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Introduction.

The intention of the workshop is to give participants an experience of shooting landscapes in Iceland. Participants will encounter diverse landscapes and diverse conditions. The main goal is to instruct participants in getting the best from each of these. There are other intentions such as an introduction to Iceland in terms of food and culture. The aim is for you to achieve great images in ideal and difficult circumstances. Our aim is to see you return to Iceland again and again.

Numbers. We decided to keep numbers low. I am used to running photo tours with groups no bigger than 4. For the workshops, the maximum number of participants will be 6. A workshop with 6 participants will include 2 modified jeeps, 2 driver/ instructors. We have considered that 6 is an optimal number to ensure good photographic opportunities for all participants.



Instructors/ Guides

Tony Prower is your instructor/driver/guide. Tony is an English Landscape photographer with several years teaching experience and several years experience as a photographer. Tony uses his magic cloth technique to capture most of his images and shoots with wide angle primes on a Canon 5D3. You can expect instruction from Tony at all locations. Tony is fine if you are either friendly or serious about photography.

The Magic Cloth Technique:

<http://icelandaurora.com/blog/2012/04/03/magic-cloth-technique-the-basics/>

There will be 1 other assistant/driver/guide (depending on the group size), and you can expect assistance at all photographic locations.

Vehicles: we drive jeeps with modifications. We are very experienced drivers.

Camera gear:

For equipment, we recommend at least a DSLR. Wide, fast lenses are more popular with night and aurora.

We recommend an ND filter, grad filters and polariser. Sturdy tripod - think windy!

An expected amount of gear would fill a camera back-pack. Typically we will be shooting landscapes, so a quality wide

angle is important... the lens needs to be fairly fast i.e. f/2.8. A quality aurora can be shot at f/4, but you should be prepared for mediocre auroras. A good quality tripod is essential for serious landscape, please let us know if you would prefer to borrow a medium size Manfrotto.

Spare Batteries, European charger. Car charger

It is important that you are able to control your camera, we can help a little bit, but if you are new to the camera, please bring your instruction book. You will get more out of this workshop with a DSLR or similar style camera. For aurora photography, you need to be able to expose for at least 30 seconds. You need to be able to change shutter speed, aperture and iso (in the dark with gloves on).

As we may be shooting at night, it is important to have a strong flashlight and a weak flash light. The strong flashlight will help us find locations and compose. The weak flashlight will help you adjust your settings without upsetting others. I don't like light painting on natural objects, if you want to do light painting, you have to wait until I am not looking. Those red lights do affect other's images!

Magic Cloth... if you want to learn the Magic Cloth technique, please come prepared with a circular Neutral Density (ND) filter for your landscape lens. I use [B+W 77mm 1.8 ND MRC 106M Filter](#) this is a 6 stop filter.

You may also need a black sock or cloth.

Basic camera control

Participants will become familiar with the following camera controls:

- Shutter Priority – TV mode
- Aperture priority – AV mode

Learn how to switch to these semi-automatic modes and understand which aspect you are in control of. Participants should be confident using 'Exposure Compensation'. [+/-] the plus/minus button.

Manual/Bulb – M/B mode (sometimes 'bulb' mode is an extension of Manual mode). Participants will learn when to switch to Manual modes. Participants are encouraged to bring extra equipment to allow camera control in 'bulb' mode – this is normally a 'Shutter release cable' or 'Infra-red equivalent'.

AF/MF – participants will learn when to use auto/ manual focusing along with a variety of focusing considerations.

Photography skills

In general we aim to assist you in Composition, exposure and focusing. Peripheral to this will be learning to see, learning when not to take photographs. Deciding an appropriate aperture. Choosing an intelligent focal point. Dynamic range considerations. Bracketing, HDR and Magic Cloth Technique.

Clothing:

expect the worst conditions - expect Arctic conditions. The correct way to dress is to have suitable layers of clothing, so that layers can be added or removed accordingly. Icelanders dress with 3 or 4 thin layers, starting with wool and ending with Gortex (or similar).

you can expect temperatures between 12 c and -12 c

- Layers of clothing, for example, thermal-shirt, fleece, jacket, long-johns, Outdoor trousers (not jeans!!), rain jacket and rain trousers.
- Sturdy shoes for light hiking (water proof is best), wool socks.
- Hat and gloves, scarf and balaclava.
- Eye protection!
- Spare gloves - spare shoes.

Luggage Guide;

One large suitcase, small personal bag, camera bag and tripod each.

Accommodation:

During the 4 nights of the workshop. We will be staying at Guest house Hali.

Itineraries:

we recommend arriving in Iceland at least 1 day before and reserving a hotel in Reykjavik for the night before and the night at the end of the workshop.

Pick up day one

Participants will be collected from their Reykjavik hotels around 09.30 and we leave Reykjavik as quickly as possible in 2 vehicles.

After an hour drive and dependent on the weather, we will stop at a cafe for introductions and refreshments.

Along the south coast of Iceland we will make 2 or 3 major stops depending on Light and weather. We aim to reach a good location to catch some evening light. We will arrive at Hali Country hotel to check in before dinner.

Daily Schedule

Each day we will wake an hour before sunrise and invade the beach at Jökulsárlón. In good weather the rising sun glowing through huge chunks of glacial ice on a black sand beach, gives incredible images.

Weather dependent and also dependent on the activities the night before. We may return to Jökulsárlón or another lagoon to get the best of the morning light for 2 hours.



Nov, Dec, Jan, Feb workshops will run right through the day!

October and March workshops may have a rest period of up to 2 hours. This may depend on the likelihood of evening shooting and the energy of the group.

Afternoon: we head out to one of our main locations (see the next page). We shoot until the sun goes down and then return to Hali for evening meal. After evening meal, we relax and assess the Aurora forecast.

If conditions are favourable, i.e. if we see stars, we will head back out to the lagoon to capture, Milkway, aurora or something equally creative. If conditions are never good, we may attempt to have at least one night photography session in less than favourable conditions.

On days with completely unfavourable conditions, we will be happy to assist you in basic image processing. Bring a laptop with image processing software if you wish to participate in this.

Location schedule

At each location, we will direct you in terms of good places to stand. Participants will be encouraged to find their own ground for 10-15 minutes and shoot free style (the way you normally shoot). After this, instruction will begin depending on individual needs. Instruction will typically become less as the week progresses, but assistance should always be available.

Locations



Urriðarfoss – a waterfall on Iceland's longest river. Nothing spectacular, but a nice introduction to basic composition.



Seljalandsfoss – the waterfall you can walk behind. This will probably be in the afternoon of our return trip. A very dynamic waterfall with plenty of compositional angles.



Skogafoss – a popular waterfall, much bigger than Seljalandsfoss and you can climb to the top. Not as many compositional opportunities as Seljalandsfoss. This will be a stop on day one.



Reynisdrangur – beach with the sea stacks and black sand near Vik. Lots of dramatic shots available in a variety of conditions. This will be included on our first or last day.



Fjaðrárgljúfur – a river canyon in the South east. Deserves exploring, but needs a reasonable sky and it is our furthest mid-week location. Should be visited late morning.



Skaftafell – a hiking area with some good viewpoints and a interesting waterfall – Svartifoss.

Foss a síðu – a low level horse shoe waterfall. We will pass this a few times during the week.



Svinafell – a mountain near Skaftafell with a glacial tongue and several surrounding photo locations.



Fjallsarlon – a glacier lagoon near Jökulsarlon. Water is less attractive colour, but very close to the ice-shelf.



Jökulsarlon – the main location for our morning and night shoots.



Skalafellsjökull – a local mountain road which leads to great views across Vatnjökull Glacier. Some nice viewpoints to the South and some mountain lakes.



Hofell – a glacier lagoon further East. Fairly easy to get to and quite private. Chance to have a soak in a hot-tub (if weather is bad).

Höfn – a South Eastern town with nice views over Vatnjökull and a famous lobster restaurant



Vesturhorn/ Stokksness – a photogenic mountain with a nice beach.

Drop off day five

Leave Hali in the morning.

We drive back to Reykjavik and visit all the locations we missed. The aim is to be finished before 20.00, you will be dropped at your Reykjavik hotel.

