

COLOR PRINT FILMS

KODAK ROYAL GOLD

NEW COLOR-PRINT FILM FAMILY FOR THE CONNOISSEUR

by Jack & Sue Drafaehl

**PHOTOGRAPHIC'S
USER REPORT**

How many times have you taken that photo of a lifetime, only to get it back from the film processor and discover to your dismay that your print looks much different than what you visualized when you made the exposure? You know that you used the best film available, the lighting was just right and the moment perfect, so what went wrong? Maybe nothing. With all the different films on the market today, lab technicians face the battle of the many emulsions. Most of the films print with different filter packs, making it difficult for the labs to produce consistent results.

Kodak found that customers were happy with Kodak films but were concerned with inconsistent printing results. So, Kodak put its experts to work to solve the problem. The answer was to standardize on one film family that offers a wide variety of film speeds and provides printing consistency from one film to another. The Ektar family of color-print films for the discriminating photographer has been discontinued and its films incorporated and improved to create the Royal Gold fami-



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ly of ISO 25, 100, 400 and 1000 color-print films. These, added to the popular Kodak Gold 100, 200 and 400, bring the Gold family members to seven.

For this report we really put the Royal Gold films to the test. We packed up our family and our Royal Gold and set out for a weekend excursion. We wanted our tests to reflect typical photo situations that we would run into on a day-to-day basis. The schedule of events included a trip to a science museum, a cheese factory, a small amusement park, the beach, a quick jaunt around the local harbor and a hike along a nature trail. The best part of all was the weather promised to be great, so we set off on our working weekend.

ROYAL GOLD 25

Before we learned of the Royal Gold family, we had heard rumors that Ektar

25 was being discontinued. We use this film in a lot of special situations, such as nature close-ups, underwater work, architecture and several commercial applications where our 4x5 camera is too bulky. We were very unhappy to hear that it might fall from the Kodak line since we had found this superfine-grain wizard to be especially well suited to electronic imaging with film scanners and Photo CDs.

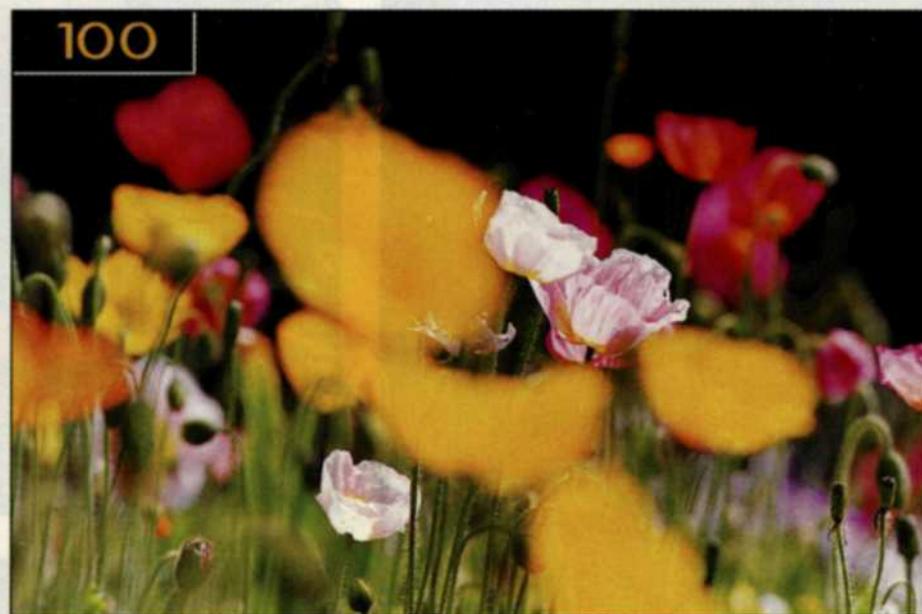
We had already decided to buy the last of the Ektar 25 before it was sold out when we heard it was being resurrected as Royal Gold 25. We were relieved, but wanted to make sure that it indeed still provided the superb image quality. We proceeded to test it on flowers, a garden snake and a variety of close-up subjects displaying extreme detail. These subjects were ideal for grain evaluation, as grain tends to be exaggerated in the out-of-focus areas in close-up images. With Royal Gold 25, we found the entire image to be grainless, even those out-of-focus areas. Way

to go, Kodak! We still had our quality champion.

To refresh your memory on the structure of Royal Gold 25, it has an ISO rating of 25 although we found that images shot at EI 40 seemed to have the best quality. The exposure latitude is narrower than with most color-print films, so more care should be taken in determining exposures. The emulsion itself incorporates Kodak's patented T-Grain technology and uses dye masking color couplers that keep the colors from blending into each other, which is how Kodak came up with the catch phrase "sharper color." Royal Gold 25 can be used in sunlight, with electronic flash, in shade and under tungsten lighting with or without an 80A filter (unfiltered tungsten shots can be color-corrected when printed). You will be convinced about the image quality of Royal Gold 25 when you make your first enlargement greater than 16x20 inches.

ROYAL GOLD 100

Royal Gold 100, a totally new emulsion, takes the best technologies from past ISO 100 films and incorporates



them into one high-quality medium-speed color-print film. Royal Gold 100's high quality is based on its T-Grain structure and improved dye-masking coupling technology.

Royal Gold 100 is a true ISO 100 film, while we've found that standard Kodak Gold 100 has an actual film speed closer to 125. This means that the exposure latitude of Royal Gold 100 is slightly less than that of standard Gold 100 on the underexposure end of the scale. If you are accurate with your exposure, Royal Gold 100 will yield a better negative. Don't let this worry you though; the exposure latitude of Royal Gold 100 ranges from three stops

KODAK ROYAL GOLD

over to two stops under.

ROYAL GOLD 400

The new high-speed member of the Gold family is Royal Gold 400. This film also takes the best technologies from past high-speed films and incorporates them into one emulsion. T-Grain, special dye couplers and a matched printing base make this new addition one of the best ISO 400 films on the market. Royal Gold 400 has a wider exposure latitude than previous ISO 400 films and can be exposed from EI 50 to ISO 1600 with acceptable results. This

are so extreme that even ISO 400 won't capture the scene, switch to Royal Gold 1000. This super-speed demon can be exposed from EI 250-2000 with acceptable results. Royal Gold 1000 is a daylight-balanced film, but can be used under a variety of lighting conditions with or without a correction filter. If you shoot under tungsten lights, an 80A filter will help balance the image, while a CC30 magenta filter will help with fluorescent lighting to make color printing easier. We found this film to work well when you had to take pictures with flash from more than 50 feet away. Because

of the film's high speed, Kodak recommends that Royal Gold 1000 be kept away from heat, bright sun and airport X-ray machines.

PRINTING

The key to all these new films in the Royal Gold family is that they were designed to print as if they were one emulsion. This means that printing labs will spend less time balancing each emulsion, and prints from several types of Royal Gold films will all have the same balance. We did extensive testing with this aspect of the Royal Gold film group and found that the ISO 100, 400 and 1000 films did print with the same color balance. We did find, though, that the Royal Gold 25 (nee Ektar 25) needed a change in color pack. We might have expected that, but we don't consider it a problem, as most photographers today shoot ISO 100 and 400 films. We talked



daylight-balanced film is ideally suited for action, low light, interiors and long lenses. Royal Gold 400 can be used under tungsten light with color correction when printed, but the negatives are easier to print if an 80A filter is used on the camera lens.

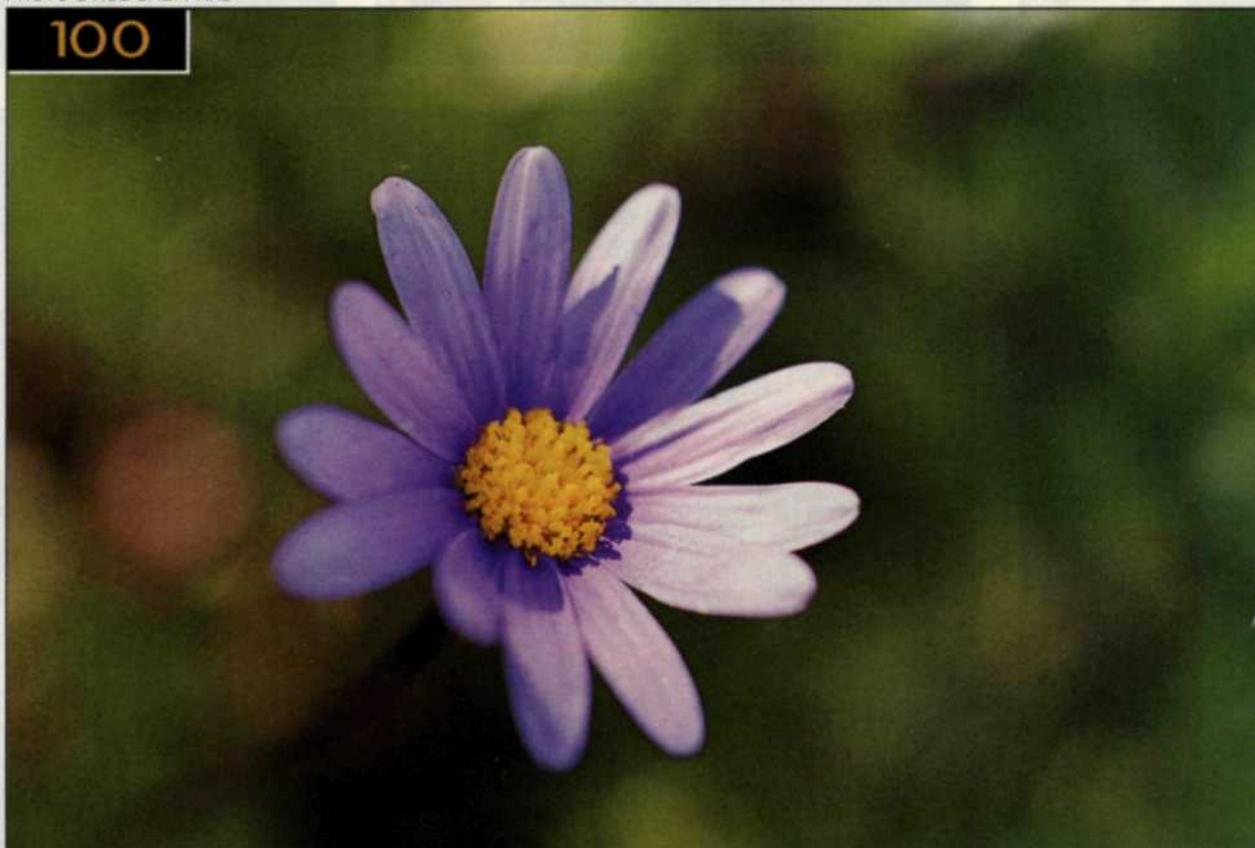
ROYAL GOLD 1000

The last member of the Gold family is the fastest, Royal Gold 1000. Fans of Ektar 1000 will find Royal Gold 1000 to be very close in quality and performance. When the action and light level



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to a Kodak representative, and he said that there are no plans to change Royal Gold 25 in the near future.

PHOTOFILE INDEX SYSTEM

Many people like to enlarge their photos. Kodak's Photofile Index System makes selecting the right photos for enlargement easier. The Index System basically consists of a small index color print illustrating each picture on the roll of Royal Gold film. This feature, which originated with the Kodak Photo CD, will be available for Royal Gold users.

A NEW GRAIN MEASURE

Kodak found that the RMS granularity system no longer works because the newer fine-grain films all compress at one end of the scale and you can hardly tell one from another. So they created the Print Grain Index, which spreads the scale. A higher number indicates an increase in observed graininess. The new scale also takes into account the degree of enlargement: a 25 rating on a 4x6-inch print would be a 47 rating on an 8x10 print, for example. The rating for the four members of the Royal Gold family, based on a 4x6 enlargement, are: Royal Gold 25, less than 25; Royal Gold 100, 30; Royal Gold 400, 39; and Royal Gold 1000, 57.

Eastman Kodak Co., 343 State St., Rochester, NY 14650; 1-800-242-2424 or (716) 724-4000. □

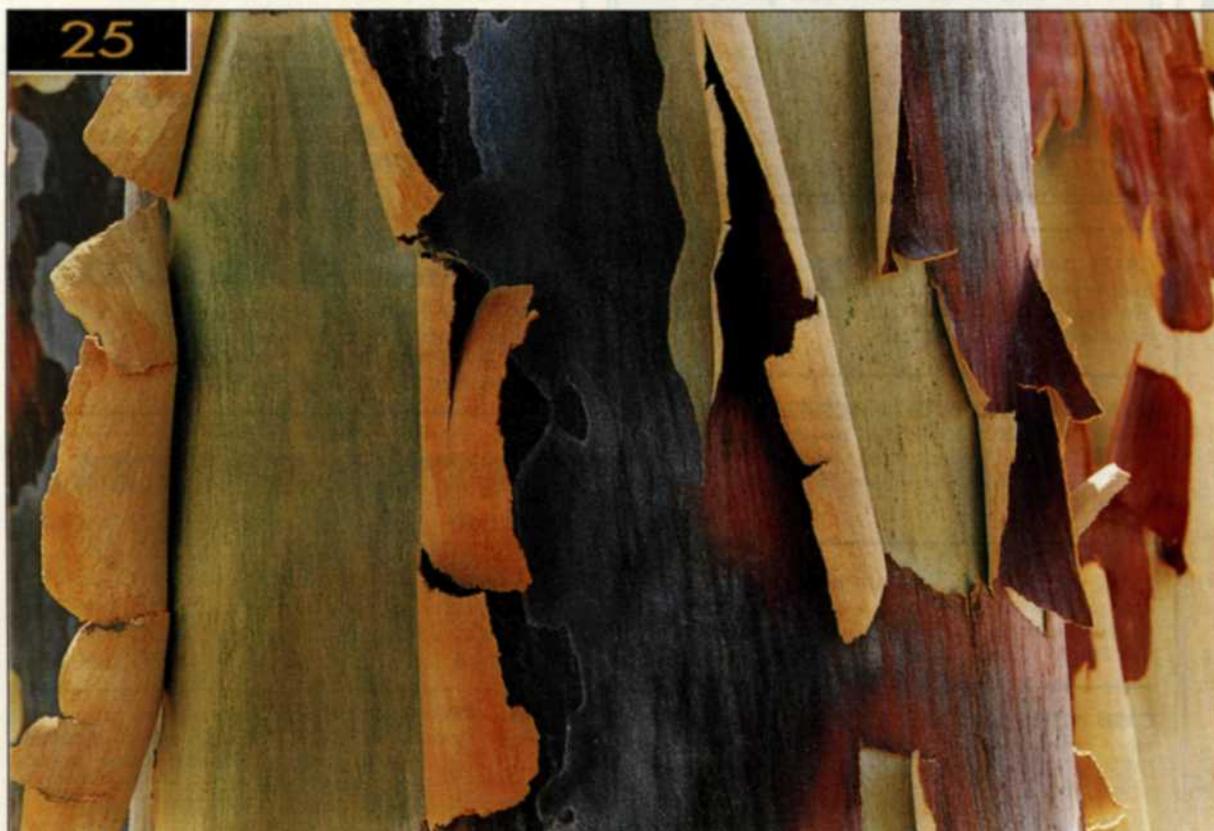


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