

Temple Photography

I am in love with temples or historical sites. To me, getting close to them makes me feel content. Being content also entails another beauty that eyes could enjoy, i.e. pictures. Temple photography is challenging yet engaging. Temples here do not necessarily mean the very big tall buildings. They could also mean ruins of historical sites. For people being in love with both photography and historical sites, temple photography could be an option to accommodate and blend the two.

There are challenging things, do's and don'ts, and other matters when we want to explore temple photography. So as other streams in photography, temple photography is challenging in nature in a way that it requires the photographer to play with the light, the buildings, the weather, and the rules in the sites for sure.

Temple photography always seeks light in its best place to capture. The best pictures are always taken in their best moment. The best moment is in the morning right before the sunrise to 8 o'clock. The afternoon shot starts at 3.30 PM to the arrival of the sunset light. The other perfect time for shooting is shortly after the rain where the puddle reflects the buildings for magical shots.

The light does not come alone since it has to be there with the buildings to shot. There are angles where we can shoot the buildings from. Before shooting, we need to somehow figure out the building's shape, colour, and size. This then determines perspectives and types of shot.

Temples are mostly made of limestone, andesite, red brick, and sometimes marble. Therefore, we have to be really careful in dealing with those ancient buildings. The way we touch, walk, stand, and shoot needs to again reconsider the age of the buildings. There are codes of conduct to obey. We're not allowed to take pictures of certain statues and sanctum sanctorum or in Sanskrit it is called the *garbhagriha*. This innermost sanctuary is only meant for worshipping. Thus, photography is not allowed at all.

Temple photography enables me to meditate for the very calm surroundings and atmosphere. It also allows me to do some yoga under a tree. I do believe, after all, that temples are my very start for calm heart and mind and wonderful journey to study history. Besides, it also becomes my vehicle to always improve my shooting skill for perfecting the pictures for wider audience. In September 2018, some of my temple pictures were exhibited by Taman Wisata Candi (TWC), a state-owned enterprise or BUMN in charge of managing Borobudur, Prambanan, and Ratu Boko.