

10 Top Color-Slide

We choose our favorites

That color-print films outsell all other film types by a tremendous margin is no accident. Color-print films have very forgiving exposure latitude, making them the resounding choice of point-and-shooters and pro photojournalists. And color-print films yield color prints, which is what

amateur photographers—and the clients of pro portrait and wedding photographers—want.

But many serious photographers prefer color-slide films, because slide films give you just what you shoot, exposure- and color-wise, and because transparencies show detail throughout a

greater range of densities than prints are able to show.

Each year, we poll our editors and contributors to learn their current favorites among the 35 or so daylight-balanced 35mm color-slide films currently on the market. We present those choices to you now, from slowest

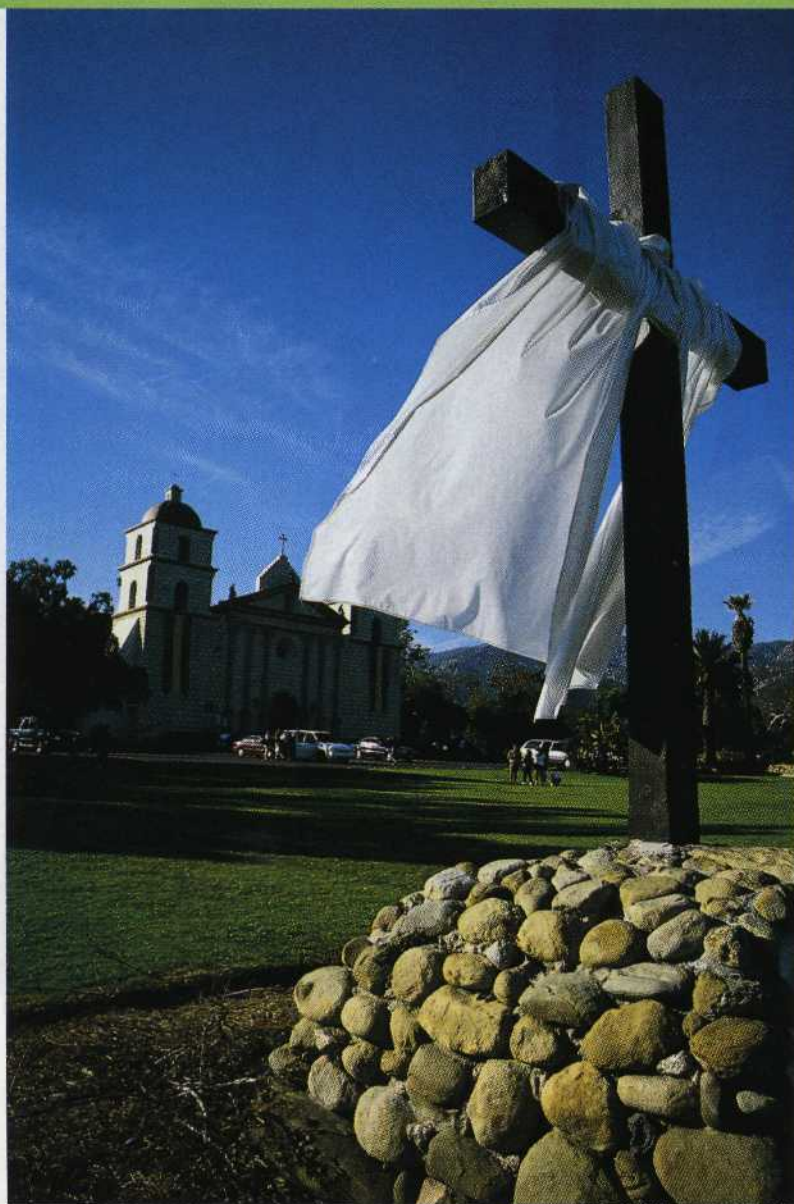


PHOTO BY MIKE STENSVOLD

FUJICHROME VELVIA

A perennial member of our favorites list since Fuji introduced it back in 1990, Velvia offers superb image quality (incredibly fine grain and tremendous resolving power), super-rich colors and blacks, snappy contrast, accurate rendition of nature's colors...wow! Velvia is a bit slow for some purposes (and, actually, many photographers rate it at EI 32 or 40 instead of ISO 50), but it's a great film whenever high film speed and muted colors aren't requirements. Fuji Photo Film U.S.A., Inc., 555 Taxter Rd., Elmsford, NY 10523; 800/800-FUJI; on the Internet www.fujifilm.com.



PHOTO BY JACK & SUE DRAFAHL

AGFACHROME RSX II 100

The pro-oriented siblings of Agfa's CTprecisa consumer slide films, the RSX II films offer similar excellent results. RSX II 100 is a beautiful film. Colors are brilliant—even difficult-to-capture natural blues and greens. Skin tones are accurate. Neutral tones stay neutral even with long exposures—this, plus the film's ability to capture a wide scenic brightness range, makes it great for photographing white subjects. And these features are maintained even when the film is push-processed to EI 200. Agfa Corp., 100 Challenger Rd., Ridgefield Park, NJ 07660; 800/243-2776; on the Internet www.agfaphoto.com.

Films

by the Editors

to fastest, in alphabetical order by manufacturer. These are all great films, and there are fine films among those that didn't make our list. If you're looking for a film of a particular speed, try our choice(s), and some of the others you'll find at your film supplier, and see which one(s) you like best.

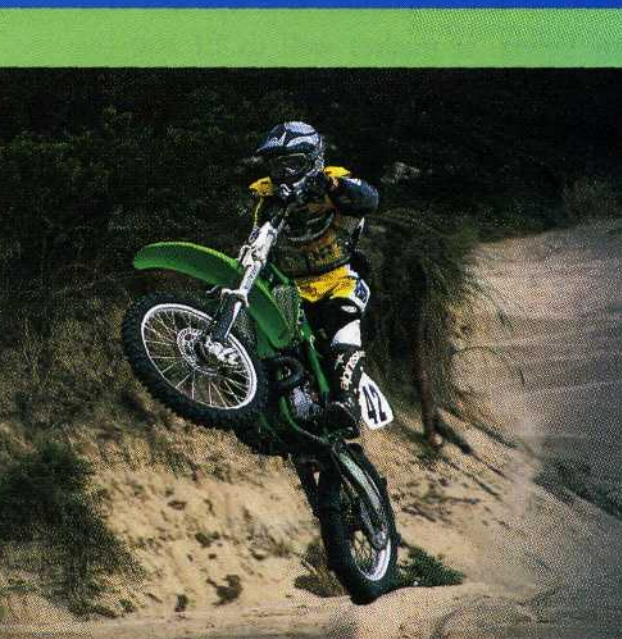


PHOTO BY JACK & SUE DRAFAHL

FUJICHROME MS 100/1000 PROF.

Designed to be pushed (the MS stands for Multi Speed), MS 100/1000 can be exposed at speeds from ISO 100 to EI 1000 with excellent image quality: At ISO 100, it's as fine-grained as Fujichrome Astia 100; at EI 400, it's noticeably finer-grained than the excellent Fujichrome Provia 400, and at EI 1000 it's only a step grainier than Provia 400. And MS 100/1000 maintains its Astia 100-equalling resolving power of 135/55 lines per millimeter (with high- and low-contrast test targets, respectively) throughout its speed range—even at EI 1000. The motorcycle shot shown above was made at EI 1000. Colors are accurate at all speeds, albeit not quite as rich as with Provia 100.

Top Color-Slide Films



PHOTO BY MIKE STENSVOLD

FUJICHROME PROVIA 100

A terrific general-purpose film, Provia 100 (ISO 100) is the answer for those who love Velvia but want more film speed. Provia 100 produces saturated yet faithful colors under daylight and electronic-flash illumination, and has less contrast than Velvia. It pushes well to EI 200 (we frequently rate it at 200 so we can use faster shutter speeds when hand-holding long lenses), and has tremendous sharpness and miniscule grain.

FUJICHROME SENSIA II 100 (left)

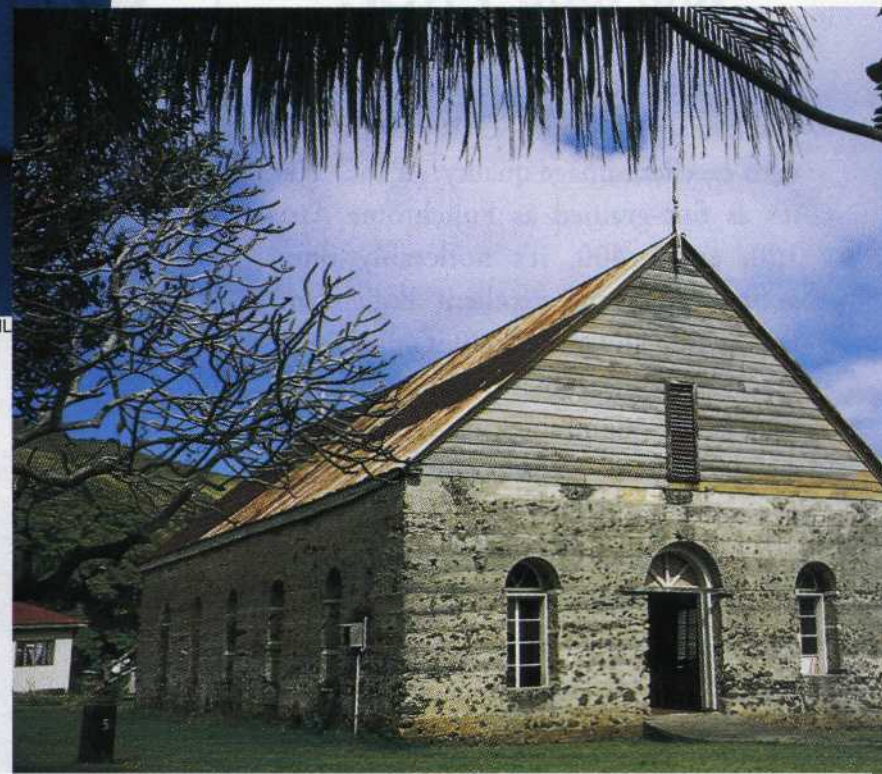
Essentially a lower-priced consumer version of Fujichrome Astia 100, Sensia II 100 (ISO 100) reproduces skin tones naturally and both bright and delicate colors accurately. Image quality is superb, even when the film is pushed a stop to EI 200. It handles varied lighting conditions with minimal color shifts. Both Astia 100 and Sensia II 100 utilize even newer technology than Provia 100, another of our favorites.



PHOTO BY JACK & SUE DRAFAHL

AGFACHROME CTprecisa 200

Very fine-grained for its ISO 200 speed, Agfachrome CTprecisa 200 (along with its pro "brother," RSX II 200) also offers excellent sharpness for the speed, slightly lower-than-normal contrast (making it ideal for portrait and landscape shooting when you need extra film speed) and beautiful, realistic color reproduction—vivid colors pop and pale ones remain delicate, while neutral tones remain that way. If you need more speed, you can push CTprecisa 200 (and RSX II 200) to EI 400 or even 800 with little effect on color balance.



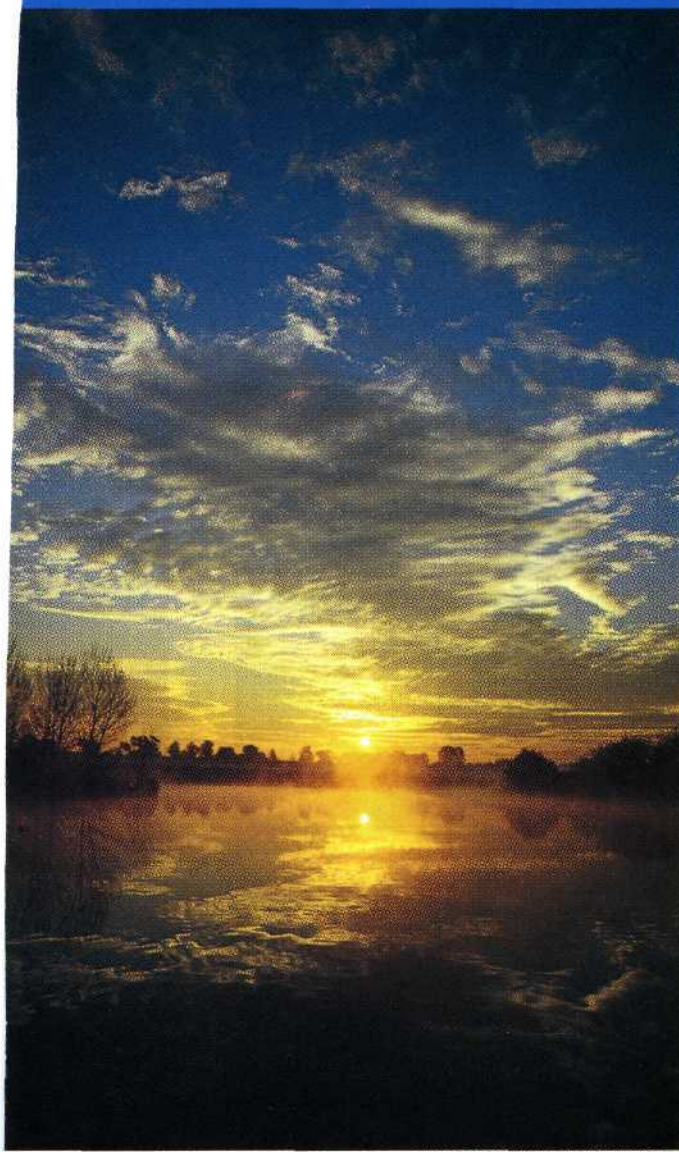


PHOTO BY MIKE STENSVOLD.

KODAK EKTACHROME E100VS PROF.

The VS stands for Vivid Saturation, and this new slide film's colors have it, making it one of our favorite films at first use. If you like rich yet accurate colors and a neutral gray scale (along with excellent image quality in terms of sharpness and grain), E100VS is well worth a try. You can push it a stop

with good results, and its reciprocity characteristics are amazing—no compensation is required for exposure times from 10 seconds to $\frac{1}{10,000}$. Note: The new Ektachrome Elite Chrome Extra Color 100 provides similar characteristics in a consumer film. Eastman Kodak Co., 343 State St., Rochester, NY 14650; 800/242-2424; on the Internet www.kodak.com.



Top Color-Slide Films

KODAK PROFESSIONAL EKTACHROME E200

Ektachrome E200 combines the “look” of a slower film with the ability to be pushed to speeds up to EI 1000. No ISO 200 slide film has finer grain, and E200 maintains rich, accurate colors, natural skin tones and excellent image quality even when pushed. This is the film that changed our long-time practice of pushing ISO 100 films to EI 200 when we needed that speed—E200 produces better image quality at ISO 200 than any of the ISO 100 slide films pushed to EI 200. E200 is a first-rate general-purpose film as well as a terrific low-light film. If ISO 100 isn't fast enough, this is an excellent choice for any shooting situation.



PHOTO BY LYNNE EODICE

KODAK KODACHROME 200 (below)

It's grainy, but Kodachrome 200 is *very* sharp and more importantly, has a beautiful palette. It reproduces nature's nuances very nicely. And at ISO 200, it's three stops faster than Kodachrome 25, making it a great choice in a wide variety of shooting situations, including action and low-light work. We love it for aerial photography and general-purpose shooting, and like the “photographic” look the grain pattern adds to our images. Skin tones are lovely, making this a fine windowlight portrait film. Kodachrome labs can push Kodachrome 200 to EI 500 and even higher with good results—another plus.

PHOTO BY MIKE STENSVOLD

