



A photo of the wreck of the Peter Iredale by Randall J. Hodges.

RANDALL J. HODGES

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which purposes?

"I shoot a Cannon 5 DSR and my number one lens is the Cannon 24-105 Mark 2 lens. My second favorite is my Canon 16-35 wide angle [lens]. My third favorite is my 100 macro, and my fourth favorite is my 100 to 400, which is my least-used lens. Before deciding on a lens, you must explore the area and find some compositions, then you will know which lens to use."

14. For photographs of water with a feathery affect, what settings do you use on your camera?

"Aperture Priority f/20 or f/22 with a low ISO. This small aperture will create a long exposure which creates the soft effect. Best on overcast days for lower and balanced light."

15. What type of photographs do you take when using an ND filter?

"I do not use a lot of ND filters, but I do use graduated split neutral density filters to balance light at sunrise and sunset. Otherwise, during the days there is always a circular polarizer on my camera."

16. Do you alter your camera settings when taking photos different times of day and light such as sunset, afternoon, sunny or rainy?

"Yes. Different apertures, ISOs, shutter speeds, white balances, and/or filters. Every light and scene require its own adjustments."

17. Do you have a favorite memory from one

of your classes in the field?

"One of the great things about my classes is not only do my students learn all the photography techniques at the right place and time over and over again, they build lifelong friendships. I had a couple of older students that met during class. During day three or four at Thor's Well on the Oregon Coast, these couple of gals chose to stay up higher and shoot the Spouting Horn instead. As I was coming up the hill to check on them, they were sitting together looking at each other's cameras and photos. One said, 'Look! I caught a photo of a heart in the mist!' The next thing you know, they're hugging and got teary eyed. They all still go out shooting today from three years ago when they met."

18. What is one mistake most amateur photographers make?

"The first mistake young photographers make is they do not shoot from a tripod. Compositionally, they put way too much empty sky in their photographs, and they do not think about their foreground. Often when I have new students, I say to them, 'You have too much sky, point your camera down.'"

19. Besides teaching your field classes and adventures, do you personally mentor aspiring photographers one-on-one in your free time?

"I mentor all my students whenever they call and ask questions. I don't have the time to just mentor one person on a more rigorous basis. At any given time, I'm helping a couple dozen photographers, whether

it's printing questions or after lessons questions. I'm constantly always available to my students."

20. What has been the most rewarding aspect of being a photographer?

"The miles I get to hike and the sites I get to see. It's the whole reason I do it. I've always wanted to get paid to hike."

21. Was there a time when you didn't have access to a vital piece of equipment, and had to use creative ways to supplement them?

"I would say no. The only time I don't have a piece of gear is because I broke it out in the field. Since I do this full time, I always have more than one lens, camera body and everything. The worst thing that can happen is I break something out in the wilderness. Knock on wood! That has not happened. The items I've broken, I was still able to get back to the car and get more stuff."

22. What methods or tools do you regularly use to see how your photo will turn out? For example, the camera's histogram or a light exposure app.

"No, since I don't do Photoshop, I don't look at the histogram ever. I actually ask my students to turn it off because that is a Photoshop technique and I want my students to use their eyeballs to determine if they're taking a good photo or not. However, there is a device that you can use out in the field that makes you twice as good. It's called a loop, which shades and magnifies the back of your camera. You can

clearly see much better what you're doing. The other tool I use quite often is the zoom tool to check foreground, background and check on your work. Every single student who got one, says he or she got twice as good."

23. What is your necessary non-photography equipment you always bring with you?

"Because I'm a hiker, in my bag there is always one full set of clothes. Even if it goes from 80 degrees to snowing, I even have winter gear in the summer. Two headlamps in case one fails because I'm often hiking at night. I could not live without my hiking poles. There is always a stash of water and snacks that I replenish every time I use it. Your bag should always be ready even if you're not going [anywhere]. You never want to be caught unprepared. Also of course a first aid kit."

24. Is there anything else you'd like to add?

"Even if it's not with me, the best thing a photographer can do to get better at their craft is to take an actual out-in-the field lesson with a professional photographer. That's where most want-to-be photographers fail. They read stuff online, they buy a camera, they go shooting, but they never learn actual technical techniques. One five-hour class with me, I'll get you technically sound so that every photo you shoot after that is professional grade. The sooner you can get technically correct, your portfolio is better for it. Rather than buying another lens, take a class first. You'd be better spent taking a class."

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