10 THINGS TO SHOOT
This Summer

WORDS & PHOTOGRAPHS BY HOLLY CLARK

Last year was the 100th anniversary of "The Year Without a Summer," which took place in 1816 and was caused by the 1815 eruption of Mount Tambura, a volcano in Indonesia that severely affected weather patterns around the world. In my home state of Pennsylvania, river ice was recorded in the northwestern corner of the state in July and August, traditionally our hottest months of the year! Compared to Europe, though, America had it easy. Europeans were hit with the worst famine of the 19th century, with food shortages far and wide. Can you image that? It's almost inconceivable that this could happen today.

Learning about this story had me thinking of all my favorite things about summer, which, of course, I'll also want to celebrate with my camera! So I thought I'd create a list of my top themes to shoot while the weather is hot, the days are long, and I'm enjoying being outdoors as much possible. I hope you enjoy these too!

1. VACATION

Probably the best thing about summer for many of us is going on vacation! Whether it's putting your feet up on the dashboard on a road trip, pitching your tent while camping in nature, or laying a striped towel on a sandy beach, capture those moments that make you feel relaxed and alive while letting go.

2. WATER

Waves in the ocean. Hanging out at the pool. Sprinklers in the garden. Whatever or wherever your local watering hole may be, look around you and capture the details surrounding it! Docks, rafts, beach balls, canoes, paddle boards, boats, squirt guns, garden hoses — capture it all!

3. PLAYING OUTDOORS

I don't know about you, but for me summer as a kid meant spending every waking moment outdoors. Just because I'm all "grown up" now doesn't mean anything has changed. Chalk on the sidewalk. Blowing bubbles. Riding Bikes. Taking my dog for long walks in the park. Summer still means getting outside and having fun!

4. VEGGIES & PLANTS

I love that fresh, local produce and fruit is widely available all summer long — not to mention the sweet corn come August! Pull your camera out when you stop at your local CSA, plant nurseries, farmer's stands, and farmers markets. Go berry picking! Or if you're like me and grow your own, shoot your garden in the backyard!

5. COLD ON A HOT DAY

Ice cream and popsicles and cocktails, oh my! Nothing beats an icy cold treat when the temperature rises! And what better way to keep your cool than sipping on fresh-made lemonade — or maybe you're an ice cream fan? Coolers full of cold drinks, piles of melting ice, rosé in an ice bucket. Whatever your flavor, if it's cold on a hot day, capture it!

6. OPEN WINDOWS

Winter is done, and the windows are open! YES! Fresh air for all ... and for my dog, that means the car windows, too!

7. SUMMER FEET

Shoes are off for the summer! If I had a choice, I'd probably spend the whole year barefoot or wearing my beloved Teva sandals. (I have four pairs of the same kind!) Dig those tootsies into the sand, slip on some flip-flops, or go barefoot... and then catch it with your camera!

8. FESTIVALS & CONCERTS

Music in the park anyone? Every August, my neighborhood sponsors concerts in our local park up the street, not to mention the various festivals that take place all summer around Philadelphia. Pack a picnic and your camera, spread out a blanket, and enjoy the show! While you're walking around that festival, there will be limitless options for photos to capture!

9. OUTDOOR DINING

Summer creates a new room at my house, turning our back deck into an outdoor dining space. Look to capture BBQs, open-air cafés, picnics, and meals by lantern and candlelight. Trays full of stacks of dishes, paper plates on a picnic bench, blankets on the lawn. Wherever you eat outside, snap a photo!

10. FIREWORKS

Break out some sparklers and paint with light, or light some smoke bombs to play with color. If you're really ambitious, you could even shoot some fireworks! If you're not sure how to capture the big boys, there are plenty of online tutorials. Just remember, you'll need a tripod if you want to do it right, using a long exposure to capture the trails without camera shake.

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Holly Clark is a Philadelphia-based photographer. She's on a personal quest to find the best life has to offer at home and abroad while shooting it along the way. You can visit her online at **viewfinders.io** *and* **soupatraveler.com.**