

Photo Locations : South of the Border

by Photographer Raymond Klass

Located just South of the North Carolina – South Carolina border, on Route 95, “South of the Border” is a true icon of Kitsch. Though it is Mexican themed, this unique tourist trap is definitely a creation of American excess. So why is this nature photographer highlighting this decidedly un-natural location? Driving by, on my way to photograph spring in South Carolina, I couldn’t help but stop and have some fun shooting the colorful and unnatural sights.

I think that when we start classifying ourselves as “nature photographers”, as “naturalists”, photography becomes less about the image, and more about the theory behind the image. I learned a long time ago that this is not who I am – it’s not that I don’t care about the environment, it’s just that I don’t see environmental protection as the only reason to pick up my camera. I used to be so focused on the natural that I would pass by such fertile locations – that I would avoid such places because they weren’t natural.



I realize that there isn’t such a definitive black and white line around what those who care about the environment should and shouldn’t photograph. Oddly enough, it took an environmentally geared project – about the Adirondack Park, to make me realize that what I truly liked interpreting is light, line, and life itself, rather than the concept of green we’ve been presented with.

So, this month’s photo-location is about more than just a simple spot to go photograph. Rather, it is about the possibilities when you leave behind your



preconceived notions, your pre-judgements about what is right to photograph. After all, isn't that what photography is, your interpretation? Isn't art about your vision, your creativity, and the unique lens that the photographer brings to the piece?

South of the Border is an amazing palette that truly allows the photographer to play. Its wonderful colors, delightfully playful sculptures, and unique interactions make this a place that really allows for your creativity to shine. The juxtaposition of design elements is wonderful, and if you have the chance to visit, plan to spend a couple of hours to let your imagination run wild.



