

3. TRAVEL PHOTOGRAPHY

Extract

OVERVIEW

In this module, we will cover the following topics:

- A checklist for better travel photos
- The types of holiday pics that sell
- Getting the best stock photos – parades and ceremonies
- How to get free holidays
- What equipment should I take?
- Using digital cameras for travel photos
- Producing your images
- How to capture beautiful scenery for stock photos

You don't have to be a veteran photographer to be able to sell your holiday snaps. You just need the know-how, so that you can create images that people will want to buy and use. This module will teach you how to produce those images that can be potentially very lucrative.

A CHECKLIST FOR BETTER TRAVEL PHOTOS

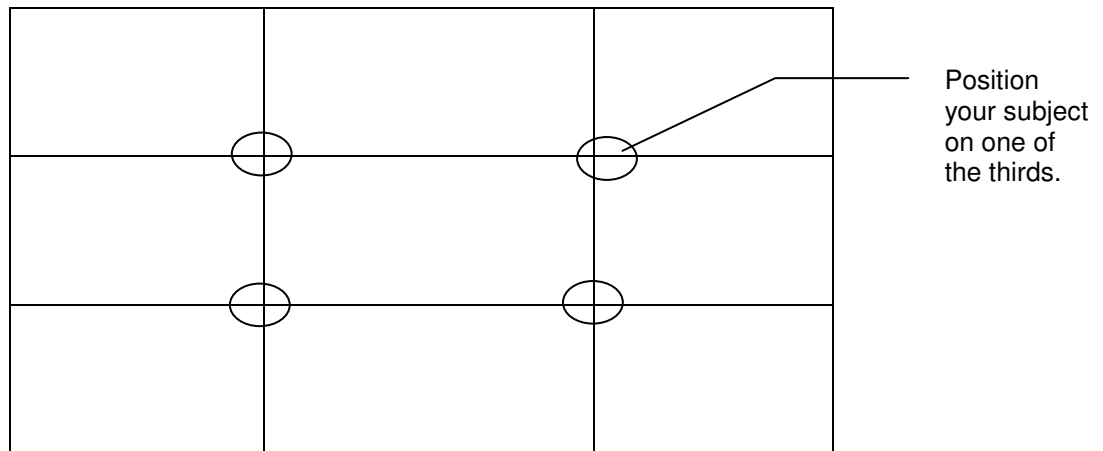
Here are eight factors that you should take into account when taking photos on holiday. If you follow these instructions, you'll separate your photos from the competition.

- **Make the right format choice** Placing the camera vertically will emphasize height. Meanwhile, holding it horizontally will emphasize range.
- **Add greater depth to your picture** To do this, use a wide-angle lens. This will exaggerate perspective.



Take photos of famous places like the Sacre Coeur in Paris

- **Take time to look for detail.** Make sure you focus on the smaller, understated objects instead of the more obvious larger ones.
- **Get the right grip.** It's best to hold the camera with both of your hands. Also, use your chest as a place to rest your elbows. And most importantly try and relax!
- **Is your picture missing something, or perhaps someone?** Your picture might benefit from a human element. If so, ask your friends or family if they'll pose for you. If you have particularly shy friends and family, bite the bullet and ask a stranger to pose for you, if you think it will enhance a photo.
- **A picture must be in proportion.** To help you make sure your photo is in proportion; employ the 'rule of thirds'. To do this, visualise the picture frame divided into thirds, both horizontally and vertically. Then, position your subject on one line or intersection.
- **Correctly adjust your proximity.** Make sure that you frame the most important part of your picture and get rid of any excesses from the photo.



THE TYPES OF HOLIDAY PICS THAT SELL

It's quite common for the print media to create stories, articles and catalogues without hiring a photographer. From these types of stories, you can potentially make good money.

This is because these print media companies will look for 'stock photos' to use to accompany their stories. You should start to build a collection of stock photos to sell to the print media.

However, because stock photos need to last for several years of differing uses, it is important that your photos don't appear dated. You can avoid this by keeping your holiday photos as generic as possible.

- Make sure that there are no company labels or logos anywhere in a photo, including clothing.
- Keep the tone of the photos happy, playful, and light-hearted so that they can be used for a wide range of topics.
- If you use people as the subject, pull the background out of focus.

USEFUL STOCK PHOTOS

Here's a list of ideas for good stock photos:

- Crowded streets
- Any events with lots of children
- Empty fields of lush crops
- City skylines at night
- County fairs
- Sunsets
- Campsites
- Crowded trains and subways
- Airports
- Animals

EXERCISE 3.1

Look on the internet for websites that sell stock photos. Make some notes of any inspiration that these photos give you.

HOW TO SELL YOUR STOCK PHOTOS

- **It will take hard work** – You have to be prepared to devote half of your time to promoting yourself. The best ways to promote yourself and your stock photos, are to:
 - Make phone contacts
 - Research publishers
 - Visit potential clients

- **Expect low returns** - Many stock agencies have very rigid requirements, and often use the same photographers repeatedly.

The more prospects you create for yourself, the greater chances you have of a sale. Once you are associated with an agency, you will have a much easier time selling your work.

- **Only show the best you have** - Stock agencies will be looking for quality not quantity. Only present the very best of your work.

It's a good idea to solicit feedback from other photographers, rather than friends or family who tend to judge according to their own personal tastes.

EXERCISE 3.2

Do some research on the internet for companies that you could potentially sell you stock photos to.

GETTING THE BEST STOCK PHOTOS - PARADES AND CEREMONIES

Festivals, parades and other ceremonies can make excellent stock photos. They can fill your travel pictures with the excitement of a particular environment from a specific time.

Photos of strangers often give off the implication of a back-story. This is because all who are present at such events are equally involved.

Street ceremonies such as historical, religious or traditional festivals are always visually significant and can also hint at the dramatic and spectacular.

Some festivals are yearly tourist attractions. Most of these environments will be hectic - often to the point of frenzy. This can create an artistic challenge for any photographer. There are several different approaches to such situations:



This photo was taken during the Chinese New Year celebrations in New York

- **Take photos from above the action** – For instance, you could take your shots from a hotel balcony, a high set of steps, or if you like a challenge, climb a tree! Try to highlight the massiveness of the proceedings.
- **In the midst of the action** – Involve yourself in the chaos and let your photos reflect this. Photograph people's faces with a zoom lens to get a clear reflection of their expressions.
- **Experiment with your points of view** – Take a variety of photos. Some photos can be of people in the thick of the action who don't notice you, or alternatively get people posing, expressing how the event makes them feel.
- **Look for attire or ornamentation** - What symbols are intrinsic to the event? A flag? An instrument? A specific colour or texture? What are the emblems of the event you're shooting?

EXERCISE 3.3

If you're going on holiday this year, do some research into the area that you'll be visiting. Will there be any parades or ceremonies taking place?

HOW TO GET FREE HOLIDAYS

The first step in marketing yourself as a location photographer is to appeal to the hospitality business on the local level.

Contact small, unique businesses in your area and offer to take photos of their establishments. Offer your services free of charge, if they agree to pay for the materials. In return, you can acquire suitable photos for your portfolio.

Possible companies to contact include:

- Bed and Breakfasts
- Independently owned inns
- Restaurants
- Historical landmarks

Once you have a body of work, you will be able to offer your services to travel companies in exchange for free accommodation. This can best be accomplished through:

1. **The barter system** - Offer a potential client free photos of their establishment and surrounding location in exchange for free lodgings.
2. **Frequent flyer miles** - Offer to cover your own transportation expenses in exchange for free accommodation and a small fee. This is

where frequent flyer miles come in handy. If you use these, you can give yourself a paid holiday!

3. **Make a suggestion** - Submit a proposal to a travel magazine – either print or online. Offer to take photos of a geographic region that has always interested you. Be as specific as possible. Bid a low fee with the understanding that all of your expenses will be covered.
4. **Team up** - Find a freelance writer and submit a joint proposal. A complete article, including photos, can be very enticing to a publication. The more complete a package you have to offer, the more likely a publication might be willing to cover all of your expenses.
5. **Cover the expenses** - Instead of a fee, request that all your expenses be covered, as well as a per diem (per day). You'll enjoy yourself, and not spend a penny!

EXERCISE 3.4

Do some research into local businesses that you could contact and offer your services to build up your portfolio.

REMINDER

Have you completed the following exercises?

- Exercise 3.1
- Exercise 3.2
- Exercise 3.3
- Exercise 3.4
- Exercise 3.5
- Exercise 3.6
- Exercise 3.7

Tick each box when you have completed the exercises. Then you can move on to the assignment that follows.

SUMMARY

1. You have a checklist to consult when taking travel photos.
2. You are aware of the types of holiday photos that sell.
3. You know how to get the best stock photos by attending ceremonies and parades.
4. You are aware of ways to obtain free holidays from travel photography.
5. You know what equipment you should take on your travels.
6. You understand the benefits of using a digital camera for travel photography.
7. You know how to produce your travel pictures.
8. You understand how to capture beautiful scenery on camera.

ASSIGNMENT 3

For this assignment you need to determine what popular landmarks exist in your local area. This is because you are going to take some photos that could be used in a brochure for your local tourist board.

Once you have decided on which landmark to photograph, you should concentrate on getting the best shots of it that you can. You'll need to send you tutor at least five photos.

Include an explanation of the problems you encountered, and explain any techniques you used.

When you have completed this assignment, send it to your tutor for marking. If you email your assignment, make sure you include your name and assignment number at the top of your work.

NOTE: If you send your pictures by email, they must total no more than 1mb – that's all the photos together. To achieve this, you will need to 'crunch' the pictures, that is, reduce them in size and 'dots per inch'. You can do this in Photoshop or Microsoft Picture Editor, or online at <http://www.freegraphics.com/art-gifjpeg-cruncher.html>

If you send the assignment by post, attach the cover sheet, which is on the following page.

Well, that's the end of the extract. If you want to know more, you'll have to register!

We look forward to welcoming you on to the course, and helping you become a professional photographer.