

THROUGH THE LENS
CHRISTIAN NØRGAARD



Location: Namibia



ABOUT

CHRISTIAN NØRGAARD

Christian Nørgaard is a Danish photographer, explorer, and educator whose passion for storytelling through imagery has taken him from the Arctic wilderness to remote tribal villages in Africa and Asia. With over two decades of experience in travel and portrait photography, Christian has led hundreds of photo expeditions through his company Better Moments, inspiring photographers around the world to find their voice through the lens.

What sets Christian apart is his ability to blend technical precision with deep human connection. Whether he's documenting the fading rituals of the Suri tribe in Ethiopia or capturing the stillness of a Himalayan morning, his photographs invite viewers into intimate, authentic worlds. As a mentor and speaker, Christian is known for his generous teaching style, making complex techniques approachable for beginners and meaningful for advanced shooters alike.



CHRISTIAN NØRGAARD – A

Photo: Gillian Robertson - Christian Nørgaard at work in Mandalay, Myanmar

Travel has always been more than a destination for me – it's a way of seeing. From the misty highlands of Ethiopia to the chaotic streets of India, my camera has been both a passport and a compass, guiding me through cultures, landscapes, and human stories that deserve to be told.

As art and editorial photographer, I've spent decades traveling the world in search of authenticity – not the polished or staged, but the raw, the real, the overlooked. Whether photographing

tribal elders in the desolate monasteries, my goal is to capture the essence and to translate that

My workflow reflects an intuitive – one camera, one environment. I plan meticulously, but I'm not chasing perfection, I'm capturing the result of patience, tr



LIFE THROUGH THE LENS

desert of Namibia or monks in Himalayan
is always the same: to connect, to listen,
moment into a meaningful visual narrative.

that philosophy. I prefer to work light and
ra, one lens, and complete immersion in the
meticulously, but I shoot instinctively. I'm not
m chasing honesty. Every photograph is the
ust, and respect for the people I meet.

Back home, my editing is minimal. The story is already there
– I simply remove the noise. I use the same tools I've trusted
for years: SanDisk for storage I can count on, no matter the
elements.

In the end, photography is my way of understanding the world.
It's how I give something back to the people who let me into
their lives – even for just a moment.

TIPS & TRICKS FROM THE ROAD

Photography is one of the most powerful tools you have to document and share your experiences with the world – and with future generations. Whether you're photographing remote villages, vibrant festivals, or dramatic landscapes, there are techniques and habits that can help you make stronger, more meaningful images.



You Learn Every Day - Especially when you travel – the learning curve is steep and always essential. Never repeat your mistakes – learn from them.

Location: Mandalay, Myanmar

PLAN AHEAD

Before packing your camera, spend time researching the people and places you plan to visit. The more you know about the culture, language, religion, and daily life, the better prepared you'll be to anticipate challenges. Being well-informed allows you to focus on creativity instead of problem-solving.

RESPECT THE PEOPLE YOU PHOTOGRAPH

Great portraits are built on trust. Learn people's names, take time to connect, and always ask before taking a photo. A simple smile and genuine interest go a long way. Always remember: you are a guest in someone else's life.

LOOK AROUND BEFORE YOU SHOOT

Don't rush. Walk the scene, feel the light, and get a sense of your surroundings. The strongest images often come once your eyes and instincts have settled.

WORK WITH THE LIGHT – NOT AGAINST IT

Shooting in harsh midday light? Look for shade or try backlighting. Overcast skies are excellent for portraits. Golden hour – the time around sunrise and sunset – is your best friend. And twilight? Often underrated and beautiful.

HAVE A STORY IN MIND – NOT JUST A SHOT

Ask yourself what you're trying to say. Is it about emotion, strength, isolation, or beauty? Even a simple idea can shape a better photo. Don't just look – feel.

BE READY – THE MOMENT WON'T WAIT

Keep your camera on and your settings ready. Moments appear fast and vanish even faster. Being technically prepared means you can focus on intuition and timing.

BACK UP – TWICE

At the end of each day, back up your photos to two separate drives. Losing images can be heartbreaking – and it only takes one mistake to learn why backup matters.

BE CURIOUS, BE HUMBLE, BE PRESENT

Your attitude matters. Stay open, respectful, and aware of your surroundings. Some of your most powerful images will happen when you're fully present, not just looking through the viewfinder.

FOLLOW THE LIGHT – AND THE EYES

Natural light brings emotion, especially when it's soft – through windows, doorways, or filtered skies. In portraits, focus on the eyes. As Steve McCurry says, "If you can get the eyes right, you've got the soul."

WAIT FOR THE STORY

Strong images unfold – they're not forced. Find a composition, then wait for a gesture, a glance, or a moment of stillness. With patience, people relax and forget the camera – and that's when the soul appears.

SIMPLICITY IS POWERFUL

Keep your backgrounds clean and uncluttered. A plain wall, doorway, or early morning mist can give your subject space to breathe. The simpler the frame, the stronger the focus.

USE COLOR TO EXPRESS EMOTION

Color speaks. Red can suggest passion or drama, blue can feel calm, yellow can warm. Be intentional with how you use color – pair it with light and mood to deepen your story.

GET CLOSE – BUT STAY RESPECTFUL

Meaningful portraits come from closeness – both physical and emotional. Build a connection. Ask permission. Earn the moment. You're not taking a photo – you're borrowing a presence.

SELECT ONLY THE BEST

You don't need to show hundreds of images. Share the ten that speak loudest. Edit with both heart and honesty – less is more.



Your camera is your tool – and your shortcut to success. Never underestimate the value of the “hammer” in your bag.

Location: Inle Lake, Myanmar

ESSENTIAL TIPS WHEN BUYING A NEW CAMERA

Before you start looking at specs or prices, be honest with yourself: What do you want to photograph most? Are you drawn to portraits, landscapes, wildlife, travel, street scenes, or maybe video? Your intended use should guide your decision.

Portraits benefit from cameras with strong dynamic range, allowing them to capture both shadows and highlights effectively. Travel calls for compact, lightweight gear. Wildlife or sports demand fast autofocus and high burst rates.

If you're not sure, choose a flexible camera that can do a bit of everything. Don't buy the most expensive model just because it has the most features – buy what matches your passion.

CHOOSE BETWEEN MIRRORLESS AND DSLR

Today, the photography world is moving quickly toward mirrorless systems. But what's the difference?

Mirrorless cameras are lighter, faster, and offer advanced autofocus. They show you a real-time preview through the electronic viewfinder.

DSLRs use a mirror system and optical viewfinder, giving a more traditional experience with excellent battery life and rugged build.

For most of us – especially travelers and new photographers – mirrorless is now the better choice. But if you already own DSLR lenses, it might make sense to stick with that system.

SIZE AND WEIGHT MATTER – ESPECIALLY WHEN TRAVELING

Ask yourself: Will I actually carry this with me?

A bulky camera often ends up staying at home. Choose a camera that fits your lifestyle – small enough to bring everywhere, but powerful enough to deliver the results you want.

UNDERSTAND SENSOR SIZE AND IMAGE QUALITY

Bigger sensors typically mean better image quality, especially in low light. Full-frame sensors offer the highest quality and control over depth of field.

APS-C and Micro Four Thirds sensors are smaller, but make cameras and lenses more compact and affordable.

Choose based on your needs and budget – not just sensor size.

DON'T OBSESS OVER MEGAPIXELS

More megapixels does not mean better photos. Unless you plan to make huge prints or crop your images heavily, 20–30 megapixels is more than enough.

CHECK AUTOFOCUS SPEED AND SHOOTING PERFORMANCE

If you're shooting action – kids playing, wildlife, sports – fast and accurate autofocus is essential.

Try the camera in a store or read reviews that test real-world speed and subject tracking.

MAKE SURE THE LENS OPTIONS FIT YOUR GOALS

Your choice of camera should also be about the lens ecosystem.

Is there a good selection of high-quality lenses for the brand? Are they affordable?

Remember: You'll invest more in lenses over time than in the camera body itself.

TRY IT IN YOUR HANDS – ERGONOMICS MATTER

The camera should feel natural in your hand. Controls should be easy to reach and intuitive to use.

If the camera isn't comfortable, you'll be less likely to bring it or enjoy using it.

THINK AHEAD – IS THE SYSTEM FUTURE-PROOF?

Choose a camera system that grows with you.

Look for brands with a strong lens lineup, good customer support, and a track record of updates and innovation.

CAMERA GEAR FOR LANDSCAPE, TRAVEL, PORTRAIT & WILDLIFE PHOTOGRAPHY DSLR CAMERA

There are a handful of questions you need to ask yourself when choosing your gear – and they apply to everything you pack in your camera bag.

CAMERA BODIES

Full-frame mirrorless camera with high resolution and excellent dynamic range

Always bring a second camera body as a backup – in case your main one fails during the trip

LENSES

The lens is your eye to the world, and price and quality often go hand in hand. This is not where you should compromise — but rather think carefully about which lens suits the kind of photography you wish to pursue.

TRAVEL PHOTOGRAPHY

A 24–70mm zoom lens is the perfect all-round choice — it covers almost everything you see and encounter on your journey.

PORTRAITS

85mm f/1.2 or f/1.8 – beautiful background blur and natural perspective

50mm f/1.4 – perfect for closer portraits and shallow depth of field

LANDSCAPES

24mm or 35mm – wide-angle lenses for dramatic yet natural compositions

14–30mm – ultra-wide for immersive scenes and expansive views

TRAVEL

24–105mm or 28–200mm – versatile zooms ideal for flexibility and speed

WILDLIFE

70–200mm f/2.8 or f/4 – fast and flexible, great for moving subjects

100–400mm or 150–600mm – long reach for distant wildlife

1.4x or 2x teleconverter – extends your reach without adding bulk

MEDIUM FORMAT – PORTRAIT PHOTOGRAPHY

80mm to 110mm – classic portrait range

110mm LS f/2.8 – beautiful background blur and natural perspective

MEDIUM FORMAT – LANDSCAPE PHOTOGRAPHY

21mm to 45mm – ideal for wide, sweeping scenes

100–120mm – for compressed landscapes or isolating subjects in vast environments

NB A medium format camera is not the most obvious choice for travel photography. They are often heavy and slow to work with.



It can be difficult to find the camera that truly suits you — take the time to find one that meets all your needs.

Location: Ethiopia, Jinka

STORAGE & BACKUP ESSENTIALS

Your files are like your children or best friends – you need to protect them day and night. SanDisk is your trusted safeguard, ensuring you return home from your journey with every image safe and sound.

When you're traveling off-grid for weeks at a time, fast and reliable backup is everything. I rely on both the Sandisk Extreme Portable SSD and the Sandisk Extreme Pro Portable SSD to keep my workflow running smoothly, even in the most punishing conditions. They're compact, rugged, and deliver the speed I need for fast offloads in the field. I always go for the largest capacities available — either 4TB or 8TB — because running out of space simply isn't an option. These drives give me total peace of mind, allowing me to focus on capturing the story without compromise.

Never lose your files – make sure to back them up at least once a day while traveling.



LIGHTING GEAR FOR PORTRAITS & TRAVEL

Photography is painting with light – especially in moments where daylight is absent. In these situations, you have the power to create your own light and turn the impossible into the photographable.

- Compact battery-powered flash – Powerful and portable
- On-camera TTL flash with Air Sync – Useful for both on-camera and off-camera setups
- Collapsible softbox or deep umbrella – Provides soft, flattering light
- Small LED light panel – Lifts shadows without disturbing the atmosphere of the scene
- Collapsible reflector – Bounces natural light back onto your subject's face
- Profoto A2
A great lighting system for travel — compact, reliable, and powerful.

Light is your friend – and sometimes your greatest enemy – but there is always a solution. Ethiopia, the Omo Valley



*Use natural light from a door or a window -
that's a wonderful soft light.*

Location: Tibet

BEST & WORST LIGHT – WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Light changes depending on where you are in the world and what time of day you're shooting. You can divide the day into three parts: the soft morning light, the harsh midday light, and the wonderful soft afternoon light that stretches until after the sun has set.



- Best: Golden Hour (sunrise & sunset) – warm, directional, soft light.
- Second Best: Overcast – soft shadows, ideal for portraits.
- Tricky Light: Midday sun – harsh shadows and blown highlights.
- Tips:
 - Use shade during harsh light
 - Turn subjects to avoid squinting
 - Shoot in RAW for better recovery
 - Use a reflector or fill flash in contrasty light

SUPPORT & ESSENTIALS

There are situations where you suddenly need gear you may have forgotten in the rush – and that can be disastrous, causing unnecessary stress and worry.

- Sturdy but lightweight tripod – crucial for landscapes and long exposures
- L-bracket – quickly switch between horizontal and vertical framing
- Camera cleaning kit – especially useful in dusty or humid environments

PACKING & WORKFLOW TIPS

It's the small – but important – things that make all the difference to your success.

- Back up your files twice daily – to two separate drives (keep one in your bag)
- Keep your camera accessible at all times – many of the best moments come unannounced
- Label and organize your cards and drives to avoid mistakes under pressure

There are situations where you need a helping hand – especially when photographing under challenging conditions.

Location: Svalbard, Norway.



PROTECTING YOUR CAMERA GEAR

– BEFORE AND DURING TRAVEL

If you want your camera to last – and your photos to survive – then protection begins before you leave home.

BEFORE THE TRIP:

- Clean and check your gear thoroughly. Make sure everything is working, batteries are charged, lenses are clean, and firmware is updated.
- Use lens and body caps to avoid dust and scratches.
- Pack gear in padded compartments to prevent damage during transport.
- Label everything – from your batteries to your memory cards – so you can easily find and identify your gear when needed.
- Bring weather protection: A rain cover or a few large ziplock bags can protect your camera from sudden rain or dust.

DURING THE TRIP:

- Avoid extreme temperatures. Heat can damage batteries and sensors; cold can cause condensation. Store your camera in the shade or inside your bag when not in use.
- Keep silica gel packs in your bag to reduce humidity and moisture – especially important in tropical or coastal regions.
- Use a UV filter on each lens for extra protection against scratches and dirt.
- Never leave your gear unattended – not in a car, not in a lobby, not even in a zipped backpack in a crowded place.
- Carry a small cleaning kit: lens cloth, blower, and brush. A clean lens equals a clean shot.

READY FOR ANY DESTINATION

– CLOTHING FOR THE TRAVELING PHOTOGRAPHER

The weather, for better or worse, is your constant travel companion – so make sure your clothing protects you from uncomfortable conditions. Being prepared can make all the difference.

CLOTHING FOR PHOTOGRAPHY IN WARM CLIMATES:

- Lightweight, breathable shirts (preferably long-sleeved for sun protection)
- Quick-dry trousers or zip-off pants
- Wide-brimmed hat or cap for sun protection
- UV-protective sunglasses
- Lightweight scarf or buff (for dust and sun protection)
- Comfortable walking shoes or lightweight hiking boots
- Moisture-wicking underwear and socks
- Light rain jacket or windbreaker (compact and packable)
- Photographers' vest or other lightweight gear-carrying solution
- Fingerless gloves (optional, for grip and sweat control)

CLOTHING FOR PHOTOGRAPHY IN COLD CLIMATES:

- Thermal base layers (top and bottom – wool or synthetic)
- Insulating mid-layers (fleece or down jacket)
- Waterproof and windproof outer shell (jacket and trousers)
- Warm, windproof hat (preferably covering the ears)
- Neck gaiter or insulated scarf
- Insulated, waterproof gloves or mittens (plus thin liner gloves)
 - Wool or thermal socks (bring extra pairs)
 - Insulated, waterproof boots with good grip
 - Hand and foot warmers (especially useful during long outdoor sessions)
 - Layering system that allows flexibility with changing weather
 - Weather-sealed gear bag or waterproof backpack cover



Catch the moment when it happens.

Location: Namibia



THE BEST CAMERA BAG FOR TRAVEL – AND WHY YOU MUST CARRY IT ONBOARD

A good camera bag isn't just about comfort – it's your first line of defense.

WHAT MAKES A GREAT TRAVEL CAMERA BAG?:

- Padded compartments that protect each item from bumps and shocks.
- Quick access panels, so you can grab your gear without unpacking everything.
- Weather resistance, so a little rain doesn't ruin your day – or your camera.
- Lockable zippers for security in airports and crowded places.
- Modest appearance – avoid bags that scream “expensive camera inside.”
- Always carry your gear onboard when flying – never check it in. Here's why:
- Airlines are not gentle. Checked luggage is often thrown, crushed, or dropped. That's a disaster for precision gear.
- Baggage may get lost. Imagine arriving on location for a once-in-a-lifetime shoot – with no camera.
- You need access during delays. A bag with your essentials – camera, cards, batteries – should always be within reach.
- If your carry-on limit is tight, prioritize your most critical gear: camera body, key lens, memory cards, batteries, and backup drive.

IN SHORT:

- Your camera is your creative voice. Protect it like your passport.

DON'T FORGET ACCESSORIES

A camera isn't complete without:

- A high-speed memory card
- A sturdy and padded camera bag
- At least one extra battery
- Possibly a protective filter for your lens
- Build these costs into your budget from the start.

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MY 10 BEST TIPS FOR

PORTRAIT PHOTOGRAPHY

- Connect Before You Shoot – Build trust and respect. Make eye contact, smile, and introduce yourself before taking any photos.
- Focus on the Eyes – The eyes are the emotional anchor of any portrait. Always ensure they're sharp.
- Use Natural Light – Soft window light or shaded outdoor areas create flattering results.
- Choose the Right Lens – A short telephoto (like 85mm) gives a natural look without distortion.
- Watch the Background – Keep it simple. Avoid distractions that pull focus from your subject.
- Shoot at a Wide Aperture – Use f/1.8–f/2.8 to blur backgrounds and create depth.
- Use Reflectors or Soft Fill Light – Brighten shadows gently without overpowering natural tones.
- Shoot from Different Angles – Move around your subject to find the most flattering perspective.
- Let the Subject Relax – Give space, don't over-direct. Genuine moments are best.
- Keep the Session Short and Fun – Avoid fatigue and keep energy high.



*It can be challenging to reach the small villages
– like this one on the border between Myanmar and India.*

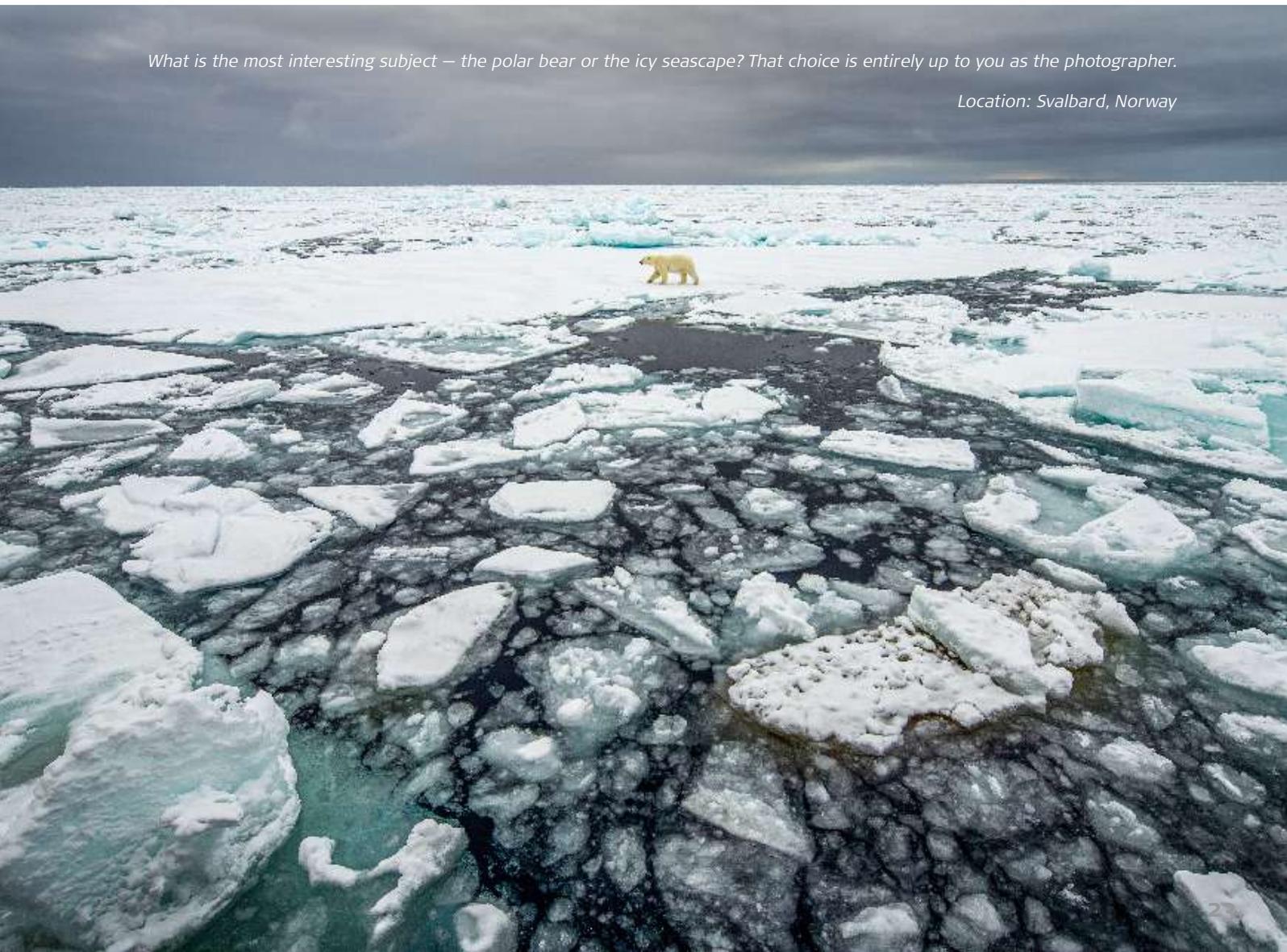
Location: India, Nagaland

WILDLIFE PHOTOGRAPHY

- Know Your Subject – Study animal behavior to anticipate movement.
- Use a Telephoto Lens – A 100–400mm or longer lets you stay distant.
- Use a Fast Shutter Speed – Freeze movement by shooting at 1/1000s or faster.
- Be Patient – Sometimes, you wait hours for the right moment.
- Stay Quiet and Still – Sudden noise or motion can scare off wildlife.
- Shoot in Burst Mode – Capture multiple frames to increase your chance of success.
- Focus on the Eyes – Sharp eyes make powerful wildlife portraits.
- Use Natural Light – Early morning and late evening light are best.
- Stay Ethical – Never bait or disturb animals for a photo.
- Use a Beanbag or Tripod – Stabilize long lenses for sharpness.

What is the most interesting subject – the polar bear or the icy seascape? That choice is entirely up to you as the photographer.

Location: Svalbard, Norway



LANDSCAPE PHOTOGRAPHY

- Use a Tripod – Essential for sharpness, especially in low light.
- Shoot at Golden Hour – Light is softer and more dramatic.
- Use a Wide-Angle Lens – Capture the vastness of the scene.
- Focus One-Third Into the Scene – For maximum depth of field.
- Use Small Apertures (f/8–f/16) – Ensures more of the image is in focus. Add Foreground Interest – Rocks, flowers, or trees create depth.
- Use Filters – Graduated ND filters can balance skies and land.
- Wait for the Right Moment – Light and clouds change quickly.
- Scout Locations Ahead of Time – Find your best composition in advance.
- Check the Weather – Conditions make or break the shot.

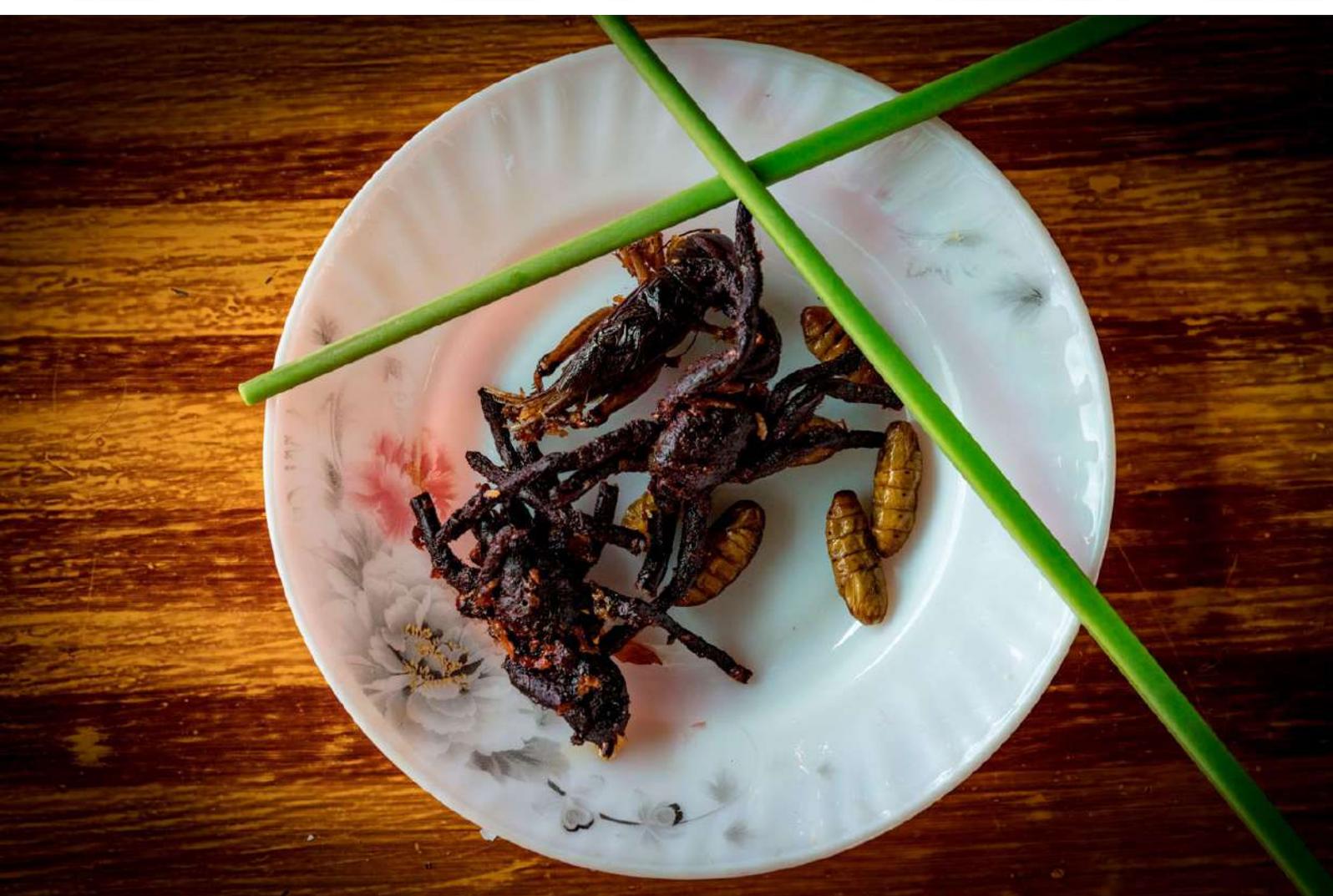
FOOD PHOTOGRAPHY

Funny enough, the food you eat while traveling is often what you remember most – the place where you ate it, the smell, and the taste – for better and often for worse.

- **Use Natural Light Whenever Possible**
Soft, diffused daylight creates beautiful, appetizing images. Position your food near a window and avoid using your camera's built-in flash.
- **Choose the Right Angle**
Top-down works great for flat lays like breakfast spreads, while 45° or straight-on suits layered dishes like burgers or cakes. Match the angle to the food.
- **Keep It Simple and Clean**
Avoid clutter. Let the food be the star. A few well-placed props can enhance the image, but too much distracts the viewer.
- **Use a Neutral Background**
Plain wood, stone, or linen works well to highlight colors and textures. Busy patterns can pull attention away from the dish.
- **Style with Intention**
Garnishes, utensils, napkins, and side elements should serve a purpose. Think like a food stylist — every item in the frame should enhance the composition.
- **Control the Shadows**
Reflectors (like a white foam board or even a napkin) can bounce light into darker areas and reduce harsh shadows.
- **Capture Texture and Detail**
Show the crispness of a crust, the juiciness of a fruit, or the steam rising from a fresh meal. It makes the image come alive.
- **Work Quickly but Carefully**
Food changes fast — sauces run, ice melts, greens wilt. Plan your shot before plating the food so you can shoot it at its best.
- **Shoot RAW if Possible**
RAW files give you more flexibility in post-processing to adjust color balance, highlights, and shadows — crucial in food photography.
- **Edit Thoughtfully**
Boost contrast and clarity slightly, enhance colors gently, and crop carefully. Don't overdo it — food should still look real and delicious.

Landscape photography is often about capturing what the eye can't immediately see – like this river delta in Iceland, photographed from a helicopter. Location: Iceland

"The most memorable food images are often the fun and unexpected ones – like this: grilled spiders and scorpions, served with passion." Location: Cambodia



WHAT TO LOOK FOR WHEN YOU PHOTOGRAPH

There are a few, but important, things to keep in mind before setting off on a photographic adventure.

- Background – Keep it clean and intentional.
- Composition – Use leading lines, framing, and rule of thirds.
- Subject Placement – What's the story? Who or what is the focus?
- Colors – Are they distracting or do they support the emotion?
- Emotion – Does the moment feel genuine?
- Balance and Harmony – Is the image visually pleasing?
- Action or Stillness – Decide what you want to capture.
- Framing – Can you use a door, window, or natural frame?
- Moment – Is this the best moment or should you wait a few more seconds?

It's the small details in your images that make the biggest difference – like in this portrait, where the subject's expression and the soft, beautiful light tell the real story. Location: Mandalay, Myanmar





INSPIRATION FOR PHOTOGRAPHY

Books are a cornerstone of photography. The books created by the photographers who inspire us often become lifelong companions – visual reference points and artistic mentors in printed form.

Henri Cartier-Bresson

- "The Decisive Moment"
A landmark book in photographic history where Cartier-Bresson outlines his concept of capturing the perfect, fleeting instant.
- "Henri Cartier-Bresson: Photographer"
A retrospective collection showcasing his mastery of geometry, timing, and human expression.

Robert Capa

- "Slightly Out of Focus"
Capa's vivid and humorous memoir from World War II, filled with iconic images and personal reflections.
- "Robert Capa: Photographs"
A comprehensive overview of his groundbreaking war photography.

Annie Leibovitz

- "Annie Leibovitz: At Work"
A behind-the-scenes look at some of her most famous portrait sessions, with commentary on technique and process.
- "Annie Leibovitz: Portraits 2005–2016"
Striking portraits from a decade of capturing cultural icons and artists.

Diane Arbus

- "Diane Arbus: An Aperture Monograph"
A haunting and empathetic collection of portraits that explore the margins of society.
- "Diane Arbus: Revelations"
A deeper look into her creative process and legacy, including personal notes and unpublished work.

Jan Grarup

- "And Then There Was Silence"
A harrowing yet beautifully composed body of work from global conflict zones.
- "Shadowland"
War photography with emotional weight, documenting human suffering and resilience.

Richard Avedon

- "In the American West"
Psychologically intense portraits of everyday Americans — raw, minimal, unforgettable.
- "Performance"
Portraits of actors, dancers, and performers revealing the soul behind the persona.

Sebastião Salgado

- "Genesis"
A visual journey through untouched landscapes and ancient cultures, captured in stunning black and white.
- "Workers"
A moving tribute to laborers around the world — dignified, gritty, and epic.

Steve McCurry

- "Portraits"
An emotional and vibrant look into faces from around the globe, rich in cultural depth.
- "The Unguarded Moment"
Evocative scenes of life captured with McCurry's signature use of color and timing.

Magnum Photos

- "Magnum Contact Sheets"
An invaluable look at how master photographers selected their iconic frames from full rolls of film.
- "Magnum Stories"
Thirty in-depth photographic essays from some of the greatest photojournalists of our time.

The fascination with foreign cultures can open many doors to great and lifelong experiences.

Location: Nagaland, India



Even a busy city can be almost like a landscape.

Location: Kathmandu, Nepal







LEARNING PHOTOGRAPHY ON THE ROAD – WORKSHOPS & EDUCATION

Travel photography workshops are a great way to combine adventure with skill-building. You'll learn on location, get hands-on feedback, and travel with like-minded people.

Some of the best workshop providers:

www.bettermoments.com

Workshops vary in style, so pick one based on your interest.

THINGS YOU SHOULD NEVER DO AS A PHOTOGRAPHER

There are "invisible" rules to keep in mind when photographing and exploring the world on an adventure.

- Don't photograph people without permission.
- Don't ignore cultural norms – always do your homework.
- Don't be intrusive – respect personal and sacred space.
- Don't touch wildlife or the environment.
- Don't use flash where it's inappropriate.
- Don't forget backups – data loss is real.
- Don't show disrespect – photography is a relationship.
- Don't overshoot – shoot with intention.
- Don't ignore your safety – be aware of your surroundings.
- Don't chase the shot at any cost.

Common sense and empathy are two essential foundations of photography – always make sure the person you're photographing feels comfortable and respected.

Location: Havana, Cuba

BEFORE TAKE OFF

Be prepared – it will always give you an edge when it comes to capturing the best shots.

- Practice Before You Go – Know your camera inside out.
- Set Realistic Goals – Don't expect perfection. Focus on learning.
- Travel Light – One camera, 1–2 lenses, no more.
- Have a Backup Plan – Extra batteries, cards, and backups.
- Learn Basic Local Words – Especially for “hello,” “thank you,” and “photo?”
- Wake Up Early – Great light and less crowded scenes.
- Keep Notes – Record places, names, and stories.
- Engage with People – Be curious and kind.
- Plan but Stay Flexible – Serendipity is often the best guide.
- Edit Sparingly – Don't oversaturate or overprocess. Keep it real.

You never know when something unexpected will appear – that's why you should always check your gear before and during the journey. It needs to work when it matters most. Location: Svalbard, Norway





SHOULD YOU PAY PEOPLE YOU PHOTOGRAPH WHEN TRAVELING?

There's no simple answer. In some places, paying is expected. In others, it can feel exploitative.

Best practices:

- If someone asks for money, give fairly.
- If photographing performers or models, pay like a professional.
- Always be respectful and grateful.

Often, a genuine smile is the best form of "payment" when taking a portrait of a stranger. Money is rarely the deciding factor – smile, and the world will smile back at you. Location: Namibia

WHAT NOT TO DO

Worth remembering

- Don't shove your lens into people's faces in markets. It ruins the trust and the moment.
- Don't ask a child to pose alone without asking their guardian.
- Don't pay children directly – always speak to an adult.
- Don't dress or behave disrespectfully in conservative areas.

The answer is simple: think before you shoot. Location: China



MASTERING COMPOSITE PHOTOGRAPHY GENRE



Never underestimate the power of creating harmony in your images through simple – yet often essential – compositions. Location: Myanmar, Bagu

ION ACROSS

S *Composition is the foundation of a great photograph. It's the way you guide the viewer's eye through the frame, tell a story, and create balance. Whether you're shooting wildlife in the savannah, portraits in a quiet alley, or a bustling street market, strong composition makes your images stand out.*



WILDLIFE PHOTOGRAPHY

In wildlife photography, your subject often moves fast – so your composition must be intentional and responsive.

- Focus on the eyes: Just like in portraiture, sharp eyes are essential.
- Leave space to move: If the animal is walking or looking in one direction, leave negative space in front of it. This adds tension and narrative.
- Use natural framing: Trees, bushes, or rocks can frame your subject and add depth.
- Avoid cluttered backgrounds: Use a wide aperture to blur distractions and isolate the animal.

LANDSCAPE PHOTOGRAPHY

Landscapes are about scale, depth, and mood. Your goal is to lead the viewer into the scene.

- Use the rule of thirds: Place the horizon either in the top or bottom third of the frame – not in the middle.
- Find strong foreground elements: A rock, tree, or reflection can anchor the scene.
- Use leading lines: Rivers, paths, fences, or clouds can guide the viewer's eye.
- Shoot during golden hours: The soft light of sunrise and sunset adds magic to any scene.

PORTRAIT PHOTOGRAPHY

Portraits are about connection and character. Composition helps you highlight the subject's story.

- Frame tight or wide – with purpose: Close-ups reveal emotion, while wider shots show context.
- Watch the background: Keep it simple or meaningful. Avoid distracting elements near the head.
- Place the eyes on the upper third line: This gives balance and draws attention to the subject's gaze.
- Use light creatively: Natural window light, open shade, or backlighting can enhance the portrait's mood.

STREET PHOTOGRAPHY

Street scenes are spontaneous. Your composition must be quick but thoughtful.

- Look for strong geometry: Lines, patterns, shadows, and symmetry are powerful tools.
- Wait for the right subject: Find a good background or composition first – then wait for a person to walk into it.
- Shoot from the hip or low angles: This can create surprising, authentic perspectives.
- Embrace imperfection: Street photos don't need to be clean – tension and contrast can tell great stories.

TRAVEL PHOTOGRAPHY

Travel photography often combines all genres. Your job is to show the feel of a place.

- Think in layers: Foreground, middle ground, and background can add depth and context.
- Use environmental portraits: Show people in their surroundings to add cultural narrative.
- Capture details: Don't forget small compositions – signs, textures, hands – they tell rich stories.
- Balance light and shadow: Contrast adds drama and dimension, especially in vibrant settings.

FINAL THOUGHT:

- Composition is not about following rules – it's about understanding them so you can bend or break them with purpose. Practice, review your images critically, and always ask: *What story am I telling with this frame?*



A portrait always grows when it tells a story about culture and traditions.

Location: Ethiopia

YOU CAPTURE MEMORIES THAT LAST

Travel moments are often fleeting – the morning light over a mountain, a smile from a stranger, a hidden alley in a new city. A photograph freezes those moments in time so you can return to them again and again.

You see the world with fresh eyes

When you travel with a camera, you have to slow down and look closely. Light, color, texture, emotion – everything becomes more noticeable. Photography trains you to be present and curious.

You tell stories

Photos from your journey become visual stories you can share – with family, friends, or even a wider audience. They speak across language barriers and make your experience relatable to others.

You grow creatively

Travel challenges you: different light, different cultures, new landscapes. Photographing in unfamiliar environments improves your creativity, adaptability, and technical skills.

You honor the people and places you meet

Thoughtful, respectful photography can be a tribute to the beauty, resilience, and spirit of the people you encounter. It becomes a way to celebrate their stories — not just your own.

You create a visual journal of your life

Over time, your travel photos become more than souvenirs. They mark your growth as a person and a photographer. They remind you not just where you've been — but who you've become.

So whether you shoot with a phone or a pro camera, take your time, shoot with intention, and let the camera help you see the world — and yourself — in a new way.

TRAVEL PHOTOGRAPHY & SAFETY

Photography is a powerful tool for storytelling, but not everywhere in the world welcomes cameras. In some countries, taking pictures can be restricted, misunderstood – or even dangerous. Knowing where photography is not allowed is essential for every traveling photographer.

- Military sites, police, or airports
- Government buildings or infrastructure
- Religious sites and ceremonies
- People without their consent
- Research local laws before traveling.
- Know what you can and cannot photograph.
- Avoid political events, demonstrations, and military sites.
- Respect religious and cultural boundaries. In some places, even showing a camera can be offensive.
- Blend in. Dress modestly and act respectfully. Don't act like a tourist with a mission – behave like a guest with gratitude.
- Follow local advice. Listen to guides or local contacts. They know the risks.

AND LAST BUT NOT LEAST

H.C. Andersen, one of Denmark's greatest fairy tale authors, loved to travel and write about his journeys. He often stayed in manor houses, castles, and inns — usually under the roof, where he had a magnificent view. From there, he would sit and write, sharing his stories with the rest of the world.

H.C. Andersen was a wise and respected man, and people always listened to his two pieces of travel advice:

Always bring a rope so you can escape if the building catches fire.

And the second — and for me the most important — piece of advice, which I've followed ever since I first read it:

TO TRAVEL IS TO LIVE.

That, too, I pass on to you.

When visiting a market - regardless where in the world - you will need many strong faces.

Location: Ethiopia





Location: Omo Valley, Ethiopia



better  moments