

"& Moments" and the Human Element

The A&K photo library is full of beautiful landscapes and gorgeous architecture from around the world. We travel to over 100 countries, all of which provide ample opportunities for "& Moments". Photographing buildings, landscapes, and historical monuments are very important in adding depth and variety to the photo library. But it is the people and the experiences of our guests that define A&K travel. Capturing the human element in your photographs will add depth and may help them end up in one of our brochures.

Images of properties or popular tourist attractions can usually be obtained from local tourism boards or the properties themselves. What we cannot get from these third party sources are images that capture what makes traveling with A&K so unique. The special "& Moments" are best captured by guests and photographers who are a part of the A&K traveling experience.



Subjects Needed for the Photo Library

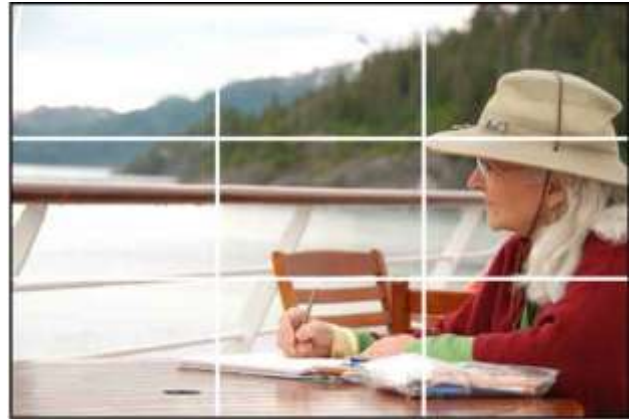
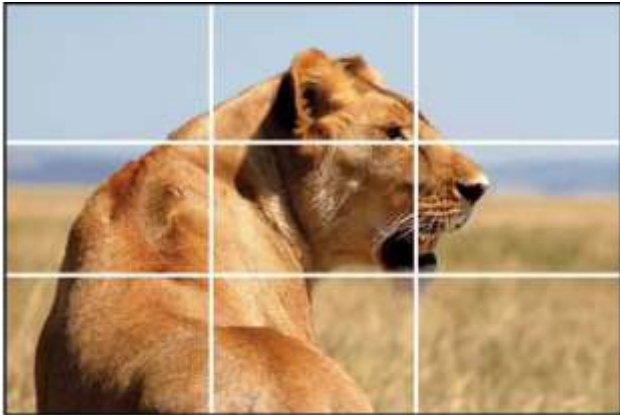
1. Local People & Environments (especially local children)
2. American children (interacting with local children is especially good)
3. Interaction between guests and local people ("& Moments")
4. Europe (especially the Czech Republic & Bulgaria)
5. Happy/smiling local people (candid shots and portraits)
6. Local artisans and craftsmen at work
7. Representation of local culture (people, places, objects, etc.)
8. Lifestyles



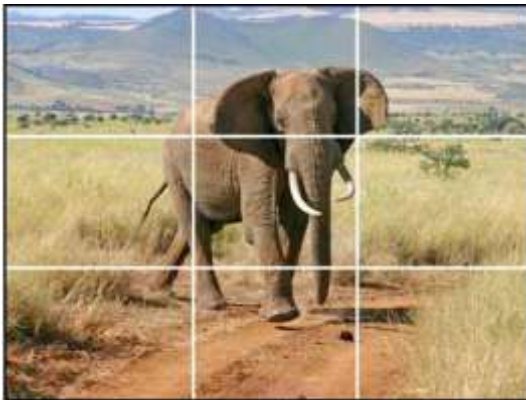
Composition

Rule of Thirds

When composing a photo, it is usually best to follow the Rule of Thirds. This is a compositional rule of thumb in photography (and other visual media) that divides the compositional area into thirds, both vertically and horizontally. This is achieved by applying two equally-spaced horizontal lines and two equally-spaced vertical lines (some digital cameras feature this grid on the display).



The most common error in photography is centering your subject. Using the lines as guidelines, place the subject into one of the thirds. Moving the subject out of the center of the image leaves room for the subject's environment to help the photo tell a story. This technique generally creates more tension, energy, and interest in the photo than simply centering the feature as in the two images below.



Lines & Repeating Patterns

Use the compositional elements of the photo to create leading lines which can be used to lead your eye to the subject. Lines can literally be lines or repeating patterns that bring the viewer's eye into the photo.



Composition (continued)

Fill the Frame

The second most common error is not getting close enough to your subject to fill your camera's viewfinder. But there is also something else to remember. Many of the images from the photo library get published in A&K brochures, magazines, and newspapers. These are all print media, which means there will be text (or a large ampersand logo) placed on an image. Leaving empty areas in your photograph (also known as negative space or copy space) is also appropriate in some cases. Remember to treat any "rule" of composition as more of a guideline, since pleasing photographs can often be made while ignoring one or more of these rules.



Lighting

"Light makes photography. Embrace light. Admire it. Love it. But above all, know light. Know it for all you are worth, and you will know the key to photography". – George Eastman

Subjects in bright daylight have a range of brightness that is outside of the range of most cameras. This causes shadow areas to become solid black. Most photographers prefer to take photos early or late in the day to avoid the problem. This time of day also provides warmer light.

If there are no other options, a neutral density filter can be used to decrease the brightness of the highlights, thereby narrowing the range of brightness in the image to more closely match the range of the camera.

The two photos below are examples of good use of natural lighting.



Backlighting

Most photography books recommend keeping the sun behind you or over your shoulder. However, photos can be made while directly facing the sun. This may require some experimentation, but the results can be very interesting.



Flash

The built-in flash on most cameras is capable of illuminating a subject that is between 3 and 10 feet away. At greater distances, light from the flash is too diffused to be effective. Regardless of what flash is on your camera, do not be afraid to use it! Using your camera's flash in broad daylight will illuminate shadows, thereby bringing the image back into the range your camera can record.

Bracketing

Some cameras can take multiple photos at different exposures. This increases your chance of hitting the correct exposure. The added plus when using a digital camera? It is easy to delete the photos you don't like!

Lenses

The human eye is about the equivalent of a 50mm lens. Any lens wider than 50mm is considered to be a wide angle lens; any lens that is narrower is considered to be a telephoto lens (Wide lenses have lower millimeter numbers and telephoto lenses have higher numbers). Wide angle lenses distort subjects. This is most noticeable in portrait photography. Most portrait photographers use lenses between 75mm and 135mm to minimize distortion.

Depth of Field

Telephoto lenses have a small area they can keep in focus. The area that is in focus is called the depth of field. Be aware that while putting the background behind your subject out of focus may look pleasant, it may take away from your subject's ability to tell their story.

Things to Keep in Mind Before Taking Your Next Photo

1. What story will this photo tell?
2. What are you trying to express in your photo?
3. What mood or emotion do you want to capture?
4. Are there repeating patterns or leading lines that you can utilize?
5. Where is the sun in relation to you and your subject(s)?
6. Are you photographing during the "golden hour" of sunrise or sunset?
7. Are you engaged with your subject(s) and close enough to fill the frame?
8. Look for unique symbols that represent a country's history or culture.
9. Is there an opportunity to frame your subject(s) with an object such as a tree branch, doorway, or window.