



Landscape photography workshop in les Iles de la Madeleine – 2015

With your guide Nigel Quinn, a local photographer that has intimate knowledge of the most breathtaking locations and privileged access to certain areas that are on privately owned land.

Dates : 2 workshops are available : from the 20th to the 26th of July and from the 10th to the 16th of August. Contact me if you wish to see a workshop given at a different time, early September being a potentially great time.

Cost: 1495\$+taxes. Includes the workshop, 6 nights at the Auberge Madeli or Château Madelinot, breakfasts and group transportation on the Islands. A 400\$ non-reimbursable deposit is required to reserve your spot.

We shall only be a **small group of 6** with a guide that does not actively photograph during the week. This will give you the opportunity to receive more feedback in the field instead of padding my portfolio. I will take a small number of photos to demonstrate proper technique, for capture and also post-production as well as explain the thought process when deciding on composition.

WORKSHOP DESCRIPTION

The islands are a playground for landscape photography. With breathtaking views on both the east and west side, easy access, open horizons and sculpted colorful capes; coming to photograph here is pure bliss. You will be able to make the most of sand, sun and sea and capture their visual essence.

We will be photographing at the tips of each day, barring a few exceptions, as to make the most of the beautiful light here. Taking shots at noon just to have memories is pointless in my opinion. We will have five days of shooting together, with an additionnal floating day to limit the impact of a rainy day. And also so you will have a day to experience the islands without a camera stuck to your nose.



Expect to be shooting from 5:30 till 8:30 and 6:00 to 10:00 in the evening with probably a night session also for star photography. Afternoons will be for photo theory and feedback on your photography. We will shoot on a beach in the afternoon, as it is great light for that subject.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Physical demands: This workshop is rated as a 4 on a scale of 1-10. We generally have easy access to our locations and we can pace ourselves, but it does require sometimes walking 30 minutes or less over uneven ground or sand. We will also be spending a day on Entry Island which we will hike, it is like a miniature Scottish Highlands. There will be numerous times to rest and the group can split. I consider the physical requirements quite reasonable but if you are unsure, contact me directly.

Technical knowledge in photography: This workshop is adapted to people of varying ability, from amateurs with a passion for the outdoors to semi-pros that want to tighten up their skills and interpret the Islands in their own eye. It is highly recommended to understand the basics of exposure, the relationship between aperture, shutter speed and ISO as well as the visual effect of each variable. For example, the difference in depth of field between F4 and F16. You also must be comfortable enough with your camera to change certain functions, white balance for example. You may participate and learn in the workshop in any case, but you may have to concentrate more on camera operation instead of the best way of capturing the breathtaking vista in front of you. If you are unsure of your technical abilities, contact me and we can go over a few details.

Transportation: Each participant is responsible for transportation to the Islands. I can offer advice and options for getting here. In French we say: *les Iles c'est beau mais c'est loin*. Happily it is more beautiful than far. Once here, we will be going to our various locations together in a 7 passenger Ford Flex. You may also have your own vehicle.

Lodging: In partnership with Hotels Accent, you will have the choice of staying at the Chateau Madelinot or the Auberge Madeli. In both cases, we will be situated in the heart of the island of Cap-aux-Meules, close to all services. It is an ideal staging area to go to our locations without losing any precious light.

Meals: A continental breakfast is included at the hotel and I will also have a number of snacks and precious coffee in the field. As for lunch and dinner we will have a number of delicious options each day but are not included in the price of the package. I dislike the lack of variety in group meal situations and want to go beyond the meat or fish choice. And when taking photos, time becomes a strange concept and I don't want to have to respect a set time for meals.



RECOMMENDED CAMERA EQUIPMENT

A dslr is highly recommended with lenses covering the focal lengths from 17mm to 200mm.

A solid tripod, if it has a hook underneath, all the better as we have some windy days here. Don't invest a fortune though as sand and salt can damage moving parts in the legs and head.

A filter system with graduated and solid neutral density filters is good to have, it makes it much easier to deal with varied lighting conditions and lower contrast between the ground and the sky. You will also be able to do longer exposures, with moving water, it is a nice option to have. You can use the Cokin P system or the pricier Lee system. It is not an absolutely necessary accessory, but is quite handy. Contact me for more information on systems as there is an intimidating number of choices in filters and holders. I do highly recommend having a good polariser for your lens though.

A shutter release, inexpensive cable to trip the shutter of your camera without having to touch it while on a tripod. I also generally have a Hoodman loupe with me in the field, that way I can look at the lcd screen on my camera without any reflections from the ambient light.

A bag containing all your equipment. A laptop with Lightroom and/or Photoshop if you wish to work on post production technique during the afternoon sessions. A windbreaker and a few pairs of comfortable shoes, you may get a bit wet from time to time. Wetsuit booties can also do the trick. And bring an appetite for fresh lobster and shorts for a kayak/sailboat/horseback adventure in your free time.





WHY PICK A DSLR INSTEAD OF A MIRRORLESS CAMERA

A dslr offers the best results in the field for landscape photography (unless you have a medium format system and the price tag that comes with it)

You have the most versatility in lens choices. From 12mm fisheyes to 800mm telephotos and specialized lenses like macros or tilt-shifts, nothing offers as many options as a good dslr. The most popular brands (Nikon, Canon and Sony) are simply so modular, with the amount of lenses, flashes and various accessories available.

Dslr's are generally quite robust, which is a practical quality for working in the field. Wind, salt and sand will be our constant companions here. I will show you how to lower their impact on you gear, but it helps to have solid equipment to begin with. A mirrorless camera offers image quality equal to their bigger cousins, but a mirror helps shield the sensor from the open air and wind when changing lenses.

You can still bring a mirrorless or other type of camera for a workshop. I always have a fuji x100s in my pocket (an extraordinary camera for what it is designed to do) and I wish I could afford a Sony A7 to travel with, but there are limitations in each system. Most notably a smaller lens selection and electronic viewfinders that are not as pleasant to compose with.

Average temperature

between July 20th-26th: around 20°C

between August 10th-16th: around 20°C

Sunrise

in July: 5:30AM in August: 5:56AM

Sunset

in July: 8:57PM in August: 8:30PM





ITINERARY

We have a floating day in our week, to have the flexibility to deal with bad weather. We will also adapt to lighting conditions to get the most out of our locations. So on a foggy day, we may change to visit a place with a lot of black and white potential.

July 20th/August 10th

As most people will be arriving by ferry in the evening, you are invited to come have a beer at our renowned micro-brewery, l'Abri de la Tempête in the evening to get to know each other and discuss the coming week. We may take a few sunset photos at the Corfu beach, which is 2 minutes away.

July 21st/August 11th

We will begin our workshop by photographing the contrast between wind sculpted red sandstone and the beauty of the Islands. A personal favorite and in the afternoon it is a very popular beach).

Theoretical session in the afternoon at the hotel photography.

Sunset session at the Borgot lighthouse. Another perspective that are not often used.



July 22nd/August 12th

We will visit l'échouerie in Pointe-Basse for sunrise. It is a magnificent area with a variety of rich textures and shapes (turquoise water, capes of various rock types, elegant hills)

Afternoon session on post-production.



We will visit la Grave in the evening. We will try to go a bit earlier, as I want you to have time to explore and plan shots before the golden hour.



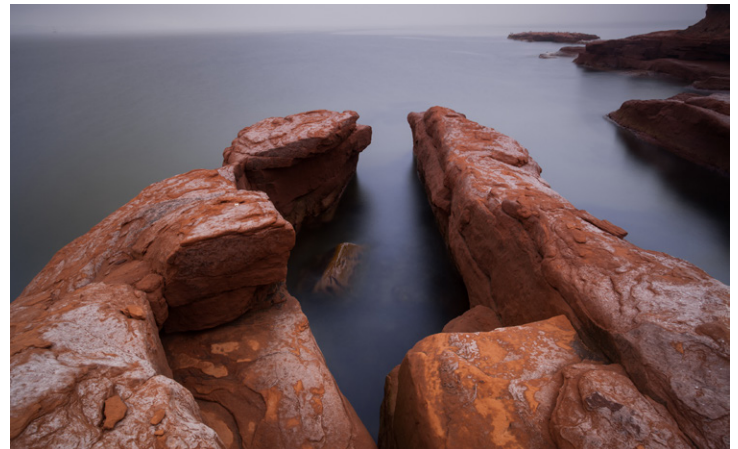


July 23rd/August 13th

Sunrise at l'échouerie or the beach in Gros-Cap, depending on conditions. It is a location with smaller capes, but with a unique morphology. If we are lucky, the fossil forest will be clear on the beach.

Afternoon session of beach photography with sharp light. At the Corfu or Pointe-aux-Loups beach.

We will wrap up our day at la Belle-Anse. It is a popular location, but it is always impressive. I also have access on private land to some jaw-dropping perspectives.





July 24th/August 14th

We will take the ferry to Entry Island in the morning. This is my native island, so I may take a few photos myself, just because it is the most wonderful place in les Iles. We will hike behind the Big Hill and savour the simplicity and therapeutic effect of this tiny island. You will be able to capture the contrast between rolling green hills and the rich blues of the sea. Don't forget to plan for a picnic and a nap with a view of lagoons. We will decide on a sunset location on our return, depending on lighting conditions and energy levels.





July 25th/August 15th Don't forget we have a floating day for weather

We will have a bit of a drive this morning. We will visit Old Harry to capture its beauty in morning light, not necessary to catch the sunrise. Then we continue to Grande-Entrée and have fun at the fishing wharf and l'île Boudreau.

Evening session at la Côte to the wrap up with a beverage of your choice at either l'Abri de la Tempête or the Café de la Grave. Cameras off.





POSSIBLE ADDITIONS DEPENDING ON CONDITIONS

Star photography

We may do a night session to capture stars if the conditions are good and we have the energy. There is one technical restraint though, you need a camera with a 24mm or wider F2.8 or less lens and a camera body that goes to ISO 2000 or more.

Environmental portrait session

The workshop concentrates on landscape photography, but I am also a portrait photographer. The arts council recognizes me as a professional artist for my work in portraiture. I also was among the winners in Photo District News 2014 Faces competition. If we have time and there is an interest for it, I can demonstrate with a model how to capture a portrait in a natural environment.

