



Fuji Superia X-TRA 800 & 1600

Over the years, the demand for higher film speeds has become the driving force behind the development of new film emulsions. With advanced technologies, what was considered impossible a few years ago is now the norm. It is now common place to find ISO 400 films in the camera bags of most photographers using small and medium format cameras.

Fujifilm has raised the bar a step or two higher with the introduction of two new and improved Superia high speed color negative films. An improved version of Superia X-TRA 800 and the new Superia 1600 help round out the Superia family membership to a half dozen. Both new films incorporate Fuji's 4th Color Layer Technology and Fine Sigma Technology to deliver fine grain and image sharpness.

Fuji's 4th Color Layer Emulsion technology was introduced a few years ago when Fuji first premiered Reala 100. This fine grain film has a very long tonal curve that gives it the ability to work well in complex, combined lighting situations. In early 1999, the 4th Color Layer was incorporated in Fujicolor Superia X-TRA 400 and was eventually integrated into the entire Superia film family.

To fully understand how these two new emulsions work, we need to look at the fourth layer first. Fuji found that most films with the standard color sensitive layers of red, green and blue didn't always see color in the same way as the human eye. The fourth layer fills in the gaps and extends the sensitivity in the green end of the spectrum. Since fluorescent lights fall in the green spectrum area, these new films are ideal for mixed lighting situations. The increase in film speed of these emulsions allows for smaller apertures, higher shutter speeds, and the ability to capture sharp images in very low light situations.

The other area of the improvement is Fine Sigma Technology. With most higher speed films, you had to settle for coarser grain in exchange for ISO flexibility. Fujifilm's Fine Sigma Technology, uses thin flat, uniformly shaped silver halide crystals to improve the grain structure and efficiency. The results are fine-grained images offering sharp yet smooth tonal gradations. What more could you ask for?



Left and above—Superia 800

Over the years we have tested many different film emulsions, and in the process, have run across shooting locations that really push the limits of a film's capabilities. We put these two new film contenders through some tough photo situations to see if they had the right stuff. We tried low light, long telephoto lenses, high contrast situations, mixed light, zoom lenses and high-speed action.

Our first stop was the new and improved Portland Zoo. The first animals we encountered included wolves, bears and assorted small furry creatures. Most of these animals were quite some distance away and completely backlit by the sun.



Superia 800

Out came our 75-300mm zoom and 500 mm mirror lenses. As we focused on the highlighted edges of the animals, the shutter speed was hovering between $\frac{1}{2000}$ and $\frac{1}{4000}$ second. Even with the animals moving, we were able to stop the action and f/5.6 and f/8 gave us adequate depth of field.

From there we move to the impressive new marine exhibit. The Plexiglas wall seemed so invisible that the children felt they could reach out and almost touch the sea lions. The existing lighting was so extreme that we weren't sure we were going to get useable shots even using these speed-demon films. The

Another Page from the Albums Inc. Family Album

"I know what it's like to run your own business, too. I've learned that you've got to let your customers know that their business is important to you."

— Monica Pritko
By Night,
Laundromat Owner



"In Albums shipping department, ours are the last hands to touch a customer's order. It can get pretty hairy back there, processing anything from 800 to 900 packages a day."

"But the customer has to be satisfied or else we're going to lose him as a customer."

"Satisfying the customers, getting their orders right, getting them the right products, servicing them to the best of our abilities is important. Very important."

— Monica Pritko
By Day, Albums Inc. Shipping Clerk since 1996

Complete your pictures with real people who understand what you're shooting for. To request a visit or free catalog, call: 1-800-662-1000, or visit us at www.albumsinc.com.

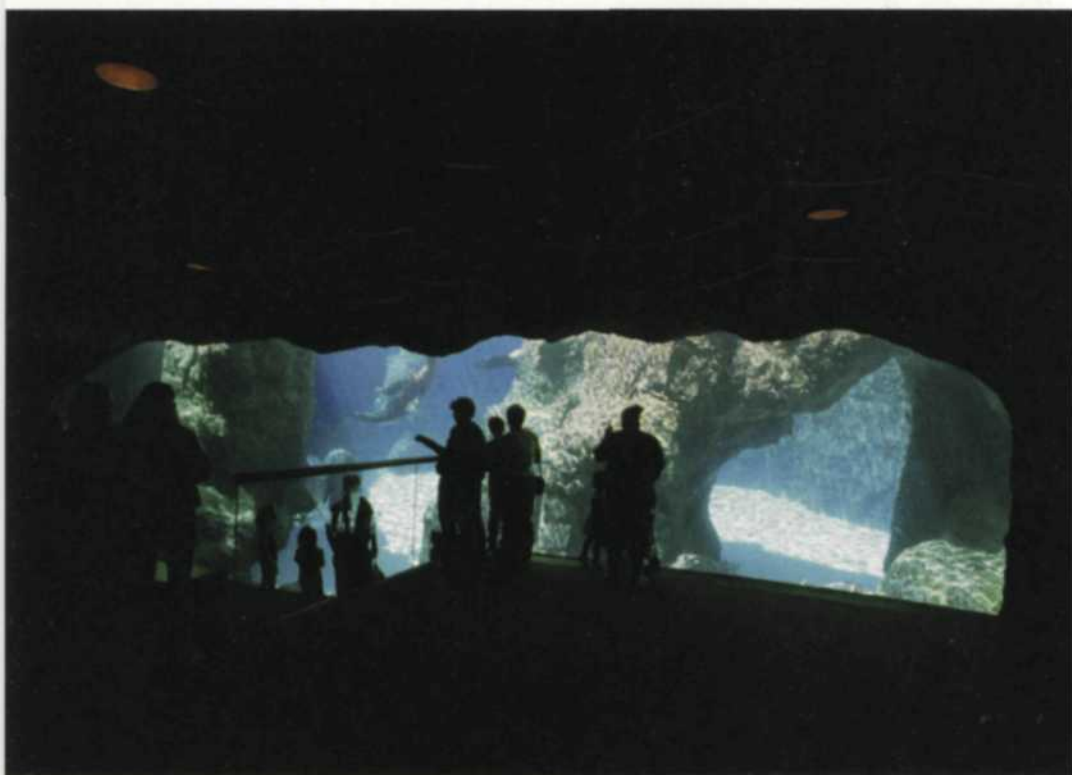
Everything after the photography



See us at PhotoPlus Expo, New York—Booth 1565

For more information, circle 201

714-050PT



Superia 800



shutter speeds with the 800 emulsion were holding at $\frac{1}{60}$ to $\frac{1}{25}$ at $f/4$ with the 14mm and 20mm lenses we were using to document the scene.

Our next stop was a local museum that was even older than the extensive array of exhibits it housed. The lighting had not been updated in years, and many exhibits were even difficult to see with the naked eye. Even with ISO 800 and 1600 films, we had exposures as low as $\frac{1}{5}$ second at $f/2.8$. Adding to the problem, there was a mixture of tungsten, fluorescent and slivers of sunlight filtering through cracks in the windows. Fortunately, the subjects were frozen in time, so we held our breath and squeezed off a few frames.


Our final stop was an old blimp hanger that is one of the most impressive structures on the West Coast. It has the distinction of being the world's largest wooden building. It now houses an air museum and still serves as a test site for blimps under construction. The building is so tall that even with very powerful lights, the wood is very dark. We pulled out our 14mm and 20mm lenses and loaded up the Superia 1600. There was so little available light that we wondered if any detail would show in the final image. To make matters worse, there was also contrasty lighting coming through the large door at the opposite end of the building. We metered between the dark walls and the sunlight streaming through the door to achieve exposures around $\frac{1}{25}$ at $f/4$.

We processed the film in a Wing-Lynch Model 5 processor using new chemistry and standard processing times. Once we had all the film processed, we grabbed a loupe and gave them the critical eye. Grain was impressive with both films, but the biggest surprise was the color saturation. The tonal qualities of the colors in the backlit zoom scenes were very rich, and were as accurate as we could remember. Normally high-speed films cannot handle contrasty scenes that well, but both emulsions were exemplary.

The best test results would be analyzed by scanning the

Superia 1600

film. High-speed color negative films tend to pick up grain during the scanning process. We are not sure how they did it, but the grain for both emulsions was tight. It was not exaggerated in the out-of-focus areas as we have found with previous high-speed films we have tested. Also, the shadow detail of the blimp hanger and zoo shots was far better than we had expected. The images with mixed lighting portrayed excellent color balance, and looked even better than we had remembered.

These two Superia films provide valuable tools for the amateur and pro photographer alike. Their superior quality demands that you make a place for them in your camera bag so as to maximize any potential photo opportunity. You won't be sorry you did. 

Jack and Sue Drafaahl are freelance journalists/photographers living in the Pacific Northwest. They have owned and operated a custom lab and service bureau, Image Concepts, for many years. They can be reached at: concepts@pacifier.com. The Drafaahls new web site is: www.jackandsuedrafaahl.com



Superia 1600

Risser Offers The Best of Both Worlds - Traditional and Digital Services

Digital and Optical ProShots

Scanning Services

FTP File Transfer

Digital Retouching and Artwork

Durst Lambda Digital Printing

C-41 Film Processing and Proofing

Candid Wedding and Portrait Prints

Full Service Finishing

**Digital Camera
Files Direct
to Lambda**

Call for details.

New ProShots Customer Special

**Free Paper Proofs and CD ROM
With Your First ProShots® Order**

Please mention when ordering. Valid for first order only.
Call for further details.

Donean Holmquist, Portrait Sales Director
(800) 747-7371 ext. 119



Risser Imaging, Inc.
www.risserimaging.com



© Photo Images, Inc.