

La Luz L800 focus/video light

by Peter Rowlands

I'm sure you've heard the one about a microchip manufacturer whose business was developing so much that they had to move into a smaller premises, well the same could be true for underwater torch manufacturers.

The advent of the LED (light emitting diode) has revolutionised underwater lighting and, when combined with good high ISO performance cameras is starting to offer a credible alternative to strobes. With these cameras being able to shoot stills or video it makes a lot of sense to consider LED lighting. Just as photographic technology is converging to produce stills/video cameras so too is LED lighting to produce aiming/video lights.

La Luz Optics is a Hong Kong based lighting manufacturer and their L800 light is based around a single 10w CREE LED behind a focusing lens which concentrates the beam into an 80° circle with no hot spots. The output from such a small device is very impressive indeed and makes it an ideal focus or video light. The outer dimensions just 34 x 113mm and the Color Temperature is 6500K. It is rated to 100 metres.

The L800 is powered by a single 4000mah 3.7v Li-Ion battery which takes around 8 hours to fully charge and will then give a burn time of 90 mins at High (100%) power, 180 mins at Medium (50%) and 10 hours at Low (10%). The settings are controlled by a single push button on the rear of the unit in the following sequence: Low, Medium, High and then Off. Rotating the rear section by just a quarter turn will ensure that the L800 does not come on accidentally when being handled or more importantly during transport. To be doubly sure, the battery can be removed altogether.

LED technology may be reworking the rule book but one thing remains true - light still generates heat and this is a problem for sealed waterproof designs. The result is that the L800 should only be used underwater to avoid over heating but that's not really a problem for us underwater photographers.

At \$199 plus shipping, the La Luz L800 is significantly less than the Fix LED750DX which offers a similar output and coverage but the L800 is about a quarter the size and weight so, as I said in the beginning, if the L800



takes off, La Luz will need to look for smaller premises!

La Luz deal direct from Hong Kong and when ordering I'd recommend adding a spare battery (\$25) and a Red filter (\$10). They ship within 1-2 days and they say allow up to 20 days delivery but mine arrived in less than 10 and that was over the Christmas period.

I will be using a pair of these tiny

lights for stills and video work over the next couple of months and will report back in UwP65.

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