



## Top Tips On Capturing Stunning Landscape Photographs

### Photograph In All The Seasons

Even taking the same picture at different times of the year will result in vastly different pictures. What might look drab in winter could come into life in spring. Don't be afraid to keep trying!

### Understand How Light Works

Many people say that this is an area of photography that cannot be taught, although the more you practice the better at it you'll become. For me, good lighting is the most important part of photography – it can turn an average picture into a great picture. That isn't to say that a photograph always requires brilliant sunlight, some of my best images were taken in overcast days, but different lighting conditions suite different scenes. In landscape photography, light is usually out of your control, but if you visit a great location and the light is not quite right, don't be afraid to keep going back until it is.

### Try Using People In You Images

Sometimes this can add huge amounts of information to an image, be it scale, depth, or just a bit of life.

### Utilise The Benefits Of Digital Capture

Digital photography enables you to, not only take hundreds of pictures without the expense of film, but scrutinise the results instantly. If a picture isn't quite right the first time round, continue to photograph the scene until it is, without moving from the spot. The important rule here is to get it as close to perfect in-camera. Too many photographers rely on post production to salvage poorly and lazily taken photographs. It's much quicker and more rewarding to get it right first time.

### Keep Challenging Yourself

Keep trying new techniques and don't be afraid to experiment. If you find yourself a winning formula, that's great, but keep pushing yourself to explore and develop it.

### Don't Be Afraid To Get Up Early

None of us like doing it but, unfortunately, the best images and best light usually require an early start. When working out what time to set the alarm, research the time of sunrise, plan how long it will take to get to your destination and, importantly, leave plenty of time to get set up and in position.

### Expose For The Highlights

Correct metering has always been important but for drama during strong sunlight, exposing for the highlight areas is a must. If your camera has a spot metering function, use it to take a reading from a bright area of the scene. It is always easier on the eye to view darker images with a small amount of highlight detail than bright, overexposed pictures which are simply bleached out.

### Consider Working With Other Photographers

Having another photographer with you will often motivate you to keep going when, perhaps, you would otherwise turn round and go home. I have always found getting up for the pre-dawn shoots are much easier when I know staying in bed will be letting down another person – as well as myself.

### Remember The Third Dimension

Try to create photographs with a more three-dimensional feel. Get close to a foreground subject with a wide angle lens to add real impact to the shot.

### Use A Tripod

The best depth of field is gained by using small apertures in the lens. Unfortunately this results in slow shutter speeds which can create camera shake. The trade off between depth of field and shutter speed is a common one but can be overcome by using a tripod. Don't however be fooled into using the smallest possible aperture just because you have a tripod available. The best results from any lens are between f/8 and f/11.



### **Think Local As Well As National**

Research photogenic sites which are local to you and set yourself challenges to capture great pictures of them. It is not always necessary to travel to distant countries to find great landscapes. Remember, half way across the world for you is still on the doorstep for somebody else.

### **Shoot After Sunset**

Great landscape images can be had with just moonlight or starlight. It is also possible, and very effective, to balance flash with the ambient light to highlight a foreground subject. Experiment with different shutter speeds but be prepared for long exposures.

### **Keep Fit**

One thing landscape photographers need to be able to do is lots walking, and more often than not, in pretty tough terrain. Whilst many good photographs can be captured from the roadside, usually better vantage points can be achieved by getting off the beaten track.

### **Look For Design In A Landscape**

Sometimes less is most definitely more. Design to an image in the way of a collection of lines, shapes or colours really adds drama without always adding clutter. I often find that abstract images with interesting colours are more interesting than the subject.

### **Try Using Filters**

There are hundreds of different filters on the market, all offer many different effects from the subtle to the sublime. Two which I never leave home without are the 'graduated grey' and the 'polariser'. The grad grey allows us to reduce the light intensity of one part (usually half) of the image. Perfect for photographing landscapes with an amount of sky. The polariser cuts through reflections, great for photographing water, but more importantly increases colour saturation and intensity to a scene. This is largely used to darken blue skies whilst giving them a rich tonal quality.

### **Wear The Right Clothing**

Whilst this sounds obvious, it is very important. Check the weather forecast before leaving home and, if they say it will rain, take the waterproofs. Likewise, for bitterly cold conditions, use sensible gloves which will keep your hands warm whilst still allowing you to operate the camera.

### **Show Courtesy To Other Photographers**

If I arrive at a location first, I'll get set up where I want to. However, if somebody is there before me, I'll show some courtesy and give them the space I would like in the same situation.

### **Find An Unknown Location And Work Hard To Make It Your Own**

Don't think you always have to follow the rules and the crowd. If you find a location which looks promising, experiment to capture images of it that nobody else will have. This gives an enormous sense of achievement.

### **Experiment With Black And White**

Some of the greatest landscape images are black and white. Sometimes scenes just lend themselves to this, now little often, medium. These days of course, a decision doesn't have to be made to shoot in black and white straight away. It is very easy to change images to monochrome on computer – don't forget to try it!

### **Enjoy yourself!**