

Jim's Travel Photo Strategies

- Make a little **checklist** of what to check before you start shooting.
 - Program modes generally save their settings and I have found myself shooting with exposure control set lower because of the evening before. I recently took several shots before I realized I had the custom white balance set to an odd indoor color. I've even taken shots without a memory card in the camera!
- What would be on your checklist right now?



Getting Started

- Look for interesting people being who they are.
- Look for local color (especially if a cloudy day).
- Get out in the morning and evening for the best light.
- Take group pictures in soft light. Put them in the shade if you must.
- Watch out for local taboos.



Taking a Decent Image from a Car/Bus/Airplane Window

- Anticipate if you can.
- Use manual focus.
- Use spot exposure.
- Set for burst mode.
- Get a good seat.
 - Which side of the vehicle will be in the shade?
 - Does the window open?
 - The back of the bus will pitch the most.



Abroad

- Hide your camera. Attach it to your body.
- Don't keep your extra cards with your camera. A lot of cameras are stolen!



Stained Glass Windows

- Expose the glass, not the surroundings.
- Or try to get the colored light shining on things.



Little Detail Shots

- Side and hard light shows form/texture better.
- If you can get detail close up with distant context, all the better. Use a really narrow aperture. For instance a close up of a glass of wine with the hills of Italy in the background.



Groups

- Use soft light. Don't stand them in the sun.
- Keep it informal. Not standing at attention.
- Watch for reflections in glasses, windows.
- Don't automatically wait for everyone to get into position. Get just before and just after too. These can be the most interesting. But you need lots of them.



Groups

- Stack people somehow, on steps, chairs, front kneeling.
- Get back and use a zoom so you don't over-emphasize noses and knees, front row people, etc.
- Check to see they are all equally lit.



Parades

- Lots of free culture, and they expect to be photographed!
- Get ready ahead of time.
- Stake out best angle and lighting.
- Look for color.
- Look for people being themselves.
- Call out to them. "You are looking good!"



Beaches

- Sand fools a camera into stopping down.
 - (Except for the Oregon coast where JB comes from. There it is usually dark/raining. Sigh...)



Candid Shots of People

Some of the best images...

- Ask permission if possible. Be impressed. We can easily insult people of other cultures because they assume we are making fun of them. Give them a chance to be proud of what they do.

When you need to be surreptitious...

- Be ready and quick (got your checklist?)
 - Don't aim and fiddle with the controls.
 - Preset the white balance, exposure compensation, and focus.
- Use wide angle and aim off-center. Crop later.
 - This is the low hassle method. A mono or tripod will help a lot.
- Set your camera on a table and control it from your phone.
- Use a camera with a fold out LCD and look in the LCD one way while the camera is taking the other way.



General Tips for Best Travel Images

- Do one straight-on shot and get it over with. Then get on to the really interesting pictures.
- Find interesting light. (AM, PM, Window, etc.)
- Find the unexpected, the ironic, the human.
- Find personal details other people miss. Look for narrative details that tell a story.
- Take many pix. Reject many.
- Look at what other photographers did in local postcards.

