

White Pocket Magic

White Pocket is truly one of the most superbly photogenic natural landscapes our planet Earth offers!

The complex creation idea ~ water, sand, and time. Long ago, equatorial sand dunes blew across an area of some 600 x 200 square miles. Monsoon rains filled interdune low spots, making ponds where



ancient dinosaurs drank. Water tables rose high in dune sands, creating instability in waterlogged layers of gorgeous, multi-colored sand.

In chaotic slumps, those red, amber, and white sands flowed, almost like liquid gold, toward ancient life-giving ponds.

Today's result - White Pocket is almost a fairyland on the Pariah Plateau in far northern Arizona's Vermilion Cliffs National Monument. Long, if not difficult access is on dirt roads where deep sand requires four-wheel-driving skills. Such access suggests camping; getting the right light in exactly the right place may take a few days for successful Magic Hour capture.

Magic Arc

Our image tantalizes the visual senses. Light on an upturned red sandstone ridge. Shadow across the swirl of white sandstone. Little black balls atop wind blown sand. Snow just inside the shadow line. It's as if your ageless child ran amok in an ancient candy factory, making majestic swirls to fill our hearts with truly incredible delight!

White Pocket is a superb example of a Magic Arc - difficult access, challenging photography, remarkable colors, surreal shapes, and excellent light.

Learning Barriers

Access, camping, and truly capturing chaotic slumps at Magic Hour. Because White Pocket is icing on the cake, the scintillating range of red and white colors captivates one's senses. The big challenge - capturing all provocative facets of this unique natural landscape. The secondary challenge - spending necessary time to get truly award-winning images.

The hot tricks - *being there in truly excellent light and knowing where to shoot!*

Color Management of Your Images

Between camera club and state fair competition entries, I've watched some 6000-7000 images be judged. While a single judge does the camera club with comments, the state fair does a juried competition with three to five judges.

The judge's principal objective is to clearly discuss color management of each presentation. So, what's color management...?

Color management is the process of evaluating each image for clipping, contrast, sharpening, and other details which move the image from humdrum to dramatic fine art.

Why all that post processing work?

Because the camera has a limited capture range compared to the human eye.

In a separate piece entitled What NOT To Do, we evaluated some 300 White Pocket images we found on the web. Selecting perhaps 10%, we examined the histogram for each image. In web images, it's fairly common to both blow out channels and not perform other color management steps before submission.

When we applied a simple Lightroom 3 color management scheme, we were able to improve images 20-40%.

You can find all that analysis and procedure at [What NOT To Do](#). (If you're reading a saved PDF, click this hypertext link to download; otherwise, go to Workflows menu at Bistiart.smugmug.com and click What NOT to Do...)

Future Color Management

A lot of color management can be done in camera. You just have to know what each histogram segment means, then watch your LCD histogram after each picture.

Yet even managing a camera histogram does not offer the precision of managing Lightroom 3's histogram. Lightroom 3 has more sophisticated tools in the Basic, Tone Curves, Details, and Presets tabs for histogram control...

Full Range HDR Fine Art Processing

But, the elephant in the room is Full Range HDR...

No one has really used Full Range HDR, emphasized the scintillating color range, used careful tone mapping, and created the exquisite fine art White Pocket truly deserves. I think fine art processing will be the next big landmark in memorializing White Pocket as a well-known 4 Corners digital photography site.

Come with Joe to White Pocket; let him take you beyond just nature photography into capturing and crafting fantastic pictorial natural history stories as you re-create fine art photography from long ago and far away...

We will shoot 2 photographic categories - Nature (sky) and Intimate Landscapes (no sky). The first is broad brush landscape or portrait capture; the second is Mother Nature's way of creating such startling close up reminders of a candy factory.

*White Pocket images are forthcoming!
We plan a fine art discovery shoot early next spring
to apply our award-winning digital techniques
and capture this most indelible nature site in full Magic Hour light...*

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