

## **Tipsheet 1 in a Series: Photography**

By Dale Shekooley

---

*Dale Shekooley is a freelance writer and Administration Manager for Canadian Rockies Tours Inc. She has traveled extensively through Canada, Australia, the United Kingdom and continental Europe. Additional resources for planning your Canadian holiday can be found at <http://www.canadian-rockies-tours.com>.*

---

Many travelers and hobbyist photographers take pictures in the same way regardless of where they are. This approach is akin to using a toothbrush to wash everything from one's teeth to one's car. Even family snapshots will look better and be less expensive to develop with a little attention to the following details.

### **Light**

Canadian spring and summer, particularly in Northern Alberta, are blessed with extended hours of daylight. You may be able to take pictures well into the evening with no flash required. It is still advisable to use your flash for shots of people with their backs to a setting sun, or reposition the subject of your shot so that it is properly illuminated. Check settings on your camera. An automatic flash setting may be best late at night even if the sky appears quite light. Cloud cover and humidity rising up from grass as the sun goes down can create a grainy, foggy effect. Beautiful sunset shots are easy to get—catch them when they are at their brightest, usually six to eight p.m.

### **Framing and distance**

Many travelers to Canada are so impressed by the Rocky Mountains that they stop on the side of the highway to take pictures before ever getting near the mountains. You do not want to use up a roll of film and have nothing left when the mountains are even closer. Try to limit your shots from the road—moving vehicles can ruin your shot and you will be better off buying postcards of the far-off panoramic views. If you are visiting national parks like those at Banff or Jasper, wait until you are well inside the park gates and there will be brown signs of a person with binoculars to point you to accessible viewpoints, many of which are right along the road for you to pull into and park at. Choose parts of the mountains that look particularly interesting—don't try to fit everything in or you will end up with a lot of pictures which look the same. Vary your distances—try to zoom in to a craggy outline with a single tree growing on an outcrop, or capture a face or shape in a cliff side. And don't forget to put some people in your shots to personalise them.

Canadian Rockies Tours Inc.  
*Improving Your Canadian Holiday*

**Wildlife**

It is important to remember that approaching wildlife is not recommended, regardless of the size of the animal. Many animals in national park areas have become violent and attacked humans with little provocation. Animals accustomed to being fed by bystanders have also developed a taste for human food and wander into towns searching for garbage to scavenge, endangering themselves and humans in the process. Please carry your litter with you and dispose of it properly in receptacles designated for that purpose. In the mountain parks these receptacles are often painted dark brown or green and appear as slanted mailboxes with heavy hinged lids—these keep animals, particularly bears, from getting into the garbage. Bears that become dependent on garbage for food are often tranquilised or shot and relocation is not always successful. Staying well away from wildlife (or of controlled fire burns, avalanches or other natural disasters) and taking pictures from inside a vehicle or at a safe distance (the length of three coaches) is advised.

**Photofinishing**

Photofinishing is very inexpensive in Canada and is worth doing before you leave for home. Many places even in the smallest towns have one-hour or same-day photofinishing service. Look for photofinishing services at drugstores, camera stores or big-box department stores. It is usually cheaper to get double prints of an entire roll of film than to select a few reprints of single shots from that roll.

Canada offers many excellent and awe-inspiring photo opportunities. These tips will help you create memories that will last a lifetime.

\* \* \*