

INON UWL-95 C24 & Dome Lens Unit III

by Peter Rowlands

With the current trend towards slightly wider zoom lenses on compact cameras, it was inevitable that manufacturers would have to come up with new designs to maximise the performance of these new cameras.

Japanese manufacturer INON recently introduced their UWL-95 C24 supplementary wide angle lens which is a totally renewed optical design which supports shooting at the 24 mm wide end with compact cameras. The UWL-95 C24 is physically very similar to their well established UWL-H100 and is available in either 52 or 67mm thread fitting.

The standard UWL-95 C24 lens increases the field of view to a very useful 95° but with the optional Dome Lens Unit III this increases it to an even more useful 141°. In addition the minimum focus is an incredible 0cm which makes this a very versatile option for compact users. The Dome Lens Unit III improves the performance so much that I would suggest it should be thought of as compulsory rather than optional, finances permitting.

INON UK sent me a lens to review just after lockdown eased. Unfortunately that coincided with the onset of some seasonally autumnal weather with water clarity less than ideal but these are the sort of conditions in which supplementary wide lenses thrive because they allow you to get close to a large subject and still get it all in frame.

I used the INON UWL-95 C24 and Dome Lens Unit IIIG on a Sony RX100 Va in their MPK-URX100A underwater housing. The combination is a very neat and manageable combination but, being glass, it is a little nose heavy and would benefit from a small buoyancy collar. The clever people at INON also have available a Dome Lens Unit IIIA which is acrylic rather than glass so this will help the buoyancy and reduce the costs compared to the glass version.

As well as being lighter and less expensive, the acrylic port can be polished to remove any slight dinks which would not be possible with a glass dome.

Since the UWL-95 C24 is a threaded lens you will need to align the dome shade to avoid vignetting but this is easily done by loosening the screws and rotating the dome.

Once in the water, the UWL-95 C24 has to be unscrewed to remove any air bubbles from the rear of the lens and the front port of the housing. Being a fine screw thread this has to be done with care to avoid cross threading but once in place it is held securely.

The benefits of a supplementary wide angle lens are well documented but some manufacturer's





*(Above) RX 100 Va with lens at 24mm
(Below) RX 100 Va with UWL-95 C24 and Dome Lens Unit IIIG*



The UWL-95 C24 and Dome Lens Unit IIIG allows the full zoom range to be used which makes it very versatile. (Top) 24mm (Below) 70mm



designs do not allow the full zoom range to be used so check first before you buy. The INON UWL-95 C24 allows full zoom through from 24-70mm on the RX100 Va which makes this the 'go to' lens for all but super macro on compact cameras.

Optically most supplementary wide angle lenses produce the sharpest overall results at smaller apertures but I was pleasantly surprised by the overall sharpness at F4 with this INON combination.

The weight, size and cost benefit of a housed compact camera versus an SLR or even mirrorless for that matter are compelling especially for overseas travel and the UWL-95 C24 and Dome Lens Unit IIIG is such a good performing combination that photographic quality is not compromised either.

The INON UWL-95 C24 is £489.99, the Dome Lens Unit IIIG is £299.99 or the Dome Lens Unit

IIIA is £169.99 so it probably costs the same as your compact camera and housing did but the way in which they will transform your image capability makes this purchase an investment rather than an indulgence.

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