

## CONTRE JOUR

“CONTRE JOUR” is translated from French as “AGAINST THE LIGHT”  
The Italian version is “CHIAROSCURO” which is translated as “LIGHT-DARK”.  
HOWEVER one says it, “CONTRE JOUR” means having the **principal** light source more or less in front of the camera lens. In most situations the light source is behind the photographer, (the most common position for many amateur photographers).

The abilities of the photographer and the camera can be pushed to extremes with “CONTRE JOUR”, but the results can be **spectacular**. “Contre Jour” can emphasise shapes, outlines and size of objects which can be used to the photographer’s advantage.

Often one can create unusual patterns of light and shade and show good interplay of the light and shadow areas. The best time for this effect is early morning and late afternoon.



Sunset images are undoubtedly **Contre jour** however they are not always as interesting as low light photos taken 30 minutes before the setting of the sun or using a street light after dark to outline a person or a textured object.

Portraits will often have a halo around hair when lit from behind. A fill-in flash may be necessary if the subject is not to be in silhouette.

Exposure can be a problem compared to “over your shoulder” shots so try bracketing your images. Another problem is flare on the lens which shows on your image as a polygonal shape or half a rainbow. Some photographers use this *problem* to their advantage, however if you wish to reduce this effect, use a lens hood, or protect your lens from the direct light with your hand or maybe stand in the shade.

It is not hard, just a bit different, so give it your best and great images will be yours for the taking.