

ASIAN Photography

MAY 2005
US\$ 2 - Rs 50

Vol. 17 - No. 5

BETTER THAN THE BEST

35 TIPS
TO SHOOT
TRAVEL PICTURES



TESTED
CANON EOS 350D



PHOTOGRAPHERS FEATURED

ASHOK DILWALI
JACEK PIWOWARCZYK
KATE MOXHAM
SCOTT WOODWARD
WENDY CHAN

TRAVEL
SPECIAL

Travel and Tourism – Huge Promise, Big Challenges

Indian tourism industry has finally recorded the unenviable mark of over three million arrivals this year, while the domestic tourism soared to over 320 million. With destination India making its mark on the top 10 charts of Conde Nast Traveller and Lonely Planet, Indian tourism industry is on the threshold of a real boom, especially considering the overall aftereffects of the deadly tsunami waves that left many dead and homeless. Undoubtedly a momentum has been generated. But it has to sustain for the sake of the industry and the country as a whole.

One of the masterstrokes of the campaign to promote Incredible India as a destination was the brainchild of the former Tourism Minister Jagmohan, and the results have now started to show. This has resulted in the country's arrival going up by 16% and earning in US \$ terms to over 600 million. The record is quite phenomenal but it could have been bettered with proper infrastructure planning in the country like irrational road, limited seat capacity on the domestic routes and good hotel accommodation.

Perhaps the most important market characteristic that India should understand is that the industry has become extremely price sensitive. However, if India wants to capture a larger slice of the pie, the focus needs to shift from the product to the customer, from the built heritage to creating visitor experiences, from sightseeing based tourism to activity based tourism. On the contrary, today's visitor prefers some recreational activities to spice up his vacation.

In recent years the accommodation scene in the country has witnessed the slowest growth rate in the last 30 years. Contrary to expectations, the availability of hotel rooms is still only half the number required to host even a modest target of five million visitors. Some of the reasons for lack of development are the high price of land; archaic laws of land, and the absence of a single window clearance system have acted as the major deterrent to the growth of the industry.

Some of the solutions to the problem are that the country needs more four and three star accommodations and value for money properties because out of over one-lakh rooms, which are available in the country, roughly 25 per cent are in the mid-market segment. In additions, the need for developing service apartments, holiday villages and camping sites are some of the options that lure the tourists to experience the thrill.

In order to achieve the target of over five million international tourists and over ten million domestic tourists annually, there is a desperate need to improve our airports, as a case in point; the Kochi airport is the finest example of what private sector can do to the infrastructure. Arguably there is no denying the fact that foreign equity and technical know how could drastically implement changes in the sector over the controlled regime of the government of India.

One of the positive developments in recent years is the concept of low cost carriers gradually finding acceptance and the recent announcement by the government owned airlines to take that route seem to suggest that the operating formula has really clicked.

With the advent of the summer vacation and with the holiday season in full bloom, we at *Asian Photography* have showcased a travel photography special and have featured the work of leading national as well as International travel photographers (in alphabetical order).

Ashok Dilwali – New Delhi
 Jacek Piwowarczyk – Hong Kong
 Kate Moxham – New York
 Scott Woodward – Singapore
 Wendy Chan – Singapore



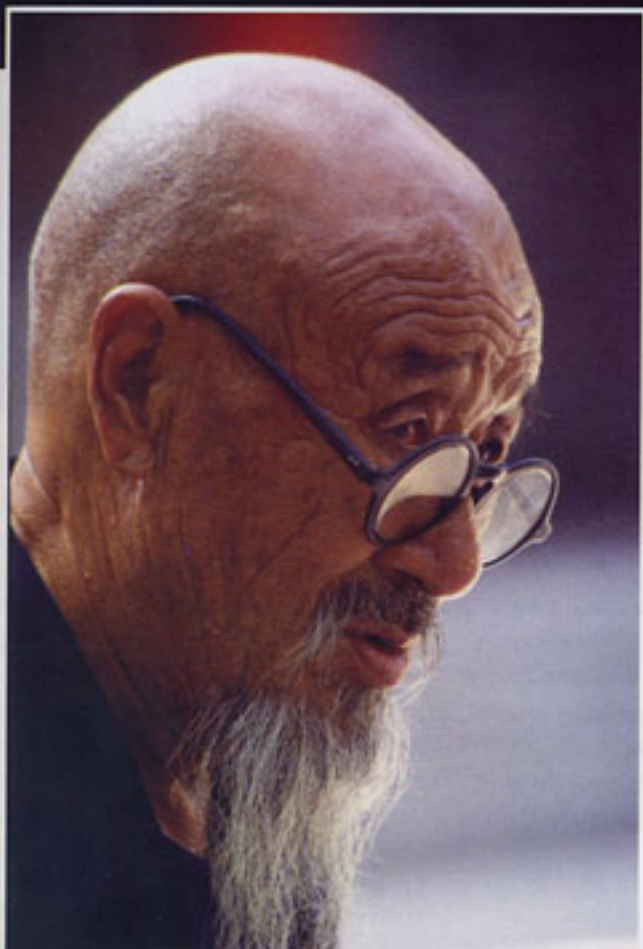
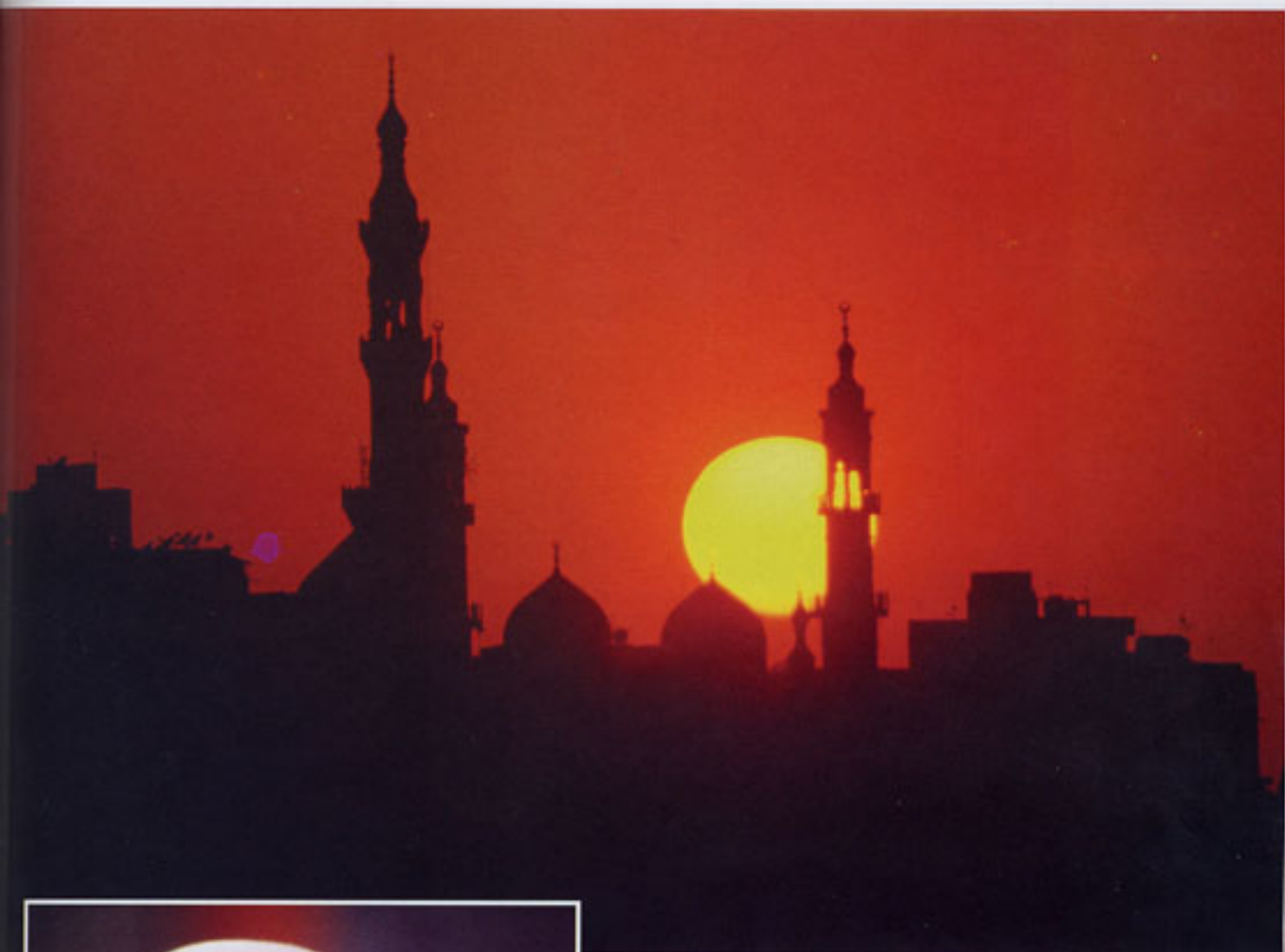
Jacek Piwowarczyk - Hong Kong

Jacek Piwowarczyk's adventure with photography began more than 15 years ago but side by side the passion for the art developed along with another passion - travelling. Soon his creative sojourn became a career, invariably as a freelance photographer and writer. With a portfolio of over 300 images having been published in different publications across the globe, including *Great Encyclopaedia PWN*, *Historical Encyclopaedia*, *Geographical Encyclopaedia*, *The Guardian*, *The Observer*, *The Sunday Telegraph*, *Daily Mirror*, *The Weekly News*, *Daily Mail*, *Evening Standard*, *Metro*, *Daily Record*, *Sunday Mirror*, *Sunday Times*, *Daily Star*, *Business Traveller*, to name a few. In addition, he has written over a dozen articles for Polish magazines and also travel magazines and books as well.

His love for travel photography has taken him to over 45 countries in 5 continents (many several times over a period of time). But he admits that he is particularly interested in landscape and travel but human photography, especially portraits to appeal to him. In a tete-a-tete with *Asian Photography*, the Hong Kong based travel photographer reveals as to why the exotic locations brings out the very best in him and more.... Excerpts:

How did photography happen as a career and being a Polish man how did you happen to settle in Hong Kong?

My passion to photography started almost 20 years ago with my first exotic trip to India and Nepal. From that moment on I knew that travelling and taking pictures would become not only a hobby but also an important part of my life. With my geographical background I was well prepared to begin systematic exploration of world's most interesting and culturally diverse places. In order to fulfill this dream I became a tour leader bringing Polish tourists mainly to China and Southeast Asia. Working as a UN volunteer in Cambodia and South Africa gave me a unique opportunity to take some rare shots and gain necessary experience. Since 1992 my photographic passion has become a job and



I started my career as a freelance photographer and writer. Then about four years ago, recognizing the power of the Internet and new possibilities that it brings, I created the website <http://www.jacekphoto.com/> which became my on-line portfolio as well as a business platform. The website has been refurbished recently to give it more professional look. The reason for settling down in Hong Kong was my Chinese wife, whom I met during one of my travels.



Photographic technique is still the most important and bad pictures cannot be changed into outstanding ones on the computer. »



Travel photography is your forte but your CV says that you are into landscape and human photography as well. How do you manage to balance between shooting travel, landscape and people photography?

I personally believe that travel photography has a very broad meaning and incorporates both human and landscape aspects of this art. I think that my pictures can be classified in different folders and

that's why I included them on my CV.

Your travels have taken you across different places in Asia and overseas. What is the most important motivation that keeps you going in your art?

First of all I simply like travelling which brings tremendous possibilities to enhance knowledge about the world and meet interesting people. One of the most important aspects of my job and passion is appreciation. It brings a lot of satisfaction to see pictures printed in reputable publications



but what I really like is to receive letters from different people I never met any who love my pictures and express gratitude for bringing the world closer to them.

In a way, since you travel around exotic locations does travel precede over landscape and people photography or is it the other way round?

Exotic locations bring tremendous opportunities to take different kind of

pictures. I carefully plan my travelling by reading books, browsing Internet, talking to the people. As limited time is always a crucial factor, I always try to use it in the best possible way. The subjects of my images usually depend on the peculiarity of the places. I shoot more people in India or Nepal and landscape in New Zealand for example.

What subject do you enjoy the most in your brand of photography?

Most recently I enjoy taking beautiful and spectacular landscapes. I was really fascinated by incredible scenery of New Zealand and I shoot plenty of landscapes in Hong Kong. Landscape photography is one of the reasons I do not want to switch from film to digital photography. Currently available professional digital SLRs are still too expensive but first of all they are yet to match the quality of images shot on Slide Fuji Velvia films (in terms of colour saturation, depth of field etc).

What is the equipment you normally carry for your photography and what are your thoughts about digital manipulation?

I use Canon EOS 3 SLR with Power Driver Booster PB-E2, Sigma 24-70 2.8 EX DG ASPHERICAL DF and CANON EF 75-300 f4-5.6 IS USM lenses - usually with polarizing filters. As I have already mentioned I shoot almost exclusively on Fuji Velvia slide films. Then the pictures are scanned with 2880 dpi resolution as most of the publishers require digitalized photographs anyway. The images are usually slightly retouched in Photoshop (i.e. levels, contrast). I do not see anything wrong with more extensive digital manipulation; however I usually do not do it myself. Photographic technique is still the most important and bad pictures cannot be changed into outstanding ones on the computer.

When it comes to people photography, different regions speak different languages, then how do you get yourself orga-



nized in photography them?

Taking pictures of people is usually not an easy task. The best way to achieve the best results is to spend some time with them and get somehow acquainted but language and cultural barrier usually makes it impossible. People in some countries simply do not like or want to have their pictures taken and cautious approach must be undertaken in order not to offend them or make them unhappy. Sometimes smile or a gesture can break the ice but usually



there is not other option but a powerful telephoto lens and a lot of patience.

Travel and nature are two sides of a coin. What is the basic difference between the two photographically?

If nature photography means taking pictures of animals and plants the difference is huge as it requires different approach, more time patience and different equipment. I rarely take such pictures, however, I

really enjoyed shooting wild African animals during my south-African safaris.

Having traveled through many of the different destinations, are there any particular region that has fascinated you and why. Besides, is there any other destination that you have short-listed to visit in the near future?

My all time favourite is Nepal where I

have been seven times. I especially like hiking and trekking in the Himalayas which apart from splendid landscapes and opportunities to shoot great pictures provides a bit of adventure and satisfaction. However, the most beautiful and photogenic country as a whole was New Zealand, especially the south island. There are a lot of places I would like to visit and the first on the list are Myanmar and Vietnam, and I will be going to my native Poland next year.

-Mathew Thottungal