

# UK summer landscapes

## with Glyn Davies

▶ Glyn Davies has plenty of advice for summer landscapes: “I love the summer: the long days, sunshine, warm weather, trips to the beach, blue skies, green grass and sunlit seas. However, the very things I like about the season do not necessarily lead to the most interesting or dynamic pictures. I prefer dramatic skies, threatening weather and atmospheric lighting, the last being the most critical.

Summer’s blue skies and harsh overhead lighting create two main effects: the natural colours at the warm end of the spectrum are counteracted and can’t be accurately mimicked even using Photoshop controls; second, definition and texture in the landscape become flattened leading to less detailed and uninteresting landscapes. Shadows created by lower sunlight often reveal important and beautiful patterns, which might otherwise go unnoticed.

My first choice when the weather’s good is to use ‘end of the day’ lighting, when the sun drops lower in the sky, shadows elongate and the colours become richer, warmer and more saturated. During summer, this means having to shoot much later at night.

Dull weather means lower contrast, muted colours and less definition. In weather like this, I look for naturally occurring contrasts and reflections, such as wet sand or pebbles on beaches, lakes and streams, and bright-toned rocks, such as limestone or granite, carved into darker surroundings. I prefer to head for the coast in these conditions, where even subtle shifts in light and contrast in the sky are balanced by the light on the sea. Mists are just fantastic... they completely transform everyday views into something surreal, ethereal and mysterious. Although summer is not known for its mists, they do sometimes occur, and in coastal areas these appear as sea fogs.

Techniques for more accurately depicting the variations within a landscape are the traditional use of a graduated neutral density filter for balancing the land and sky, and the digital processes of RAW adjustments and HDR (High Dynamic Range). Shooting digitally is much closer to the old days of shooting slide film rather than negative. If you blew out the highlights on slide film there was nothing you could do to get them back. It’s (nearly) the same with digital, so I often use a subtle graduated neutral density filter to maintain highlights in the sky at the same time as retaining shadow information in the foreground.

When genuine art-buying visitors chat about my work they never ask about adjustment layers, RAW stages, HDR, exposure or Photoshop. They are solely interested in their emotional responses to my work. They talk about times when they have witnessed similar lighting, when they have got soaked by huge waves, when they walked on an empty beach or when they were blown away by theatrical lighting after a summer storm. This is why they view and buy my work: this is what matters to them. Regardless of technology and technique, this appreciation of what I strive to convey is really all that matters to me too.”

DP

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### Meet the expert



Originally from Cornwall, Glyn Davies now lives and works on the Isle of Anglesey, North Wales. Davies gained a degree in Photography, Film and Television in London and moved straight into the world of freelancing. Since then his work has appeared in many books, magazines, brochures and publications, attracting awards. In 2002, Davies set up his own commercial studio and gallery on Anglesey, before relocating to larger premises in 2005.

#### 1 Use RAW

Files can be processed any number of times, blending variations together so that the final image contains good visual information in both sky and land.

#### 2 Try black and white

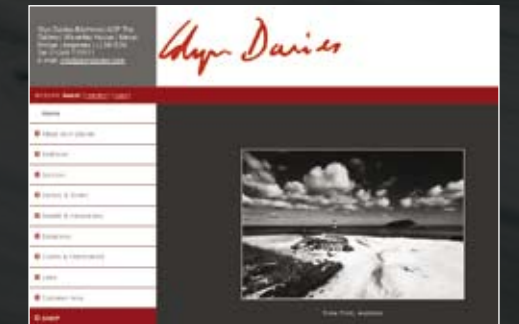
Enjoy the fun of harsh sun shadows, not worrying about colours but concentrating instead on form. Enjoy minimalist images where the overhead sun’s effect of flat lighting plays to your advantage.

#### 3 Be subtle in Photoshop

When used with restraint we can recreate something much closer to the original experience than ever before.

#### 4 Watch the weather

British weather is notoriously fickle. Use this to your advantage: relish each change in the weather as an opportunity.



Find out more about Davies at [www.glyndavies.com](http://www.glyndavies.com) or contact him on 01248 715511

#### [Main] Dusk Pushes Forward

“The wide angle perfectly replicates the formal lines of these miniature hills and valleys of rock allowing us to see the approaching weather”

#### [Inset] A Brighter Moment

“I have never found this side of Anglesey to hold as much energy for me as the more exposed west coast. However, this one morning the light was clear and the colours naturally vivid”

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