



DESERT INSTITUTE
JOSHUA TREE NATIONAL
PARK ASSOCIATION

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LANDSCAPE PHOTOGRAPHY HIKE

FIELD CLASS / FALL 2023

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Are you a landscape photographer looking to advance your photography skills, make it more rewarding, and start capturing some great landscape images? You've come to the right place! Joshua Tree National Park is a photographer's playground with dramatic geologic features, funky flora, and diverse wildlife. Immerse yourself in your photography practice on this full-day hike-and-shoot excursion, and develop skills such as shooting in manual, selecting exposure settings using the histogram, and exposure bracketing, while exploring Arch Rock and Twin Tanks in the Pinto Basin. In this workshop, we'll teach you some advanced techniques while ensuring you're in the best place to take advantage of the weather and conditions on the day. Your instructor, Jon, will be available to coach you in real-time on specific techniques you'd like to learn or answer any questions you may have.

MEETING LOCATION

[Twin Tanks parking lot](#) in Joshua Tree National Park, approximately 6.5 miles from the North Entrance station in 29 Palms.

DATE and TIME

Friday, Dec. 1, 9am to 4pm (*Please arrive on time; we start classes promptly, and in the case of hikes or other classes on the go, we cannot wait for students who arrive late.*)

ACTIVITY LEVEL

This hike will be paced slowly and will follow maintained dirt trails and pathways. Participants can expect to walk up to 4 miles, carrying all camera gear and supplies needed for the day—we will not be returning to cars until the class ends. Don't hesitate to get in touch with us if you have questions about your ability to participate.

EXPERIENCE REQUIRED

Participants must have some experience working with their DSLR or mirrorless camera in manual exposure mode and be familiar with their camera's controls and options settings. You must know at least the basic functions of your camera.

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- Admission to Joshua Tree National Park (please download or print your park pass ahead of time, or you will have to pay fees at the gate!)
- First aid and emergency supplies for the group

WHAT'S NOT INCLUDED

- Meals
- Lodging
- Transportation
- Photography equipment

GET TO KNOW YOUR INSTRUCTOR

Jon Norris is a professional landscape photographer and workshop guide, a JTNPA business member, and a Desert Institute volunteer. Jon offers one-to-one and small group workshops, plus photographic adventure tours, in Joshua Tree National Park. He started taking photos at 14 with his trusty Zenit 10, teaching himself the fundamentals of photography via countless rolls of poorly exposed 35 mm film. Born in the UK, Jon spent 25 years working in aerospace engineering (15 years while living in France and Germany). As a recovering engineer, he now divides his time between marketing and photography and lives in Lake Forest, OC.

PROGRAM AGENDA

We'll start with a quick orientation session to review camera gear, go over the itinerary, and answer any questions. Then we'll spend the morning hiking and taking photographs before taking an in-field lunch break. In the afternoon, you'll have plenty of time to continue exploring the amazing geological features at our location, ask questions and practice your new learning.

SPECIAL NOTES ABOUT THIS ACTIVITY

There is no cell service in the park! Print or download your park pass ahead of time, and please allow ample travel time to arrive at the meeting location—extra time if you are meeting on a weekend morning (see FAQ notes about late arrivals.) Please make sure you check the weather ahead of time and dress accordingly.

WHAT TO BRING

The essentials for all field courses

- Water, between 3 and 4 liters per person for a full day outing
- Food and snacks, easily packed and eaten in the field, for the duration of your course
- Close-toed athletic shoes or hiking boots; no sandals, not even hiking sandals!
- Sun protection: hat, sunglasses, sunscreen; light-colored long-sleeved shirts are recommended and very effective on hot days
- Warm layers for cooler mornings/evenings (it can be surprisingly cold!)
- Backpack to carry food, water, and any personal items you need for the day
- Notebook and pencil are always good to have

Required photography equipment

- Digital camera (DSLR or Mirrorless)
- If you have a camera with interchangeable lenses, you may bring multiple lenses (cleaned!) if you would like to, but limit yourself to no more than 2-3 lenses (as you'll be hiking with them).
- Prime lens around 24mm, a 24-70mm, or a 24-105mm zoom lens (full frame focal length) will work well for most of what we'll photograph from sunrise to sunset, f4 to f6.5 - doesn't have to be a fast lens.
- 70-200mm zoom lens - or longer (full frame focal length) will work well for the more intimate photographs that we'll be shooting.
- Extra camera batteries (charged)
- Spare memory cards
- Camera/lens cleaning supplies
- Your camera manual. You must know at least the basic functions of your camera. We'll go through what else you need to know during the workshop
- Small backpack or camera bag

Recommended photography equipment

- Sturdy tripod
- Remote shutter release
- If you have a circular polarizing filter, bring it (cleaned). Don't forget the filter holders/lens adaptors (if required)

FAQ

WHO DO I CONTACT IF I AM RUNNING LATE?

Please call our main line: 760-819-4714 and if no one answers, please call the Desert Institute coordinator, Benny Lopez: 949-241-9693.

For classes meeting in the park, please take into consideration the time it will take to go through the entrance gate—on weekends after 9am, you may wait up to 45 minutes! (15-20 minutes is typical.) For afternoon activities, you will also want to allot time to park, as parking lots tend to be congested between 10am and 4p in the busy season. **There is no cell service in the park**, so please plan accordingly!

WHAT IF I NEED TO CANCEL?

Desert Institute will provide a full refund if we are notified 14 days in advance. If we are notified less than 14 days in advance, we are unable to process refunds for any reason. (But we would like you to notify us if you are unable to attend.)

DOES DESERT INSTITUTE CANCEL ACTIVITIES FOR WEATHER OR LOW ENROLLMENT?

Desert Institute runs classes rain or shine, with the exception of astrophotography classes, which require mostly clear skies in order to be successful. If we do not meet our minimum of 4 registered participants for any given activity, we will cancel the activity with 48+ hours notice. We recommend that you purchase travel insurance, as we are unable to reimburse for expenses you incur due to a canceled class, such as airfare and hotel.

ARE THERE ANY THINGS I NEED TO DO TO PREPARE?

All participants must return the completed **health questionnaire** and signed **waiver** before the day of their activity. **Failure to do so will cancel your registration.** If your course enters Joshua Tree National Park, you must **download or print your park pass** ahead of the class, or you will pay the entrance fee at the gate, which is currently \$35 per vehicle.

CAN I BRING MY KIDS? MY SPOUSE? PETS?

Only registered participants may attend Desert Institute activities unless noted in the activity description. If this is a kid-friendly activity, please make sure your child(ren) meets the age requirements. As much as we love our pets, we don't allow them in the field with any of our activities.

