

PETREL COVE FIELD TRIP

Meeting:

Meet in the Carpark at the steps above Petrel Cove by 6:50pm as sunset is scheduled for around 7:30pm on Saturday 28th November.

When you arrive, it can be a little tricky to get a park, as sometimes there are other people surfing or fishing, but they tend to leave after sundown.

There are more car parks behind the main carpark.

Food:

We did consider a meal before/after, but the current conditions and the timing have caused us to consider that this was not a viable option. It is fine if you wish to bring something to eat and drink whilst at Petrel Cove.

What to Bring:

- Rubber boots, or water type shoes with good grip, or if you're happy to get your feet wet, bring a towel to dry off your feet afterwards.
- Warm clothing (weather depending).
- If you have a rain cover, use it to protect your camera. If you don't have one, even a clear plastic shower cap can help protect your camera from the spray and moisture.
- Your Camera preferably with a wide-angle lens, or even a mid-zoom.
- A sturdy tripod, especially if you want slow shutter speeds to show the movement of the water
- A cable release, an electronic trigger. You can use the self-timer on the camera, but this does delay the actual taking of your shot.
- Filters
Filters can reduce the amount of light entering the camera, allowing you to use longer shutter speeds to accentuate the water motion. Nicole uses a 6 stop ND filter for this.
Nicole also uses Graduated ND Filters to balance the exposure in the sky with the exposure of the foreground.
- Microfiber cloths.
Nicole uses a lens cloth to wipe excess water from filters or the lens. She has also used a car chamois "as it's nice and soft". You need to keep several microfiber cloth pieces in your backpack or pocket, as Nicole uses them on every single shot just to make sure all water spots are removed from the lens and/or filters. You don't want to go home and try to clone or remove 100+ water-spots in Photoshop!
- A head torch can be handy as the darkness comes in.

Key Safety Tips about the danger of the waves

- Spend 5 minutes looking at the ocean before proceeding.
You'll have an idea of where the waves can reach and where it's safe to stand. Dry rocks typically mean it's safe, but incoming tides and a rogue wave can still reach some of these areas, so beware!
- Always keep an eye on the ocean, do **not** turn your back on it.
- **Always** plan a safe way to retreat **before** you start setting up
Don't forget rogue waves do exist. These are huge waves that can suddenly hit the coastline at any time.
- Do not go near the edge where the waves are crashing. This is most important.
A big wave can easily knock you down and drag you into the sea as it retreats.

- Some of the algae are very slippery. Avoid stepping on any.
- Check the swell and tides before shooting seascape photography. This way, you'll know if the sea is going to retreat or not. This info can prevent you from being stuck on some rock in the middle of raging waves.

Nicole's Procedure:

Like all good landscape photographers, she likes to scout the area first and find the composition that is most pleasing to her.

Camera Settings:

She uses AV mode mainly because she wants to capture the movement, but sometimes she uses manual mode.

She will choose a small aperture and adjust the ISO to achieve a slow shutter setting such as 1/30s to begin with, but then make alterations to those three settings to get the result she is hoping to achieve.

While any focal length lens will capture elements of the scene, she likes start by using a wide-angle lens (a 16-35mm Canon lens) and tries and get as close as she can to the water; even standing in the water. She says "Often on slow shutter speeds, when the water is moving past, it creates a really interesting scene and the wider the frame the more dramatic the effect. It really draws the viewer into the scene".

"You can take many differing shots of the waves, as the texture of the waves are constantly changing. By using different shutter speeds, you are able to change the water texture in these shots. For example, using a fast shutter speed such as 1/500s will freeze the action and capture the power of the sea. Whereas, you can bring a sense of motion to the image by using a slow shutter speed such as 1/2s to capture the movement in the water. Using shutter speeds of 1 second or longer will allow you achieve a milky or foggy affect. This helps to create a sense of calmness and serenity in the image".

After the shooting is done:

The return journey

The stairs down to the beach are steep, so returning up to the carpark can be challenging to some. There is no need to rush, just take your time, stop and enjoy the scenery for a while then continue a little more after you have caught your breath.

Cleaning your equipment

The salt spray is very corrosive and can be detrimental to your expensive equipment even if your camera didn't appear to get wet, the sea spray or mist will be on it, so you should clean it thoroughly at the end of the shoot.

When Nicole gets home, she uses baby wipes (alcohol free) to wipe down the camera and lens, but a soft damp cloth can work quite well.

She washes her tripod with tap water to get rid of the saltwater and any salty sand that are stuck to it. Nicole uses Zeiss- lens cleaning wipes (available from the chemist) to clean the front of all lenses used.