

VMCA/Photography at St. Agnes

TIPS

1. You'll need – a camera; compact or SLR, healthy batteries plus spares, memory card with spare capacity, a tripod if you have one, though not essential, ditto a polarising filter. Any SLR user with a macro lens might find that useful too.
2. Whatever equipment you bring to the beach, remember cameras, tripods etc don't like sea water or sand so, take care, keep the strap of your camera round your wrist or round your neck, not too tight, of course.
3. If you have a digital compact camera take a few minutes to check the manual or CD instructions as to how you can take close ups, such as the settings you need (usually a 'tulip' symbol) and how close can you get to the subject.
4. If you're shooting into pools you'll need to be extremely sneaky to catch things and will need to watch out for reflections and your own shadow. You may need to use manual focussing, if your camera allows that.
5. Any of those with SLR cameras may wish to use a polarising filter to reduce reflections.
6. For seascapes or landscapes featuring the beach and shore you have several choices depending on your camera. Many compacts will have a 'Landscape' setting that you can select and this will set the optimum settings on your camera. If you have some control over the settings then choose a small aperture such as f8, f16 or smaller. This will make sure more of the scene is in focus from front to back, near to far. Just keep an eye on the shutter speed if you have a very small f number. You're stuck with the mid-day lighting on this occasion but low lighting such as early morning or evening lighting, particularly from the side, generally gives better results for landscapes.
7. Landscapes appear more interesting if you have something interesting in the foreground. This gives depth to the scene. Foreground interest could be rocks, a stream or people. Focus about one third of the way into the picture. Try also a different viewpoint; get down low for that foreground or shoot from up high if you can find a safe viewpoint.
8. Any image appears more interesting when you use the rule of thirds. This means imagining your screen/viewfinder divided into thirds by two vertical lines and two horizontal lines. Some cameras allow you to bring such a grid up on the screen/viewfinder for you. If you then place some item of interest at any one of the four points where the lines bisect then your picture is improved. Magic.
9. If you're into rocks and things then semi-close ups of strata and patterns will be enhanced by getting the best light,; side lighting for the relief and fairly soft light, if the day permits.
10. Try the unusual and the different – digital is virtually free! Enjoy!