

Through The Lens

*A guide to digital photography for computer enthusiasts.
After the click of your camera, you're only half done!*



What gear to pack?

by Lynda Buske

Now that some of us are back to travelling a bit, I thought it was a good time to put together a handy list of what photographic gear you might want to consider for vacation and what to think about for individual outings during the trip.

- 1. Camera bag.** You may wish to purchase a large bag that would carry every piece of gear you are taking on vacation, especially if you are flying and wish to take it all as carry-on. Once you arrive at your destination, you may prefer a different kind of bag for day outings. I use a backpack for hiking in the woods so I can be hands-free for tricky trails or scrambling over rock. Your bag should be large enough to carry your gear plus a snack, water, maps (don't rely on cell phone coverage), bug spray, sun block, etc. For more sedate walks, I may use a smaller bag that will hold only one camera body or cell phone since the other can stay around my neck for the duration.
- 2. Camera bodies.** I like to have my DSLR for certain landscape and macro photos but also like my lighter bridge camera, with a good zoom, for nature shots and of course my cell phone primarily for indoor or other low light situations. I find I can cover most circumstances with those cameras.

I have learned it is better to have two bodies set up for my typical needs than to have one body that requires changing lenses. While it doesn't take that much time or effort to change a lens, it is just enough bother that I don't always do it when I should. As well, if there are birds or animals around, you may not have time to shift gears so I always have my bridge set for a fast shutter speed. Then I'm ready for any type of action shot.

- 3. Lenses, lens hoods and filters.** If you have multiple lenses, think about those you will likely want to have on hand for your trip. Don't forget specialized needs like a neutral density filter for long exposures and a circular polarizer to cut reflections.
- 4. Rain protection.** Take a micro fibre cloth for wiping light rain drops or sea spray off your camera body. A hotel shower cap is handy for covering your camera during light rain and is easy to remove when you want to take a shot.
- 5. Lens wipes** for both lens and display screen. Don't forget to clean your cell phone lens!
- 6. Charging units, spare memory cards and extra batteries.**
- 7. Tripod,** including base plate for attaching the camera and a coin to tighten it. Use a tripod for low light situations where a long shutter speed is required. This allows you to

lower your ISO and limit graininess in your photo. In some circumstances, a monopod or leaning against a tree/car or resting the camera on a solid rock/railing may suffice.

A word of warning with respect to museums. Some permit photography as long as you do not use a flash but if you enter with tripod and bags of gear, they think you are a professional who is going to sell your images. This may not go over well so for these circumstances, I try to look like any other tourist.

For more info on tripods, see article I wrote earlier this year.

<https://opcug.ca/Photography/ShootingWithThreeLegs.pdf>

8. **Business card** with name and email address. I have homemade business cards which I hand out to people who may be interested in receiving a copy of my photos when I have incorporated them or their boat or their property into my pictures. It can also open the door for more in-depth picture taking since you probably now have their explicit permission.
9. **Penlight** for blue hour. There are certain settings on my cameras that cannot be set through the electronic screen and must be adjusted with a button or dial. When I'm shooting before dawn or after the sun goes down, I keep a penlight handy so I can see the settings in the dark. Alternatively, you may prefer a red flashlight that won't disturb your night vision. A small headlamp can help you make your way safely on dark trails and some come with both red and white lights.
10. **External flash** unit (if you use one)
11. **Luggage tag** for camera and tripod bags
12. **Pen and notepad**
13. **Some cash** for emergencies like an ice cream, beer, or a taxi home!

For anyone interested in seeing photos from my various trips or day outings, please go to <http://lyndasphotos5.shutterfly.com>. The "Photos of the Week" album is a collection of images that I have sent out to a private mailing list each Monday morning for the past few years. There is no fee and I'm happy to add new people to my list. Your email will not be shared with others and you can unsubscribe at any time. Just write me at lbuske@sympatico.ca if you are interested.

