

Editorial

Charity begins at the dive site

The subject of excess baggage charges always creates a flurry of responses on the internet forums but I, for one, would have no problem with them if they would just be consistent and up front about the rules and costs before I pack. That way I can pack to protect my equipment properly.

In addition another annoying thing about travel with most airlines is that their baggage guidelines often never filter down to the check-in clerks and we are faced with a lottery every time we approach the counter.

My other final niggle about excess baggage charges is that I don't see the planes getting smaller and becoming critical about their payload.

But what really annoys me even more than this is the bleeters on the forums who complain about excess baggage charges when they are already booked on a \$5000 trip (and no doubt traveling with camera equipment worth well in excess of that) going to a location most hard working people could only dream of visiting once, let alone several times, and where the local standard of living and healthcare is woefully underfunded.

We are extremely privileged to be able to go to the places we do and rather than donate money to carbon offset schemes (which to my mind are of dubious longterm use anyway and prey on our human guilt gene) we should research the location and seek out a local charity to support.

Bruce Yates, for example, who supplied the cover shot and review of Aquatica's Canon 5D Mk11 housing in this issue donates all of the profits from his underwater photography to his charity of choice, *International Children's Surgical Foundation*.

ICSF provides free surgery to third world children suffering from treatable disfigurements. Patients treated by ICSF are initially identified by local doctors and consist primarily of children suffering deformities that the local doctors are unable to treat due to inadequate training and expertise.

We are all expected to tip the staff at our resorts but rarely do we give a thought to others in the country's we dive in.

A comparatively small donation from us can make a huge difference to local lives. Consider giving to the ICSF (their details are on Page 27) or seek out a charity of your choice but, either way, do it.

www.icsfoundation.org

Kodachrome



I suspect many UwP readers won't have a clue what I'm on about with this one but here goes.

Kodak recently announced that it was ceasing production of its legendary slide film Kodachrome with the processing facility to follow in about 18 months. Now I haven't exposed a roll of Kodachrome since 2001 but that doesn't stop me feeling a sense of loss.

With Kodachrome, except as I understand it in the US, the purchase price included processing, mounting and return postage so at the end of your holiday you sent off your rolls to Kodak. They then arrived back about a week later in an iconic box which greeted you on your doormat when you got back from work.

The mere sight of the distinctive box made your heart skip a beat as you opened it up and spread the mounted slides onto a lightbox. The next few minutes were spent doing the Kodachrome Loupe Dance (KLD) as

you bent forward to check the focus on a particular slide and with smooth coordination brought the magnifying loupe up to your eye.

At this point, the dance, over the years, evolved into two distinctive styles - there were those who straightened up fully to take an overview of the slides and then repeat the KLD while the other, more professional style would stay bent and hop along the slides one by one with skillful choreography saving their eyeball from being prodded by the loupe.

Either way you checked your focus and composition in detail then either punched the air in delight or slid the offending, unsharp image off the edge of the lightbox and into a real, physical waste basket.

Throughout its lifetime Kodachrome has produced some extraordinary, iconic images and its presence defined an era; even inspiring Paul Simon to write a song about it and so eloquently capture its performance and place in our photographic history.

Time and technology may move on but it doesn't necessarily move for the better and Kodachrome reflects an era when good things took time.

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