

Iceland: A Visual Tour

Tony Sweet

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From the wild dance of the Aurora Borealis to the vivid greens of hillside mosses to the jewel tones of the long summer twilight, those who think of Iceland as a drab, colorless place will be surprised by photographer Tony Sweet's revelations of its timeless beauty. Iceland's minimalist landscapes boast waterfalls; brilliant red sunsets; fields of blazing wildflowers; vibrant green hills set against a bright blue sky; and ice that glitters like forgotten diamonds on its black volcanic beaches.

The massive, stark beauty of this "land of fire and ice" dwarfs signs of human habitation. Abandoned buildings, isolated and shrouded in mystery, dot the landscape, giving rise to a sense of loss, evoking images of sturdy people unafraid of solitude and provoking questions about who they were, why they left, and what hopes may have died with them in these barren, windswept places.

Beyond recording the beauty and mystery of a little-known land, Sweet shares creative and technical photography tips: how simplifying an image can enhance its magic; how the colors of the landscape "pop" when shot against a cloudy, white sky; how "swiping" an image (moving the camera during a long exposure) can produce interesting painterly effects; and how the flowing grace of an S-curve can lure viewers into a photo.

Practical as well as poetic, the book also shares the dangers and challenges posed by the landscape and how best to meet them, as well as giving advice on lenses and helpful apps; setting exposures; "framing" a subject to enhance its impact; experimenting with infrared photography; the best times of the year to visit Iceland; and more.

While we may never wish to photograph a scene in fifty-mile-per-hour sustained winds as Sweet has, all can enjoy his tribute to Iceland's rugged beauty and appreciate its challenges and delights.

KRISTINE MORRIS (January/February 2019)

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