

Antelope Canyon



After an unbelievably scenic and incredibly long drive from Bryce Canyon National Park, Clive, Marde and I arrived in Moab at about 17:30 pm. As it turned out we arrived within minutes of Joe, David and the rest of the group who had driven down from Salt Lake City. Quite impressive considering we had arranged to meet at about 14:00!! It was great meeting up with the rest of the group - a few new faces and some old (and some not so old) friends from the Hebrides.

Our first three days were spent in either Arches or Canyonlands National parks. The highlight for me was Mesa Arch. After the fourteen Swiss tourists left, the light (as Joe had assured us it would) got better and better - and we all had plenty of time to copy Joe's shot from the Light and Land brochure.

From Moab we moved down to Monument Valley and our hosts the Navajo - the landscape there is simply awesome. Our trip to the prohibited parts of the valley with a Navajo guide was great fun, truly this is Cowboys and Injuns country.



*Lower Antelope Canyon
Ebony SV45te
4 seconds F32150mm no filtration*



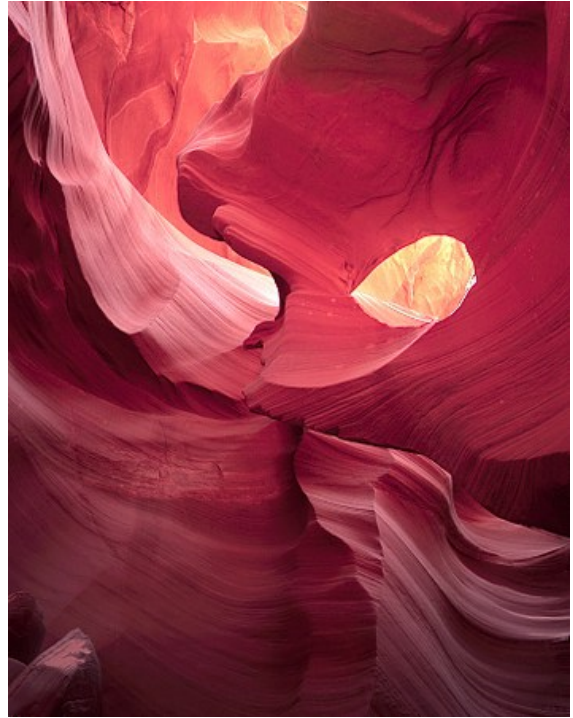
*Tumbleweed in Antelope Canyon
Ebony SV45te
45 seconds f32 150mm No Filtration*

Unknown to me however, my absolute highlight was being saved for our next stop - Page. Here we spent about four hours in Lower Antelope Canyon - for me an almost spiritual experience (a certain M.Fatali prefers to call it "Cathedral Canyon" and rightly says "it invokes wonder, imagination, and reverence"). Yet again Joe and David "booked" us the ideal weather conditions (clear blue skies) and we arrived at the perfect time of day (mid morning). These normally to be avoided conditions are spot on for Antelope. It allows the receding, reflected light to weave its magic around the swirling shapes of Navajo Sandstone.

There's something quite strange about taking pictures in semi-darkness down a 150ft deep hole in the ground. The combination of long exposures, reciprocity failure and the almost luminous sandstone can give exciting results. I exposed half a dozen different images in my 4 hours (fast work for me) and the "Tumbleweed" picture shown here ended up as my favourite.

I entered a print of this image in a recent competition at an International Photographic Convention in Fuerterventura and was lucky enough to win both the Landscape category and the Best Overall print. A great deal of thanks must go to Joe, David and Light and Land for their part in this success.

At this point I would have happily packed my camera bag a satisfied customer, but there were still more photographic delights in store. Our last few days were spent in Zion, another magical location. After spending time in the "desert" the verdant greenery here was a spectacular contrast. I am seriously envious of anyone booked on Joe's trip this year (unfortunately I can't make it this time) I am sure those lucky ones who are, will come back with their own experience from Bryce and Zion to match my four unforgettable hours in "Cathedral Canyon"



*Lower Antelope Canyon
Ebony SV45te
8 seconds f22^{2/3} 90mm No filtration*