

Blue Pixel Guide to Travel photography: perfect photos everytime  
By David Schloss  
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The Blue Pixel guide promises to help you take perfect photos but it is more a book about preparing for a travel adventure than a guide to travel photography.

The six contributors give good, practical advice on the difference between point and shoot cameras and digital slrs, helpful to those who have not already purchased a digital camera and want to know what is best for their situation.

Do your research before you take off, to find the best places and the best times to get snap happy. Find out about local mores and rules regarding who and what not to photograph or you might lose your camera equipment or worse.

Who would have thought of packing a headlamp, duct tape, ziplock bags and gps device and travel guides along with the various lenses, filters and tripods. You might well need that trolleybag to carry all the items the book recommends.

Wear gortex clothing with lots of pockets and gloves with velcro fingertips and take care not to let condensation damage the camera. Take a receipt for the camera gear to smooth the path through customs and a photocopy of your passport in case the original goes missing, stranding you in Afghanistan.

A small part of this book is devoted to actually taking digital photos. The book's writers try to make it simple and fun. Use a slow shutter speed for waterfalls and a fast speed for action shots. Shoot just after sunrise and before sunset, move in close but not too close and aim for eye level shots of animals.

Your external hard drive is threatening to crash with the weight of images and it's time to go home. What next? Software options for downloading, processing and archiving images are discussed but very little space is given to improving those images and making those photos perfect. But the book gives plenty of information to assist in printing the images or publishing them online.

Word of warning: This book contains many American references eg: 110 volts and US travel advice sources may not be relevant to travellers from the South Pacific. A good, reasonably priced A5 paperback to send to a friend in the States who is thinking of going digital and planning an overseas trip in the near future. Hunt around for a New Zealand equivalent before buying this one. Look elsewhere too for advice on editing and improving your travel photos.

Reviewed by Belinda Carter