

The Power of Underwater Photography

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Aquiline Photography doing
AQ.uatic Photoshoots



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Preface:

I took on underwater photography as a challenge to myself and the ever increasing complexity of different photo-shoots with glamour models.

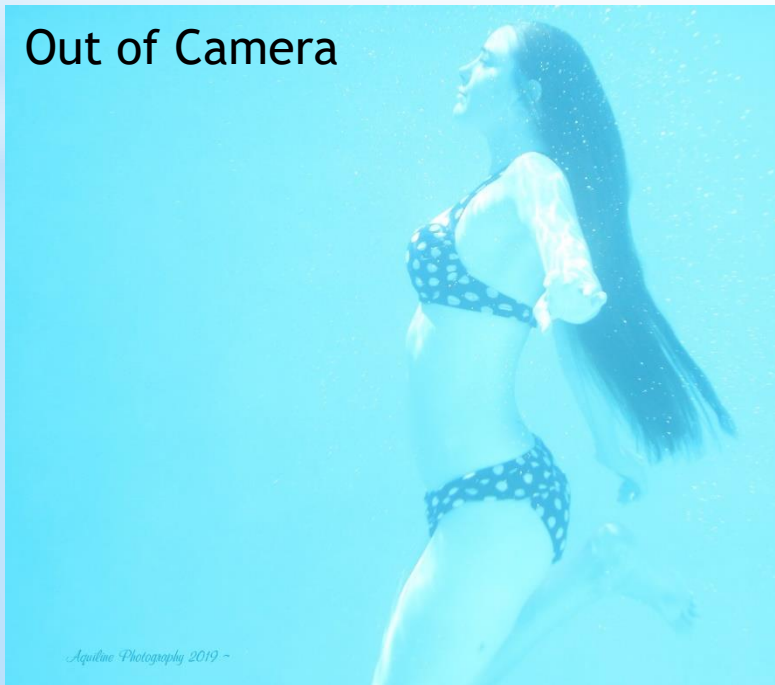
Like most of my endeavors I wagered small to begin with using other people's swimming pools at apartments and even wrapping my camera in some \$40 plastic housings that resembled sandwich bags. After getting decent results, I was encourage to move upward with better camera housings and owning the process by owning a swimming pool.

My current camera housing is the *PULUZ 40m Underwater Depth Diving Case Waterproof Camera Housing for Canon EOS-5D Mark III* (Made for lens EF 24-105mm f/4L IS II USM) It was rather costly at \$530 but the best I've had yet.

White Balance

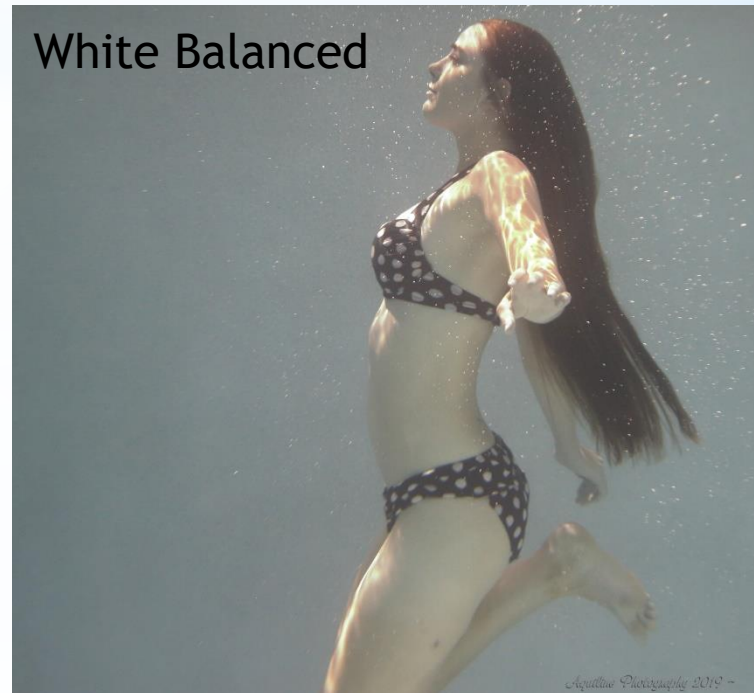
There is a part of me that enjoys the images that are not white-balanced. I mean when you are under there it really does look tropical blue. However, it's only after sampling from something white and correcting the image when one gets the example to the right in the below set. Note that in this set I sampled from the pink dots on the bikini for white. Later I found a white object and corrected yet again with almost identical results so I left this as it was. There is a remarkable difference from the blue images to the corrected ones and it's worth the energy to get skin color returned.

Out of Camera



Aquiline Photography 2019 -

White Balanced



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Water Clarity - pH and Chlorine Balance

Water clarity can be controlled if you own the location. If you do not own the location items like chlorine level , potens-Hydrogen (pH) acid levels along with algae growth could contribute to any lack of clarity in your images. Generally salt pools have more clarity than chlorine based pools, even though they both contain chlorine obviously.

Pools typically need a 7.5 or 7.4 pH acid level. If it's too low the water can irritate the glamour-model's eyes. For instance pH of 6.0 or lower. The pH balance of a lemon is 2.4 because lower is more acidic. If it's too high the chalky base could be cloudy and slimy-film texture. Anywhere in the 7's is best.

Chlorine is another super important element that needs balanced. Pools requires between 2 and 4 parts per million. Without proper chlorine levels, the water could be unsanitary or potentially smell like stale pond water.

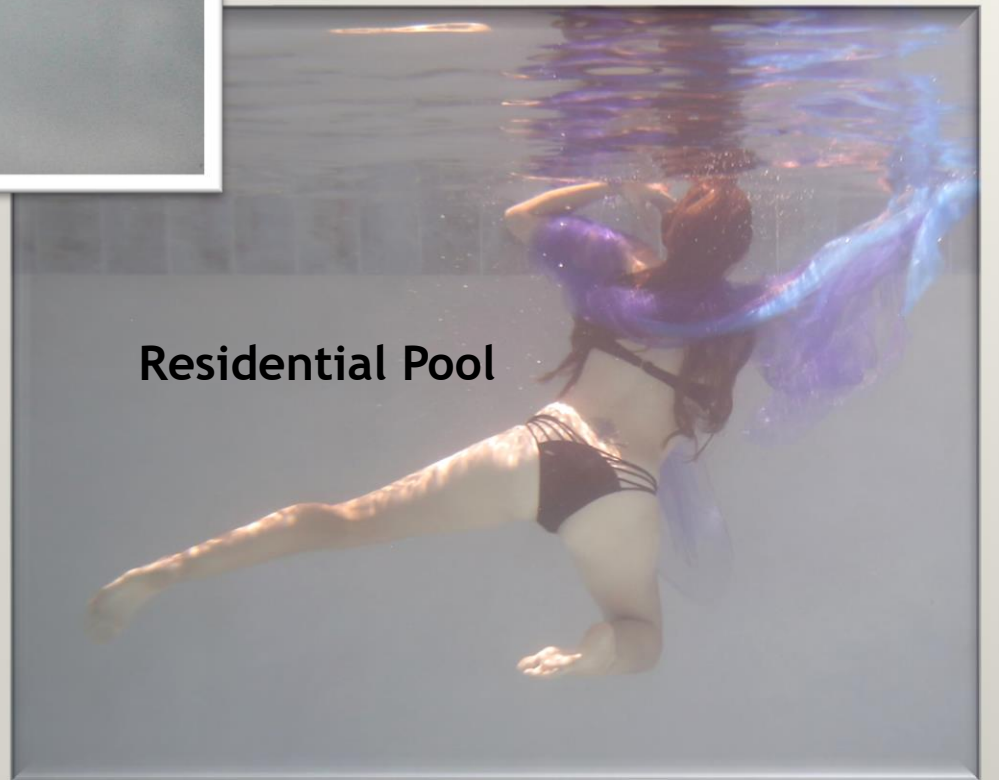
Apartment Pool



Aquiline Photography 2016 ~

Water Clarity - Notice the edges

Residential Pool



Granted these were two different
Camera housings as well.

Water Clarity - Algae and Dissolved Solids

One of the largest players in water clarity is Algae. Algae clouds up the water as it multiplies and makes the water green. One source of Algae food comes from rain in the form of phosphates. The mid-day sun spurs algae's rapid growth. Algaecides (algae killer) placed in the water more than 24 hours before the shoot can tremendously clear up the water.

Total Dissolved Solids (TDS) are merely floating debris and dirt in the water. While not toxic, they certainly could cloud the water and lessen the images. For instance, if one had power-washed their deck and the dirt particles made it to the pool that week. Over time these would hopefully be filtered out.

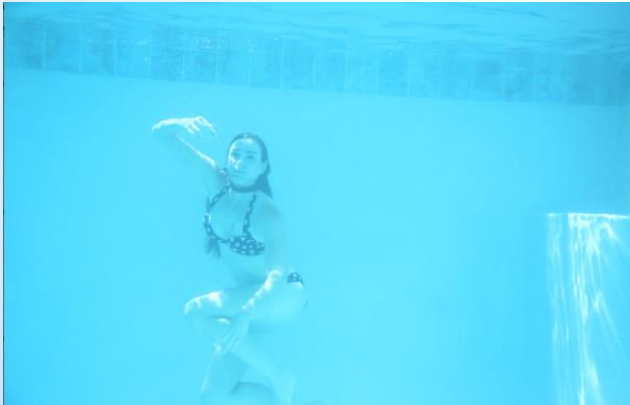
Alkalinity , Calcium, Cyanuric Acid levels and Heavy Metals are all important to the water balance and long term clarity. However, they have little if any effect on the immediate photoshoot.



Distance and Focus Part-i

Often the equipment one uses for underwater shoots does not allow you to twist the lens to extend the zoom. It may need to be known what the focal length is desired before enclosing the camera.

Your housing could limit what shots you can get that session. My housing has a long lens tube. I had to choose from the lesser of two evils. I could either get no vignette and be too close to the subject from all the way across the pool (cropping out arms and legs) or could get full body shots but have the tube of the camera housing vignette the shots because the lens was retracted. Below, having a full frame camera meant it wasn't a bad choice to go with the vignette and zoom out. One can always crop with enough mega-pixels.



Distance and Focus Part-ii

- During the period where I used a Ziplock-like bag for my camera housing. The front of this bag was very wrinkled and created a funhouse mirror appearance to people's faces. This wasn't desirable. I ended up pulling back hard on the plastic and wrapping rubber bands around the lens and subsequent bag. This gave more clarity.



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Natural Lighting for Image Creation

- Arguably the best time of day to shoot is around high-noon. In this way the sun itself is your light. If the mood you're going for is more dark and broody this might still hold true. It's easy enough to lower the brightness in post production if you get all that you want in the brighter photograph.
- One light altering decision is pump or no water pump running. If you leave the pool pump circulating water it gets rippled light on the model which can be cool looking. This lends itself to an oceanic appearance. Of course maybe the opposite with still water is preferred?

Model Makeup

- Waterproof makeup is the obvious purchase for a photoshoot. However, using a sealer type spray to hold on traditional eyeliner and such is also feasible
- Wearing no makeup at all is another good option if it fits the goal of the photoshoot.

Water Poses for Glamour Models

- The fact your body wants to float upward to the top of the water takes away quite a few posing options for models.
- The water makes a mirrored surface when see from under the water looking up. This has been exploited quite a few times by photographers.
- Usually shots where the model is arching her back tends to be a bit cliché in different directions. Yet these are so great looking.
- Another typical shot is the model waving cloth or fabric around underwater with varying degrees of dramatic success.



AQ has covered these topics....

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End
any questions?