

Take Better Travel Photos

Simple Tips for Everyone

Rhonda Albom
AlbomAdventures.com

Great photography doesn't occur by accident. However, it can happen whether you shoot with your phone, a point-and-shoot, a DSLR, or a mirrorless camera. These simple tips will improve your images. Example photos follow.

- 1** Think about everything on your screen. Are you cutting off feet? Interesting shadows? Background sites?
- 2** Frame your subject or use lines that lead the reader's eyes to the main subject (paths, trees, etc).
- 3** Zoom in or step closer to your subject to eliminate unwanted background.
- 4** Include familiar objects or people for perspective.
- 5** Shoot at golden hour: the hour just after sunrise or the hour before sunset casts softer and redder colours than when the sun is high in the sky.
- 6** Action should move into the frame, not out of it.
- 7** Use the rule of two-thirds as a guideline. Mentally divide your image into nine boxes. Place important elements on the lines.





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Essaouira, Morocco

As I saw the rider gracefully moving through the surf, I knew I didn't have a lot of time to prepare. The secrets of this shot are keeping the rider moving into the image, shooting wide to be guaranteed to capture the tail, legs, and rider's hair, and thinking about the rule of two-thirds. Horizontally, both the horizon and the first surf line divide the image, while the rider is on a vertical line.

By keeping the horse in the upper half of the photo, I allowed for reflection in the water. Candid opportunities like this don't come around twice. I keep my camera ready to shoot in burst mode (multiple shots when I press the button), so I don't miss the magic.



Paris, France

Everyone who comes to Paris has a photo of the Arc de Triomphe. I wanted something a bit different. By shooting the Arc de Triomphe at an angle, the viewer sees a more dramatic aspect than the traditional straight on view. Plus, without the distraction of the sky seen through the arch, the viewer focuses on the details. Only interesting subject matter should be framed.

The foreground road is a leading line bringing the viewer's eyes to the busy roundabout, then to the memorial. The trees along the road frame the photo and the vehicles offer size perspective to the massive structure. I took this shot from the centre of the street.



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Auckland, New Zealand

Twilight racing means we are out during the golden hour, but too busy for photography. This shot was taken with my iPhone, just after we crossed the finish line ahead of these two competitors.

The soft and reddish tones are quite exaggerated on a cloudy night at sea. The elongated shadows become part of the picture as the sun gets ready to set. Both boats lie on vertical two-thirds lines.



Mykonos, Greece

It was a windy day and this wall of water shot up with somewhat regular frequency. To me, it was more interesting than the famous windmills we came to see. Therefore the wave became the subject of my image.

However, I kept the windmills in the background, capturing a surge that leads your eyes right to them as it turns and falls back into the sea. Also, the path acts as a leading line bringing the viewer into the shot.

Advanced Tip: If you have an adjustable camera, use a faster shutter speed to freeze the water.



Fes, Morocco

The old medina in Fes is a treasure trove of sights, sounds, and smells. We were drawn to the barbecue aroma. Framing the photo with the archway, the image captures the smoke thus creating an air of mystery.

The leading lines of the path draw the viewer into the scene and leave them wanting to know more. The scene is not cluttered, yet it doesn't look empty.



Sydney, Australia

Sunlight and shadow often enhance nature in ways we can barely imagine. Stepping in close to get the image I wanted, I focused on the flower tips. The light appears to almost dance in the still shot.

Advanced tip: To obtain a shallow depth of field, use a wider aperture (lower number f-stop), or come in close so there is a larger gap behind the focal point than in front of it. This was shot at an f5.6.



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Auckland, New Zealand

I am a mum as well as a photographer, and sometimes I want to capture candid family moments. This photo breaks the rules, as the horizon meets the edges at the midpoint, neither the foreground nor background is interesting, and the faces are small and difficult to see; yet, it is one of my favourites.

My husband sits on a one-third line, and my two girls are centred around the other one. With my one daughter looking into the shot, the viewer's eyes stay focused.

About Albom Adventures

Capturing the essence of travel through photography, Albom Adventures inspires readers to explore New Zealand and the world. Together, Rhonda and Jeff Albom have photographed their way across 54 countries on six continents.

Rhonda is the primary photographer and upgraded to mirrorless technology a few years ago. Loved for its compact size and ability to go all manual, Rhonda prefers to keep a prime street lens on her camera body, finding the combination perfect for travel photography.

Both Rhonda and Jeff frequently take shots with their iPhone cameras. Rhonda took the sailing shot featured in this book with her phone.

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