

PHOTO BY MIKE STENSVOID



Kodachrome 64

since we feel photographers have different film-speed needs, if they are anything like us. Without further delay, here they are: our consensus 10 top color-slide films. Let us hear from you—agree or disagree?

KODACHROME 25

The slowest Kodachrome has long

been the film by which other color-slide films were judged, because it was the best—the sharpest and finest-grained, with the richest colors. The current Kodachrome incarnation, in both standard and pro versions, is still a revered member of the color-slide film elite.

No color-slide film has finer grain than Kodachrome 25 (KM; pro version

Fujichrome Velvia



PHOTO BY BILL HURTER

designation PKM), and none has greater overall sharpness. And few can match its rich "Kodachrome colors."

Certainly, no film is perfect. KM is slow (ISO 25), ruling out most low-light and high-speed-action work; and it requires special K-14 Kodachrome processing, which isn't available on every street corner as the ubiquitous



PHOTO BY JACK AND SUE DRAF AHL

Kodak Ektachrome 64X



PHOTO BY MIKE STENSVOID

Kodachrome 25

10 Top Color-Slide FILMS

E-6 process seems to be. But Kodachrome's colors will likely outlast those of the E-6 films, if image longevity is important to you. Many professional magazine photographers shoot only Kodachrome.

Eastman Kodak Co., 343 State St., Rochester, NY 14650; (716) 724-4000.

FUJICHROME VELVIA

The "relatively new kid on the block," Fujichrome Velvia (RVP) has acquired a tremendous following in a relatively short time, because it's a fantastic film. Rivaling Kodachrome 25 in fine grain and sharpness, Velvia is a full stop faster (ISO 50), and can be readily processed 'most anywhere, because it's an E-6-process film.

Of course, the most important thing when shooting in color is color, and Velvia's got it—rich, spectacular color, enhanced by slightly higher-than-normal contrast (colors look richer when set against blacker blacks).

Fuji Photo Film U.S.A., Inc., 555 Taxter Rd., Elmsford, NY 10523; (914) 789-8100.

KODAK EKTACHROME 64X PROFESSIONAL

Ektachrome 64 (EPR/EPV) is a wonderful film, but it has a tendency to go a bit blue when shot under overcast skies, or when photographing snowscapes. Ektachrome 64X (EPX) is a new film from Kodak designed precisely for such shooting conditions—a warmer companion (not a replacement) for standard Ektachrome 64. Thus, Ektachrome 64 lovers can use EPR for accurate colors, or EPX when a warmer rendition is desired. There's a full User Report on the new ISO 64 Ektachrome 64X, by Jack and Sue Drafahl, elsewhere in this issue.

Eastman Kodak Co., 343 State St., Rochester, NY 14650; (716) 724-4000.

KODACHROME 64

An excellent general-purpose color-slide film with very fine grain, great sharpness, and great color reproduction, Kodachrome 64 (KR and PKR, the pro version) is a favorite of many serious shooters. In fact, in July 1990, our readers overwhelmingly picked KR as their favorite color-slide film.

KR's colors and image quality very nearly equal those of KM, but with KR, you get an extra 1½ stops of film speed (ISO 64), making Kodachrome 64 highly useful in a wider variety of shooting

situations than Kodachrome 25.

Eastman Kodak Co., 343 State St., Rochester, NY 14650; (716) 724-4000.

KODAK EKTACHROME 100 PLUS PROFESSIONAL

A beautiful ISO 100 color-slide film, Ektachrome 100 Plus (EPP) doesn't acquire a blue cast in overcast light as readily as the other popular Ektachromes, and it has a beautiful color palette.

Ektachrome 100 Plus is an excellent general-purpose color-slide film that we've used for everything from portraits to aerial photography with fine results. It produces accurate skin tones, has a good D-max black, and responds well to electronic flash.

Eastman Kodak Co., 343 State St., Rochester, NY 14650; (716) 724-4000.

AGFACHROME 200 RS PROFESSIONAL

Agfa's color films, both slide and print, have a unique "European" palette. Many photographers like this look, and so prefer Agfa's films.

Agfachrome 200 RS is an ISO 200 color-slide film for professional shooters that has good gray balance and contrast, along with its rich and unique color reproduction. It is also quite sharp and fine-grained for a film of its speed.

Agfa Corp., 100 Challenger Rd., Ridgefield Park, NJ 07660; telephone (201) 440-2500.

KODACHROME 200

If you need a film speed of ISO 200, Kodachrome 200—in both its standard (KL) and pro (PKL) configurations—is a great way to get it. It's got a neutral color balance, excellent color reproduction, relatively low contrast, and, despite its tight-but-evident grain pattern, amazing sharpness. And it's recently been improved, with a change in the toe of the characteristic curve of the film's red-sensitive layer, to provide a more neutral coloration for subjects such as ice and snow, and better batch-to-batch consistency.

Kodachrome 200 pushes well to EI 400 (one stop), and quite a few action pros push it to even higher speeds.

Eastman Kodak Co., 343 State St., Rochester, NY 14650; (716) 724-4000.

FUJICHROME 400

If you need a color-slide film with a speed of ISO 400 for pictorial work, Fujichrome 400 (RH, and RHP pro ver-

sion) is the one. It and Kodachrome 200 (pushed a stop to EI 400) provide (in our panel's opinion) the best image quality and the best color rendition of the high-speed color-slide films.

One interesting test of a high-speed film's image qualities is how well it performs in normal sunlit conditions. Fujichrome 400 meets this test very well, producing images that don't look like they were shot on a high-speed film. Of course, in low light, it's excellent, too.

Fuji Photo Film U.S.A., Inc., 555 Taxter Rd., Elmsford, NY 10523; (914) 789-8100.

SCOTCHCHROME 1000

ScotchChrome 1000 (along with its tungsten-balanced counterpart, ScotchChrome 640T) is famed for its pointillistic grain pattern, gaining great popularity among portrait and scenic photographers who are looking to produce images that are different.

This is a fun film to experiment with. You can rate it at EI 500 and pull-process it, or rate it at EI 2000 and push-process it. Try soft lighting and harsh lighting. One of the more popular effects is produced by rating the film at its ISO speed (1000), employing strong backlighting, and using a diffusion or fog filter—this produces a truly ethereal effect. A warm effect can be produced by using tungsten lighting with the daylight-balanced film.

3M, 3M Center, St. Paul, MN 55144-1000; 1-800-695-FILM.

FUJICHROME P1600 PROFESSIONAL D

Among the superfast color-slide films, our Top 10 panel likes the fastest, Fujichrome P1600 D (code designation RSP II), the best. Its color reproduction and image quality, while not great by Kodachrome 25 standards, are surprisingly good for a 1600-speed color-slide film. If such a high film speed is needed for pictorial work, this is the film to use.

The P in P1600 D's name indicates that the film was designed to be push-processed (by extending first-developer time), and most E-6 labs will provide this service. Working speeds up to EI 4800 are attainable, the graininess and contrast increasing with the EI. For a soft, fantasy effect, you can rate the film at EI 800 and have it pull-processed.

Fuji Photo Film U.S.A., Inc., 555 Taxter Rd., Elmsford, NY 10523; (914) 789-8100. ■