

# I Took 5345 Photographs On My Last Trip and I'm Overwhelmed!

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In the “good ol’ days” when one was limited by the number of photographs you could get on a roll of film (12, 24, or at best 36), managing travel pics was easy. Most of them would be less than ideal and could be discarded although I have to say even then I found myself keeping them tucked away “just in case.” After all, I had paid to have them developed. Throwing them away seemed wasteful. The good ones (or even sort of okay ones) would go into an album labeled “my trip to Spain” or “my trip to the Grand Canyon.” As the recipient of many of these similar albums from deceased relatives, I can tell you that they just keep on giving. They are tucked away in the same box as those printed photos that weren’t good enough to go into an album. I imagine my children will discard them since they have never even met these folks whose albums I have stored away.



This iceberg photo from Antarctica was just one of hundreds. Here's how I decided on it as my memory shot.

But meanwhile today's cameras create a whole different set of issues. In the earlier days of digital photography, memory cards were pricey acting a barrier similar to the cost of film. That's hardly the case today and even with the ever increasing megapixels of cameras, one can fill card after card cheaply. So even that limitation isn't there to protect us from our trigger finger. The result is that I can take as many photos as I want catching every ray of light, every turn of a head, or every horse that looks at me. And sights such as the Eiffel Tower offer even more opportunities. Here's a nice math problem: if one takes an image every ten seconds and one is allowed 47 minutes to view the Tower, how many pictures can one take? Uh huh. Kind of mind boggling isn't it?

The result is that I get home with thousands of photographs. I've been known to terrify friends who ask, “did you take pictures while you were gone?” My grinning response of “Yes, about 5345. When do you want to see them?” brings a look of horror into their eyes. Actually, I'm just about as horrified when I contemplate trying to sort the wonderful from the ordinary. It's a daunting task for sure.

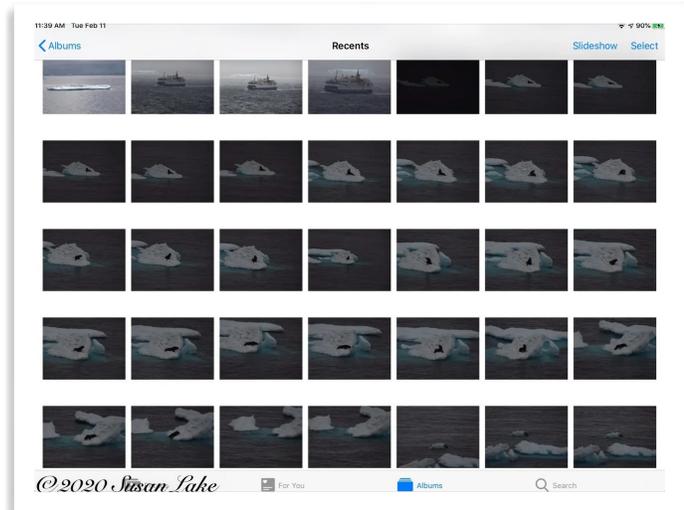
So here's the plan of action that I usually follow. At the end of each day I download the photos I've taken into my iPad. (A laptop works too). This accomplishes two purposes: I have two copies of each photo to bring home. One is on my memory card (or cell phone) and the other is on my second device. Even if I lose a card or a device, I have a “spare.” That's comforting. I do know some folks who download and then erase their cards to reuse later in the trip. I cannot bring myself to do that. Cards are cheap, I buy more than I'll need so they all come home

intact. Only after I've safely copied them at home do I erase my cards.

Here's a Suggestion: If you've read one of my earlier posts, you know I've said the best camera to bring is the one you are most comfortable with. This is even more true when transferring images. I know so many folks who have no idea how to move their images from their cameras or phones to a computer. I've seen them take their cameras to the local drug store, hand it to the guy behind the counter, and say "print these for me." Don't be that person. Get someone to show you how to make the transfer making notes along the way if necessary and practice at home until you can do it easily. **In a future post, I'll outline some of the ways to move your photos so let me know what creates the most difficulty for you.**

The second part of my action plan is to play the "delete delete" game on my second device (an iPad for me) whenever I have a free moment on my trip. Airport waiting time, sea days while cruising, watching TV in hotel rooms at night, or long bus trips are all good opportunities. I start with the "low hanging fruit" or the obvious losers. If an image is blurry, too dark, too light, boring, or a mistake (you know when you clicked accidentally), they go quickly. Then I compare those that are of the same thing making a decision about which one I like best. You have to be brutal and not waver. Trust your instincts. If you like it best on first look, go for it. But, you say "what if I change my mind?" That's the joy of working with a secondary device. The original is still safely on my camera or phone. If I have buyer's remorse, I assure myself I can always change my mind. But I have to say it NEVER happens. My first instinct is usually spot on.

Now that I've cut in half the number of images to think about, I go to the third stage of picking out those I REALLY like. I try to find at least one a day that I love. I mark those. Apple images lets me identify my favorites and that works for me (you may need to make physical notes depending upon your situation). I've been known to show an unwilling spouse or child a series of those I like asking for their vote. But mostly I just trust my own responses.



Does this look familiar? Image after image of similar pics.



Notice the heart in the upper right corner. This image of penguins "made the cut."

With these actions in place, when I get home, I have a fighting chance of having images to share without creating a glazed eye response from my unwitting friends.

To be honest, this is my goal. I don't always reach it, but even one step is better than none. Sometimes one is too busy seeing things to have time. It would be silly to miss the good sights trying to follow some plan. So if you are only going to do ONE thing, download the day's images. Everything else is negotiable.

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