

Microstock Traveller - Working while on Holiday?

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By Steve Gibson
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[2]

Some people go on holiday to get away from it all (and if that's you then perhaps the thought of getting up at the crack of dawn to get some great travel photos is not your idea of fun!). Even so there are still a few types of photo you can take while you are out and about travelling the world without spending too much of your relaxation time.

For me travel is more about adventure and adrenaline than sun beds and swimming pools so it's pretty easy to combine some photography (work) with my holidays, and if you are a [microstock](#) [3] photographer then chances are that you actually enjoy spending time taking photos.

I've written this to suit the opportunistic microstocker whose primary goal for travel is vacation perhaps with family / partner.

The Food



Food is such an underrated stock subject - particularly local delicacies and specialties. Food is dear to a lot of peoples hearts (mouths and stomachs too!). You probably won't be traveling with much in the way of equipment so improvisation is key here. Use available light, shade harsh light with a sun umbrella and let the camera worry about the colour cast. Try using built in flash and defuse the light with a paper cup or anything similar that is to hand. Shoot and eat local dishes, the only reason to visit mcdonalds while traveling is to use the mctoilets.

Landscapes, Vistas and Skylines



Duh!, Well this is the obvious one, a little care is needed not to make it look like a holiday snap, but even if you only have a few seconds it is quite easy to get some nice foreground detail into your shot and make something saleable. For increased microstock sales try getting shots at sunrise or sunset (golden hour) and at night; also photograph when the weather is bad; mist, rain and snow etc often add to the atmosphere of a photo so don't let that put you off. Regardless of how saturated you might think a subject is always take on the most iconic subjects in the location you are visiting, especially if you can show them in a new light or from an unusual but still highly recognisable angle. It's the iconic subjects that get the

higher volumes in sales - balanced with the stiff competition they face in the microstock marketplace.

Signs



You don't have to go out of your way for this one. Take pictures of famous street names you are in. No need to go back when the light is right etc, just be opportunistic, grab and move on. Things to look out for are signs at the entrance to a town, direction signs to a famous landmark. Even things like foreign signs for toilets, ferries, or the police could all make usable stock images, but some might have to be sold under an [editorial license](#) [4].

Your Hotel Room

Unless you are stopping in a chain hotel with generic decor then your room should make another interesting subject, don't forget the view from your window, even if it's just the street below or the rooftops opposite. If there is a restaurant or roof garden then take some photos from there too.

The Locals



Now this is where it gets tricky, if you have [model release forms](#) [5] with you then to be honest you are crossing into a 'working holiday' or a 'trip on assignment', if you want to keep your holiday exactly that then think about silhouettes of people, people walking down the street away from you, details of hands and arms, or feet etc, and local dress. Tourist destinations often have shows and dances where locals dress up in national costumes making such photos a lot easier to obtain, festivals and markets are another great photo opportunity while traveling.

The Details



Details of landmarks while still allowing the landmark to be somewhat recognisable if used in context make great images. Close ups of local produce at a market, local crafts and textures of buildings. Think about a study of colour and shoot brightly coloured doors, buildings, cars, bicycles etc.

Research Before you Go

Do a little bit of research before you go to your location. Look on google images for something that

catches your eye, and look on a site like flickr for images of the area you are visiting. The aim is not to copy but to inspire you into being more creative and give you ideas you might not have otherwise thought of. If you run out of 'creative steam' while on holiday a quick look at the postcards and books in the gift shop to give you a kick start, even if it's only with amusingly cliché postcard images.

Two things NOT to do...

- 1) Never be put off by the fact that 'everyone' has already photographed it, that might be true, but if a landmark or location is so famous then you should also photograph it. If you have time, try a few unusual angles as well as the 'expected' cliché shots.
- 2) Never ever hold back from taking a photo because you don't have enough time, a tripod, macro lens, enough zoom, etc etc. Make do with what you have and learn to recompose your shot with the resources you have available, **you will often be more creative when less burdened with equipment.**

Licensing [editorial images as microstock](#) [4].

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