



INSPIRATION

The Night Explorer

PHOTOGRAPHS BY
ASHISH KAMBLE

In this feature, Ashish takes us on a breathtaking journey across the stars—revealing the art and precision behind his Milky Way panorama photography. What may seem like a dreamy night shot is, in reality, a complex dance of planning, patience, and technical mastery. Shooting under pitch-dark skies with specialized gear, Ashish shows us what it truly takes to capture the galaxy in motion. Dive in to explore his process, camera settings, and the behind-the-scenes magic that brings these celestial images to life.

EXPLORER II

Thar Desert, Rajasthan

2 April, 2025

(STACKED | PANORAMA)

Sony A7iiia + Viltrox 16mm f/1.8

SKY: f/2.2 | 15 seconds x 6 | ISO: 6400 (9 Panels)

FG: 16mm | 30secs | f/2.8 | ISO 6400 (9 Panels)

Flash: Godox TT 350 + Ulanzi LED inside car

Tripod system: Leofoto LS 365c + LB 75 + DH 60

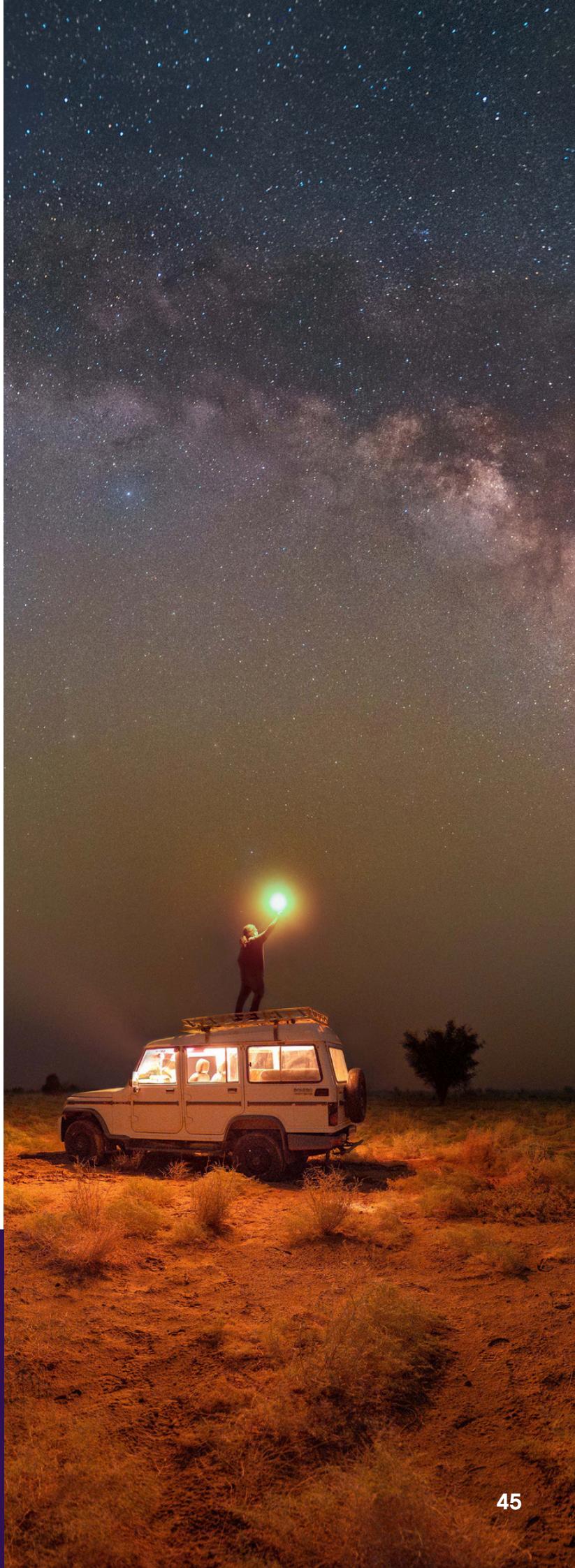
+ VH 10

By 1:00 PM, the red line on the thermometer had soared to 46°. Right after lunch, we rushed back to the comfort of our air-conditioned stone den. We finalized the gear setup, I managed to get some rest around 4 PM and woke up two hours later. When I looked at the window, the usual golden glow was missing, it was replaced by a diffused light. Curious, I stepped outside to check the weather. It was windy and overcast and soon heavy rain poured down, followed by a loud thunderstorm. We ended up staying inside all night, waiting and hoping for the rain to stop.

The forecast for the next day also showed thunderstorms, dejected me - I packed my bags, left the homestay and headed to Jaisalmer to relax, as shooting wasn't an option again. I spent the entire day catching up on sleep and resetting my sleep-cycle. Around 5:30 PM, I got a call from my friend suggesting I return to Thar Desert as the weather was clearing up. I went up to the terrace to see for myself and the weather looked promising. Even though the weather app showed hailstorm, I started packing my camera bag. When I arrived back in the Thar Desert, I was welcomed by clear skies. As I turned on my headlamp, its beam cut through the thick dust hanging in the air. Although I was aware that the dust accumulation on the lens would significantly reduce the detail in the Milkyway, I still wanted to give it a shot.



ONE THING I LEARNED
FROM THIS EXPEDITION,
NEVER LOSE HOPE. THIS
IMAGE WAS POSSIBLE
BECAUSE I RETURNED
INSTEAD OF GIVING UP ON
HOPE.





D U N E S

Thar Desert, Jaisalmer, Rajasthan

30 April, 2025

(PANORAMA + STACKED)

Sony A7iiia + Viltrox 16mm f/1.8

SKY: f/2.2 | 15 seconds x 10 | ISO: 6400 (7 Panels)

FG: 16mm | 119secs | f/2.8 | ISO 1250 (7 Panels)

Flash: Godox TT 350

Tripod system: Leofoto LS 365c + LB 75 + DH 60 + VH 10

Located in the northwestern region of Rajasthan, the Thar Desert is a sea of shifting sands, where dunes rise and fall like waves which are beautifully sculpted by the desert winds. I never imagined such massive sand dunes existed in India. To truly portray their scale and vastness, I decided to capture a panoramic shot with myself in the frame.



While scouting for a location to capture the panorama, we came across this farmland. The owner mentioned that we could shoot there during the summer, as nothing typically grows in the Thar Desert region. The land was scattered with uprooted, thorny shrubs, leaving only one tree standing. When I asked why that tree was spared, he explained that it's the only fruit-bearing tree in the entire desert region. Traveling to such isolated places really makes you appreciate the delicate balance of nature.

That night, the green airglow was so vivid that despite my attempts to tone it down in post-processing, the intensity of the green hue still dominates.

THE BER TREE

Thar Desert, Jaisalmer, Rajasthan

30th April 2025

Sony A7iiia + Viltrox 16mm f/1.8

SKY: f/2.2 | 15 seconds x 10 | ISO: 6400 (6 Panels)

FG: 16mm | 119secs | f/2.8 | ISO 2000 (6 Panels)

Flash: Godox TT 350 + Yellow Gel

Tripod system: Leofoto LS 365c + LB 75 + DH 60 + VH 10



Ashish Kamble is more than a photographer—he's a visual storyteller who fuses culture, consciousness, and the cosmos into striking imagery. With over a decade of experience, he is inspired 900+ budding photographers through his teaching at Mumbai University colleges and his own LotusBeam School of Photography.

Now a mentor at Indian Photo Expeditions, Ashish brings his love for sharing knowledge to the field. His unique perspective—rooted in India's vibrant traditions and a deep fascination with sci-fi and human consciousness—shines through in every frame, whether it's a soulful tribal portrait, a dramatic landscape, or the awe-inspiring beauty of the night sky.

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