

DESERT INSTITUTE

at Joshua Tree National Park

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Fall Session

2020

Mastering Landscape Photography

Information

Date/Time: Friday, November 6, 7 pm - 9 pm
 Saturday, November 7, 5 am - 6 pm
 Sunday, November 8, 5 am - 3 pm

Meet at: Oasis Visitor Center, Twentynine Palms

Instructor: Ralph Nordstrom, photography workshop leader & fine art landscape
 photographer

Overview

What goes into making a great landscape photograph? You can find scores of articles that promise you will master landscape photography in 10 easy steps or take your photography to the next level in 5 steps or shoot like a pro in 7 steps. These articles keep on appearing. And most offer valid tips. But it's not that easy.

We can't promise you that you will be a master landscape photographer at the end of this course. What we can promise is you will have a much clearer idea of what is involved in pursuing this journey.

The class is based on the idea that landscape photographs can communicate more than a beautiful scene. They can be a medium by which we can share our experiences with their viewers. So, the in-depth look we will take of light and composition not only covers the techniques and principles associated with them but how we can use them to communicate with our viewers.

We will also touch on how the digital darkroom is used to complete an image, the gear that is in common use in landscape photography and methods and sources for planning a photographic outing.

This class is intensive and comprehensive and will give you plenty to think about and incorporate into your photography.

This class offers an optional but exciting camping experience in the pristine Lost Horse campground. We have reserved the campsite for this class.

Note: arrangements will be made for those preferring to sleep with something more substantial over their heads than rip-stop nylon. Plan to make accommodations in Twentynine Palms and meet at the Oasis Visitor center to head out to the shooting locations.

Itinerary

Friday, November 6	
7:00 pm – 9:00 pm	Meet and greet, orientation
9:00 pm	Set up camp
Saturday, November 7	
5:00 am	Sunrise and morning shoot
11:00 Lunch	Oasis Visitor Center
12:00 noon	Mastering Landscape Photography presentation
4:00	Afternoon and sunset shoot followed by dinner at a local restaurant
Sunday, November 8	
5:00 am	Sunrise and morning shoot
10:00	Break camp
11:00	Lunch – Oasis Visitor Center
12:00	Topics of interest and share photographs
3:00	Wrap-up and departure

Note: We will carpool to all our shooting locations to avoid excess traffic in the park.

What to Bring to the Course

Required Class Materials

- Digital camera (DSLR or mirrorless)
- Lenses: wide angle, normal, telephoto
- Tripod
- Camera bag

- Extra camera batteries
- Memory cards
- Filter – circular polarizer (optional)
- Remote shutter release (optional)
- Headlamp / flashlight

Optional Class Materials

- Laptop computer with image processing software
- Thumb drive
- GPS
- Trekking Poles

Camping Materials

- Tent
- Sleeping bag
- Pad or cot
- Water (we're in the desert – always have water)
- Food
 - Sack breakfasts for Saturday and Sunday
 - Lunches Saturday and Sunday will be at the Oasis Visitor Center. Several options for purchasing lunch are available in Twentynine Palms
 - We will all go out for dinner Saturday night.
- Lantern
- Flashlight (your headlamp will do just fine)
- Trash bags
- Note: There won't be any time for cooking or campfires in camp

Personal

- Sturdy hiking boots (strongly recommended – tennis shoes strongly discouraged)
- Socks
- Light colored long sleeve shirt
- Long pants
- Sweatshirt
- Warm jacket
- Warm gloves
- Broad brim hat
- Sun glasses
- Sun screen
- Toiletries
- Rain gear (you never know)

Fitness Requirements

Participants must be in good physical condition for courses/activities in a desert that may be hot, dry, windy, and sometimes surprisingly cold.

Hike Level

Easy to moderate

Guidelines

- You are responsible for your safety.
- Park your car in designated areas only. Parking along the side of the road is dangerous to you and the environment.
- Rattlesnakes are present in the park. Avoid contact with wildlife. Put your hands and feet only where you can see.
- Stay with the group. If you get lost, stay put.
- Drink plenty of water. If you run out, notify the instructor or the Desert Institute Representative.
- Before leaving the class, check out with the Desert Institute Representative.

Instructor Biography

Ralph Nordstrom: Nature has always been a source of inspiration, adventure and rejuvenation for me. Leaving the city and venturing into the wilderness always fills me with anticipation and excitement. The wilderness is fulfilling in and of itself. Adding photography to the experience, especially approaching photography with the eye of an artist, makes the encounter even richer. Because, in art we attune ourselves to our personal response to the beauty we see and attempt to communicate our unique vision through our works. The journey into fine art photography is a venture into a heightened awareness of our surroundings and can also be an odyssey of self-discovery. It is this journey that thrills me as much as my best photographs.

Suggested Reading

These two blog posts sum up the spirit of this course.

Making a Photograph – The Four Pillars

<http://ralphnordstromphotography.com/wordpress/articles/making-photograph-pillars/>

Taking Your Photography to the Next Level

<http://ralphnordstromphotography.com/wordpress/journal/photography-level-2/>

* The Desert Institute staff/instructors will attempt to accommodate participant's needs. However, we reserve the right to deny a student participation in the course due to concerns regarding health and safety issues.