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# One Shot: The Family Trees

A short detour for a most memorable photograph

Featuring **LAYNE KENNEDY**



© Layne Kennedy

D800, AF-S NIKKOR 80-400mm f/4.5-5.6G ED VR (at 360mm), 1/160 second, f/22, ISO 200, manual exposure, Matrix metering.

**T**he voices from the back seat were insistent: "No, don't stop... let's get to the beach...how long is this going to take?"

Layne Kennedy and his wife and kids were on a family vacation in Spain, heading out of Granada for the coast, when Layne spotted the rows of trees. In pretty much no time at all he was out of the car and into the forest.

Where there was a problem.

"It was a vacation, so I hadn't brought a tripod," Layne says, "so I had to hand-hold the 80-400mm and couldn't get the depth of field I wanted at the speed I had to

shoot." He had to decide which trees to focus on and where to allow the fall-off of sharpness in the image. As he walked around, going farther and farther into the woods, he could imagine what was going on in the car: "Oh, no...he's going in deeper...this is going to take hours."

Layne's children were well beyond the "are we there yet?" age—at the time of the vacation they were 24, 26 and 28—and were quite familiar with "this will only take a minute" photo situations.

"I got the shot I wanted," Layne says, "but the backseat aggravations grew when I wanted to find someone I could ask about the trees—what species they were and why they were planted in uniform rows." For Layne it was half satisfy curiosity and half obtain caption information; for the kids it was 100 percent delay.

"I found an elderly woman in one of the nearby buildings," Layne says, "but she didn't speak English and I don't speak Spanish, so it was all hand gestures, pantomime and showing her the photo I'd taken—none of which was working. But then she went back inside the building and brought out a wooden chair. She pointed at the forest, then at the chair, and I finally got it. The poplar trees are planted that way because it's easier to harvest them for furniture, and they know exactly where to plant them because they know exactly how much room the trees need. I hugged her with joy, brought the chair back inside for her and waved goodbye—but as we were pulling away she came running out with a small tray in her hands, and through the back seat window she passed us warm cookies, right from the oven."

It was a moment the family will long remember. "When the kids were growing up, I'd take one per year with me on assignment," Layne says. "I wanted to introduce them to the world and show them what I did as a photographer and why I'd be gone for three weeks at a time. The woman's patience and kindness—that was what I always hoped they could witness and share."

You can find a range of Layne's storytelling photographs and information about his workshops at [laynekennedy.com](http://laynekennedy.com).

*Featuring*

**LAYNE KENNEDY**

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