

# Six Travel Photo Tips by Geoff Morrison

Though I'm known as a freelance writer, I am also a freelance photographer. It's something that started as a hobby, and now makes me a bit of income as well. Mostly, though, I just like taking pretty photos. I get "complimented" a lot with "Wow, you must have a great camera." Besides being amusingly absurd (do you compliment a chef on his ladle?), it's also only half true. While I do have an OK camera, several of my favorite photos were taken with a cell phone or a GoPro. So the subject matters, but so do a few other things. They're easy. Here are a bunch.

**1) Grids:** The easiest way to up your photo game is to enable the grid. Nearly every phone and camera has an option to overlay a 3x3 grid on the screen. All you have to do is line up the important parts of the image with the intersections (or even just the lines) of the grid. Voila! Better looking image! Now, this isn't *always* the best framing, and there are plenty of professional photographers that balk at the grid, but for most people, and for most photos, moving the subject off center helps a LOT.

**2) Keep Your Back To The Sun:** I can't count how often I see people trying to take a photo, seemingly with the sun as a group member. Whenever you can, shoot photos with the sun on your back. Sure, you can't *always* do it, but this will avoid subjects in deep shadow, or blown out backgrounds. Related, the best time of day to take photos is the hour before and the hour after, sunset

**3) Try A Different Angle:** Everyone takes photos with the camera at their eye level. What does what you're shooting look at dog level? Giant level? It's also worth keeping in mind that people look better from *their* eye level, or slightly below, not necessarily *your* eye level.

**4) Selfie Sticks Are Great:** People who don't like selfie sticks are boring. Selfie sticks are great. They let you get you and where you're at in all one shot. I don't have one because, as one traveling buddy put it, I have "freakishly long arms." Probably true, since I was able to get with my arms what she could get with her' selfie stick. Ignore the haters. If you don't have long arms, get a good selfie stick.

**5) A Bit Of Editing Goes A LONG Way:** Most phones have built-in editing tools. These are OK, but the ones in Photoshop [Express EXPR -4.24%](#) are a lot better. Others swear by VSCO Cam. The editing tools in Instagram are great too, but they force you to (1) Use Instagram and (2) always have square photos. I love Instagram, but not everyone does. Increasing the contrast, raising the shadows, punching up the colors, these all help make a good photo great. Photoshop's "Defog" and Instagram's "Lux" do a great job tweaking the reality a bit.

**6) Learn Your Camera:** Lastly, if you've gone to the trouble of buying a real camera, play with it! Using aperture priority to reduce depth of field, increasing ISO so you can shoot in lower light, slowing shutter speed to blur water, these are all easy, and easy to learn. All you need to do is sit somewhere and take a bunch of photos of the same thing, while adjusting the settings. *Well worth your time.*

*About the author: Geoff Morrison is a tech and travel writer/photographer based (occasionally in Los Angeles). For most of the year he's a digital nomad with a laptop camera and headphones his trusty companions. He blogs about his adventures at BaldNomad.com. You can follow him on Twitter @TechwriterGeoff and Instagram @Inveterate\_Adventurer. The author is a Forbes contributor and the opinions expressed in this article are those of the writer and not of Venue International Professionals, Inc.*