

My Passion – Landscape Photography

aka

Secrets of Landscape Photography

*(Revealed Confidentially to the)*

Plano Photography Club

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# Key Points

- Great landscapes are generally accessible – you don't have to hike into the deepest mountains
- Our national parks and monuments and state parks offer almost endless opportunities.
- Get there at the right time of day and right time of year.
- Be patient at sunset – it's not over until it's over.
- The sun doesn't have to be up – moonlight, twilight
- Do your research.
- Prepare for the weather.
- Have the right gear and know how to use it.
- Use a variety of focal lengths.
- Two best investments are a first-class tripod and head and at least one great lens.
- Your image capture should support your final vision – it is not the final image.
- Revisit your work as your post capture skills get better and your sensibilities change.
- Infrared for bad time of day
- Turn Around
- There is no “Landscape formula”
- Study landscape photography – *Elements Magazine* is great.

# Secret #1

## Go to Pretty Places

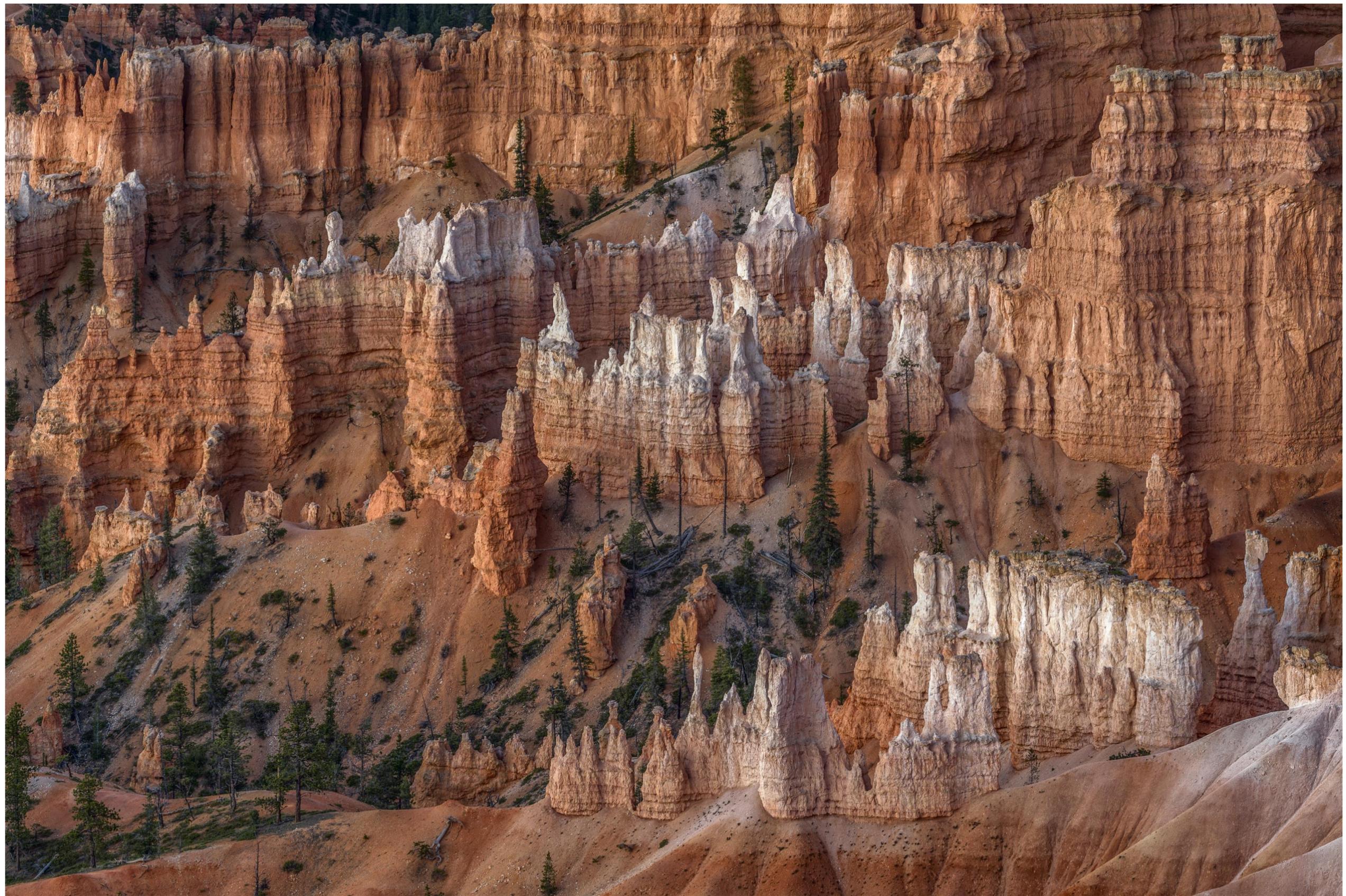
**I'm not a hiker.**

**Wonderful scenes are easily accessible.**

**The vast majority of my favorites are within 200 yards of the car.**

**National and State parks offer an endless array of locales and subjects.**

**Plan your trip.**



Bryce Canyon, Utah



Monument Valley, Utah/Arizona



Trona Pinnacles, California



Big Bend National Park, Texas



Chisos Mountains, Big Bend National Park, Texas



Monument Valley Utah/Arizona

Secret #1

Go to Pretty Places

and

**Turn Around!**



Monument Valley Utah/Arizona



Monument Valley Utah/Arizona

# Secret #2

It's not all about the light

But it sure helps!



Santa Elena Canyon, Big Bend National Park, Texas



Monument Valley, Utah/Arizona



Galveston Island, Texas



Dead Horse Point, Canyon Lands, Utah

# Secret #2

It's not all about the light, But it sure helps!

**Be Early – Golden Light doesn't Last Long**



8:37:39 Near Cuba New Mexico



8:38:36 Near Cuba New Mexico



8:39:10 Near Cuba New Mexico



8:41:58 Near Cuba New Mexico

# Secret #2

It's not all about the light, But it sure helps!

Be Early – Golden Light doesn't Last Long

**Don't Give Up on the Sunset**



Mojave Natural Preserve, California



Caddo Lake, Texas



Mono Lake, California



Mono Lake, California

# Secret #2

It's not all about the light, But it sure helps!

Be Early – Golden Light doesn't Last Long

Don't Give Up on the Sunset

**The Sun went down? So What?**



“Weston’s Lake”, Yosemite National Park, California



Near Mono Lake, California



Sedona, Arizona



White Sands National Monument, New Mexico



Secret #3

Essential Gear

Just about any modern camera

Substantial Tripod and Head

At least one really good lens

# My Gear

- Cameras: Nikon Z7, Z72, and Z8
- Tripods: Gitzo Mountaineer, Really Right Stuff 24L
- Heads: Arca Swiss D4, RRS BH55
- Monopod: Really Right Stuff and RRS Head
- Lens: uhhh... Not really enough space here.
- Essential: Nikon Z 24-120, 100 – 400, 13 – 30, 20 f/1.8

# Lens Choices for Landscape Photography

- I have never subscribed to the “landscapes mean wide angle” philosophy.
- The choice of lenses is driven by your subject, how close you are, and how you want to compose that subject for maximum impact.

| Camera          |     | Lens                |     |
|-----------------|-----|---------------------|-----|
| All (3 Cameras) | 989 | All (7 Lenses)      | 834 |
| NIKON D500      | 26  | 0.0 mm f/0.0        | 70  |
| NIKON D750      | 155 | 14.0-24.0 mm f/2.8  | 39  |
| NIKON D850      | 808 | 24.0 mm f/1.4       | 21  |
|                 |     | 35.0 mm f/1.4       | 46  |
|                 |     | 50.0 mm f/1.4       | 104 |
|                 |     | 70.0-200.0 mm f/2.8 | 520 |
|                 |     | 300.0 mm f/4.0      | 34  |



24mm Mesa Verde National Monument, Colorado



14mm Chaco Canyon, New Mexico



16 mm Mystery Valley, Utah/Arizona



50mm Monument Valley, Utah/Arizona



50mm Sunset Crater, Arizona



70mm Monument Valley, Utah/Arizona



110mm Sand Island near Bluff, Utah



200mm Monument Valley, Utah/Arizona



200mm Mesa Verde, Colorado



200mm Monument Valley, Utah/Arizona



300mm Mesa Verde, Colorado



450mm Mesa Verde, Colorado

## Secret #4

### Exposure and Post Processing

- Learn to separate the best exposure from the final result.
- Ansel Adams called this “visualization”.
- Capture the image in camera with the best information to realize your vision.
- In the days of large format black and white, photographers “exposed for the shadows and developed for the highlights”.
- In the digital world, we “expose for the highlights and develop for the shadows”
- Master one post processing program. I recommend Lightroom.
- Go back and look at older photographs and reprocess with your latest skills and sensibilities.



Raw Capture (Nikon D3X)



2011 Processing (Probably with NIK plug in)



2018 Processing (with Lightroom Classic CC)



2023 Processing (with Lightroom Classic CC)



2010 Processing



2016 Processing (with Lightroom)



2023 Processing (with Lightroom Classic CC)

Secret #5

Print Your Photographs

You don't know what you have until you make a print!

No more Secrets

Thank You