CREATIVE PHOTOGRAPHY TRAINING

ISLE OF SKYE & GLENCOE PHOTOGRAPHY WORKSHOPS with NIGEL FORSTER

3 and 4 Day Workshops with accommodation available

INFORMATION AND ADVICE NOTES

Explore and photograph the wonderful Isle of Skye. I have visited the island on many occasions and am familiar with the popular and less known spots. ***If you wish and if convenient for your travel arrangements, we'll also explore the Glencoe area either on the Saturday on the way up (with the 4/5 day workshop) or on the following Saturday on the way back (with the 3/4 day version). This is a free option.***

There are 2 options for this trip: 4/5 days between Saturday and Wednesday 3 Day between Wednesday and the following Saturday.

About me: My work is characterised by the use of striking natural light and eye for simplicity in composition. I'm also experienced in long exposure and night sky photography, both of which will be a feature of the workshop.

Mealt Falls at Kilt Rock

River Sligachan and the Cuillin Mountains

I will pass on my thoughts, ideas and creativity to you and take your photography to a very different level.

ABOUT THE ISLE OF SKYE

The **Isle of Skye** is an island of 1,656km2 situated off the west coast of Scotland, separated from Kyle of Lochalsh on the mainland by the Skye Bridge which spans Loch Alsh. It is known for its rugged landscapes, picturesque fishing villages and medieval castles. The largest island in the Inner Hebrides archipelago, it has an indented coastline of peninsulas and narrow lochs, radiating out from a mountainous interior. Portree is the capital and largest town on the island.

Our locations cover the many aspects of the island's landscape; full details of locations will be explained as part of your introduction on the first (Saturday) evening. It may be helpful if you familiarise yourself with the geography of the Island beforehand by studying the following maps:

Maps (available in Broadland / Kyle of Lochalsh or in advance of the workshop):

- OS 1:50,000 Landranger Map 23, North Skye
- OS 1:50,000 Landranger Map 32, South Skye & Cuillin Hills
- OS 1:25,000 Explorer Map 408, Skye – Trotternish & The Storr
- OS 1:25,000 Explorer Map 411, Skye – Cuillin Hills

Allt Dearg Cottage (our base for the workshop), is located via a track (left turn off the A863 heading west) 700m past the Sligachan Hotel.

Useful references:

- **Lonely Planet:** https://www.lonelyplanet.com/scotland/highlands-and-northern-islands/isle-of-skye/travel-tips-and-articles/77507
- **Isle of Skye Website**: http://www.skye.co.uk/

Our accommodation

We stay at Allt Dearg Cottage http://www.glendrynoch.co.uk/cottages-allt-dearg/. It's great location at the base of the Cuillin Mountains on the River Sligachan. It's designed for self-catering, so we'll be sharing meals and tasks. It's got WIFI (on a good day!) and phone reception and is in an unbeatable location! **Please click on the link for full information**

We cover any additional costs (such as electric and heating) associated with the cottage. However food and drink is not included apart from teas & coffees. We anticipate mainly sharing meals, we will therefore need to be advised of any dietary requirements and pooling costs that need to be taken into account.

Access into the Cottage is from 4pm on Saturday 17th November and from 2pm Wednesday 21st November respectively. If travelling independently, please advise me of approximate arrival time. Food shopping is available at Portree (20 mins drive) and Broadford (30 mins) from the cottage.

ABOUT THE WORKSHOP

Within the workshops we're able to accommodate a range of experience and previous knowledge but you should have some previous experience and your primary interest will be a love of the landscape and a wish to interpret it though your photography. We will cover a range of photographic subjects and themes, developing your range of knowledge and skills and explore your own preferences.

The itinerary is in outline form and may be modified according to the specific capabilities and preferences of participants. You will need a reasonable level of fitness to complete the mountain days but these elements of the trip can be amended in accordance with your capabilities. Most locations however, are within easy reach of the car. We may also make day-by-day changes to locations to allow for weather conditions or group preferences. The range and quality of teaching is not affected by any changes.

The 3 Day and 4 Day options follow a similar itinerary and both include all key locations, but the 4 day option allows more time to revisit in different conditions and get to another couple of more remote locations. We'll also look to include some time on time-lapse photography

WHAT YOU'LL LEARN

Whatever your exisiting level of knowledge and experience, the workshop offers expert tuition in both the technical and creative aspects of photography and enable you to create images you've always wanted. They offer learning in the latest techniques in digital photography, using Photoshop and Lightroom at the end of the course to process and print your best images.

Finally, although our courses are essentially outdoor or 'landscape' based, any course participant needing advice on any other aspect or subject in photography need only ask. We will do our best to help and if possible allow time for you to practise your preference or issue during the course.

Key skills which the workshop covers for example:

Technical skills:

- Recommended camera settings for landscape photography
- Use of lenses in landscape photography
- Taking control of your image through use of manual camera settings
- Use of filters and accessories and how they can enhance your photography
- Shooting in RAW and RAW processing

Creative understanding

- Guidelines to effective composition – from the basics to advanced.
- How to create dramatic landscapes through understanding light and the weather
- Long Exposure and Night Photography
- Light and colour theory
- Creative uses of long exposure photography.
- Understanding Black & White photography

Digital camera and processing techniques:

Our priority will be optimum processing of your RAW image, but we will introduce other ideas and techniques.

Marsco at dawn from Sligachan

Theory Sessions

We will include theory sessions which will mainly take place in the evenings, but also potentially during the day in the event of bad weather. In this case, we would also spend additional time on post-processing. Main theory subjects include the following:

- Composition in Landscape Photography
- Developing a Style in Landscape Photography
- How we perceive and interpret the landscape
- Long Exposure Photography
- The Weather, Seasons and Light in Landscape Photography
- People and the Landscape
- Travel Photography – creating a story of your trip

Practical Sessions (on Location)

The practical sessions will take you to a wide range of locations throughout the island, timed to potentially capture them at the best time of day. There will be a mix of familiar locations and those 'more off the beaten track'. However the following detail is a guide only and is intended to be flexible according to weather conditions and group preferences. We may for example revisit locations if the weather has been against us first time round.

GLENCOE AND THE WEST COAST TO SKYE

Summary

On the way up to Skye, there's the opportunity to visit both the iconic landscape at Glencoe, and other photographic attractions nearer to the Island. I will be travelling up to Skye on the first Saturday and returning on the second one. Typically I pick up a customer or two at Glasgow on the first Saturday on the way up and can therefore utilise this day anyway (this isn't possible for the return trip), but if you're driving up & back yourself we can link up & photograph these locations.

Three Sisters at Glencoe (above) and the Glen Etive Waterfalls (left). Two of the great sights at Glencoe, that we can visit on the way to or on returning from Skye

Eilean Donan Castle – less than 10 miles from the Skye Bridge & a great location at any time of day

ISLE OF SKYE – BASIC SCHEDULE

- **Lists of indicative locations**; it is unlikely that we will get to all locations listed & intend to prioritise those suitable for the weather conditions and group preferences (however within these there are 'essentials' such as Old Man of Storr, Quiraing and Elgol). We also intend to split the group on occasions giving the group maximum choice of locations. Please feel free to research the locations listed in advance and give us your thoughts before or during the trip.
- **Revisiting Locations:** Depending on weather conditions and group preferences, we may revisit specific locations (for example if, on our first visit the weather has been against us). For this reason, we intend to largely leave Day 4 (Tuesday 20th) flexible.

4/5 Day Schedule

- **Day 1 (Saturday 17th)**: We aim to arrive at the cottage around 4pm, travelling from Glasgow, through Glencoe and the west coast to Kyle of Lochalsh (see above). On arrival at the cottage, after picking up shopping, there is an introductory / theory session in the evening before / after dinner. If it is a clear evening we will include a short night sky session outside the cottage.
- **Days 2-4 (Sunday 18th – Tuesday 20th)** will commence at dawn and we will plan to be out on location all day; packed lunches will therefore be prepared the night before. However, in the event of bad weather, we may amend the itinerary. We will include at least one night sky session on Days 2-4. Each evening will include theory, post-processing and review sessions.
- **Day 5 (Wednesday 21st)** will be a half day on location; if dawn looks promising we will go to the River Sligachan and / or the Fairy Pools at Glenbrittle for an 11.00 am finish

3/4 Day Schedule

- **Day 1 (Wednesday 21st)** starts around 1.00pm. We'll stay fairly local to the cottage in the afternoon, then include an introductory / theory session in the evening before / after dinner. If it is a clear evening we will include a short night sky session outside the cottage.
- **Days 2-3 (Thursday 22nd – Friday 23rd)** will commence at dawn and we will plan to be out on location all day; as per days 2-4 above. We will include at least one night sky session on Days 2-3. Each evening will include theory, post-processing and review sessions.
- **Day 4 (Saturday 24th)** will include a dawn start; the cottage has to be vacated by 10.00am & in order to catch the light at Glencoe we have to leave by then. We leave Skye and anyone travelling back to Glasgow or the south is welcome to join me to visit Eilean Donan and Glencoe on the way down. We'd aim to get to Glencoe by 2.00pm. Our final location will be the Glen Etive waterfall.

ISLE OF SKYE 4/5 DAY WORKSHOP ITINERARY

(For 3/4 day we'll still cover all the main locations)

THIS ITINERARY IS A GUIDE ONLY & MAY BE VARIED ACCORDING TO WEATHER CONDITIONS, GROUP PREFERENCES AND TIMESCALES

Day 1 – Optional visit to Glencoe and Eilean Donan (and anything else we see!)

We meet at Glasgow or Glencoe and explore the area before travelling north to Skye via Spean Bridge, Loch Duich and Eilean Donan Castle

Day 1 - First Afternoon / Evening (from 4.00pm Saturday 12th November):

We meet at Allt Dearg Cottage from 4pm. Nigel will go through our plans for the 4 days. Once we've organised ourselves in the cottage, he will introduce you to compositional theory and camera controls for landscape photography. If it's a clear evening we'll also go out for a quick night shoot.

Day 2 – River Sligachan / West of Island

On our first full day we stay in the central area of the island in the morning and travel west to Dunvegan and Neist Point in the afternoon for sunset. It will give you a chance to practice your camera controls and a range of compositional ideas.

Locations visited from:

- River Sligachan
- Loch Caol
- Portree Harbour & Town
- The Fairy Pools (Glenbrittle)
- Dunvegan Castle
- Talisker Bay & Carbost
- Neist Point

Day 3 – Storr, The Quiraing and Trotternish Ridge

We capture either Old Man of Storr or the Quiraing at Dawn ***(potentially returning to the other location on Day 4)*** and then explore the Trotternish Ridge. The group may be split depending on preferences. We'll also stop briefly at Mealt falls, which dramatically drop off Kilt Rock near Staffin. The reminder of the day will be spent at the landscape around Uig and the Fairy Glen with some great rock formations. We may stay to capture the night sky.

Locations visited from:

- The Old Man of Storr & Loch Fada
- Mealt Falls (Kilt Rock) & Brides Veil falls
- The Quiraing and Trotternish Ridge
- Uig and the Fairy Glen / The Falls of Rha
- Trotternish Peninsula (Kilmaluag Bay / Kilmuir Church

Day 4 – Red Cuillin, Elgol and South Skye

In the morning there wil be a choice of either walking up the Red Cuillin with great views of the Black Cuillin and the Island at dawn, or staying low and going to Kyleakin Castle and Skye Bridge. In the afternoon we intend to meet up at Elgol with its stunning views towards the Black Cuillin Mountains

Locations visited from:

- Beinn Dearg and the Red Cuillin
- Kyleakin Castle
- Ben Cleat & the Cuillin Coastal Path
- Elgol Coastline & view to the Cuillin
- Isleornsay Lighthouse & Point of Sleat

Day 5 – Departure & either repeat dawn start or visit locations on route back

This will be a half day max on location; if dawn looks promising we will go out early (perhaps Sligachan, Fairy Pools or even back to Old Man of Storr) and return around midday for departure.

INCLUSIONS / EXCLUSIONS

Tour Price (£695 for 4 Day / £525 for 3 Day) includes:

- Expert tuition and Guide Services with Nigel Forster
- Accommodation at Allt Dearg Cottage
- Transfers by private car from Glasgow, Kyle of Lochalsh, Portree or other location by arrangement for those travelling by bus or train.
- Transport to and between locations (up to 4 passengers can be transported in each car).
- Photographic instruction and full course notes (in PDF form)
- Use of camera equipment if required
- Tea & Coffee at the cottage premises
- Filters and other accessories if required

Tour Price excludes:

- Meals / drinks. Catering will be shared.
- Transport to the Isle of Skye (except by prior arrangement)
- Holiday insurance & insurance of personal camera equipment

EQUIPMENT / CLOTHING

Photographic Equipment

Essential requirements:
Please bring your camera and any equipment you have (along with your camera manual if possible).

- Camera (with spare body) and Lenses (this might seem obvious but I frequently have customers who leave some lenses at home thinking they won't need them!)
- Memory Card (s). You should bring at least 64GB of cards with room for 2000 minimum images shot in RAW
- Camera manual
- Card reader
- Full battery + at least 2 spares.
- **Your battery charger (do not forget this).**
- Tripod

Optional items (but please bring them if you have them)

- Remote release
- Filters: e.g. Polarising / Neutral Density / Graduated Neutral Density
- Flash
- Monopod
- Any other accessories
- ***Laptop if you have it, loaded with your preferred imaging software (perhaps should be on essentials list above)***

(I can assist with some of these if required. I would also be happy to offer advice on purchasing any equipment you may be looking for).

Other Clothing / Equipment

Clothing / Footwear / Protection

- Waterproof Jacket and Trousers. These should be Goretex or equivalent material.
- Windproof jacket for dry but windy conditions
- DriFlo / Wicking layers are best for humid or wet conditions
- Fleece top & Jacket
- Walking Boots / socks and at least one other pair of footwear.
- A change of footwear other than your walking boots.
- Head protection: One or both of fleece or waterproof hat which protects ears
- Gloves. Waterproof and / or 'Windblock' Fleece pair. Fingerless mitts are also useful for accessing dials. Bring at least 2 pairs of gloves.
- Head torch with rechargeable batteries for dawn and night sessions
- Golf umbrella made from carbon fibre. Wind resistant ones are best

Other items for location use:

- Mobile Phone (however reception cannot be relied upon on Skye). We will need your mobile phone number in advance
- Maps of area (please see OS map list above)
- Flask for hot drinks
- Walking stick if you prefer

Items for accommodation / other use

- Normal clothing for 5-6 days
- Most utensils are provided but you may want to bring anything specific
- Towels (available for rent but we suggest to bring your own)
- Toiletries & other personal effects

Image overlooking Old Man of Storr from February 2017 workshop

HEALTH & SAFETY NOTES (ADVISORY ONLY – HEALTH & SAFETY OF YOURSELF AND OTHERS IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY)

Key general points are as follows:

- This photography workshop is based in terrain consistent with mountain and upland landscapes. We are usually out for 8-9 hours visiting a number of locations. Importantly we may also be reaching two or three of these locations in near darkness to catch dawn light.
- We ensure that the course is designed around your capabilities, and if applicable, takes full account of any physical limitations. In all cases we discuss the content of the workshop with you beforehand based on your answers to the Workshop Questionnaire.
- With exposed locations, on each day we will make an assessment of their safety, and make a final decision based on the weather conditions. There will always be alternatives if weather conditions do not permit our first choice
- ***Please note however that this is a photography course and not a mountain trek***; the emphasis is on stopping at specific locations to learn and practice photographic techniques and to explore the potential for great photography. Therefore, the majority of locations are fairly accessible from the car; however we do intend to offer 2 upland half days for those wishing to do this (see itinerary).
- We only stray from from a public footpath or right of way to get to key viewpoints and all will be safe; you will therefore not be asked to experience unfamiliar or untested routes to photographic locations.
- ***All are locations accessed by members of the public and promoted as such by The Highland Council and Visit Scotland.*** **Anyone leaving agreed locations do so at their own risk.**

General Health & Safety Advice

Please bear the following specific hazards in mind (these are not comprehensive: others may be around which you should be mindful of):

- **Mountain Paths**. Be aware of the steep embankments and rocky outcrops. The path surface may also be slippery. Do not stand next to edges or back away from a vantage point without looking behind you.
- **Waterfalls.** These often have slippery and rocky paths and potentially fast flowing water at all locations. Never stand on wet rocks or in deep or fast moving water to take pictures from; even if the vantage point may be better from there. Current can be strong and ground conditions underneath extremely slippery. Never, ever stand near the top of a waterfall.
- **Always wear waterproof walking boots & clothing.** Please also note the other 'Essential Requirements', such as a Headtorch listed above.
- **Don't forget how distracted you can be when taking photographs**. Look around you at all times. Do not at any time place your and others lives in danger by taking unnecessary risks.
- **Never keep your camera on a tripod while walking on uneven or slippery ground or near water.** Always remove it from the tripod and pack it away before moving to a new position. This is because if you do slip, your first instinct will be to protect the camera rather than yourself!

- **Do not leave any item of your equipment in a position where it may be a hazard to any other person in the area**; this is of utmost importance in an area such as this with limited access & dangerous hazards.
- **Be aware of traffic at all times in towns and villages**. It is easy to become distracted with photography; be a conscious of other road and footpath users.

Health and Safety Advice at Specific Locations

The following locations in particular are highlighted as having particular potential hazards:

- **The path to and above the Old Man of Storr.** The route up to Old man of Storr involves climbing a well maintained but fairly steep and narrow path. It is 350m from road level to Storr and another 200m to the ridge above. You may experience significant climatic conditions during the ascent and you must be prepared for cold and windy conditions.
- **Trotternish Ridge and the Quiraing.** It is our intention to explore this ridge beyond the easily accessible location on the minor road from Staffin to Uig. The path is generally safe but can be exposed in places. However if you prefer to remain close to the parking area, this is a safe location, though you should be mindful if steep drops from locations and you should not stand too close to the edge.
- **Beinn Dearg and the Red Cuillins.** The Red Cuillins involve a climb to an altitude of 650-750m. They are therefore exposed. However paths are generally well maintained with few steep drops. However, with any high level mountain location you should be careful at all times.
- **Elgol coastline.** This is a rocky coastal landscape. Surfaces can be slippery when accessing viewpoints and you should be careful at all times. You should also be careful of incoming tides.
- **Other waterfall locations such as Sligachan, Neist Point and the Fairy Pools.** This locations are generally safe. However you should always be careful to watch your footing with any rocky and slippery surfaces. Neist Point also has a sheer drop. DO NOT stand too close to the cliff edge to get your images.
- **The Black Cuillins:** It is not our intention to climb into the Black Cuillins and the Cuillin ridge on this workshop. This will be included as a location in a workshop in the new year

First Aid / Emergency Medical Treatment

We will have a full First Aid Kit available in the event of any minor accidents; this will be kept in one of the vehicles and taken with us on the mountain days. However, if you have any specific medical conditions or requirements please bring the necessary medications or first aid items with you. Should the unlikely need arise, there are 2 hospitals on Skye at Portree and Broadford.

OUR ENVIRONMENT

'Leave only footprints, take only photographs': A familiar expression but very relevant to a business promoting photography. Our key principles are as follows:

- **We never leave anything behind**: we always take your litter home including biodegradable matter. We do not accept littering in ourselves or others.
- **We never cause unnecessary erosion** by straying off used footpaths or tracks, particularly on heavily used rights of way. We never climb on walls or exposed foundations of historic monuments and encourage others not to do so. If stiles are provided do not climb gates to get to locations
- **Our photographic subjects stay where they belong**: from objects found in the landscape to tiny wild flowers always stay where they are and never go to the studio
- **We only go where we're allowed to**: we only stray off common land or rights of way with permission. We do not climb over walls or over fences to get to a location
- **Recycling**: If recycling facilities are available at our accommodation, please use them as instructed. If we are required

CREATIVE PHOTOGRAPHY TRAINING

MY CONTACT DETAILS

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