



## **Photography notes on Autumn Colours**

### **1. Use a polarising filter**

This will help with the saturation of colours. It is also surprising how many leaves are shiny or slightly reflective. A polariser is also useful for darkening the skies which if cloudy can be glary (light bouncing around off clouds) and then the range of light being too great for exposure including dark trees.

However using a polariser can be a bit of a compromise because you will lose up to two stops; but you can increase your ISO. (I would or suggest use a slower shutter speed with a steady hand or a tripod; but if there is any wind there will be leaf movement causing blurring)

### **2. Try for colour contrasts**

You can accentuate the colours by framing in such a way that the different colours contrast with one another eg red leaves against lush green grass, golden-yellow leaves against a blue sky – etc You can get some really punchy close-ups like this.

### **3. Double up on colour by using reflections**

If there is a pond or lake include the reflections; preferably when the sun is fairly low in the sky and almost behind you as this will produce the strongest reflections. A slow shutter speed will smooth out water movement giving a more mirror like effect, (but beware motion blur on the leaves if breezy). If it's calm, use a tripod and shoot a series with different shutter speeds up to one second.

### **4. Try using a style setting**

If your camera has style settings use the 'Landscape Picture Style' to add emphasis to colour. (Canon have specific 'Autumn Hues' which you can download and install on your camera; but it is a bit of a faff.) But you will be able to saturate colours later in software if you prefer.

### **5. Avoid shooting into the sun**

Avoid shooting towards the sun/bright sky, as it will result in dark shadows, lower saturation of colours and lens flare (which further reduces the impact of colours.) If you do have to shoot towards the sun use a lens hood or shield your lens with something to avoid lens flare.

If really sunny you are normally advised to keep the sun at your back, but it can wash out and flatten things – keep the sun at 45° wherever possible and get a more graduated 3D effect.

(but there is an exception to every rule - it can be very effective to shoot through a leaf or some translucent fungi with low sunlight to backlight it)

### **6. Experiment with white balance settings**

Shooting later in the day (in the golden hours) is best to accentuate the reds and yellows, but it may not always be possible. You can try experimenting with AWB (Automatic White Balance) to give you more vibrant results. Warm up colours by increasing the colour temperature a little. (i.e. make more 'warmer', more yellow/orange). You can do this by increasing the kelvin numbers or the easiest way is by selecting the setting 'cloudy', if your camera has semi-auto settings.

**All in all, enjoy the scene and take your time – those trees aren't going anywhere.**