depth-of-field.

Similarly, shutter priority would be useful to ensure you have a fast enough shutter speed, but usually you can control this with the Auto ISO setting as well.

So, thinking it through, aperture priority with an Auto ISO setting using a minimum shutter speed might give you the best of all worlds – and is certainly how I shoot most of my travel.

Photographers also ask about the metering mode and I find the matrix or multiple area modes are superior for travel, compared to centre-weighted average or spot metering, especially when you're keeping an eye on the histogram. Things happen quickly with travel, so I have my exposure compensation set to -0.67EV (minus

two thirds) as I would prefer to deal with dark shadows than burnt-out highlights. This works well for me most of the time.

For focusing, I'd set continuous autofocus for moving subjects (or a moving photographer), with a wide-area or subject-based focus setting, depending on my subject.

Face-recognition is great, as long as the AF is recognising the right face in a crowded situation. However, maybe we're better working with a wide-angle lens and an aperture with more depth-of-field to get the shot?

And while I probably have my camera set to single frame advance, when shooting from the hip I'm happy to hose down my subject at 10 or 20 frames per second, to compensate for the volatile situation and the fact I'm framing blind.

I think a lot of photographers take too few exposures and expect to get a winner. My observations of great studio photographers is that they took a lot of photos in a controlled situation to get one right, so I wonder why some of us think we can just take one or two shots in a completely uncontrolled situation and have high expectations!

Take lots of photos!

F 2.8 @ 1/60 sec, ISO 400



This gentlemen surprised us, running out of thick jungle towards us, screaming and waving a spear. It was only when his 5 year old son followed with a smaller spear that we realised it was a performance. Tufi Warrior, Papua New Guinea.

SHOOTING IN THE RAIN FOR TRAVEL PHOTOGRAPHERS

When travelling, we usually desire good weather, but why?

Travel brochures are fully of sunny days, blue sky and a few white, puffy clouds, so perhaps our expectations begin here, but after a while, this weather in all our photos becomes either repetitive or boring.

Rainy days provide different opportunities. If our intention is to return from a trip with photos that make people notice, then perhaps a rainy day portrait or a landscape under stormy clouds is the way to go?

The thing I keep reminding myself is that rainy days don't necessarily rain all the time. There are intervals when the rain stops and the environment looks clean and shiny. And the periods before and after rain often have great light, but since you don't know when this is going to happen (well, not exactly, but an app like Windy gives remarkably good weather forecasts), it's best to

walk out with your camera whether it's raining or not.

When travelling, I always pack both a rain jacket and rain overpants. And while modern cameras are moisture resistant, I usually remember to include a rain cover of some description for my camera (even if it's the shower cap from the last hotel room).

In terms of processing my files, I find two approaches are helpful.

First, I go for less overall contrast, opening up the shadows. In heavy rain you're not going to have much contrast anyway.

Second, I will push the colour saturation slider a little harder, being sure to have an appropriate white balance setting to begin with.

It's true that a rainy day photo might not have the crowd-pleasing impact of a late afternoon sunset, but as part of your travel narrative, one or two can really give your portfolio a lift.

 F 7.1 @ 1/120 sec, ISO 50



Coromandel Peninsula, New Zealand. It was not only pouring, but the wind was pushing the rain onto the front element of the lens, making the shot a little challenging. Fortunately, any droplets weren't noticeable in the final capture with the wide-angle focal length.

SHOOTING AT NIGHT AT KEY TRAVEL LOCATIONS

With so many people travelling and taking photos with their phones, it can be a struggle to create something that is different about the locations you visit. And while phones are now incredibly good at taking photographs in very low light, shooting at night remains one way to be noticed, simply because most travel photos are still taken in the day (and the preference is with bright blue skies).

The main challenge for shooting at night is avoiding large expanses of black – either the sky or shadow areas. Many photographs have wonderful information along the horizon line (e.g. a city skyline), but above and below are often without purpose.

One suggestion is to crop out unwanted black areas. Note, I'm not suggesting you remove all the blacks as we definitely want our viewers to know the photo is taken at night.

With this in mind, look for the light sources in the foreground. If shooting a skyline full of colour, put a courtyard or an old car or something in the foreground, just as you would when shooting in

daylight.

Another solution is to cheat, just a little. Rather than shooting in the dead of night, shoot either an hour or so after sunset and an hour or so before sunrise. To the eye, the sky can look black, but to our cameras it can be recorded as a wonderfully deep blue.

If you have a lot of sky, clouds can assist. And if your travel destination is experiencing inclement weather, shooting at night is a great solution because invariably the night lights are reflected on wet roads and puddles.

Do you need a tripod? Modern phones allow you to hand-hold relatively long exposures with image stabilisation and high ISO settings. Modern cameras do the same and so you can probably shoot without a tripod.

However, if you are wanting to make a print or feature the photo in a book, then a lower ISO setting may give you a superior technical result, or perhaps you'll be happy with the wonderful noise reduction algorithms now available in Lightroom and Topaz.

The choice is yours!

F 4.0 @ 1/30 sec, ISO 3200



This location is best seen at night when the blue mosque is lit with blue lights. Shooting well after sunset, there's still a hint of light in the sky so it isn't pitch black, but a rich blue to match the mosque itself. Note how the foreground is 'neutral' in colour balance, emphasising the colours that leaves the viewer exclaiming, "It really is blue". Blue Mosque, Yazd, Iran.

BE AWARE OF SOCIAL ISSUES WHEN TRAVELLING

When travelling, it can be tempting to photograph street life and the people who live there. There's probably no trouble photographing someone shopping in a market, but what about a homeless person or a beggar?

Photographs of homeless people have historically been very popular in photography circles, so much so they are almost cliché today. Invariably the attraction for the photographer is the well-worn clothing or the character lines in the face. Even so, I would find it difficult to photograph someone on the street where I live without first asking permission. I'd feel like I was taking advantage of them if I stole a sneaky shot – but that is a purely personal viewpoint.

Of course, it's not just about asking permission – there are also issues of trust and exploitation to consider. Are you genuinely starting a conversation because you're interested in the person, or do you just want to take a photo? And if so, does it really matter, given most social interactions are invariably shallow (have a nice day)?

So why is it different when we're overseas in a less wealthy country? As tourists (or travellers), we're looking at the creased clothes and lined faces as photographic subjects, but often we're oblivious (or choose to be) to the social issues these scenes

represent. Does this mean we shouldn't photograph people in the street?

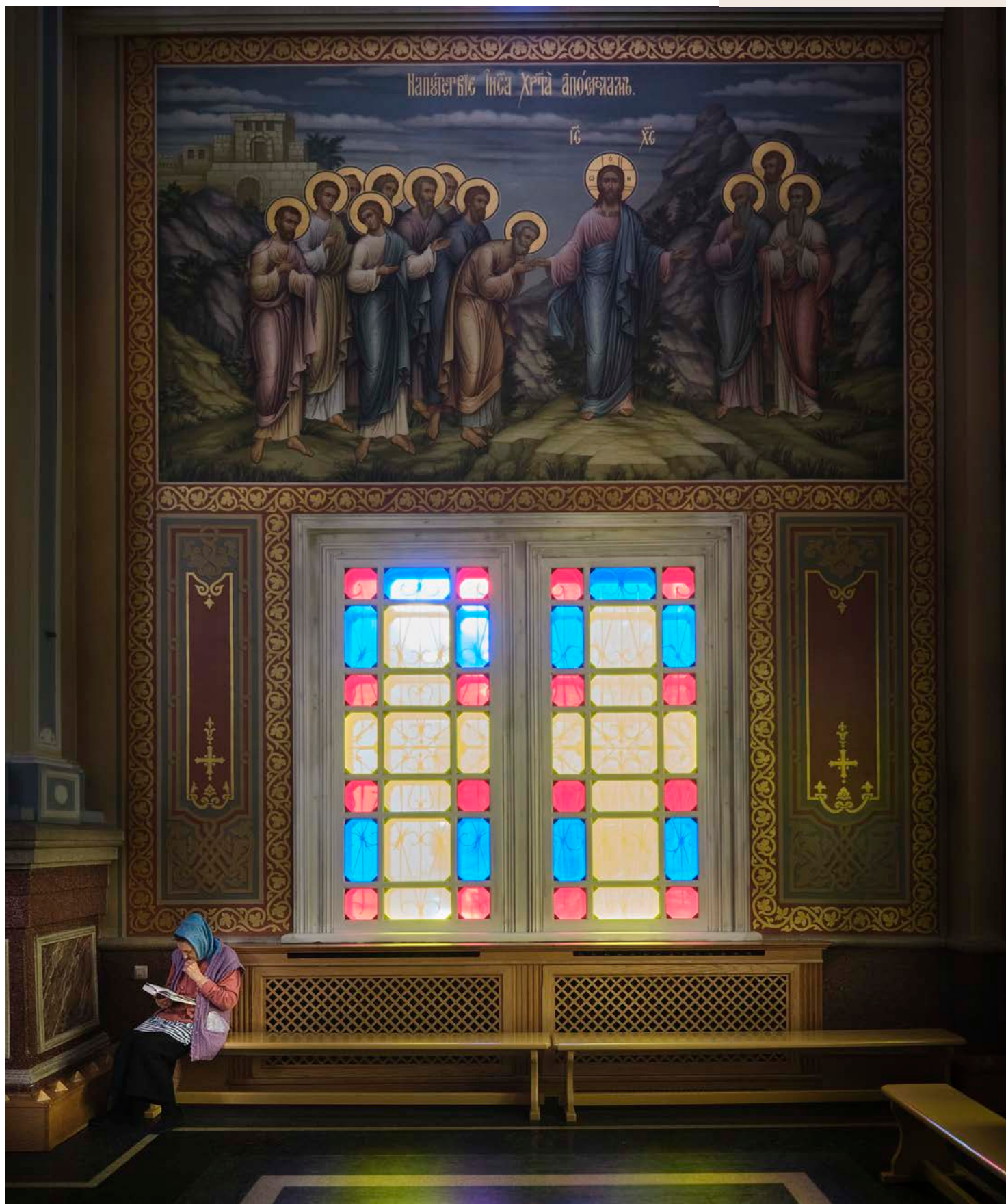
My experience is that some people are happy to be photographed, others are not. That's your first clue. And when I have engaged with a positive subject, they have no expectations of a lifelong relationship, but seem genuinely happy to receive the attention and have a conversation.

The 'thought police' will criticise me for exploiting my subjects – a nosey Westerner who is (comparatively) wealthy pretending to engage with a poor local, struggling to exist from day to day. I can't argue that fact, but I think that is the case whether or not I take the photograph.

Years ago I was invited to photograph in a small community. I was given strict instructions by the 'minders' of what I could and couldn't do, but once I was there, what I discovered was that these people were no different to me and if I just used the manners my parents taught me, which includes respecting others, the interaction became fairly straightforward.

I find this a good approach for photographing people everywhere.

And no matter who you photograph, there will always be someone on social media saying you shouldn't!



The subject was not aware of me walking past with my camera. Do I feel guilty? Almaty, Kazakhstan is a well-to-do city and while this woman might not be super wealthy, I felt that under more open circumstances, she would be bemused rather than worried.

OVERCOME SHYNESS & PHOTOGRAPH YOUR TRAVEL GUIDES

Are you intimidated a little when it comes to photographing people on your travels? Sometimes it's easier to photograph strangers in a foreign land than it is at home, but even so, many photographers are a little timid when it comes to pointing their camera at the locals.

First of all, they don't want to offend anyone. Second, they don't want the person to react badly! And third, they are possibly just a little shy!

If some of this sits with you, you're not alone. So, how do you get around it?

When travelling, you're always interacting with some of the locals, even if it's a travel guide on a bus tour. It's the travel guide's job to make you happy, so if taking his or her photo will make you happy, ask!

Travel guides are also excellent for introductions. If you tell your travel guide you'd like to take some portraits during the trip, a good guide will make this happen.

I tell our guides to explain to the locals that he or she is travelling with some crazy people who simply photograph everything and would they mind being subjects! A little humour goes a long way.

A thank you is very important. And if you get a rejection, no trouble - move on. There are lots of potential subjects.

In addition to a travel guide, there are other locals you'll come in contact with, such as the taxi driver and the shopkeeper. Once you've paid these people some money (or you're likely to), contact has been made. So, point to your camera and smile and see what happens! All they can do is say no.

F 2.8 @ 1/250 sec, ISO 100



While stopping for lunch, I noticed this street-side vendor selling small flutes. Yes, I purchased one, but it was my guide who made the introduction and asked permission to take the photograph. Hamedan, Iran.

PHOTOGRAPHING PEOPLE YOU MEET WHILE TRAVELLING

Perhaps the best aspect of travelling with a camera is photographing the people you see and meet. Different faces, different clothing, different customs – there is a wealth of material for us to capture.

When it comes to photographing people, there are many traditions we can follow. We all know about Henri Cartier-Bresson and how he photographed as a silent observer. Richard Avedon used a more formal approach, inviting his subjects to pose on an improvised set. There's no right or wrong, as long as we are respectful.

My suggestion is to consider how you would feel if you were at home, going for a run or to pick up a coffee, and you saw a tourist sneaking a few photos of you with their phone (or camera). Or you caught someone across the road with a telephoto lens, photographing you as you put out the rubbish.

Even if a tourist walked up and started talking to you, how would you feel if they then asked if they could take your photograph?

Yet this is exactly what most travel photographers do on a regular basis and all I can do is thank the world's population for being so (generally) very accommodating!

So, what should we do?

I think the answer is to play it by ear. There will be occasions when life is busy and you can take candid photographs without being noticed. We all have our special techniques for pretending not to be taking a photograph, or shooting from the hip as we walk by.

Then there will be other situations where our presence is quite obvious and our subjects not so tolerant – are we better off putting our cameras away and just enjoying the experience?

We can also smile and ask permission to take a photograph. The answer you receive can depend on how you build up to your request. How would you react if someone walked up to you in the street and asked to take your photograph? Compare this with someone asking you for directions, having a conversation and then asking you?

And the fact you can't speak their language can often be a benefit as facial expressions and gestures can communicate all that is needed.

We don't have to photograph every person we meet. We don't have to photograph every great character we see, just because we think they would make a great photograph.

There will always be other great portraits around the corner.

F 9.0 @ 1/52 sec, ISO 125



In Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, we were visiting a mosque where a wedding had just taken place and the bride and groom were being photographed, so we asked permission to do the same – with the encouragement of many of the wedding guests. It was an appropriate time and place to take our own photographs.

SHOULD YOU PHOTOGRAPH CHILDREN WHILE TRAVELLING?

Yes! Invariably when we're walking around with a camera, children from all countries and all walks of life will smile and ham it up. Not every child, of course, but lots do, especially when they're in a group, up to mischief and having fun.

Children are what life is all about. They are a point of commonality, no matter whether you're in your early 20s or your late 80s. However, be aware of the situation and whether your behaviour (taking photos) is appropriate. There will be situations when it's not cool to take photos of kids (e.g. at a funeral), so be respectful.

There are many countries where it is frowned upon to photograph the adults, but they are more than happy to push their kids in front of the camera. In Australia where I live, photographing children became a problem 20 years ago because of fears of child exploitation. I can remember photographing my own daughter at her school athletics and being told off by another parent because I looked suspicious with my 300mm f2.8 lens. I introduced myself to her (she was an old schoolfriend's mother) and smoothed the waters, but it indicated to me how poisoned

our society has become because of a fear of strangers.

Yes, we should be aware of strangers, but we're adults and 99.9% of strangers are just like us – nice people. And yes, we should teach our children about 'stranger danger' – or karate!

Fortunately, with everyone using a phone to take photos, people aren't so worried about photographers these days. They probably still associate a bigger camera with being a professional and perhaps they are now worried about you making money out of a photo of them or their children (fat chance)!

But back to travelling. In many situations, I like to stand out as a tourist because people don't see me as a threat. And a tourist with a camera, well, people can choose to interact with me or not.

When it comes to kids running up and jumping in front of the camera, go with the flow, enjoy it.

When you see a small kid enjoying an ice cream, treat him or her with the same respect as an adult and, if agreeable, take a photo.

Photographs of kids in foreign lands can be a great highlight in your photo album or slide presentation.

F 2.8 @ 1/250 sec, ISO 800



During festivals in Bhutan, while the formalities are happening on the stage or out on the quadrangle, local children run amok behind the scenes, scurrying around the dzong (monastery) and visiting rooms and places that are not accessible on a normal day. These youngsters were very happy to be photographed.

SHOULD YOU PAY TO TAKE PHOTOGRAPHS OF PEOPLE?

There have been many wonderful debates about the ethics of paying people in foreign lands to take their portrait.

Some photographers think it is quite okay, others think making a payment develops an expectation in the locals from photographers who follow. Somehow, I think people in our modern age, wherever they live in the world, are savvy enough to know there's a value in being photographed.

Some subjects will give you that value freely and without any expectations. Others will ask to be paid for their involvement. And still others simply don't want to be photographed – so they are easy to deal with!

When we look at the history of photography and the travel genre, the idea was to capture authenticity. Somehow, they argued, the act of paying a local to be in your photograph interfered with this authenticity, despite the fact many *National Geographic* photographers have been paying people to be in their photos for decades!

I'm not in agreement with the authenticity argument, or it

being unethical. If someone saw me in the street and asked to take my photograph, I probably wouldn't charge to pose for a few seconds. On the other hand, if they wanted to spend half an hour with me, then it would be reasonable for them to offer to pay. Why is it any different for the people we photograph?

And if we are travelling in country that's not particularly wealthy and a subject asks for a couple of dollars, why wouldn't we pay? In fact, if this is the situation, surely as guests in their land we should keep some change ready to make a payment if required?

However, it's true that if you pay for a portrait, then your subject will be posing for you and you won't get a candid shot. There's no doubt you will end up with a different type of photograph, but is that a bad thing?

In terms of authenticity, the question isn't one of commerce (whether you pay or not), it's whether the photograph is posed or unposed. That will make a big difference to the type of portraits you make, but it needn't affect the authenticity of the photographs you're capturing.

F 2.0 @ 1/400 sec, ISO 200



When I first visited Bhutan, I was told people didn't expect to be paid to have their photographs taken. And this lady was about the third person I photographed, but every time I pointed my camera at her, she dropped her hands. She did want to be paid, and once I had, the photography side of things was easy!

IS IT OKAY TO PHOTOGRAPH PEOPLE FROM A DISTANCE?

Did you hear about the astronaut taking photos of Earth from outer space and complaining his shot was ruined because someone in New York moved?

When we photograph people from a distance, it's not that it's right or wrong, rather it creates a different story. Many of the famous travel photographers we follow used a close-up style, employing a wide-angle lens and getting very chummy with their subjects. Or they might have the confidence to walk up to anyone in the street and ask to take their photo – a tight head-and-shoulders.

The stories that are inferred by these angles are quite different to a lone figure walking across a sand dune, but not all of us are confident about photographing people.

If this is you and you're simply not cut out to interact with people on a one-to-one basis or you're worried about what your subjects might think, say or do, then if you want to include people in your travel photos, you have no option but to shoot them from

a distance. And it's more than okay!

Of course, if you have a fear of interacting with your subject, then don't choose a single person who is looking straight at you! You may be noticed and an interaction could follow!

Shooting people in a crowded market or street is a lot of fun. I like using a long telephoto lens (like a 300mm f2.8 or a 150-600mm) and sitting down somewhere quietly. I flip the LCD screen out and look down. Another photographer would know I'm shooting, but the average market visitor won't give you another thought.

The longer the lens, the easier it is to get a tight portrait without invading your subject's personal space. And one of the advantages of shooting long is that with a wide open aperture, it's quite easy to throw the background out of focus, highlighting your subject.

So, definitely nothing wrong with photographing people from a distance. And if you do get caught, you've got a head start for the getaway!

F 6.4 @ 1/500 sec, ISO 200



A 400mm lens (equivalent to a 600mm on a full frame sensor) was used to capture this simple portrait in Bolivia. Although the midday sunshine was not optimal, by ensuring the exposure is correct, the result is (I think) quite acceptable.

USING PEOPLE FOR PERSPECTIVE AND CONTEXT IN TRAVEL

How big is the Taj Mahal? How tall are the Rocky Mountains? How small is a Lesser Hamelins Red Breasted hummingbird (and does it even exist)?

Whether we're travelling or not, subjects photographed in isolation can be ambiguous for viewers to read and they can easily be left unsure of a subject's size – and sometimes photographs with this ambiguity are exactly what we want.

On the other hand, placing a subject of a known size within the frame gives our viewers a clearer indication of scale. The subject puts everything into perspective – sort of!

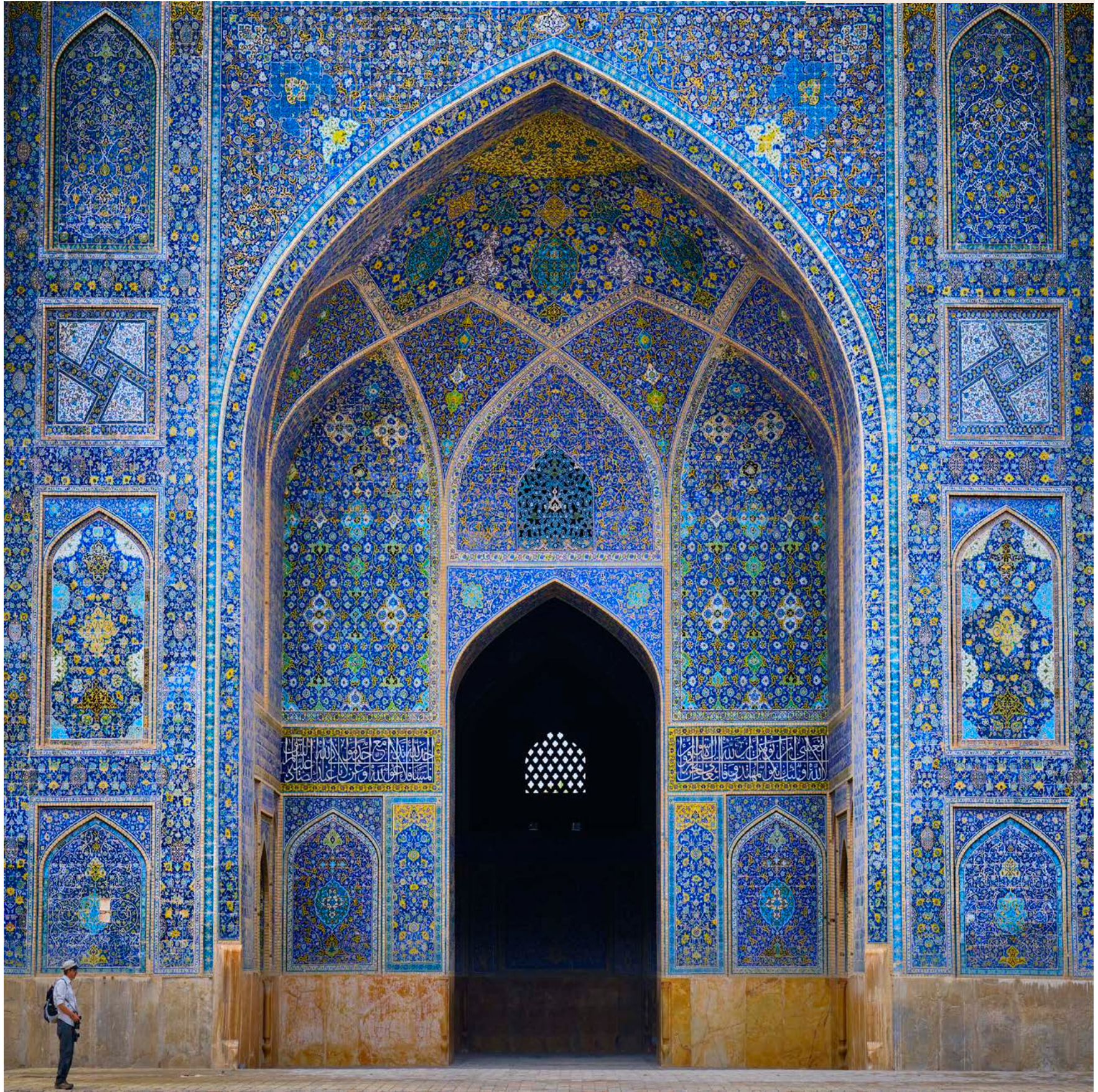
For instance, a person standing in front of the Taj Mahal shows you how large the structure is, but how big is the person? A short person will make the Taj look taller, a tall person could take a touch of the Taj's majesty away.

Can placing a person in a photograph distort the subject's size?

Think of using a wide-angle lens where a person is on one side and a mountain range in the background – the mountains will look very small in comparison to the giant human. Now step back and switch to a telephoto lens: the mountains might be a little out of focus, but they appear much larger and taller. So just because we have a figure within our scene doesn't necessarily mean we're telling the truth about a subject's size, just that we're comparing it with something else.

While a figure might not tell the full truth, it does add to the story you're telling. It can also be a great composition tool by providing a centre of interest.

And you don't have to limit yourself to people – animals, cars, even empty drink cans can be used to give your subject a sense of scale.



Mosque entrance, Esfahan, Iran. Without the figure, is the doorway the height of one man or of ten? For the casual observer, you simply can't tell how large the mosque is without the human figure providing the much needed sense of scale.

EARLY MORNING WALKS FOR TRAVEL PHOTOGRAPHERS

For many of us, the purpose of travel photography is to capture and communicate information about a destination. Invariably we find ourselves in a hotel room for the night, often with the early morning free before our travel plans begin.

This is the perfect time to take a walk.

Now for most readers, walking around a big city like Sydney, London or New York might be very much like walking around at home, but there will be differences – red buses, yellow cabs, harbour ferries.

People are focused on getting to work and today there are so many other tourists and travellers that wandering around with our cameras is hardly going to be noticed. We can enjoy being flies on the wall, or we can interact directly with people if we wish. The circumstances usually dictate our approach.

When we travel to exotic locations, or to smaller towns and

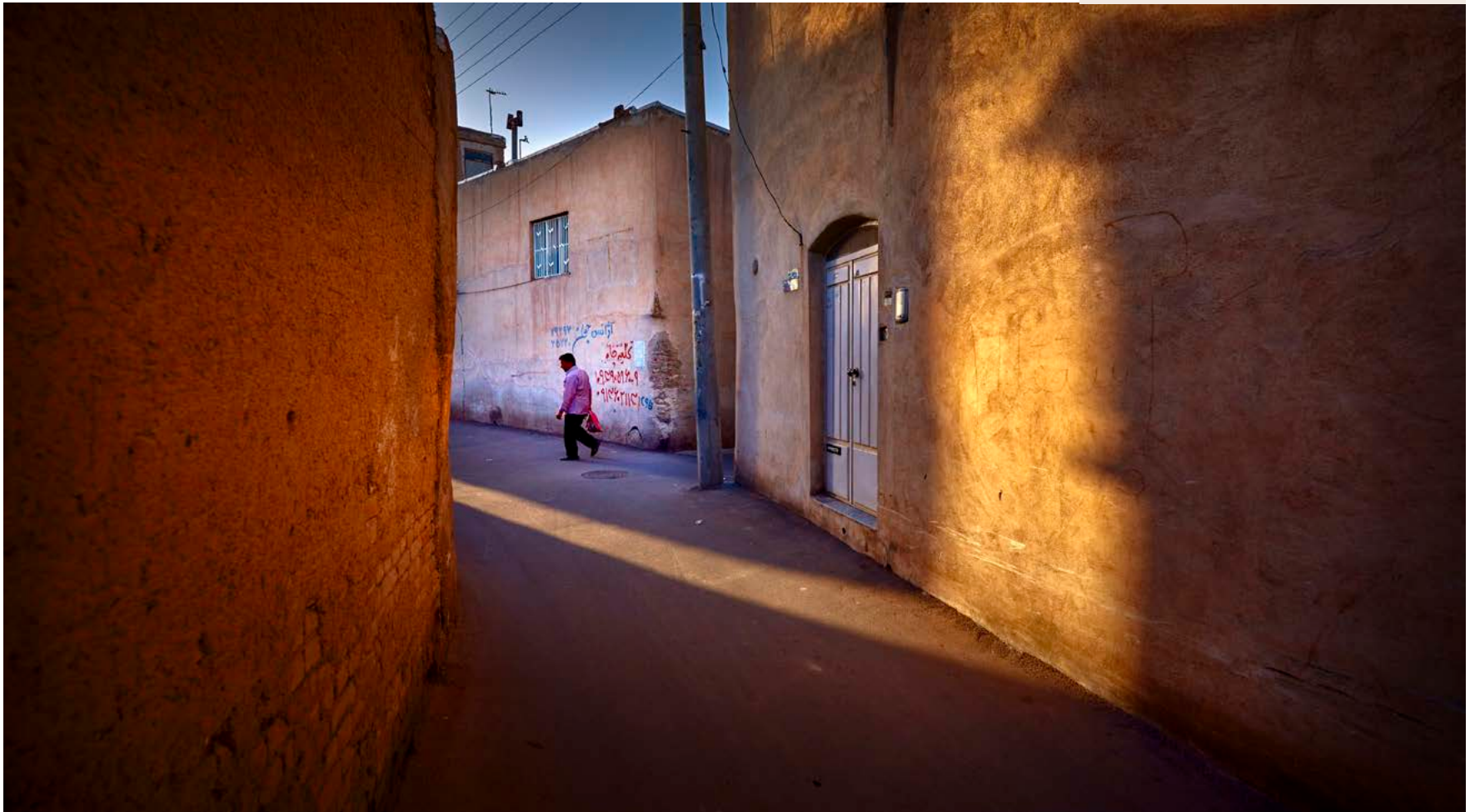
rural areas, there can be more activity for our cameras. City slickers like me will find these areas very interesting because they are so different to home. Again, the locals are usually intent on their chores, making our photography quite easy. Often people are amused that we are interested in their 'boring' morning duties – of course, some don't want to be photographed at all, in which case we should respect their privacy. There's always another subject to photograph around the corner or the next day.

Pre-dawn light can give an otherwise ugly location an interesting beauty – and I just love this time of day for almost any subject.

Once the sun rises, there are lots of opportunities to look for areas of light supported by long shadows.

And invariably you can be back to the hotel in time for a well-earned breakfast!

F 5.6 @ 1/250 sec, ISO 100



On an early morning walk around Kashan, Iran I found this wonderful sliver of light in the back streets. All I needed was a human figure to provide a centre of interest, so I waited around and within 10 minutes, a local walked by with a plastic bag holding some fresh bread.

ARE THESE THE BEST APPS FOR TRAVEL PHOTOGRAPHERS

As soon as you write about a useful app, someone invents a new one that is even better! So rather than listing 'must have' apps, let's talk about what we need to know as travel photographers. And perhaps the most obvious requirement is a map.

Google and Apple provide great maps, but what if you're travelling to a location that doesn't have phone signal? Most phones will work with GPS even if there's no phone, so an app that has the maps built-in (downloaded onto your device) can happily place you in the right position. The app I'm currently using is WorkOutDoors which links in to my Apple Watch as well. I can download maps for locations like Antarctica and they are stored on both phone and watch.

Whether you're shooting landscape or looking for an early morning location in town, knowing what time the sun rises (and

sets) and the direction can be a great help. Assuming you have internet coverage, The Photographers Ephemeris is a great app. It's maps are also excellent and it will let you plan shoots based on location and sun times. But what about the weather?

At present, Windy appears to be the app of choice for outdoor professionals globally, providing a great visual interface for not only wind, but waves, clouds and even satellite views. Plus it has a choice of prediction models to choose from. Very cool.

And do you want to edit your photos while on the road? I confess to preferring to edit my work on my laptop, but SnapSeed is a wonderful image editing app. And yes, I do take photos with my smart phone, but I rarely get around to editing them. Maybe I should give that a go on my next long haul flight!

📷 F 11 @ 1/125 sec, ISO 50



A remote settlement in Scoresby Sund, Greenland. The colourfully painted houses make great subjects. Some people say the colour of the house depicts the occupation of the inhabitant, but one of the locals said the colours simply meant they could find their home on the way back from a heavy night at the pub.

IS GPS ESSENTIAL FOR TRAVEL PHOTOGRAPHERS?

Many cameras either have GPS built-in or you can purchase a GPS adapter, allowing the camera to record your precise position at the moment a photo was taken. While this mightn't show the location of the subject being photographed, it's certainly within viewing distance and the coordinates will allow you to determine where you were and what the subject is. GPS can be really useful for travel, landscape and wildlife photographers.

For some trips where you're at a single destination, it's not going to be too hard to remember where you are, but on other trips, you might travel several thousand kilometres and locations can blur one into another. This isn't a problem until you want to tell someone where a photo was taken or perhaps you want to write a caption in your photo book.

If you want GPS coordinates, you can certainly use your camera if it has it, or with a GPS accessory. The main criticism I've heard is that these units can be thirsty on power, but this could be solved

with a spare set of batteries. A second option is to take a photo with your smart phone at each location as invariably these photos will include location data.

However, I generally forget to take photos with my phone, so a third option is to track my progress for the duration of each trip, either day by day or when travelling a particular segment. You can use your phone or watch to do this and, as long as your camera's date and time are synchronised, it will be fairly easy to determine where you were. Even better, using an app on your phone (like WorkOutDoors or Guru Maps Pro) will let you view your journey on a map or export a map file so you can use it with other mapping applications.

GPS isn't essential for a photographer with a notepad and pencil (or who writes down locations on his or her phone), but it's a fun way to record where you've been. It certainly makes caption writing a lot more accurate!

 F 5.6 @ 30 secs, ISO 50



According to the sign, this is Arkaroola International Airport in the Northern Flinders Ranges. No, I don't think many international flights arrive here, but the owners of the station have a great sense of humour. You could probably remember where this is without GPS.

DO YOU NEED A LAPTOP OR AN IPAD FOR TRAVEL PHOTOGRAPHY?

A laptop, iPad or even a smart phone is a great tool for travel photography. Invariably when travelling, there are down times in the hotel or at the airport that can be fruitfully spent reviewing and quickly editing your photographs. And let's face it, your camera can probably transfer your photos directly to your device – automatically using a wi-fi connection.

Now there are caveats, of course. Sometimes we need to travel lightly and even packing two lenses is pushing things, so taking a laptop is out of the question. Or you might be trekking in the wilds for a couple of weeks without power – will a solar charging station do the trick? So, there are travel itineraries that will preclude us from taking a laptop or even an iPad.

However, for many trips, we spend the evenings in a hotel room with a desk, a power point and probably internet. It makes sense to download your photos and make a back-up. I use cards with large capacities, so I end up with three copies – one on the card which often lasts several days, one on the laptop and a second on a back-up drive. If I leave my cameras and computer in the hotel room at night (this depends on where I am), I take the back-up drive with me, just in case!

But it's not safety that drives me to look at my photos in the evening. First and foremost, I'm curious! Did I get the shots I had been hoping to? Is my equipment working as expected – better to find a problem now than when the trip is over? And if I've missed a shot, is there an opportunity to reshoot on the following day?

Whether using a laptop or an iPad (or similar), programs like Lightroom, Capture One and ACDSee allow you to quickly rate the best images. I don't bother selecting and deleting bad shots, rather I give a star to the photos that have potential. If there are a lot of good shots, maybe I have to start applying two stars on a second round.

And then if there's time, I might quickly process one or two of the most interesting shots. Often when we're out on location, we have lots of great ideas that can be forgotten if we don't write them down or do a quick edit directly onto the file.

So, assuming I didn't drink too much red wine, by the time my head hits the pillow, I have a good idea of what I have shot successfully – and hopefully not too many mistakes to correct the following day!

 F 5.0 @ 1/2000 sec, ISO 125



Horse rider with eagle, Kyrgyzstan. I set my camera to rapid fire (15 frames per second) and took a series of photos as the rider passed across the valley in the background. This is a set-up shot and we arranged for the rider to make several passes.

BACK-UP SAFETY PROCESSES FOR TRAVEL PHOTOGRAPHERS

In many ways, backing up our images and safe shooting practices should be much the same whether we're travelling or shooting a project at home. The question becomes, what can you afford to lose? And given how rarely we lose our images, do we restrict other opportunities so we are without risk? Everyone will have their own views on this.

Let's begin with the camera and your storage cards. If you have a two card camera, you can set it to capture a copy of every photograph to both cards, so if one card fails, the image is safely stored on the other card. However, another advantage of a two card camera is expanding how many photos you can capture. The counter argument to this is that you simply buy two memory cards with greater capacity and have the best of both worlds.

Personally, I only shoot to one card at a time and the second card is sitting there for when I forget to load a fresh card. That for me is a more likely problem than storage failure.

However, if you have a large capacity card and it fails, you

risk losing a lot of images. But when I'm travelling, I don't want a box of memory cards I can potentially lose. My approach is to download the shoots every evening onto my laptop and back-up drive. I don't delete them from the memory card (assuming I have sufficient cards for the trip). So, at the end of each day, I have three copies of my photos.

Eventually, my memory card fills up, so I change cards. I usually have sufficient cards that I won't need to delete photos at any time, the exception being when shooting aials and wildlife.

So, if I do have to re-use a memory card, I will use a second back-up drive so I still have three copies of every file.

I'm sure this process could be strengthened further, but to date (touch wood) it has served me very well.

And when I look back to the days when we shot Kodachrome film over in Europe and posted it back to Australia for processing, and then Kodak posted the processed slides to your home, how much safer am I already?

F 8.0 @ 30 secs, ISO 50



Late evening, Zabriskie Point, Death Valley, USA. As we walked to our location, other photographers laughed at us for missing the sunset. However, our mission was to use the early evening light instead.

FILE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES FOR TRAVEL

Most of us take a computer with us when we travel. Not always, of course. Walking and camping treks might mean we don't have the opportunity to wrangle our files while on location, but if we're working out of a vehicle, vessel or hotel room, a laptop is usually somewhere nearby.

How do you store your files?

Everyone is different, but I find I'm capturing imagery with a range of devices – my Phase One medium format system, my Fujifilm system for wildlife, my DJI Pocket for location video and my DJI Mavic Pro 2 for drones. And there are the photos and videos taken on my iPhone – where do I save them all?

My solution is to create a folder on my laptop for the trip or travel location. If I'm in Antarctica and South Georgia for two voyages, then that will be a separate folder for each. If I'm down the south coast of NSW for a weekend, that's another folder. And I name the folder something like: 240115-Antarctica or 240428-Bermagui.

Into this folder I place everything to do with the trip. In

Lightroom, I make a new catalogue and store it in this folder. In Capture One, I store the session and all the raw files. And I manually transfer all the other files in as well.

Inside this folder, I currently have a sub-folder called 'Capture' and into this are a series of sub-folders which contain my raw files. I have a folder for each day, or sometimes two or three folders a day if I have visited multiple locations. The only rule is that all the raw files end up in a folder that sits inside the Capture folder, which in turn is inside the trip folder (I hope that makes sense).

Capture One actually creates this folder structure for us when we create a new 'session' and one of the other folders it includes is Output. When doing preliminary edits on the trip, I use this folder to hold all my working files.

I'm sure there are many variations on this theme, but what I like is having that single folder with everything else inside. Then when I return home, it is a simple matter to copy the whole folder across to my studio computer and archive systems, knowing I have everything in hand.

F 2.8 @ 1/900 sec, ISO 160



The only way to get street photos like this is to be out on the street, walking around. Travel photographers don't sit in their hotel rooms hoping for something to happen, they are constantly on the move, looking, waiting and being receptive to opportunities. Late afternoon walk in Copacabana, Bolivia.

FILE NAMING FOR TRAVEL PHOTOGRAPHY

Perhaps one of the most challenging aspects of digital photography is the way our photographs are named – by default, it's a faceless, emotionless, camera-generated filename which increments numerically, so that one filename looks much the same as another.

Most photographers rename important photographs to something more recognisable and meaningful. Many photographers rename all their files as part of the import process – as the files are transferred from your memory card to your computer, the photos are given a new file name.

For travel photography, what name do you use? You can be in one location for a few days, or at several locations in a single day. As you ingest your photos, you can ingest all the images together with one filename, ingest your photos location by location, or subject by subject with different filenames, or rename groups of photographs afterwards. There's no right or wrong way, but for me, I like things to be simple.

My approach is based on my overall filing system. I don't use Lightroom to create an overall catalogue of all my images – I'm too lazy to apply keywords etc. Rather I rely on my memory – and perhaps that will be a problem in the future!

Each year, I have a folder. Inside that folder are three sub-folders – Jobs, Work and Projects. The Jobs folder holds all my raw files – and only the raw files. Inside the Jobs folder, I have a sub-folder for every 'job'. So, if I photograph the family gathering at Easter, that's a job. If I visit Kazakhstan, that's another job. The Kazakhstan folder will be named 230919-Kazakhstan.

Inside these job folders, there might be no need for sub-folders (the family at Easter), but for travel locations, I create one or two folders for each day. For instance, when in Kazakhstan, we visited the Assy Plateau, so I created a folder 230924-AssyPlateau. Then, when transferring the images into that folder, I renamed the files Assy-0001, Assy-0002 etc. The numbers increment. The file name is more meaningful – for me.

In fact, for a travel job, I increment the file number for the entire trip, so the files I imported were actually Assy-1755, Assy-1756 – because I had already imported 1754 photos from earlier days on the same trip.

If this makes sense, use it! If not, look around for other options that make sense to you – so you don't end up with folders and folders or meaningless filenames.

 F 5.6 @ 1/1400 sec, ISO 200



The Assy Plateau in Kazakhstan. An experimental photograph taken with an infrared camera, but the filename makes it easy (for me) to know where the photo was taken.

HOW TO EDIT A TRAVEL SHOOT

How do you select your best photos from a travel shoot? No one (and I mean no one at all) wants to look at lots and lots of your travel photos, no matter how good you feel about them.

If we want people to be engaged with our travelling adventures, we must edit our shoot to include just the best, most relevant photographs.

A couple of thoughts. First, if you're shooting subjects with a high frame rate, say a bird flying or a dancer twirling on a stage, you should only show one example, not half a dozen. There are exceptions to every rule, but generally in the scheme of a travel presentation, a single shot of a particular subject is better than two or more which are essentially the same for a viewer who didn't share your experience.

Second, what were the highlights of the trip for you and what photos will communicate this to your viewers? Often our best photographs might not be of our most memorable experiences, so when selecting a portfolio of photographs to show friends and family, don't worry about the technically most amazing

photographs, rather select images that help you share your best memories.

So, when you return from your travels, you have a catalogue or folder full of photographs. How do you select the best 10 or 12 to show your friends, or the best 50 or 100 for a photo book?

There are lots of ways. Most photo apps have a way of rating or colour coding your photos and this is my starting point. I begin by giving all potential photos a single star. If there are three or four photos very similar, I give them all a single star and will return to a decision about which one later when I'm handing out two or more stars. I find that giving a single star means I have probably eliminated 80-90% of my photographs.

Next, being even more critical, I hand out two stars, and then if necessary three stars or more. The idea is to end up with a star rating that has only a small number of 'winners'.

Sometimes it's worth doing an automatic exposure adjustment to a photo before deciding to give it a higher star rating, just to ensure the technical side matches the aesthetic appear.

F11 @ 1/10 sec, ISO 50



After setting up the photograph for the cabin, the station owner and his dogs organised the sheep to stand nearby and while well-behaved, a number of shots were taken with the sheep in slightly different positions as they moved around and tried to avoid the sheep dogs. However, only one frame was chosen for the final photo book.

HOW TO PROCESS A TRAVEL SHOOT

Processing photographs can take a long time. Generally, we don't want to spend too much time processing our photos while out on the road – we're better off using that time to experience the location and take more photos.

I confess that when I'm travelling, I often return to my hotel room at night to process one or two photographs that I was particularly interested in, but this is not really a part of my travel portfolio processing. While a few photos are processed during the trip, it's generally at the end I choose a selection of files which are worth investing more time with.

Before you start processing, I suggest you need to rate your photographs first – to edit the shoot. There's no point processing a file if you're not going to use it later on. Note, we differentiate editing from processing. Editing is when you select the best photographs. Processing is when you 'edit' the photographs to make them look better. Confusing, I know!

My approach to processing a travel shoot is to use a program like Lightroom or Capture One because it makes it very easy to view the images, give them a rating and then process them with a

full range of editing tools. You can also copy the edit settings from one photo and apply them to another photo to save time and give you a head start on the processing for that next image.

And let's face it, these days you can probably do 90-100% of your editing in Lightroom or Capture One. In most cases, we don't need the extra power of Photoshop and layers anymore.

As the processing progresses, you can review all of the images together on screen and adjust them collectively to have a similar style or feeling. When putting together a set of images, they can look better if there are certain features that are similar, tying them together. It might be the subject matter, of course, but it could also be the cropping, framing, colour saturation or contrast that bind the portfolio. Apps like Lightroom and Capture One make this procedure a lot quicker and easier.

At the end of the editing and processing steps, our aim is to have a selection of 10 – 100 highly rated (4 or 5 star) photographs that can be output for a slide show or for putting together a book etc.

F 14.0 @ 8 secs, ISO 100



Arkaroola in South Australia is an old sheep station that has been turned into a protected nature reserve, The roads throughout the property are challenging even for 4WD vehicles, but from the ridge top trails, the remarkable Australian views are worth every punctured tyre.

HOW WILL AI IMPACT TRAVEL PHOTOGRAPHY?

It's so easy to edit your photographs with AI, what will happen to the genre of travel photography? Will we be able to believe anything we see anymore?

Actually, it's not AI that is the culprit. Advertising agencies and photographers have been creating fully believable but fake photographs for well over half a century, but there's no doubt AI means more people can do it now – and can do it easily.

Whether we're talking about travel photography (penguins in the Sahara Desert), wildlife photography (a five legged elephant) or landscapes (a more interesting sky dropped in), AI and creative compositing rely on the integrity of the photographer.

We shouldn't feel duped for believing an image that isn't real. We should be offended when we're told an image is real when it isn't. Weren't we all taught not to tell lies when we were children?

On the one hand, people are *naïve* if they believe every image they see. On the other hand, people are now questioning some real photographs because they are difficult to believe.

Most of the time we can tell whether a photo is fake or not, but this is going to change and most of us won't know whether a photo is real or not.

How does this impact travel photography?

Well, maybe it won't make a huge difference. Already I see lots of travel photographs with blue skies and bright sunshine, but when I get to the destination it's overcast and storming!

Mind you, there is only one Eiffel Tower in Paris, so a photo with five or six of them scattered around the town might not be believable!

How should photographers deal with it? Currently, I think it depends on how we use it. If we use AI to generate or significantly change a travel scene, then we need to tell people that's what we've done. On the other hand, if we use AI to remove some rubbish or fix up a cloud, has that significantly changed the authenticity of our subject?

This is a great subject for dinner and a glass of wine.

F 18.0 @ 1/125 sec, ISO 50



This is not an AI image, but it is a composite. The Tuk Tuk dancers have been 'stripped in' using layers in Photoshop. Someone who is familiar with the different tribes of Papua and New Guinea would know that these Tuk Tuk dancers do not come from this area and so the image is 'fake', but most viewers will just look at it as an photograph and accept all aspects of the subject are real.

TRAVEL PHOTOGRAPHY SHOOTLIST

What do you photograph when you're travelling? The answer is everything! Rather than missing an opportunity because you're worried about filling up a memory card, why not take a few extra memory cards?

To make your presentations interesting, you want to show viewers what life is like in a distant destination. In addition to the iconic travel photographs, shoot details of everyday life: close-ups of bus tickets, a meal in a restaurant, taking a train ride...

Images of the mundane and commonplace in a distant destination can be really interesting to viewers back home and that's one of the great enjoyments of being a travel photographer: being given the opportunity to see things with fresh eyes.

Here's an incomplete list of some subject ideas for your travel photography:

Icons It's important to photograph the famous landmarks associated with a destination. There's no point returning from Paris without a photograph of the Eiffel Tower. Yes, it's true everyone has their own photos of this famous spire, but yours don't have to be the same. Try to find something new and interesting, but be sure to photograph the icons.

People People 'make' a destination, so make sure you photograph them. If you're not good as a people photographer, shoot people from a distance and use a telephoto lens. Make sure you find some strong faces and not just of the young and old, although these are crowd pleasers.

Clothing Everyday dress as well as special costumes say a lot about a destination, giving it a 'travel' flavour.

Street Life Take time to sit in a cafe and watch life pass you by. Keep your camera on your lap and be ready to shoot. It might be someone who sits at the table next to you, or a telephoto shot of someone across the road, but spending a little time is a great way to get a feeling for a place and to catch some great shots too.

Food While you're at the cafe, order a drink or a meal. Photograph it.

Buildings Local architecture can be a source of strong abstracts as well as distinctive images. Shoot the buildings in situ as well as sections and details. Don't forget doors, windows and roof lines.

Hotel Rooms A few shots of your rooms before you open your suitcase can be great, and don't forget to look out the window. You can almost make a series of images from hotel windows.

Details Photograph the little things that you find interesting... the teaspoon, the sugar, the street names, the bus signs, an old man's hand. You might even take a macro lens with you to get in really close.

Fauna and Flora Outside the cities, or perhaps in the botanical gardens or zoos, you should be able to find some animals and plants that are specific to your destination. A macro lens is really useful for small flowers.

Night Time Don't put your camera away when the sun goes down. And don't automatically pull out your flash gun either. You're more likely to get atmospheric images at night with a high ISO setting and if there's a little bit of noise in the image, too bad!

Panoramas & Stitches Don't forget to take a series of stitched panoramas to really give people a sense of what a destination is like.

F 5.0 @ 1/50 sec, ISO 6400



Popular travel destinations and icons can be great for travel photographs. Travel doesn't have to be only 'authentic', you can use the 'touristy' side as well to fill out your portfolio or photo book. Versailles, France.

PETER EASTWAY - BIOGRAPHY

1958 Born Melbourne, Victoria
1960 Moved to Sydney, NSW
1974 First place, Northern Sydney Schools Photography Competition
1976 Joined Mosman Camera Club and met Elizabeth Lough
First place, Snap Your Cat, Whiskas pet food
photography competition
1977 Santa Claus photographer, Neutral Bay
1978 Bachelor of Economics, Sydney University
1979 First place, Goethe Institute Photographic Competition
for Young Australians

Career Highlights

1978 First photos published in Australian Photography
magazine monthly competition
First surfing photos published in
Australian Surfing World Magazine
1979 Author of article on wide-angle lenses published in
Australian Camera Craft magazine, published by Paul Curtis
1980 Became regular contributor to Australian Camera Craft Magazine
1981 Inclusion in the international Minolta Mirror (annual),
published in Japan
1982 Covered Ski World Cup in Kitzbuhel for Slope Magazine
Appointed editor of Australian Camera Craft Magazine
1983 Opera House surfing story and photographs, Tracks Magazine
1984 Appointed managing editor, Iris Publishing
1985 Joined Australian Institute of Professional Photography (AIPP)
Treasurer, NSW Division of AIPP
1986 Associate of Australian Institute of Professional Photography
AIPP Kodak Achievement Award
National Treasurer, Australian Institute of Professional
Photography, held for 10 years
1988 Ferry to Mosman book and exhibition with Paul Burrows and
Phillip Ramsden for the Australian Bicentennial Celebrations
1992 Published Profitable Photography Newsletter, the name was
changed to The Working Pro and then to the AIPP Journal –
published until 2019
1995 First issue of Better Photography magazine, published with wife
Kathie – still being published in 2024
1995 Master of Photography, AIPP
First issue of Which Camera, published until 2014
1998 Purchased Australian Surfing World magazine with Doug Lees,

Mark Eymes and John (Reggae) Elliss
2001 First issue of Better Digital magazine, co-published with Robin
Nichols, published until 2013
2004 First issue of Better Photoshop Techniques magazine, co-
published with Robin Nichols and Philip Andrews,
then published until 2013.
Surfing World shoot in the Mentawai Islands, Indonesia with
Danny Wills, Dean Morrison, Jay Thompson, Matt Wilkinson,
Mitch Coleburn, Tim Baker and Lance Knight.
2005 Chairman, Australian Professional Photography Awards,
held for six years.
2006 AIPP Grand Master of Photography
Panasonic Japan – camera range catalogue shoot
Chillfactor Magazine – Niseko shoot
2008 Adobe Lightroom – research trip with Adobe programmers in
Tasmania with Mikkel Aaland
Panasonic Japan – second camera range catalogue shoot
2009 First voyage to Antarctica, South Georgia and the Falklands
PNG shoot for Tourism PNG
2012 Apple uses iceberg photograph for Macbook Pro TV commercial
2012 Phase One – produced Capture One 6 instructional video
series in Denmark
2006 Dairy Australia book project with Ken Duncan
2010 The Pilbara Project with Christian Fletcher, Les Walkling, Tony
Hewitt and Michael Fletcher. The genesis of the Ninety Degrees
Five (ND5) collective.
2012 Australian postage stamp – Farming Australia series
2014 Introduced International Landscape Photographer of the Year
Awards with David Evans and Nathan Oxley
2015 Antarctica shoot with Abraham Joffe for Tales By Light television
series, in partnership with Canon, Nat Geo Channel and
(subsequently) Netflix.

Selected Presentations and Tours

1995 Business Planning for Professional Photographers with Kodak
(Australian capitals)
Co-leader of photo tour to Namibia with Ruby Spowart
2000 AIPP – GST workshops for professional photographers
(Australian capitals)
2005 Speaker, Orvieto Fotografica
New Zealand, NZIPP

2006	Speaker and judge, Wedding Portrait Photographers International (WPPI), Las Vegas, USA
2007	Speaker and judge, Wedding Portrait Photographers International (WPPI), Las Vegas, USA Speaker and judge, NZIPP, Auckland, NZ Lecture tour for Phase One to Hong Kong, Korea and Singapore
2008	Speaker and judge, Wedding Portrait Photographers International (WPPI), Las Vegas, USA
2009	Speaker, FotoFest, Birmingham, UK Speaker and judge, NZIPP, Wellington, NZ Hamilton Island Away photography workshop with David Oliver (annually until 2016). Orpheus Island Print workshop with Les Walkling and John de Rooy
2010	Leader, Karijini Photo Workshop with Christian Fletcher and Tony Hewitt (annually until 2016)
2010	Leader, Central Australia PODAS (Phase One Digital Artist Series) photo tour
2011	Workshop and photo tours around the world become a regular part of calendar

Exhibitions

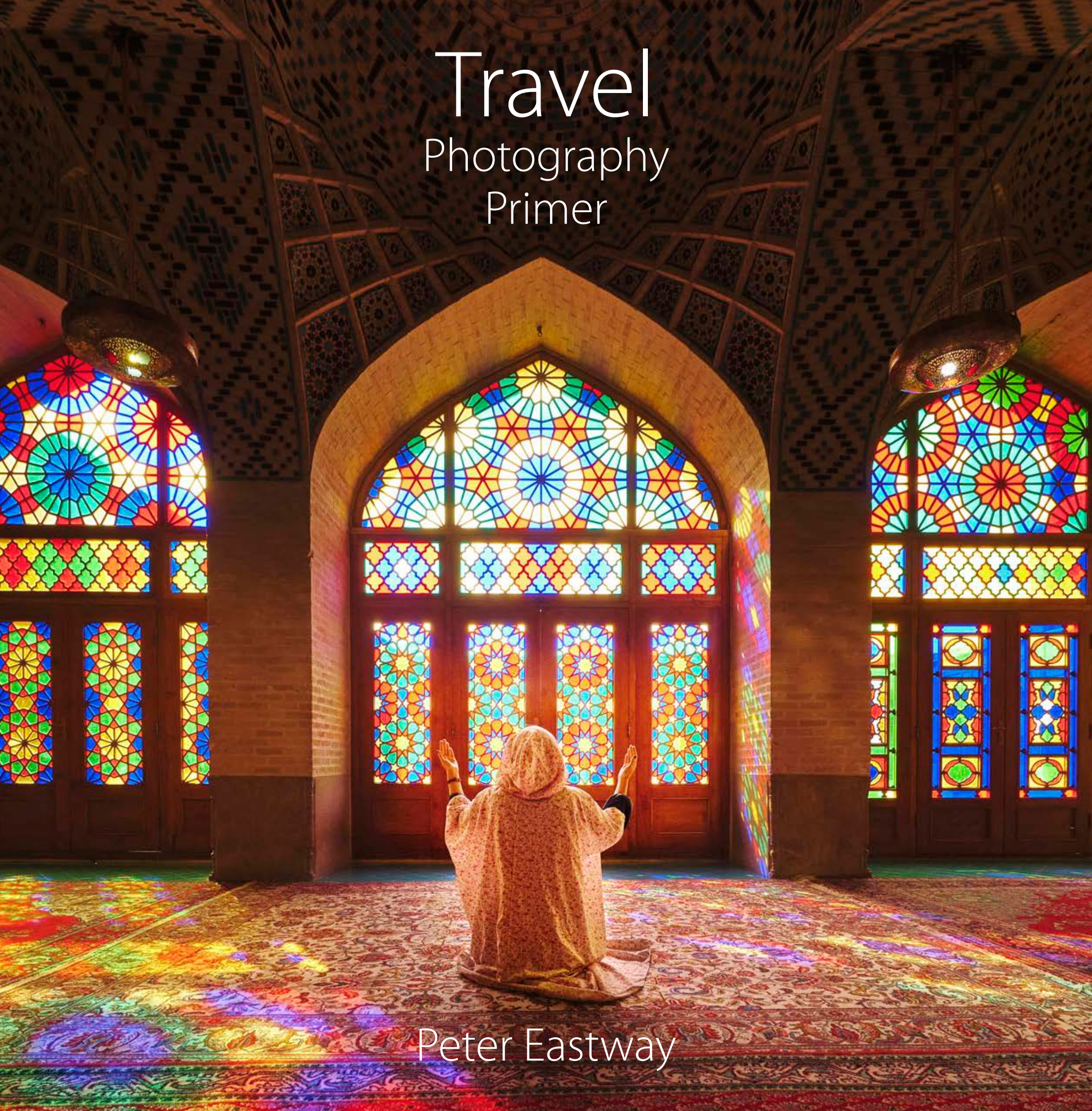
1979	Photography for Living With, Cave Group, Printers Gallery, Crows Nest, Sydney, NSW Goethe Institute Travelling Exhibition, West Germany
1981	Festival of Sydney Photography, A Creative Approach, NSW
1988	Ferry To Mosman - Australian BiCentennial Celebration, Mosman with Paul Burrows and Phillip Ramsden
2003	Away - exhibition and book with David Oliver, Gallery Xposure, Rozelle, NSW
2004	Spirit exhibition, Neutral Bay, NSW with Joanne Felk, Tania Niwa and David Oliver
2011	Rockhopper, Gaffa Gallery, Sydney The Pilbara Project, FORM Gallery, Perth, The Pilbara Project, Courthouse Gallery, Port Hedland
2012	The Pilbara Project: The Photographers' Cut, Midlands, Perth The Pilbara Project, Sofitel Hotel, Melbourne ND5 Travel Expo, Exhibition Halls, Perth The Pilbara Project, Oz Fest, New Delhi, India South West Light, Yallingup Gallery, Yallingup
2013	At The Edge of the Light, Australian High Commission, Wellington, New Zealand

2014	At The Edge of the Light, WPPI Exhibition, Las Vegas, USA At The Edge of the Light, The Digital Show, Melbourne 2016 Shark Bay - Inscription, Lynton & Kay Gallery, Perth 2016 Shark Bay - Inscription, Maud Creative Gallery, Brisbane At The Edge of the Light, Millenium Public Art Gallery, Blenheim, New Zealand
2015	North + East, Maud Creative Gallery, Brisbane Earth Matters, Monash Gallery, Melbourne
2016	2016 Shark Bay - Inscription, Denham, W.A.

Major Awards

1995	NSW AIPP Professional Photographer of the Year
1995	AIPP Australian Landscape Photographer of the Year
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1996	AIPP Australian Landscape Photographer of the Year
1996	AIPP Australian Professional Photographer of the Year
1998	AIPP Australian Landscape Photographer of the Year
1998	AIPP Australian Professional Photographer of the Year
2004	NSW AIPP Professional Photographer of the Year
2004	AIPP Australian Illustrative Photographer of the Year
2005	Grand Award, WPPI, Commercial Category
2007	New Zealand Overseas Photographer of the Year
2008	Grand Award, WPPI, Commercial Category
2009	1st, 2nd, 3rd Landscape Category, WPPI, Commercial Category
2009	Kodak Award of Distinction, WPPI
2010	Finalist, International Section, FEP European Professional Photographer of the Year Awards
2010	1st Place, SWPP and BPPA, Natural World Category, UK
2010	NSW AIPP Landscape Photographer of the Year
2010	NSW AIPP Commercial Photographer of the Year
2010	NSW AIPP Professional Photographer of the Year
2011	Finalist, FEP European Fine Art Photograph of the Year
2013	NSW Landscape Photographer of the Year
2018	AIPP Photography Book of the Year (Middlehurst – Middle Earth)
2019	NSW AIPP Professional Photographer of the Year
2019	AIPP Australian Professional Nature Photographer of the Year
2023	Aerial Award, Natural Landscape Photography Awards

Travel Photography Primer



Peter Eastway