



*L'arbre roux*

# Autumn in Aragon

*Writing with light* - this definition of photography suits autumn landscapes perfectly. There is no such thing as a good landscape without the proper light. But the challenges of second-guessing a very fickle Mother Nature can be very demanding when shooting the environment. Oftentimes you may only get one or two acceptable days out of a week's stay for photographing scenery. The colorful views of autumn can unexpectedly be delayed for several days, or even weeks. If you live in the area it is of no consequence. However, living several hundred miles away makes a big difference. Some years, the leaves are still green when arriving at your destination. Other times the leaves have fallen to the ground before your arrival. To shoot a colorful autumn landscape many variables need to be considered.

Fortunately, photographic opportunities were plentiful while on a trip to Aragon in the Spanish Pyrenees. Here are some simple tips that helped to make that trip a successful photographic adventure: **Fieldwork**; search the area for good

subjects to photograph and select locations that are not hampered by unwanted elements. **Time**; choose the time of day when the lighting enhances the landscape. **Photographing the landscape**; once the subject and the right time have been

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*Aspens impressions*



*Brume en vallée*

selected, which sometimes requires several stays at the same location, it is necessary to choose one's approach. You may want to select subjects when they are sunlit and the background, ravines or mountainsides are dark. After polarizing the light, which is imperative, measure the highlights and still under expose a bit more. As a consequence, the backgrounds become almost black and the colors of the foregrounds take on very saturated hues. Consider underexposing voluntarily from half a stop to one stop according to the subjects. Once, this photographer even went down three stops in order to enhance a specific zone of a picture. Despite the accuracy of spot metering in modern cameras, it is quite difficult to get the right measure on a small area where both a dark zone and a very bright one exist. It is because mistakes were made with average metering, hence producing unsatisfactory exposures, that underexposing is recommended.

All things considered, regardless of the expertise of the photographer, it is necessary to be patient, lucky and to be able to adjust the various metering systems of your camera before expecting to take a good photo. Landscape photography can be very challenging, but the rewards are worth it. ■

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*Virage de Campo*

