



# TAKING BETTER TRAVEL PHOTOS

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*Cover Photo:*  
*Blowing Point Harbour, Anguilla*

*2013 Photos: Virgin Gorda, Marina Cay, & Scrub Island, British Virgin Islands*



*Blowing Point Harbour,  
Anguilla*



*Trellis Bay, Beef Island  
Tortola, British Virgin Islands*

I love to travel, and take photos along the way. That is how My Irie Time came into being. It emerged from a desire to share what I had learned, to help others plan their trips. I have been helped by so many travel blogs and websites over the years. My Irie Time began as a way to repay the kindness of others, and pass along useful information to the next persons planning their trip to paradise.

This book is more about photos than words, probably because I prefer to speak through photos. When a friend returns from vacation, I love to hear about their trip, but I'm really far more interested in their images. You can share so much more of what you experience with a photo, than with words. Yet so many friends return from vacation with little to show of what they experienced. They capture the "usual" image, "Here's Dave standing in front of the boat," or "Here's the sunset on the beach."



Virgin Gorda,  
British Virgin Islands

Now don't get me wrong, I love a good sunset photo, and you will see many of them in this book and on My Irie Time. However, it seems that so much of the trip is missing. Friends will tell you of the great people they met or how they felt about a place, but it's not in the images. So here's a few tips on how to bring home the experience, how to capture what you saw and felt, to remind you of the great time away.

This is not a guide which will tell you what camera or lens you need to buy for great images. True, there is a difference between an image taken with a camera phone and a professional DSLR.

However, some really amazing images can be taken on a camera phone or a point-and-shoot. I'm a huge gear head, but that's not what this book is about. If you want to read about gear, read the ["What's in my bag?" page on My Irie Time.](#)



*Pinney's Beach,  
Nevis*

This book is about looking for the image to capture, regardless of what camera you choose to make it happen.



1  
GET IN THE PICTURE

Meads Bay,  
Anguilla

I'm probably the worst offender here, so I thought it was a good place to start.

I confess that my favorite shot from vacation is not one I took, but is a shot my son, then 7-years-old, took with a point-and-shoot camera. I love this shot so much, it's my Facebook profile shot and the "About" shot on My Irie Time. It was taken on Providenciales in the Turks and Caicos Islands, and is one of the few shots I'm in.

My daughter has now taken up photography, and if I could get her to take a picture of something other than my backside as I bend over, I might be in a few more keepers.





I have learned from looking through years of photos that we all need to get in the picture to make the story complete.



2

# SHOOT PEOPLE

SandBar, Sandy Ground  
Anguilla



Many people hesitate here, myself included, because we don't want to look like a tourist. Face it, it's pretty clear that you are a tourist. There's no shame in being one. Be polite about it.

For a portrait, I generally ask permission. There are some instances where asking permission would ruin the spontaneity of the emotion you are trying to capture, and then I will sneak a shot, but only when I need to.



*Clockwise from upper left: Rodney Elliott of Rodney's Cuisine, Nevis; Party guest at Sunshine's Beach Bar, Nevis; Sweet Pea, Pinney's Beach, Nevis; Chevy and guest at Chevy's, Pinney's Beach, Nevis*

People rarely refuse a request to take a photo, and it will give you a great memory of the people who make your trip so pleasurable.

*Glass artist at GreenVI,  
Cane Garden Bay, Tortola,  
British Virgin Islands*





*Clockwise from above: Bankie Banx at Dune Preserve, Anguilla; Providenciales, Turks & Caicos Islands; Hiking Guide Sheldon, Nevis*

*Surfers at Bomba's  
Surfside Shack, Tortola,  
British Virgin Islands*





3

RENT A CAR

Cappoon's Bay,  
Tortola

On the travel forums I frequent, people often ask about accommodations near bars and restaurants so that they won't have to rent a car and drive in a foreign land. I love being able to walk back to the resort on the beach after dinner and drinks, but I would always rent a car.

You cannot see the island as a whole by staying on or near the resort property. You only see how people live by renting a car and driving around. You can use cabs, but the cost is high, and you will not be inclined to ask the driver to stop so you can explore.





In our experience, if you have any trouble, people are quick to stop and offer a hand. When we hit a pothole and flattened two tires in Nevis, the rental car people were so fast I didn't have time to finish my beer at a local bar before it was fixed.

Driving on the other side of the road can take some getting used to, but for the first few days we both work together negotiating roundabouts, speaking aloud, "Go left, yield to the right."

If you are ever in doubt, follow the advice of the doorman at the Cuisinart Resort in Anguilla, "Left is right, right is wrong!"



*Clockwise from top: New River Estate, Nevis; St. George's Anglican Church, Nevis; Two flat tires, Nevis*

*Clockwise from right: Roadside in Anguilla;  
Sunday church services on Nevis; Elusive  
Savannah Bay, Anguilla*



*Anegada Lobster Salad,  
Pusser's Marina Cay,  
British Virgin Islands*

4

SHOOT YOUR FOOD (AND DRINK)

Your travel memories are not limited to the landscape shots of the resort or other tourist attractions.

So much of our travel experience is in what we eat and drink. I have been known to say that we travel on our stomachs (perhaps why we love Anguilla so much).

It takes just a moment before digging in to snap a shot of your meal or beverage.



*Top: Sunshine Salad, Sunshine's Beach Bar, Nevis  
Bottom: Conch Salad, Da Conch Shack,  
Providenciales, Turks & Caicos Islands*



Remember those Killer Bees at Sunshine's in Nevis?

Now you won't just have the memory of that massive hangover, you'll remember how amazing those Bees looked which prompted you to down three of them. Look at that fresh nutmeg!

Food brings back strong memories of our childhood and people we have known over the years. Let it bring back your travel memories as well.



*Clockwise from top: "Killer Bee," Sunshine's Beach Bar, Nevis; Pain du Chocolat, Geraud's Patisserie, Anguilla; Margarita, Picante, Anguilla*



*Top: Making a conch salad at Da Conch Shack, Providenciales, Turks & Caicos Islands*

*Left: Painkiller from Pusser's Marina Cay, British Virgin Islands*



Clockwise from top left: Anguillan Breakfast at Anacaona, Anguilla; Chicken Wings from Pusser's Marina Cay, British Virgin Islands; Ceviche Salad from Coco Maya, Virgin Gorda, British Virgin Islands; Lobster from Big Bamboo, Anegada, British Virgin Islands; Killer Bee from Sunshine's, Nevis; Churros from Picante, Anguilla; Carib from Sunshine's, Nevis; Everything from Da Conch Shack, Providenciales, Turks & Caicos Islands





5

# SHOOT SIGNS

Big Bamboo, Anegada,  
British Virgin Islands

This may sound pretty simple, and it is. Many people shoot signs. Those “Monkey Crossing” signs on Nevis see more photographs than the monkeys themselves.

*Clockwise from upper right: Bomba's Surfside Shack, Tortola, British Virgin Islands; Menu at Madeiriman, Shoal Bay East, Anguilla; Signpost at Pusser's Marina Cay, British Virgin Islands*





However, don't limit yourself to the ordinary, or the sign which you have seen over and over again in images. Be on the lookout for signs in bars and restaurants, political signs, and advertisements.

Signs remind of us where we are, and what is current at the time we are there.



*Clockwise from top: Trellis Bay, Beef Island, British Virgin Islands; Callwood Distillery, Tortola, British Virgin Islands; Gwen's Reggae Grill, Shoal Bay East, Anguilla*



Providenciales,  
Turks & Caicos Islands



Shoal Bay East,  
Anguilla



Loblolly Bay, Anegada,  
British Virgin Islands



Sandy Ground,  
Anguilla

A photograph of a sunset over the ocean. The sky is filled with orange and yellow light, with dark clouds. In the foreground, a wooden pier with a small building and a boat is visible. The water is dark and reflects the light from the sky.

6

SHOOT AT DIFFERENT TIMES OF DAY



*Cuisinart Resort, Rendezvous  
Bay, Anguilla*

I'm not one to wake up at the crack of dawn, but the early morning presents some great time to take photos. If you never shoot the early morning, you never capture the sun on the other side of the island. We are so quick to shoot a sunset, but not very often a sunrise.

The time just after sunset is a great time to shoot too, because the sky still has loads of color in it.

Venture out at different times of day, and see all the island has to offer.



*Above: Providenciales, Turks & Caicos Islands; Left: Scrub Island, British Virgin Islands*

Trellis Bay, Beef Island,  
British Virgin Islands



*Virgin Gorda,  
British Virgin Islands*

7

SHOOT FROM A DIFFERENT POINT OF VIEW

So many people shoot from eye level. It's natural. You're walking along and you see something you like. You pull the camera up to your eye, and snap.

However, a different angle can offer a whole new perspective and bring great interest to your image.

Get low or get high.

Think about shooting from a lower angle by getting down on the ground and shooting up, or putting the camera up high and shooting down. Instead of standing on the beach shooting the ocean, wade out into the ocean and shoot toward the beach.

*Top: Pinney's Beach, Nevis*

*Bottom: Four Seasons Resort, Nevis*



Shoot from an angle. Walk around your subject for a different view.

A different angle give a whole different look to the shot.

*Clockwise from right: Anegada, British Virgin Islands; Pinney's Beach, Nevis; Pusser's Marina Cay, British Virgin Islands*





*Four Seasons Resort,  
Pinney's Beach, Nevis*

Get your feet wet!



8

GET CLOSE

*North Beach, Scrub Island  
British Virgin Islands*



Too often travel photos consist of broadly composed landscapes of the area you visit. Draw your viewer into your experience by getting close.



If you don't have enough zoom on your camera, zoom with your feet. Walk to your subject and get your camera closer.

*Clockwise from top left: Bomba's Surfside Shack, Tortola, British Virgin Islands; Smokey's at the Cove, Anguilla; Da Conch Shack, Providenciales, Turks & Caicos Islands*



Top Left:  
Bomba's Surfside  
Shack, Tortola,  
British Virgin  
Islands

Bottom Left:  
Turks & Caicos  
Conch Festival,  
Providenciales,  
Turks & Caicos  
Islands



Top Right:  
Gardens at  
Meads Bay  
Beach Villas,  
Anguilla

Bottom Right:  
Architectural  
detail, Bomba's  
Surfside Shack,  
Tortola, British  
Virgin Islands



9

# SHOOT ATMOSPHERE

*Sunshine's Beach Bar,  
Nevis*



Shoot atmosphere. What I mean is try to get a sense for the place you are. Don't just show people where you went. Help them feel it.

Shooting atmosphere often means shooting a wider angle shot. By way of example, we were at Sunshine's Beach Bar on Nevis one afternoon. There was a birthday party going on, and a boat full of daytrippers had filled the bar. I didn't know any of these people, but they brought a real excitement to the place, which I didn't feel in the evening. I took a few shots of the crowds to remember the atmosphere.



*Clockwise from top: Pusser's Marina Cay, British Virgin Islands; Sunshine's Beach Bar, Nevis; Sunshine's Beach Bar, Nevis*

Our memories are not just a few glimpses of what we focused upon, but are part of the bigger picture.



*Picante, Anguilla*

10

# SHOOT THE NON-TOURIST SHOT





*St. Kitts*



*Providenciales, Turks & Caicos Islands*



*Providenciales, Turks & Caicos Islands*

Our final tip is to shoot the shot you won't see on the Tourism Bureau's website.

If you check out the official website of any tourist destination, you will see gorgeous images of the most picturesque areas of the island. But an island is not all about people walking hand-in-hand on the beach or clinking champagne glasses at a beachside table. An island is a community of people, and people have all different lifestyles. It's not all "picture-perfect," high-end resorts with a lot of money changing hands. I love to photograph where and how real people live. Complete the picture by shooting the entire picture.

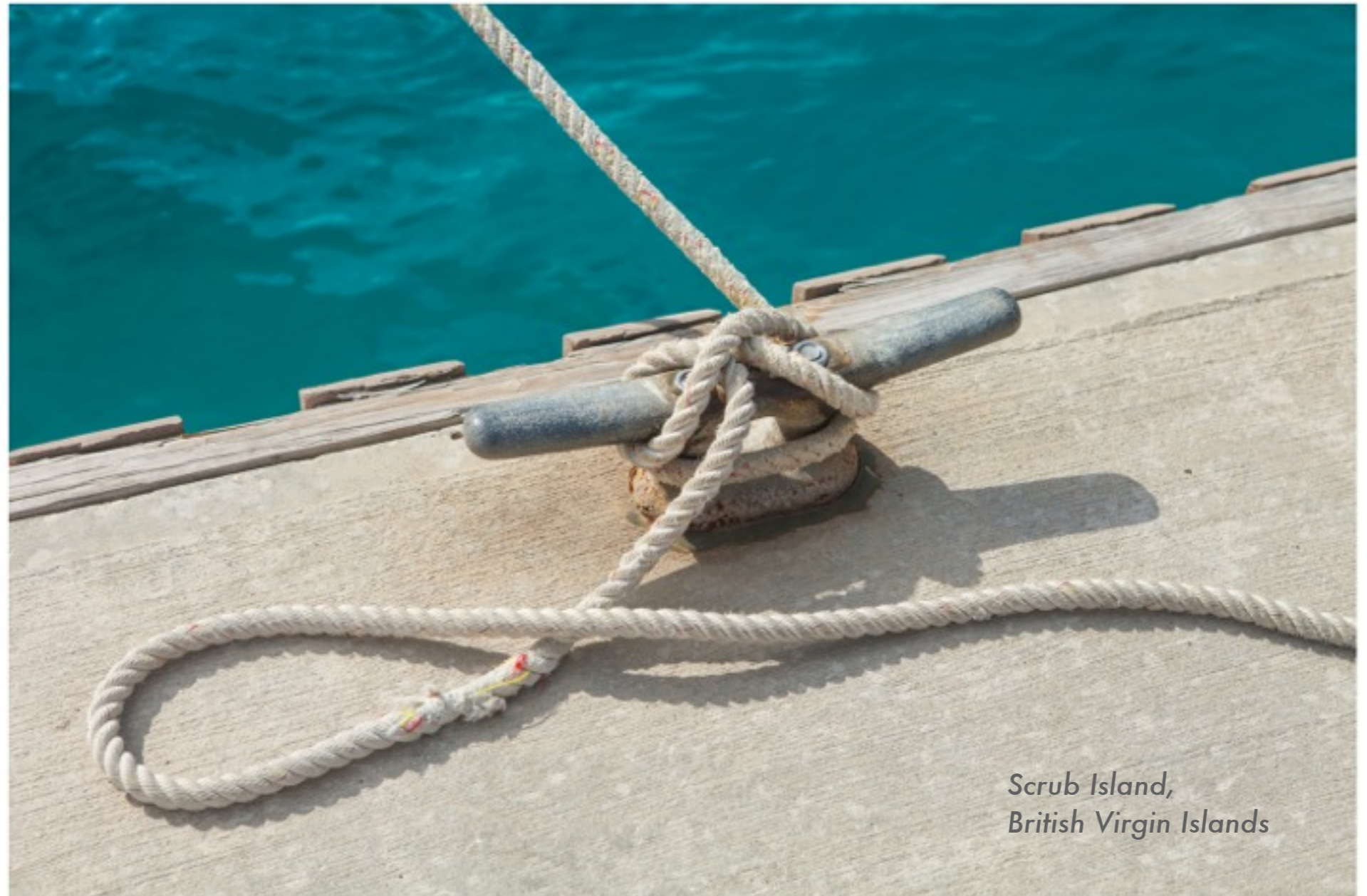
Now some people have a different point of view. I had friends who upon returning from a trip to St. Martin were shocked by all the “poverty.” Perhaps, this friend’s sense of “poverty” was not having a lawn service or a washer/dryer. One of the most important lessons I have learned from traveling to the Caribbean is that you don’t need a lot of possessions to be kind, generous, and happy. We often spend so much time wrapped up in what we have that we lose sense of what is important. A simple life can be a very rich life. These are not images of “poverty,” but of “wealth,” from a different point of view.



Nevis

I hope these tips have helped inspire you in seeing and capturing great images on your next adventure.

Be sure to share them with your friends after your trip!



*Scrub Island,  
British Virgin Islands*

If you enjoyed this complimentary book, please follow us on [My Irie Time](#)!

Also, check us out on [Facebook](#)

And on [Twitter](#)



Marina Cay,  
British Virgin Islands