



Assynt & Coigach Photography Workshops

Auto to manual in one day!

www.karenthorburn.com







"Absolutely fantastic and highly recommended for those who want to improve their photography. I was amazed at Karen's knowledge and skill in teaching.

Everything we discussed was tailored to my skill level with Karen providing lots of useful hints and tips (plus a handy guide emailed to me afterwards).

By the end of the workshop, I could see an improvement in my photography and felt like I'd known Karen for years as she was so friendly and made me feel completely relaxed.

I'll definitely be booking another workshop!"

Rose Nicholls



Assynt & Coigach Highlights

If you're looking for things to do in the Ullapool area, perhaps while touring the North Coast 500, why not join me for a day out with our cameras in Assynt and Coigach? I'd love to help you develop your landscape photography skills in the majestic surroundings of the north west Highlands.

- Develop your photography skills in the spectacular landscapes of Assynt and Coigach in the north west Highlands.
- Discover lochs, bays and beach with stunning mountainous backdrops.
- Spend a day alone with a friendly and down-to-earth professional photographer who will put you at ease.
- Learn from one-to-one tuition in the field, with feedback delivered in a positive way which won't dent your confidence.
- Enjoy a relaxing lunch, complete with cake!
- Access to a free landscape photography eBook to reinforce the key learning points from the workshop.



Hello! I'm Karen.

I know it can feel a bit daunting, spending a day with a complete stranger!

I've run numerous workshops over the years and haven't had an awkward experience yet, even when there's been a language barrier to negotiate.

I'm sure we'll find lots of things in common to chat about over lunch and in the car travelling between locations!

I live on the Black Isle with my husband Mark and our furry friends! I love coastal walks, and getting out and about in the Highlands and Islands with my wee touring caravan and bike.



"Just a wee note to say thank you for the workshop - really brilliant, lots of opportunities, lots of angles, lots of subject matter, light and atmosphere changes!

As always with your trips, I pick up photographic information, operational knowledge, and tips and tricks that assist me in my conversion to landscape photography, so thanks for sharing that with me.

Really enjoyable and your tuition has inspired me to get out and experience this great land through taking memorable images."

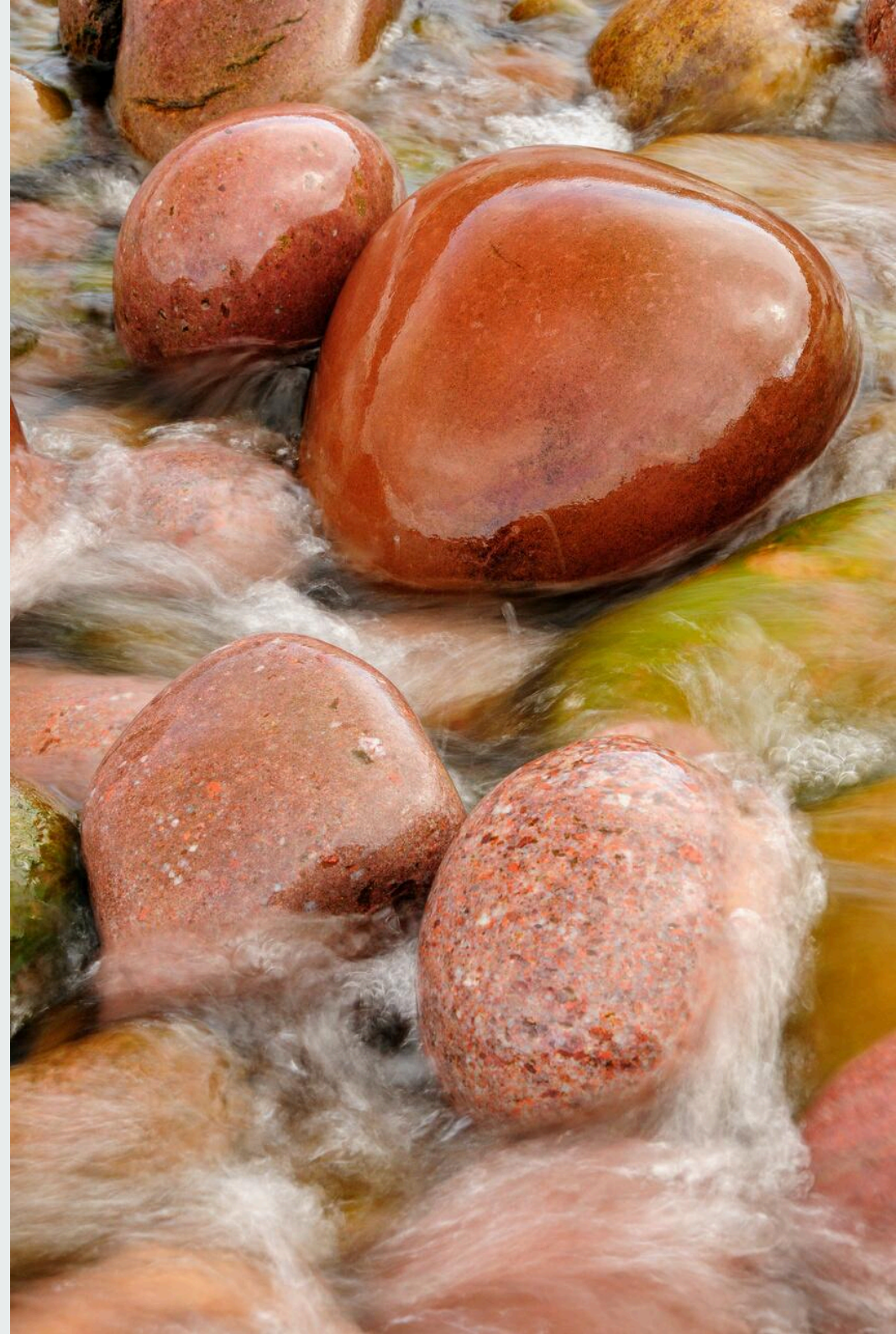
Sandy Young

Assynt & Coigach Details

The region of Assynt and Coigach offers some of the most spectacular coastal and mountain scenery on the North Coast 500 and in Scotland.

This is one of my favourite areas for landscape photography, particularly in autumn, when the landscape turns to a beautiful palette of green, orange and gold, and the silence is broken only by the sound of stags rutting on the hillsides.

The mountains aren't particularly high but what they lack in height, they make up for in character.



Assynt & Coigach Itinerary

Here's a sample itinerary, to give you an idea of the number and types of locations we'll visit. Expect this to change a little, so that we can take advantage of the weather conditions on the day. Also, don't worry if you think you might run out of energy by the afternoon; we can substitute the last location for a café!



- 09:30 Meet and greet, Ullapool/Knockan Crag.
- 10:00 Arrive at our first location, Loch Cul Dromannan, which offers spectacular views towards the mountains of Ben More Coigach and Stac Pollaidh. We'll run through some theory before setting up our cameras and tripods.
- 11:30 We'll follow the single track road past Stac Pollaidh and visit Achnahaird; a beautiful beach and ideal vantage point for photographing the Assynt mountains.
- 13:00 Enjoy a relaxing lunch at the Lochinver Larder, famed for its delicious pies!
- 14:00 Capture a panoramic view of the Assynt mountains from Strone, to the north of Lochinver, before moving on to Clachtoll where we'll practice photographing details within the landscape.
- 16:00 Pause at Loch Assynt to photograph the ruins of Ardvreck Castle with the mountain of Quinag beyond.
- 17:00 Drop off, Ullapool/Knockan Crag.

Frequently Asked Questions



What can I expect to learn?

Don't worry if you're not familiar with your camera's settings; you'll have mastered them by lunchtime! I'll take you back to basics at our first location by running through ISO, aperture, shutter speed, white balance, metering, focusing, etc.

I'll gauge how much knowledge and experience you currently have and build on this throughout the day. Even if you're currently shooting in automatic mode, I promise that you'll be comfortable working in manual mode by the end of the day.

Of course, there's a lot more to landscape photography than just dialling in the right camera settings. I'll help you with your compositions too, so that you can learn to capture images that convey a sense of depth.

If the light is flat, we'll look beyond 'the big picture' and have a go at photographing more intimate details within the landscape.

After the workshop, I'll email you my landscape photography eBook which summarises the key learning points, so that you can refer back to this in your own time, at your own pace.





Will there be other people on the workshop?

No, not unless you've booked a place for anyone else! Occasionally, I run landscape photography workshops for groups of up to 10 people (e.g. for camera clubs) but, generally speaking, my workshops are bespoke.

I think one-to-one or two-to-one is the most effective way to learn. I want to get to know you and your camera in order to provide focused, in-depth tuition, without the distractions of managing a large group.



What if the weather's poor?

I appreciate your workshop is an investment and it will be less than ideal if we're outside in heavy rain, high winds or thick fog. Changeable weather can be great for memorable images but can be very frustrating for teaching! Ideally, we want stable weather so that we can focus on the tuition without having to repeatedly dash back to the car to dodge the rain.

Please let me know your overall availability at the time of booking. If you're based locally, then it's more likely that we'll be able to reschedule in order to work around the weather. If you're touring the North Coast 500, I appreciate that you might only be available on one specific date. If the only option is to head out in inclement weather, then please make sure that you're sufficiently wrapped up and that you're able to protect your gear from the elements.



How fit do I need to be?

Please be honest about your level of fitness at the time of booking so that I can plan your workshop accordingly.

Walking will be generally straightforward over rough ground and good paths, with no major ascents. A reasonable level of fitness is required for some short steep sections. A walking pole can be helpful for keeping your balance on rough terrain.

My workshops are fairly leisurely but we'll typically spend up to six hours outdoors on a full day workshop (three-and-a-half hours on a half day workshop), depending on the weather and light. Don't worry if you think you might run out of energy; if so, we can reduce time at the last location, visit a café and look through your images.



Can I bring my partner or a friend?

Yes, of course! Additional charges apply, if two or more people are attending. I always particularly enjoy the dynamic when there are three of us (it's usually more fun!), so please don't hesitate to bring your partner along.

I'll gauge which level you're both at and will divide my time between you so that I can pitch my teaching accordingly. I've run many landscape photography workshops like this and it's always been a success.



What photography equipment should I bring?

Equipment is very much a personal choice, dependent on your budget, experience and your aspirations as a photographer. I've made some recommendations here but please don't rush out and spend a small fortune on new equipment specifically for one of my workshops!

You might find that what you learn on the workshop will help you decide what equipment to invest in. Also, don't bring more than you can comfortably carry! I only ever carry one camera body when I'm doing landscape photography.

Camera: I don't mind whether you're shooting with a compact camera, a top-of-the-range DSLR or a brand new mirrorless camera system. Even a mobile phone will produce decent results in the hands of a good photographer! Whatever camera you're using, have a play around with the menu before the workshop and bring along the camera manual, if you have a copy to hand.

Camera bag: I recommend using a rucksack, as opposed to a shoulder bag, for comfort when walking. Ensure the contents are protected from the elements, e.g. with a rucksack cover.

Tripod: A good tripod is essential if you're serious about landscape photography. It allows you to carefully consider your composition and use small apertures and slow shutter speeds. Ideally, a tripod needs to be light enough to carry over long distances but sturdy enough to avoid camera shake. A carbon fibre tripod is an excellent investment if you have the budget. Don't forget to bring an allen key in case any part of your tripod works loose during the workshop. Remember to pack your quick release plate!

Lenses: For landscape photography, I use two zoom lenses covering the following focal lengths (on a full frame sensor): 24-70mm and 70-200mm. The quality of most zoom lenses nowadays is superb and they are more versatile to work with than fixed focal length lenses. I recommend you avoid shooting with an ultra wide angle lens so that the foreground doesn't lose its impact in your landscape images.

Filters: Don't dismiss filters as 'fake'. Their purpose is to help the camera to capture what the human eye sees. A selection of high quality filters are a great investment. There is little point in forking out a lot of money on quality lenses, only to screw cheap filters on the front! For landscape photography, I use professional quality UV filters, a polariser, and a range of neutral density filters (graduated and uniform). Many filters can be replicated in post-production but I strongly recommend 'getting it right' in camera.

Remote/cable release: This is an inexpensive piece of kit but essential for avoiding camera shake, even when the camera is mounted on a tripod.

Spirit level: A hot shoe spirit level is another cheap piece of kit but is useful for ensuring your horizon is level. This will save you from losing pixels in post-production from cropping.

Backup and storage: Ensure that you bring sufficient memory, especially if you're shooting in RAW. If you're not already shooting in RAW, then expect me to persuade you to do so on the workshop! If you're attending a multi-day bespoke workshop, bringing your own laptop will enable you to back up and process your images and will facilitate critique sessions.

Spare batteries: Bring all of your spare batteries and pack your charger! Your camera will be on for hours and you might be surprised by how quickly your batteries drain, especially if you're using a mirrorless camera and/or are using your LCD screen a lot. If you bring your charger, we might be able to boost one of your batteries at lunchtime.

Lens cloth: This is useful for removing spots of rain. A small towel is also useful for drying your camera and lenses after shooting in the rain.

Diffuser/reflector: A collapsible diffuser is extremely useful for removing harsh shadows from 'detailed shots' if shooting when the sun is out.



What personal equipment should I bring?

I drive a Skoda Karoq which has a reasonable amount of boot space but it fills up quickly with camera kit, especially if there are two or more people booked on the workshop.

Try to pack as lightly as possible without compromising on safety and comfort. The key is to stay warm and dry under a variety of weather conditions. Please be aware that we will be standing around for a while at each location that we visit.

The following is a good starting point:

- Walking boots and/or wellies
- Gaiters
- Spare socks
- Walking pole
- Waterproof trousers
- Waterproof jacket
- Fleece
- Gloves (even in summer!)
- Handwarmers
- Hat for sun protection and warmth
- Midge head net
- Sunscreen
- Sunglasses
- Drinks container, e.g. 2 litre water bottle
- Small flask of tea or coffee



Do I need insurance, and what are the terms and conditions of booking?

Insurance isn't a condition of booking but it is recommended, especially for any multi-day landscape photography workshops. In this scenario, it is advisable to be insured for medical and personal accident risks, as well as cancellation, curtailment and baggage.

Your workshop may involve travel in remote areas where amenities and medical facilities are not readily available. Workshop participants must accept the risks and hazards involved in visiting remote areas and rugged terrain and must agree to comply with the decisions taken by Karen Thorburn Photography at all times.

Karen Thorburn Photography will take all reasonable efforts to ensure the safety and well-being of participants but will not accept liability for any bodily injury or illness incurred on the workshop nor accept responsibility for any lack of fitness, carelessness or negligence. Personal items, including photographic equipment, remain the responsibility of workshop participants at all times.





"Just wanted to thank you again for the wonderful course we recently attended with you.

The whole day was fantastic, learning some new skills and working the camera to its fullest potential and creating some amazing shots!

Now off to practice everything that we learnt before our holidays!"

Clare and Gordon Armstrong



How will we communicate?

I want you to *feel* like you're my only client, but the reality is there are *lots* of other people on my books! This means I have to be very organised with my communication. Email works best for me, as I can set up a dedicated folder for your workshop, and you'll receive my out-of-office reply if I'm away from my desk.

Self-employment can often feel all-consuming, and 'switching off' is an ongoing challenge for me! After your initial contact form, please stick to email until the final run up to your workshop, when I'll give you my WhatsApp number. Please download WhatsApp to be prepared for this scenario. Please revert back to email after your workshop.

I'll aim to respond promptly but please remember that I'm often out at photoshoots, particularly during peak season, and I'm striving to enjoy evenings and the occasional day off away from my inbox!



Why should I pay your prices?

Understandably, a lot of people are looking for bargains these days. For a flexible approach, stress-free experience, and top quality tuition, please book an experienced, reliable professional (me!). Buy cheap, and you'll end up buying twice.

The fee you pay won't just cover my time on the day and it certainly won't go straight into my savings account. As a sole trader, I have numerous business costs to cover before I even consider my mortgage and other household bills.

Please think about the time and effort that goes into a professional photographer's marketing, so that you even know they exist (I built my website from scratch and created my eBooks myself).





Summary and Booking

Duration: 09:30-17:00

Start/Finish: Ullapool/Knockan Crag

Suitability: Suitable for beginners and intermediate photographers.
All locations are within a short walking distance, but over some rough terrain.
Lunch included.

Price: £600 for an individual
£625 in total for 2 people
£650 in total for 3 people

Gift vouchers are available.

On a budget? Check out my [Black Isle workshop](#) (prices start at £200).

[CONTACT KAREN](#)

The price includes the following:

On a full day workshop, a light lunch served with a hot drink and a sugary treat!

All transport during the workshop and pick-up and drop-off in Kinlochewe.

One-to-one in-depth tuition covering camera settings and composition.

Auto to manual camera settings in one day.

Feedback session delivered in a positive way.

Access to a comprehensive landscape photography eBook.

The price does NOT include the following:

Any additional meals or snacks, alcohol, gratuities, insurance, equipment, or any other items not referred to in the itinerary.



www.karenthorburn.com
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Auto to manual in one day!

