



## Preparation Materials

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# WELCOME

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Welcome to your Air 2 Air Photography Mission!

This packet is your go-to reference, loaded with valuable information on photographic gear suggestions, travel and packing tips, and practical details for a fantastic photo tour experience. This tour pack has specifics for your upcoming tour and is also filled with general travel tips regardless of the tour itself.

Please note that due to possible changes in planning, some information in this packet may not be the most up to date. **Be sure to always read the latest emails sent regarding your specific tour.**

Our aim is to always keep you well informed. Please feel free to reach out to our team with any questions (keep in mind that we might refer you back to the tour packet if we've already covered the subject).

Embrace the spirit of adventure as we embark on this air 2 air photography tour! While we have a planned itinerary, expect the unexpected and be open to change. Our goal is to maximize your photographic experiences by ensuring flexibility for capturing ideal light and weather conditions while accommodating preset commitments with our aircraft and pilots, hotels, guides, etc.

Please note that a photographic tour of this nature, WILL require adjustments based on unforeseen circumstance. Safety is ALWAYS our number one priority over everything else. Please trust our team commitment to provide an exceptional experience regardless of adjustments that may need to be made.

Throughout the trip, remember that "flexibility" is our guiding principle. Capture incredible images and immerse yourself in spontaneous moments without fixating on strict schedules. When you embrace flexibility and maintain a positive attitude, you'll discover a photographic adventure like no other!

Do not hesitate to contact us at [info@air2airphototours.com](mailto:info@air2airphototours.com) for any inquiries or assistance. We are dedicated to offering unparalleled experiences and exceptional photographic education and air 2 air opportunities.

- The Air 2 Air Team



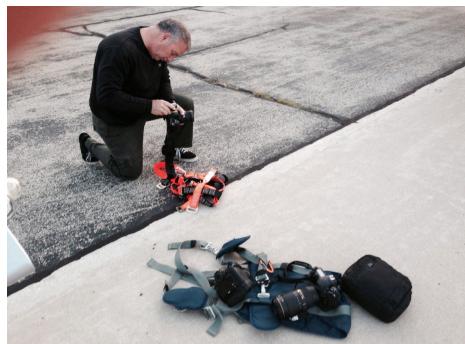
## THE TOUR TEAM

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David McKay - Founder - Instructor - Pilot - PPA Master Photographer and Craftsmen



David Leininger – Founder - Instructor - Professional Aviation Photographer



Richard VanderMeulen - In Air - Aircraft Coordination - Instructor - Professional Aviation Photographer



Keith Charlot - The Man, The Myth, The Legend - ALL things Air 2 Air Photo Missions



# TOUR EXPECTATIONS

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Below is a set of guidelines on what to expect on our tours. Please review and remember to follow so that we can make sure everyone is on the same page and ready for this wonderful adventure together! ***One thing we can guarantee is that not everything will go according to plan on a tour like this. "F" for flexibility is key and we as a team need the group to understand this and have positive energy throughout the tour.***

Air 2 Air Photo Tours is operated by McKay Photography Academy who has had the pleasure of guiding photography enthusiasts across all corners of the globe, spanning every continent, with a community that has now grown to over 3000 clients! Our journey has been nothing short of remarkable, and we feel incredibly lucky to pursue our passion and share it with those who choose to join us.

Our team is deeply committed to delivering a memorable and enriching experience on every tour we conduct. While it's a rare occurrence, there are moments when a client's expectations don't align with the services we provide. We understand that for some, embarking on a photography tour with us may be a first-time adventure, filled with uncertainties. Others may have a repertoire of similar experiences to compare with. Then there are many among you who have journeyed with us on multiple occasions, who are well-acquainted with our ethos and approach.

Considering this diversity, we aim to establish clear expectations, to help you understand what we stand for and what we will offer during your time with us.

## **EXPECTATIONS**

- Clients should expect that all Air 2 Air Photo Tours instructors will do their very best to help you achieve excellent photography education. We will pour ourselves into you. We do not take that lightly and we ask you to do the same.
- ***Flexibility stands as the cornerstone of our excursions, often fondly referred to as the McKay "F" word. It's crucial to acknowledge that each day brings its own set of unforeseen events and challenges, many times behind the scenes that the team has to deal with very unexpectedly.*** Thus, an adaptable mindset and positive outlook are essential for both the MPA instruction team and our clients during a tour. Embracing flexibility enhances the learning experience and fosters a more enjoyable atmosphere for everyone involved. Be prepared for the journey to possibly deviate from the itinerary, have unexpected changes, and the need to be flexible at certain times – it's all part of the adventure!
- We choose to describe our offerings as "tours" rather than "workshops." This is an intentional choice that reflects the depth of our experiences. Yes, photography is the catalyst that unites us, but a tour encompasses so much more. It's not solely about capturing stunning images or honing your technical skills. It's about embarking on an unforgettable journey that enriches your life. These moments have the power to nourish your spirit and enhance your photographic perspective, contributing positively to the world around us. Although photography and the love of aviation has united us, it is not our sole purpose in doing what we do.

- At our core, we view the connections with our clients as deeply collaborative and reciprocal partnerships, rather than mere client/instructor/guide interactions. We embrace a shared journey of growth, learning, and appreciation for the wonders of our world. Our collective aim is to enact positive change, leaving an environment that's more enlightened than we found it. Our hope is that what we offer transcends the traditional boundaries of photographic educational tours; and our tours become an enriching life adventure.
- Traveling can often be a taxing experience. Especially internationally. It's common for some to become fatigued and encounter moments of stress. We're here to provide support and assistance where possible. However, let's remember to embrace the spirit of exploration and adventure that comes with your journey.
- We'd like to remind you that while we diligently organize your tours, there are aspects like airline timetables, regulations, and various other elements that are beyond our sphere of influence in travel and logistics. We're committed to ensuring you're well-prepared for your journey, yet we urge you to embrace adaptability and maintain a flexible mindset throughout your travels.
- It is not feasible for us to possess knowledge of every camera system or photography product available. Nonetheless, we are committed to doing everything within our power to provide solutions for our clients and to collaborate with our colleagues to achieve this goal.
- We are here to serve, but we are not here to be your servants. This is the same for anyone we encounter such as guides, waitstaff etc. We hold our clients in high regard and request that they reciprocate with respect, not only to us, but all those we encounter on our journey.
- We do not know it all nor do we or others enjoy it when people like to be "know it all's".
- We will put in a lot of effort for every tour. However, it is important to note that we cannot be available 24/7. Since photography tours are dynamic in nature, we do not adhere to regular office hours. The instruction time must be flexible, adapting to the unfolding events of each day.
- We will be available to provide instruction and assistance during all photography sessions. We will have various times available for image reviews, editing, and other informal gathering times, depending on the specific tour length. These times will also be flexible, considering the nature of running a tour like this.
- Clients should understand that during tours, there is a mutual exchange of questions and information. We will ask our clients questions, and it is important for our clients to also ask us questions. This applies not only to photography instruction but also to any needs or issues that we may be able to assist with. By doing so, we can ensure that we address any issues and find suitable solutions if possible. Otherwise, without open communication, we won't even know if there is an issue to address. ***Communication is always a "two-way street".***
- ***Having a positive attitude daily is key.*** Overall negative attitudes, complaining, whining, and trying to get others to be a part of negative thoughts and behavior, as well as comments such as "everyone thinks this or that" will not be tolerated and "called out" if need be. Bottom line - this is supposed to be a great, fun, and exciting time together. Let's make sure it is for everyone!
- At Air 2 Air Photo Tours, we operate as a cohesive team. We are not only business owners, aviation enthusiast, and professional photographers, but we are also good friends. With each of us having extensive experience in the field, we relentlessly focus on enhancing our skills through continuous education and self-improvement, both as photographers and educators.

- We value the fact that each of us has a unique approach to teaching. This allows our clients to benefit from different perspectives and thought processes that aid in their learning. Rather than imposing "our" way, the goal is to assist you in discovering and understanding what works best for you as an individual. Our aim is to help you find "your" way.
- Our goal is to provide an inclusive experience for all types of photographers with varying skills and personalities on our tours. We strive to cater to diverse photographic abilities within a group setting and accommodate everyone's unique needs. We are passionate about making sure all participants benefit from our tours. We welcome everyone!

Let's have an AMAZING time together! -Thank you - The Air to Air Photo Tours Team



# *TRAVELER*

## *RECOMMENDATIONS AND*

## *ADVICE*



# HEALTH

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## Vaccinations

(No vaccinations are required for this tour)

## Medications

You should carry an adequate supply of any prescribed medications you may require while traveling. Prescription medicines should always be carried in your hand luggage (not in checked baggage). *You should have proof of prescription and if you have a narcotic, be sure to have a doctor's note clearly stating you have been prescribed the medication.*

## Motion Sickness

You will encounter motion in the host aircraft platform. If you are prone to motion sickness, please be prepared. Have an air sickness bag with you as well. Please be prepared with your own medications that work for you. Ask your doctor for advice.

## Ear Protection

You will NEED ear protection. Please have ear plugs, or even better, ear muffs or headsets. It will be loud in the back of the airplane.

## Physical Disabilities and Mobility Issues

Travelers with physical disabilities and those who require frequent or ongoing medical attention should advise us of their health situation at the time of booking.

## Smoking

Smoking is permitted in designated areas only and NEVER on the aircraft. We kindly ask you to be patient with this feature and respectful of non-smokers. Especially if you have a roommate that does not smoke. Also, PLEASE bring a small disposable bag(s) to place used cigarette butts in. Do NOT under any circumstances throw it away on the ground.

## Basic Health and Safety

It is important for your own safety that you are in good health and have taken all appropriate precautions. We cannot be responsible for your own health related issues. PLEASE take all needed precautions.

# SAFETY

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As participants in our photography tour, we trust that you will exercise caution to avoid putting yourself in danger. It's a universal truth that accidents or health issues can occur anywhere in the world, but deliberately seeking out danger not only endangers you but also burdens the tour guides and fellow travelers. You've acknowledged and accepted these risks by signing a liability waiver agreement, understanding that you are joining this tour at your own risk. This, however, doesn't entitle you to reckless behavior that might jeopardize your safety, disrupt the group, or endanger others.

We urge you to avoid unnecessary risks. Over the years, we have witnessed clients and others in risky environments making unwise decisions.

If we, as tour leaders, observe any behavior that we deem unsafe for you or others, we will intervene. Nevertheless, remember that you are primarily responsible for your own safety. It's essential to remain mindful of your environment and not let the pursuit of the perfect photograph cloud your judgment. The pursuit of photography should never come at the cost of your well-being or life. Please prioritize safety above all.

Please avoid these items below and use common sense.



## SAFETY AIR2AIR SPECIFIC

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Our goal WILL BE safety, and it is paramount to our operations. You will be shooting from inside a Shorts Skyvan aircraft. You all will be positioned, sitting on the floor and the rear gate will be open.

There will be a **MANDATORY** proper safety briefing given before our scheduled photo missions, but here are some basic tips to be aware of to ensure a safe flying environment for all.

1. No loose garments to be worn during the air-to-air photo flight. This mostly pertains to hats, but anything that you are wearing that could potentially separate from your body is a hazard to our subject aircraft flying behind us.

It is highly recommend a hooded jacket or a hooded face mask be worn. It must be fitted snug around your head to ensure that your hair is not flying wildly during our photo-shoot. This will negate any need for a hat and keep your hair out of someone else's photos. Believe me, that is very annoying.

2. When you board our photo aircraft there will be no lens hoods or covers on your lenses. The potential for them to fly off during flight is too great, and they could hit the subject aircraft flying with us.

3. At NO TIME will you disconnect yourself from your lanyard. The lanyard will be attached to the safety harness each of you will be wearing. Safety harnesses are **MANDATORY** and must be worn to participate in the air 2 air mission. Safety harnesses will be provided for this experience.

4. Changes lenses is prohibited during the air 2 air session.

5. All cameras **MUST** be secured with a strap and may not be only hand held.

6. During the sessions on the ramp, there will be run-ups of the subject aircraft. You **MUST** listen to the team and stay **VERY CLEAR** of the propellers. Your life and safety of all depend on it. At NO TIME can you move out of a designated area without permission from our team!

7. We are on an active airport. At **ALL** times remain vigilant of aircraft operating near you.



# TRAVEL INSURANCE

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We are SO EXCITED and are sure you must be as well about your upcoming trip! You are joining us on this amazing photographic adventure! In our experience leading trips, we have seen a lot of things come up, and in many cases, LAST MINUTE. For this reason, it is HIGHLY recommended to have trip insurance.

Remember, airfare, hotels, tours, as well as our policies are non-refundable. Trip insurance can help in the event of any unforeseen legitimate issue before OR during a trip. You MUST understand the importance of this and why we constantly tell people to get insurance!

Protect yourself~protect your investment. You would never imagine that you would not be taking the wonderful trip you are planning! Life happens! There are so many things that can change before your travel dates that might prevent you from traveling. There are also events that can change your plans while you are traveling that might require you to alter your trip, return home early or be delayed due to an accident or illness. Lost luggage, lost documents or lost belongings can also hamper your well- made plans!

We are NOT an insurance provider, and we can simply refer you to someone that can help you obtain coverage. There are several trip insurance carriers, and it can be confusing to know where to get the best coverage and rates.

For this reason, we are working with Brandon Hughbanks of Travel Insurance Center. Brandon represents most of the top travel insurance companies and can help you get the best rate for the options you need based on where you live as well.

We LOVE our tours, and we LOVE what we do. For them to be the very best available anywhere, we must clarify once again, McKay Photography Academy policies. To make sure that as a photography tour participant, our policies are understood with-out question.

Due to an influx of people contacting us asking us for help, understanding, refunds, credit and more when something unexpected happens and they are unable to attend, we need to address this once again. This is written notice that if for ANY REASON you are unable to attend, we are unable to refund or credit your trip.

It is very clear as stated in our policies, contracts, web site, emails, and conversations that trip insurance IS your security for the unexpected. We are not and cannot be responsible for doing much when a choice is made by someone to not obtain insurance, especially considering the amount of time we spend informing people to obtain it.

***EVERY tour there is a situation, and we cannot stress enough, PLEASE get insurance. If something happens and you are unable to attend for a variety of possible covered reasons, proper trip insurance will help you. IF YOU WERE TO GET HURT ABROAD, YOU DO NOT WANT TO BE WITHOUT IT!***

Of course, we would never want or expect something like that to happen, but it is best to be covered and prepared!

**Any specific questions about insurance coverage, provisions, claims, etc. MUST be answered by your chosen provider, as McKay Photography Academy or any of their team, is unable to do more than give you the facts of our policies and that we highly recommend trip insurance.**



Contact Brandon Hughbanks directly at:

Toll Free: 1-866-979-6753 Ext. 3636 Direct: 402-343-3636

email - [bhughbanks@travelinsurancecenter.com](mailto:bhughbanks@travelinsurancecenter.com)



## AIR 2 AIR TIPS with David Leininger

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Air 2 air photography can be an exciting and rewarding experience, as well as challenging, because the lighting is constantly changing. At times the sun will light the nose of the subject aircraft, and other times your subject will be back-lit. And whether our subject aircraft is propeller driven or jet, your shutter speed choices will vary as well.

Most of your normal photography shooting experience during these conditions will apply to our air 2 air experience, meaning nearly all of your camera settings during these conditions will work nicely. With the group, will be three (3) experienced aviation photographers who will be happy to help and guide you during this thrilling photo experience. They are there to answer any questions you may have about the art of air 2 air photography.

We will take away the burden of planning, briefing and choreographing the actual photo mission, so you can focus on capturing stunning images of our subject aircraft. We will help you accomplish this safely, so that when we land back on the ground there are nothing but smiling faces from each one of you.

Some things to consider as this is a very different photography experience than any of you have experienced in the past. We will be operating our air-to-air photo flights between 2000ft and 7000ft above ground. Depending on our weather conditions we are going to try and maximize our background for the photo opportunities. If we have clouds, that may mean operating at an altitude to use those clouds as our background.

I mention this because the front row of photographers will be sitting inches away from the open gate at the back of the aircraft. This is an unnatural position for photographers to operate in and something you have not experienced before. It can be a bit unnerving for a lot of people and I want you ALL to be aware of these shooting positions within our photo aircraft.

If any participant feels they are going to have a problem with heights and would rather not sit in the front row we will accommodate by seating you in the second or third row. If everyone is courteous to their fellow photographers and share the space all three rows should provide each photographer with excellent photo opportunities. ***Be kind to your fellow photographers.***



## AIR 2 AIR TIPS - LENS CHOICE

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Because our subject aircraft will be flying in close proximity to our photo aircraft (that means us) you should not need any lens over 200mm. David Leininger shoots with a 24-120mm f4 and 70-200mm f2.8. Those two lenses have provided him with both wide angle and closeup images of the subject aircraft. If you have good, fast glass by all means bring it. It will serve you well. But it is not necessary in capturing great images during our air 2 air experience.

This air 2 air experience will test you and your skills, but, ^ hope you will see this as a challenge to your photography. Y ^ believe this will be a positive experience for you all. Our goal during this adventure is to provide you, the photographer with an unmatched opportunity to capture aircraft in their natural environment, flying. Y ^ have no doubt we will succeed in meeting that goal for each one of you, but, ^ have to emphasize that safety guidelines will be enforced during our flights, and it cannot be overstated.

Our ultimate goal is to capture some wonderful images by operating our air 2 air photo flights in a safe environment, so we can all have a great time. We want this to be a positive experience for everyone, because this is one photography trip you will NEVER forget.

**David McKay Lens Choice** - I recently purchased a Canon 24-240mm lens specific for use on a tour like this. It works great as it carries such flexibility without having to use two cameras. You CANNOT CHANGE LENSES in the air due to safety reasons.

Depending on your system, there are many lens options available for a more "all in one" style choice. You can also consider renting. The Tamron 35-150 an excellent choice as well.



# PHOTOGRAPHY GEAR / BASE LIST

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## Learning and Fun

For many of you, this may be your first photography tour and not only are you unsure of what to do and how this will go, and you may be overwhelmed with what to bring! Do not worry, we are here to help!

Please understand there will be various levels of photo participants on this trip. We will be instructing you as much or as little as you want as long as you paid the photographer rate. Please note, we LOVE new photographers. If you have more experience, please be sensitive to having a "know it all" attitude.

If you are a beginner photographer, we will help you every step of the way! We are here to help EVERYONE. If all this seems a little daunting to you, no worries, we will help you get what you want/need for this trip. There is no need for you to feel intimidated or out of place if this is your first air 2 air or photography tour.

## General Photography Tour Suggested Equipment List

- Camera(s)\* (Having a backup body is HIGHLY recommended - at the minimum a point and shoot or a phone if under 2 years old could be used as a backup)
- Camera Lenses (See Lenses page)
- Camera Bag (We love ThinkTank and Mindshift Gear-(See upcoming pages)
- Plenty of Memory Cards (Multiple 256GB and/or 512GB cards)
- Batteries & Charger Minimum 3 batteries
- Sturdy Tripod AND an extra plate. **(NEEDED for Night Time Session)**
- Laptop - Optional but highly recommended!
- External hard drive - For images storage & backup
- Small Flashlight/Headlamp
- Lens Cloth

# LENS ACCESSORIES / FILTERS

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## Lens Hood/Shade

A lens hood is NOT allowed while in the air for safety reasons. It IS allowed for all other sessions.



## Filters

Circular Polarizer filters are useful. The benefits of a CP filter include:

- A reduction of reflections and glare. Particular useful with glare on the cockpit.
- A reduction of haze and blue cast.
- Adds saturation to your sky and greenery.

## Types of Filter Systems

**Thread Mounting** – These screw into the front of your lens.

Recommended Brands for thread mount to your lens.

- Budget (Tiffen)
- Middle (Hoya)
- High-end (B+W)

With all filters, be sure to get the right size screw on for your lens. Ex 77mm. 72mm etc

Filter Packages and Systems

**Magnetic Mount** – The new Magnetic Mount Systems from Maven and Kase are excellent for general photography use and many photographers have these. **HOWEVER, due to safety reasons, we ask that if you use a polarizing filter, it is a threaded mount. We cannot risk a filter coming off and hitting our subject aircraft.**

# TRIPODS

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A tripod is essential for capturing clear images during night photography and when utilizing long exposures. It's important to choose a tripod that is both light for easy transport and robust enough to ensure stability.

On every tour, we encounter participants struggling with tripods that are too weak to support their cameras properly. It's crucial to have a reliable tripod if you are bringing one, but this does not necessarily mean spending a lot of money. However, inexpensive video tripods, like those for \$39 from electronics stores, or second-hand ones that might come from a relative, are inadequate.

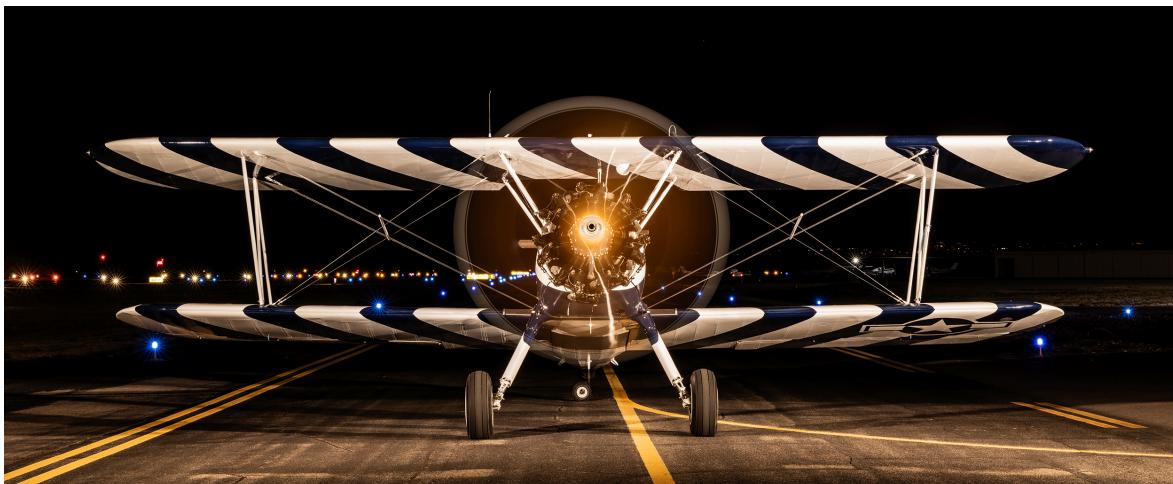
The whole point of taking long exposure photos is to keep your camera perfectly still. If you're in need of a tripod or are contemplating getting one, don't hesitate to reach out to us via email for advice.

Here is a budget friendly tripod we recommend:

- MeFoto Road Trip (Titanium) is an excellent and very reasonable priced tripod. It is lightweight and yet sturdy for most applications.



**Tour Specific** – A tripod is needed for tours where we will have a night session in order to do long exposures and keep your camera stable.



# MEMORY CARDS / BACKUP

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## Memory Cards

You will shoot WAY more images than you would ever expect on this trip. Because we are photographing almost the entire time and you will want to shoot A LOT to get the best images, have EXTRA CARDS! **It is not uncommon to shoot well over 2000-3000 images or more! You NEED memory cards!**

We will also be teaching you to shoot in RAW mode, which is the highest quality but also uses the most memory. We cannot stress enough the importance of having enough memory cards as there are no stores always available out on the tour! We recommend 256gb and 512gb cards. If the tour is for wildlife, we recommend several as you will shoot thousands of images.

Do not try to shoot everything on a single big memory card UNLESS YOU BACK UP daily to at least two locations. If that card goes bad, your camera gets stolen, and all your images are in one place, that would be a painful lesson to learn! Even if you choose to do this, ALWAYS HAVE A BACK UP CARD ALONG!

We also recommend that until you are certain that your memory card has been backed up in two locations, when it is not in use, turn it over in the card holder case to indicate it has not yet been backed up and should not be used.

## Preparing and Formatting Memory Cards

To clean cards, it is best to format your cards in camera vs hitting delete. This entirely cleans the card and leaves no hidden memory. Make sure all cards, including new ones, are formatted and CHECKED BEFORE arriving!



# ACCESSORIES

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## Head Lamp

- Bringing a head lamp so that you can work at night/early mornings with your hands free is also invaluable. Be sure to have one that has the red lamp on it as well as this helps keep bring light down to a minimum while we are shooting.
- Make sure you can operate the red-light function easily as you will use this to not distract other photographers as much.

## Batteries and Charger

- Make sure your batteries are all FULLY CHARGED before we go out to shoot! We recommend having at least 3 batteries with you.
- Remember, travel with your batteries in your camera bag and NOT in your camera body. They cannot be in your checked in luggage and do not keep them in the camera.
- We always recommend NAME BRAND batteries.

## Camera Vest or Jacket

- This is very helpful as camera bags are NOT allowed on the photo-ship platform. This allows for ease of access to batteries and memory cards.
- If your camera gear equates to more than 8kg,(it will) it may be an issue for the flights for carry-on smaller planes you may encounter while traveling. DO NOT stress over it but have a plan. The plan is that they do not weigh what is on you personally. You can stuff your vest with items. Watch these videos!

[Carry on Weight Work Around 1 - <https://youtu.be/dDSkUmQt4ns>](https://youtu.be/dDSkUmQt4ns)

[Carry on Weight Work Around 2 - <https://youtu.be/k9D8I9bjLAq>](https://youtu.be/k9D8I9bjLAq)



# GENERAL TRAVEL TIPS

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## Air Travel

- To avoid jet-lag try to stay hydrated on the plane, and if possible, avoid alcohol. Getting up, stretching and muscle flexing exercises can help circulation. Some people find it helpful to bring sleeping pills for the longest flight.
- “Pick me ups” can be helpful such as Vitamin B. Drink mixes like Zipfiz, Emergen-c, Airborn and No-Jet-Lag tabs can be good to have handy as well. Some people experience constipation after long flights so you may want to bring along something for that as well.

## Batteries

- **All lithium and camera batteries should ONLY be with you as carry-on.** Do not pack in your regular luggage.
- Keep camera batteries and any lithium batteries in your carry on. DO NOT store in camera in flight as electronics at altitude can result in dead pixels in your sensor.

## Change of Clothes

- An extra day or two of change of clothes in a carry on, is also advised in case luggage gets misplaced by the airline.

## Extra Glasses

- If you need glasses to function, be sure to bring an extra pair of glasses. Remember your sunglasses.

## Weather

- Check the weather a couple weeks prior to travel and again every 3-4 days to see the trend. Weather can always be unpredictable.
- Please do not ask us each day what the weather will be like. Everyone has their own comfort and temperature levels.
- We will be monitoring weather for all flight operations.

# GROUP DYNAMICS

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Embarking on a journey with a photography group is often a remarkable experience. It comes with numerous benefits, as we've observed that virtually all group members form strong bonds and lasting friendships. The conclusion of our tours is often marked by heartfelt farewells, underscoring the sense of camaraderie that develops during our shared adventures.

However, there is an occasional time when someone may struggle with group dynamics or exhibit a consistently negative demeanor. In such cases, we encourage kindness and respect among all participants. It's natural to connect with certain individuals more than others, and that's perfectly fine. Should you find yourself not resonating with someone, we advise maintaining peace and steering clear of confrontations.

The secret to a fulfilling group experience is to embrace the moment, engage with fellow travelers, stay calm, and be adaptable – allowing yourself to enjoy the trip without worrying about minor details like the logistics of transportation or seating arrangements. Letting trivial issues get under your skin not only diminishes your own enjoyment but can also cast a shadow over the group's collective mood. We are committed to preventing such negativity from affecting the tour.

On the flip side, carrying a positive, laid-back, and enthusiastic attitude can have an infectious effect on the group, enhancing the overall experience. ***Tours characterized by vibrant energy, enjoyable interactions, and a willingness to go with the flow often result in the most memorable and satisfying adventures for everyone involved.***

At Air 2 Air Photo Tours, we take pride in delivering outstanding photography tours. It's important to recognize that not all aspects of touring can be controlled; unexpected changes and unforeseen events are part of the adventure.

This tour is your opportunity to unwind, relish your time with us, and fully immerse yourself in the experience you're about to undertake. Allow the team to assist and educate you in your photography pursuits. In short, cherish the company of your fellow travelers as we embark on this journey of photography and aviation together.



# GROUP COMMUNICATION

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## Group Communication

Approximately 3 weeks prior to the tour and during our tour we will utilize the app “GroupMe” to stay in touch and provide you with updates throughout our time together. GroupMe provides free group messaging - like a private chat room for a small group.

This is a great way for you to also communicate with your fellow photographers and tour members. We recommend installing the app on your phone and signing up for the free service prior to the start of the tour. We will send out invitations to join the chat in the weeks leading up to the tour.

Saying hello via the Groupme app ahead of time, is an excellent way to start getting to know and bonding with the group ahead of the tour! GroupMe works over cell networks, wifi and via SMS. You can find more information here. <https://groupme.com/apps>

## Communication with Air 2 Air Photo Tours

*Clients try to reach us in many ways. Please note that we cannot be available 24 hrs a day on all forms of communication apps. Due to our heavy travel schedule, we ask you to use the following protocols to communicate with us to get the quickest response.*

- Prior and after a tour - Please use the email [info@air2airphototours.com](mailto:info@air2airphototours.com) as the primary form of communication prior to each tour. The entire team all have access, and this allows for a quicker response.
- During a tour - Please use the tour groupme messaging. If it needs to be private, please ask the tour leader to reach out to you. They will set up a time to meet with you or to communicate separately via preferred methods of each person.
- Please also note that while groupme allows for PM's. The team does not always see a private message. Those easily get buried in the communication happening with all the various tour groups going on and many times get missed.

## Emergency /Flight Delays/ Assistance

- 1- Use the [info@air2airphototours.com](mailto:info@air2airphototours.com) email address AND send a message on groupme.
- 2- Please give your family the [info@air2airphototours.com](mailto:info@air2airphototours.com) email in case they must reach you and are having any issues doing so.

# GRATUITIES

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Tipping is always done at the discretion of the guest. We receive a LOT of thoughts and feedback on tipping from clients. It seems that the number of opinions on it are as varied as the weather!

We understand the thoughts on tipping can be very sensitive and for us it is as well. As a company, we believe in generosity and honoring those that do work on all our behalf.

There is a lot that goes into why our policies are the way they are. We have tried every possible way and suggestions such as gratuities being included in the tour price, having it paid in advance to us here in the Stats, and many others.

## Specifics for Air 2 Air

We have a truly incredible team. They are doing this for the love of what we do and aviation. Gratuities for them will be greatly appreciated as their work allows us to do this and keep it affordable. The cost to do this tour is massive and it is only because of guys like them, we can pull it off at these prices. They are working non stop during this event to help us all.

Please plan on an extra thank you to be given to the team working on your behalf.



# RESOURCES/VIDEOS

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## Photo Gear

**The more you are prepared with your gear, the better your experience will be.**

We have many videos and written tutorials to help you prepare and understand getting around your camera and tripod as well as general packing tips and suggestions.

You should be able to adjust your Shutter Speed, Aperture/F-Stop, and ISO ahead of the tour. This does not mean you have to understand it all. However, please have an understanding on where these dials are and how to adjust them. You should also know how to correctly work with your tripod ahead of the tour. This will save crucial time while we are in the field.

We have specific videos to help guests prepare for a tour.

Please visit the MPA preparation tour page at the link below prior to the tour and the videos below.

[MPA Tour Preparation Page - https://mckaylive.com/tour-resources/](https://mckaylive.com/tour-resources/)

### **Exposure and Settings**

- [Exposure Help Guide](#) – A PDF Downloadable Help Guide!
- Basic Exposure Understanding
- <https://mckaylive.com/sony-camera-controls-2-2/>
- Canon Exposure Controls (Ex -60-80d, Mk and R Series) 2 Dial Systems
- [https://youtu.be/25MYn56Z\\_z8](https://youtu.be/25MYn56Z_z8)
- Canon Exposure Controls EOS T Series Systems
- <https://youtu.be/DR1vCC3HF7A>
- Nikon Exposure Controls
- <https://youtu.be/iwNmyDLICJg>
- Sony Exposure Controls
- <https://youtu.be/GPvfqqxD3gc>
- Auto Focus Techniques with Toby
- [https://youtu.be/X\\_pa9YxWbRg](https://youtu.be/X_pa9YxWbRg)
- How to Back Up Images Properly
- <https://youtu.be/8pZa88Ry3fU>
- Back Up Diversity
- <https://youtu.be/cAsaBIK4AGQ>
- Star Photography Techniques
- <https://youtu.be/-nHSvjUEmVw>
- DxO DeNoise Software for those that Edit
- <https://youtu.be/tFmzlkkjTTo>
-

## Gear

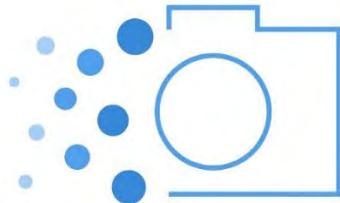
- Gear Prep for a Photo Tour
- <https://youtu.be/b1puxVFeciE>
- Camera Set up from the Box!
- <https://mckaylive.com/basic-travel-tips-international-2/>
- Filters Explained Easily
- [https://youtu.be/68\\_ffH-OSgo](https://youtu.be/68_ffH-OSgo)
- Tripods – Set up and Use
- <https://youtu.be/saGKxCZYNf8>
- Tripods – How to Use Your Tripod
- <https://youtu.be/AGzYb9wcqEE>
- Tripods – NEW Tripod Tips
- <https://youtu.be/4k4YSAPt-V4>

## Clothing, Packing and Flying

- How to Pack for A Tour (Safaris and More!)
- [https://youtu.be/\\_pGMktMXvu8](https://youtu.be/_pGMktMXvu8)
- Packing Tips and Tricks with Ally
- <https://youtu.be/2kJ-AwVM0ZQ>
- More Packing Tips with Ally
- <https://youtu.be/VKch8kcQOA0>
- Insights with Ally for Travel Clothing
- <https://mckaylive.com/insights-to-clothing-for-a-photo-tour/>
- Layering up Clothing with Ally
- <https://youtu.be/X2gYedZwLR0>
- Organizing your Travel Clothing with Ally
- <https://mckaylive.com/more-packing-tips-with-ally/>
- Flight Carry on Weight – The Workaround!
- <https://youtu.be/dDSkUmQt4ns>
- Flight Carry on Weight Workaround – Video 2
- <https://youtu.be/k9D8I9bjLAg>

## Other Needs and Items

- Travel Insurance – A MUST HAVE!
- [https://youtu.be/\\_jD3Mab0-sA](https://youtu.be/_jD3Mab0-sA)
- Get your MPA Swag!
- [https://youtu.be/BVRxiLM\\_Ts](https://youtu.be/BVRxiLM_Ts)



## PHOTO ENTHUSIAST NETWORK

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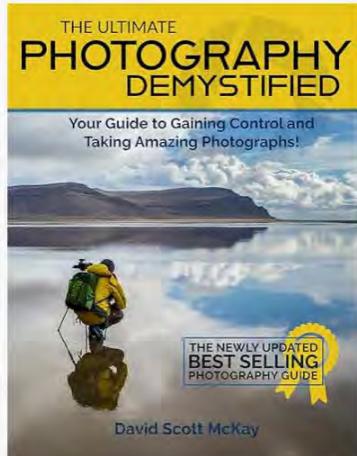
Interested in starting your photographic education before the tour and are not yet a member of Photo Enthusiast Network? We encourage you to join today!

This is a great place for you to grow, learn and belong in a wonderful photographic community run by the MPA team! Not only that, as an annual member you receive a tour discount voucher that more than pays for membership! Join today!

Photo Enthusiast Network is an educational and fun photography community run by David and Ally McKay, and Toby Gelston! FILLED with educational tutorials, videos, and weekly education as well as an amazing community of Photo Enthusiast to help share in your passion for photography!

We are SO PROUD of the community of over 500 members we have built, and this is such a great resource. [JOIN TODAY - https://www.photoenthusiastnetwork.com/](https://www.photoenthusiastnetwork.com/)

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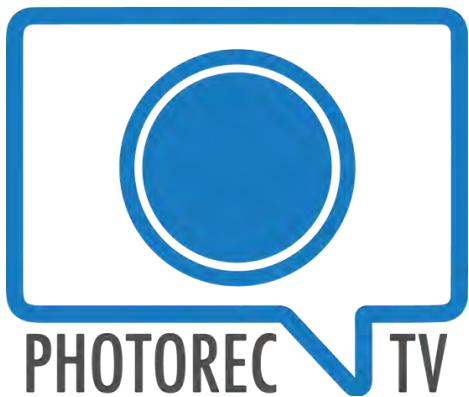


We have partnered with LensProToGo for camera and lens rentals! Can't afford to buy or want to try it out first? Then RENT IT! Visit [LensProToGo.com](#) today! You can rent TOP OF THE LINE cameras and lenses and tripods for very little money.

Let them know you will be on this tour with McKay Photography Academy! You can use the code below from Photo Enthusiast Network for 15% off any order. Sometimes, they have a special going as well, so always call, let them know you are going on our tour, and see what they have available. They are always very helpful!

**USE CODE PEN15 for 15% off any gear rental at anytime!**

[Lens Pro To Go - <https://www.lensprotogo.com/>](https://www.lensprotogo.com/)



### **Toby Gelston Photorec.tv and MPA Instructor**

We are proud to have a very special friendship and partnership with Tobias Gelston of PhotoRec.tv. Toby has worked with us now for over 12 years!

Toby runs a VERY COOL YouTube channel focusing on camera gear and equipment. He has over 340,000 subscribers!

**Toby's goal is simple: He wants to help you be a better photographer by helping you find the gear you need and the know-how to use it.**

If you have any questions about gear, you can email Toby directly via [Toby@mckaylive.com](mailto:Toby@mckaylive.com) and he will help you get what you need. He knows TONS of gear info.

Toby is a participant in the Amazon Services LLC Associates Program, an affiliate advertising program designed to provide a means for sites to earn advertising fees by advertising and linking to amazon.com. Toby also participates with B&H Photo Video.

If you use Toby for advice, and even if you don't, please purchase through his links to either Amazon or B&H. You will get the best prices and help him out as well! This costs no more for you and helps support our friend Toby, which in turn helps us give you an even better photographic education.

**Please use these links for your purchases!**



**Email [Toby@mckaylive.com](mailto:Toby@mckaylive.com) for gear advice!**

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