CREATIVE PHOTOGRAPHY TRAINING

SNOWDONIA PHOTOGRAPHY WORKSHOP TRIP NOTES

On dates as advertised or on any available date for 3 or more booking together

Snowdon and Crib Goch from the road to Capel Curig

GENERAL INFORMATION

Explore and photograph the wonderful Snowdonia National Park. There are 2 options for this trip: 4 days between Saturday and Wednesday & 3 days between Wednesday and Saturday.

The workshop is planned to give the photographer a range of skills and experience in both the technical and creative aspects of photography. Locations are designed to offer experience in camera control, technique and composition, with photographic opportunities and challenges.

Key points as follows:

- The locations are largely 'landscape photography' focussed but if you have other interests the understanding and skills covered are transferrable to other subjects.
- If the weather is good, there will be more emphasis on outdoor learning with limited time inside. However, in the event of bad weather, tutorial sessions may be extended.
- The locations are designed to offer a range of experience of use of camera control, technique and composition, with photographic opportunities and challenges.
- All locations are fairly easily accessible from car parking areas with little walking involved between locations (no walk more than 10 mins).

ABOUT SNOWDONIA

Snowdonia National Park is an island of 2,132km2 extending from Aberdyfi in tits southerly extent and Conwy on the north Coast. It is an incredibly diverse national park, providing a huge range of photographic opportunities. It's best known for its mountains but includes industrial landscapes, best known around Blaenau Ffestiniog, some great waterfalls, historic castles and monuments, inland lakes and picturesque villages such as Beddgelert. It also has stretches of coastline on its western edge, though this is more given over to holiday parks and perhaps offers less to the photographer. Apart from the Snowdon range, it includes the lesser known mountains of the Rhinogs, the Arrans, and in the southern part, Cadair Idris, one of our destinations on this trip.

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:

Maps (available throughout the National Park or in advance of the workshop):

- OS 1:50,000 Landranger Map 115, Snowdonia / Yr Wyddfa
- OS 1:50,000 Landranger Map 124, Dolgellau
- OS 1:50,000 Landranger Map 125, Bala & Lake Vyrnwy
- OS 1:25,000 Explorer Map OL 17, Snowdon / Yr Wyddfa
- OS 1:25,000 Explorer Map OL 23, Cadair Idris & Llyn Tegid
- OS 1:25,000 Explorer Map OL 18, Harlech, Portmadog & Bala

Useful references:

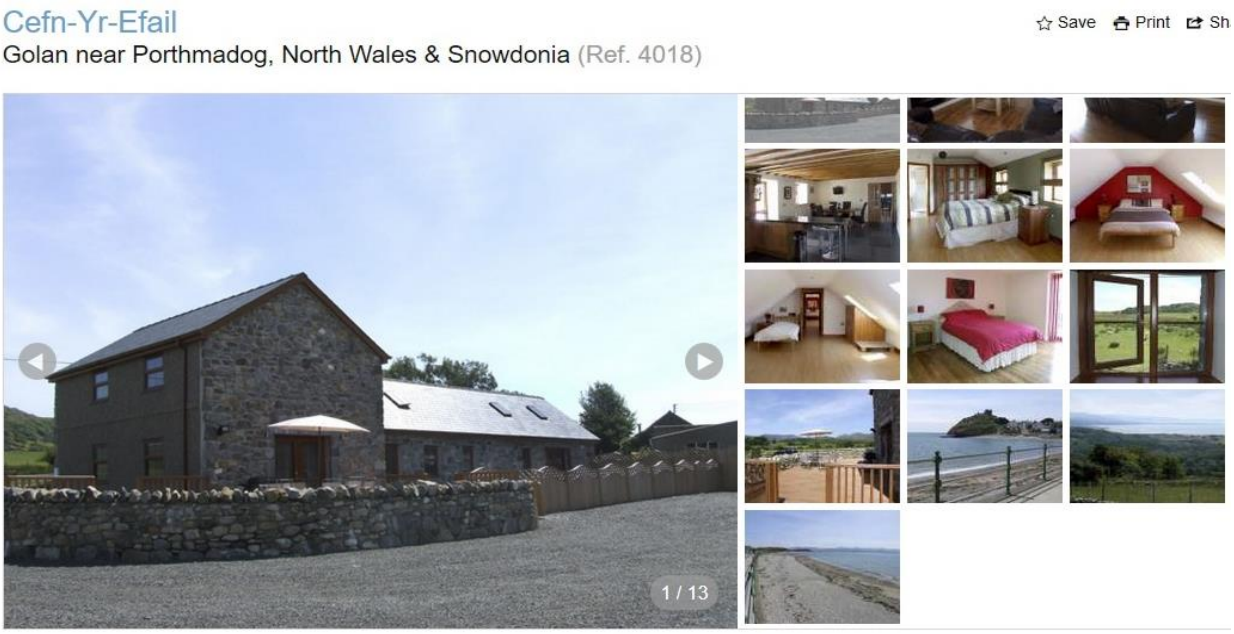
- **Lonely Planet:** https://www.lonelyplanet.com/wales/snowdonia-national-park-parc-cenedlaethol-eryri
- **Visit Snowdonia**: http://www.visitsnowdonia.info/

WORKSHOP PREPARATION

- Please ensure that you read this paper thoroughly before the workshop. It contains information and advice which will be help you get the most from your time
- Please try to understand as much as you can about your camera beforehand, and bring your manual along to check anything that you or I may be unsure about
- You shouldn't need to take notes: comprehensive course notes are provided in digital form at the end of the workshop. However, you may wish to make a note of key points

OUR ACOMMODATION

Cefn yr Efail is a spacious and comfortable farmhouse perfectly located on the edge of Snowdonia National Park. It lies within easy access of so many of the great sights and photographic opportunities that the National Park has to offer, from the Slate Mines of Blaenau Ffestioniog, great monuments such as Harlech and Caernarfon Castle and of course the magnificent mountains of Snowdonia. Anyone booking alone will have their own room while all are double bedrooms so two booking together can share in comfort. The farmhouse has plenty of communal space and all facilities including wifi.



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

WHAT YOU'LL LEARN

Whatever your existing level of knowledge and experience, the workshop offers expert tuition in both the technical and creative aspects of photography and enable you to create striking images. They offer learning in the latest techniques in digital photography, using Photoshop and Lightroom at the end of the course to process your 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 during the workshop.

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 techniques.

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

WORKSHOP TASKS

While the list of tasks included within this paper give an indication of the basic structure of the teaching you will find that tasks are frequently interchangeable and techniques repeated at different locations.

The 3 key themes that generally run through all or most tasks are:

- Developing your knowledge of your camera, its settings and controls
- Developing your understanding of exposure and natural light control
- Developing a creative eye for composition in landscape photography.

These 3 themes are supplemented by other aspects such as (examples):

- Understanding the RAW format and RAW processing
- Exploring your subject using a creative 'Point of View'
- Controlling focus and depth of field
- Use of specific techniques in landscape photography
- Use of filters and other accessories.

This is intended to ensure that you end the course with plenty of practise at learning techniques and are fully familiar with the use of your full range of camera controls.

The essential requirements for the workshop (instruction will be provided on all of below as required):

- All images will be shot in RAW for post processing
- All images will be shot using manual exposure settings
- We will use a single focus point for focussing (or use manual focus if you wish)
- Post Processing will be in Adobe Photoshop CC. I also have Adobe Lightroom 6 and Adobe Photoshop Elements 12 if you are more familiar with these.

SNOWDONIA – ITINERARY SUMMARY

- **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 Snowdon, Tryfan and the magnificent castles in the National Park). Please feel free to research the locations listed in advance and give us your thoughts before or during the trip.
- **Mountain View Locations:** These are offered as options depending on weather conditions and group preferences. However it must be remembered that these take longer to reach, are more physically demanding and take more time out of the day. We can make decisions on preferences on each day
- **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).

4 Day Schedule

- **Day 1 (Saturday 3rd)**: There will be a midday start (allowing those travelling to the area to get here) or earlier if all participants are able to arrive beforehand. We will pick up anyone requiring transfers. Based on a midday start, the afternoon is spent at the Menai Bridge and at Caernarfon Castle as the sun goes down. We aim to arrive at Cefn yr Efail around 6pm. 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 at a nearby location.
- **Days 2-3 (Sunday 4th – Monday 5th)** will commence at dawn and we will plan to be out on location all day; on Day 2 from Llanberis to Snowdon and Day 3 at Llyn Ogwen, Tryfan and the Glyders; packed lunches will be prepared the night before. 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 4 (Tuesday 6th)** will include a dawn start for finish around 3pm to allow for transfers to bus / rail termini. The location of the early start will depend on group preferences and capabilities but we'll travel to the south of the National Park and explore Ganllwyd Waterfalls, Blaenau Ffestioniog and return via Harlech Castle

3 Day Schedule

- **Day 1 (Wednesday 7th)** starts around midday, or earlier if all participants are able to arrive beforehand. Itinerary is as for Day 1 of 4 day workshop.
- **Day 2 (Thursday 8th)** will commence at dawn and we will plan to be out on location all day; It will combine days 2&3 of the 4 day version with morning & afternoon session spent in the Glyders / Snowdon area respectively. The evening will include theory, post-processing and review sessions.
- **Day 3 (Friday 9th)** will include a dawn start for finish around 3pm to allow for transfers to bus / rail termini. Otherwise as for Day 4 of 4 day schedule. ***If you wish to remain in the accommodation until Saturday morning please let me know – help with sorting out the property appreciated!***

LOCATIONS BASED ON 4 DAY ITINERARY (SUBJECT TO CHANGE DEPENDING ON WEATHER & TIMING):

Day 1 – North of Snowdonia

The afternoon takes in the north-West coastline that includes the Menai Bridge and Caernarfon Castle. We aim to arrive at the accommodation around 6pm

The day includes from the following:

- Caernarfon Castle (both during the day and at night)
- Menai Bridge
- Llyn Nantlle

Caernarfon Castle at Night

Day 2 –Snowdon Mountains Upland Option

We start at Llyn Lladaw with dawn views to Snowdon; it's an hour or less easy walk from Pen y Pass. We spend the morning in the area, potentially ascending Snowdon if the weather is suitable and depending on group capabilities and preferences. Otherwise we'll explore the lower areas that include:

- Llyn Lladaw and views of Snowdon (our initial location)
- Beddgelert: the village and surroundings
- Llyn Gwynant: the classic views from the road to Snowdon
- Snowdon Views & Llynnau Mymbyr: Towards Snowdon and Crib Goch (pictured below)

Snowdon from Llyn Lladaw

Day 3 – The Glyders, Tryfan & Llyn Ogwen

We start with views to Tryfan and explore this area up to Llyn Idwal. potentially ascending the Glyderau either via Devils Kitchen or Y Gribyn if the weather is suitable and depending on group capabilities and preferences. Otherwise we'll explore the lower areas that include:

- Waterfall on the Afon Lloer to Tryfan (dawn location)
- Tryfan and Cwm Idwal
- Llyn Ogwen and the lakes & waterfalls beneath the Glyders
- Swallow Falls Bettws y Coed

Y Gribyn from the Glyderau

Day 4 – Harlech and South Snowdonia,

The day includes a circular route south of Snowdonia starting and finishing at Harlech and includes a mix of landscapes, castles and waterfalls designed to offer a range of photographic experience.

The day includes from the following:

- Harlech Castle (both during the day and at night)
- Llanbedr Waterfalls (south of Harlech)
- Barmouth & the Afon Mawddach estuary (rainbow image pictured below)
- Cymer Abbey
- Ganllwyd Falls (pictured above)
- Trawsfynydd Power Station & Reservoir

A rainbow over the Mawddwy Estuary taken from above Harlech

EQUIPMENT / OTHER

Essential requirements:

- Camera (& lenses if separate from camera)
- Memory Card (s) with room for minimum 500 images shot in RAW (suggest min 32GB minimum or 64GB if you have 20 mpx camera or above)
- Camera manual
- Card reader & USB stick
- ***Full battery + a spare & battery charger.***

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

- Tripod (this should be a sturdy & heavy enough to hold your camera in windy conditions)
- Remote release (a essential for long exposures over 30 seconds
- Filters: e.g. Polarising / Neutral Density / Graduated Neutral Density
- Any other gadgets you have – e.g. flash

I can assist with some of these if required. I have a full range of Nisi Filters for use during the workshop. I would also be happy to offer advice on purchasing any equipment you may be looking for. My course notes, which are provided to you in digital form, also provide comprehensive information on equipment.

Other essential requirements (depending on forecast):

- Suitable wet weather walking clothing and walking shoes / boots
- Food and drink for the workshop (although these can be purchased at The Visitor Centre Café and Elan Valley Hotel
- Emergency contact details (see top of this paper - provided in advance please)
- You may like to bring maps (although I will have them with me). The 1:50 000 scale maps are No 115 Snowdon (Day 2) and No 124 Porthmadog and Dolgellau (Day 1)
- Umbrella
- Headtorch

Laptop Computer / IT Equipment

I will bring a laptop but you may wish to bring your own loaded with your post-processing software.

INCLUSIONS / EXCLUSIONS

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

- Expert tuition and Guide Services with Nigel Forster
- Accommodation at Cefn yr Efail
- Transfers by private car from Bangor, Carmarthen 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 CPW car). If we have over 4 in any workshop, then a volunteer driver will be required & given a £50 discount from the workshop fee.
- Photographic instruction and full course notes (in PDF form)
- Use of camera equipment if required
- Filters and other accessories if required

Tour Price excludes:

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

Autumn Colours at Swallow Falls

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
- Toiletries & other personal effects

Tal-y-Llyn below Cadair Idris

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 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 Snowdonia National Park Authority and Visit Wales.*** **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.

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.

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 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.
- **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. We do not climb on monuments or structures unless on public access routes.

.....AND FINALLY

Nigel will try to make the event as informative and enjoyable as possible; hopefully you will enjoy the workshop whatever the conditions! He will also be asking for your feedback at the end of the workshop for which your comments and suggestions, positive or otherwise, are very much welcomed as it's the only way to ensure continuous improvement!!

CONTACT

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