

Taking shots with Cece

Cece Scott is a well-known freelance writer and photographer whose work has appeared in many Canadian publications. She shares her photographic tips with readers so they can take better pictures while on vacation.



Tips to pack away in your photo bag

By Cece Scott

You are pumped. Your e-ticket and boarding pass are printed, the zippers on your luggage are strained tighter than a pair of jeans at a Weight Watchers meeting, and your fake and bake tan is 'bueno'.

You are ready to record every sun-filled moment, every swim up bar, every flower-bedecked drink and every fireball sunset with your camera so you can show your friends on future winter nights.

But how do you make sure those random shots you take measure up to the memories you want to document?

There are three key things to remember to make sure your upcoming trip is an excellent photographic experience.

1- Before you go, assess your equipment. If you are shooting digital, ask yourself if you have a back up battery and a second memory card? (The number of times I have heard people curse in disappointment because their battery is dead or their memory card is full is unbelievable.)

If you are still shooting film, (I am a diehard film disciple), make sure you have lots of it at different ISO speeds. To ensure film does not suffer from exposure in the airport x-ray screening process, bring your film in your carry on. Take the film out of its canister and put it in a clear plastic bag, (medium to large Ziploc bags work well), and politely but firmly request that an agent conduct a hand inspection.

The Canadian Air Transport Security Authority (CATSA) screening officials are "encouraged to comply with the

request provided that it does not compromise or jeopardize CATSA's air security policy and procedures.

While film under ISO 800 is supposedly not affected by x-ray screening, it is still highly important to protect when going to a location, and certainly tantamount when bringing your images back home.

2- Give some thought to the kinds of images you want to take, both along the way as well as at your destination. Do an online search of the area you are travelling to and see what photographic excitement you can document while you are there.

3- When shooting digital, the ease of snapping everything that moves is tempting. Shooting digital is fun, it's instant, it snaps the moment without too much thought or planning as to how the image is going to turn out. However, try being aware, attentive; spend a few minutes of every vacation day looking around; not only at the obvious but also for the not so obvious; the black blob, that is a sloth, hanging motionless from a oversized tree limb; the mocking face of a spider monkey sucking on a beer can stolen from a tourist's cooler bag.

Instead of just taking pictures, try making them.

Once you're home, activate your photo journey in a timely manner. Don't plan to do it, do it! Select your favourite images and archive them in an album or on a CD. ■

NEXT ISSUE: Cece looks at what cellphones take the best pictures. *Contact Cece Scott at latchscottphotoandwriting@gmail.com*