

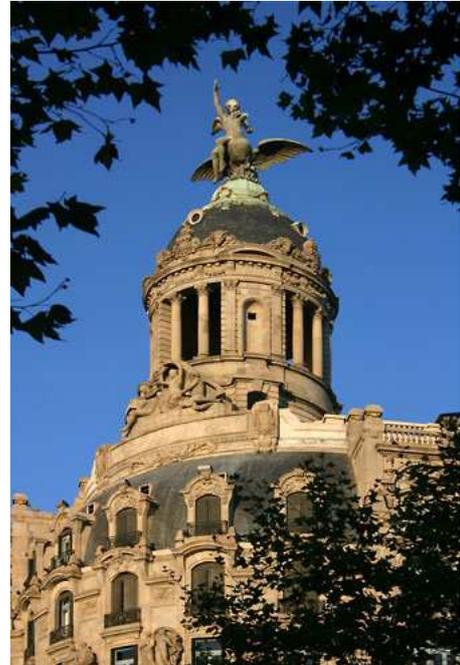
# Photographing Buildings

## **The Right Light**

The best time of day to take photos of any outdoor subject is either the early morning or the evening when the sunlight has a reddish hue and the light is coming from the side rather than directly overhead. Early morning is best and there are normally less people around. Obviously if you are photographing buildings the best time of day is going to be dictated by which way the building is facing.

The direction of the sunlight is vitally important to your photo. Objects look vastly different as you walk around them so choose your viewpoint carefully for the best lighting effect, also watch out for clutter in the background. Watch the color of the sky which changes as you turn around, it will be darkest at right angles to the sun. Try to allow plenty of time as the light also changes from minute to minute at the beginning and end of the day.

As with any other type of photography you should ask yourself what it is about this particular building that you like and focus on that. Sometimes this will mean framing the whole building, sometimes it will mean picking out details and sometimes a mixture of both will work well. In this photo it was the tower on top of the building that caught my eye but I found that I needed at least some of the building to give the tower context.



## **Framing**

When photographing buildings, especially the tops, you often end up with lots of boring sky so a good trick is to frame the top of the building with a branch or two from a nearby tree. With zoom lenses it is easy enough to adjust your perspective to fit everything into the right place.



## **Getting the perspective right**

In this instance the look is quite dramatic and the use of a wide angle lens makes the building look as though it is bending over backwards. Whenever you tilt the lens upwards to get the top of the building into the picture you will notice that the sides of the building converge towards the top and the building appears to be leaning over backwards.

## **Night Photography**

Photographing buildings at night raises new problems but can produce great images. The first problem is that there is a lot less light so holding the camera steady can be a problem. The best way is to use a tripod but you can also give yourself extra support is to lean against a tree or sturdy lamp post, bracing yourself in this way and locking your arms tight into your body can get you a reasonably sharp exposure at 1/15 sec or even down to 1/4 sec. Another even better method is to brace the camera against a signpost or sturdy support such as a wall.

### **Making it Interesting**

One way of making your photos more personal is to pose your friends and family in the foreground. The more 'artistic' way of making the photo your own is to add a little element to the scene like the shadow in the bottom left corner of the photo on the right. In the photo on the left I maneuvered myself into just the right position so the sun would just be poking through between the chimneys, I like the golden glow on the side of the ceramic chimney. At first I was annoyed that I had just caught someone walking past but then I realized that the handbag and the disappearing back actually made the picture.

