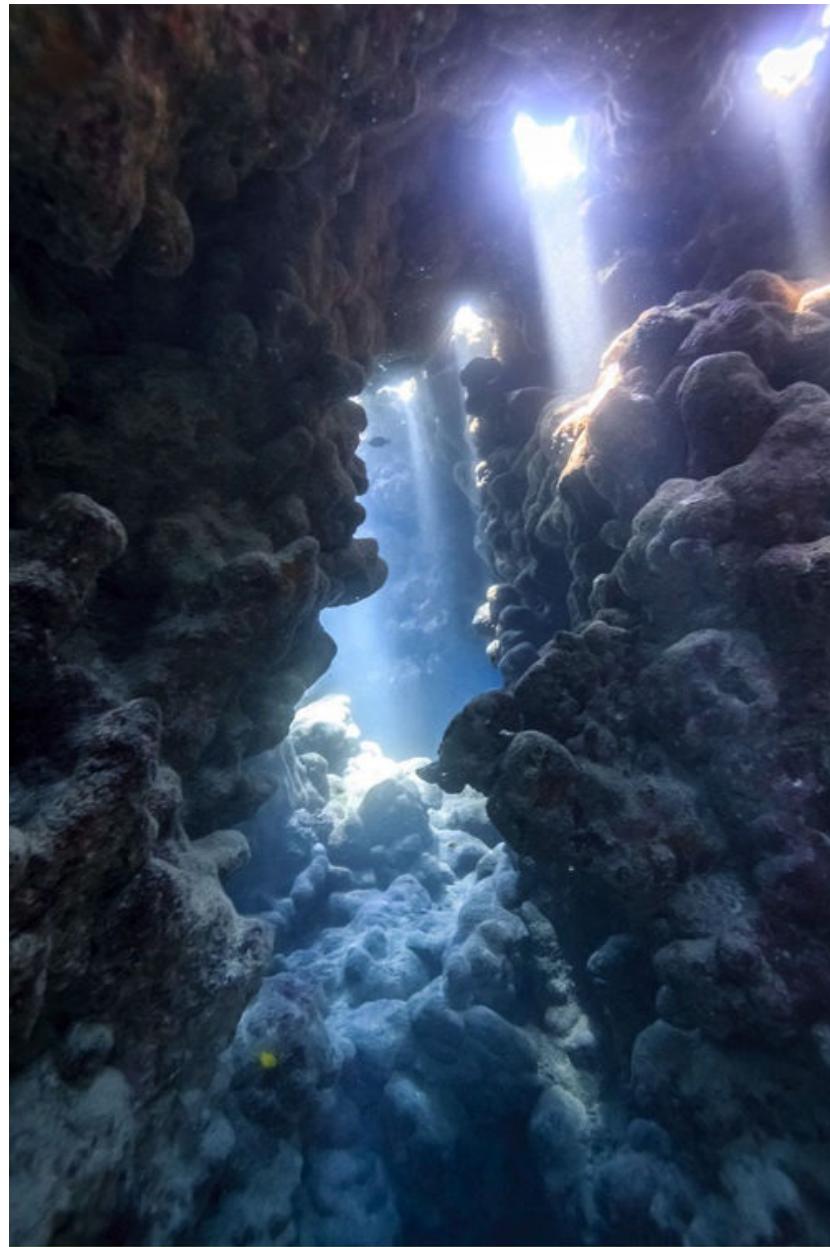


## Mastering The Basics Of Lightroom Through Dedicated Practice

To be a good artist it's absolutely necessary to have a fundamental understanding of your tools and what they can do. For a photographer this begins with his camera and his lenses, but no less vital is the comprehensive understanding of the retouching process.

Learning and mastering the tools of Lightroom will give you greater confidence as a photographer because you will not only begin to understand what you can really accomplish with your camera but how to push it to the limits to get photos which defy expectations and break new ground.

But there is no getting around one important detail: **to get good at something you have to do a lot of it.**



For the last several years I have worked to give back to the photography community through my on-line tutorials, seminars and one-on-one instruction of photographers. In the thousands of hours spent teaching I have found that there is nothing more effective than making someone do the specific actions to get a specific result and get confident at it.

After doing this enough, the tools begin to become part of them just like a dancer must master his or her dance steps or a martial arts master must know the individuals moves without hesitation.

It is within this mastery of the individual components that the truly great artists

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~~emergence.~~

And for that purpose I have put together a whole new round of projects to help you master the tools and subtleties of Lightroom to help you on your journey of greatness as a photographer.

Now as a caveat, I am going to zip through these projects pretty rapidly. These are focused on showing you an exact series of actions to get a specific result. I won't be telling you how each individual action affects what you are doing, unless I haven't covered it earlier in the book.

I'm trusting you to have gone through the earlier sections of the book already or to have a fundamental grasp of the tools we are going to use. I want you to get through these fast so you get out there and take more photos of your own.

So if you find yourself getting confused and not understanding a step I am talking about, look for the in depth explanation in the earlier parts of this book and then come back to it.

DO NOT try to push past steps you don't understand because it will be like trying to build a house of cards with one card missing at the bottom.

Confidence as a photographer or an artist is built upon understanding, and understanding comes from knowing each part that comprises something. So take the time to know them!

And for those of you who like to run forward until they hit a brick wall, I respect that too, just don't give up when you hit the wall. Check the chapter listings to find what you don't get, learn it and then come back here.

Okay then, enough talking. Strap on your seatbelts and let's go!

# Project 1: Panorama Creation Inside Lightroom

## Skills you will learn:

- How to create a panorama inside Lightroom
- How to retouch one photo in a panorama and apply these results across multiple photos

**Time to execute:** 30 minutes

The ability to make panoramas inside of Lightroom is a game changer for this program. But here is what takes it to a whole new level for panoramas everywhere: **it preserves the RAW format.** In case you don't get how awesome that is, let me tell you how it used to be.

Previously you had to retouch every photo of the panorama, go to another software, make the panorama, and re-import it into Lightroom. When you would re-import it into Lightroom, it would be on a TIFF or PSD format and the capabilities of the RAW file would be lost.

For example, being able to change the white balance afterwards. It was very hard for me to change the white balance once the panel was done, because the white balance was written in stone and when you tried to change it you usually got pretty bad results.

So Lightroom Panorama RAW in a single word: awesome.

So if you haven't already, import the 5 photos from the pyramids of Mexico City that you see here.



## A Tip on Shooting Panos: Don't Change Settings

Here's a tip on how I shoot panos. For this one I just moved my camera from left to right, I was shooting manual at 1/100th of a second shutter speed and aperture at f13 on every single photo. That's important: **Don't change your camera settings.** I did not change my settings so that I would have the same exact exposure for each shot. Why? I want to be able to retouch just 1 photo and use Lightroom to synchronize the results on all the 5 photos which I'll show you how to do in this project.

### Retouching your first photo in the series

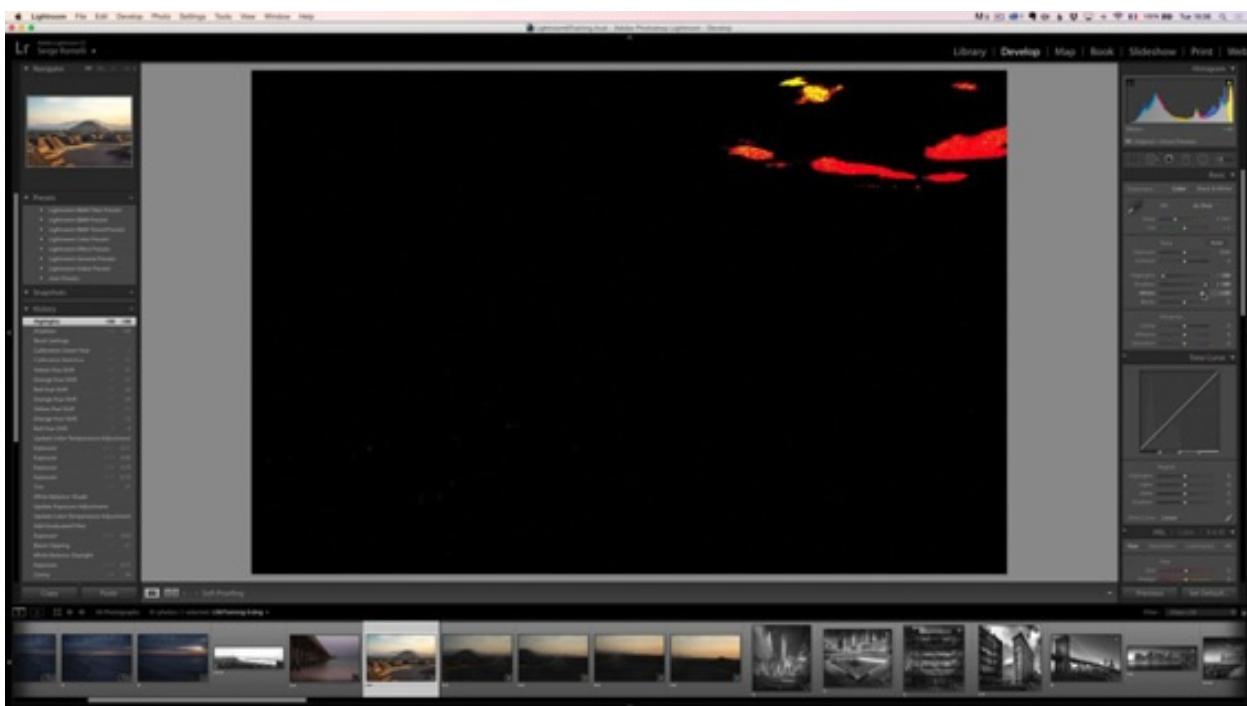
1. Open up the Shadows and bring down the Highlights.

In the **Basic panel** go ahead and grab the **Shadows slider** and bring it up to 100 and grab the **Highlights slider** and bring it down to -100 and you will already see a drastic difference in your photo.



## 2. Set your White point.

Hold down the **Alt key** while moving the **Whites slider** until the photo goes black and keep pushing it until you get a little bit of red.

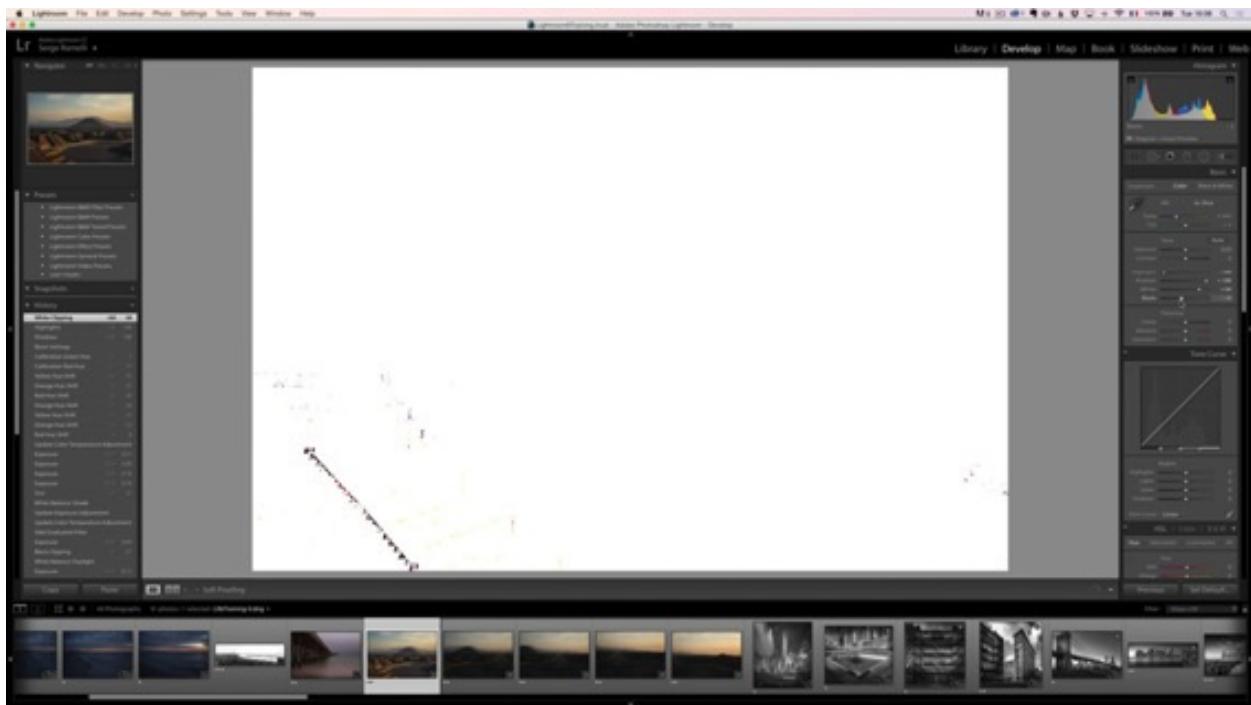


And then adjust it by eye looking at the color photo, probably to around 64.



### 3. Set your Black point.

Hold down the **Alt key** again while moving the **Blacks slider** until you see the photo go white and then start to see some black or colored speckles coming in, somewhere around -20.



#### 4. Set your White Balance.

Click on the WB drop down menu and choose the **Shade** white balance. I've chosen this one because I like the warmth that it gives the photo.



And then go ahead and add just a touch of Magenta into it by tweaking the **Tint slider**, not too much, maybe just +30.



## 5. Adjust your Hues.

From the **HSL panel** I am going to shift my oranges and yellows to add some punch here. I'll push my **Orange slider** to -8.



## 6. Intensify the sky.

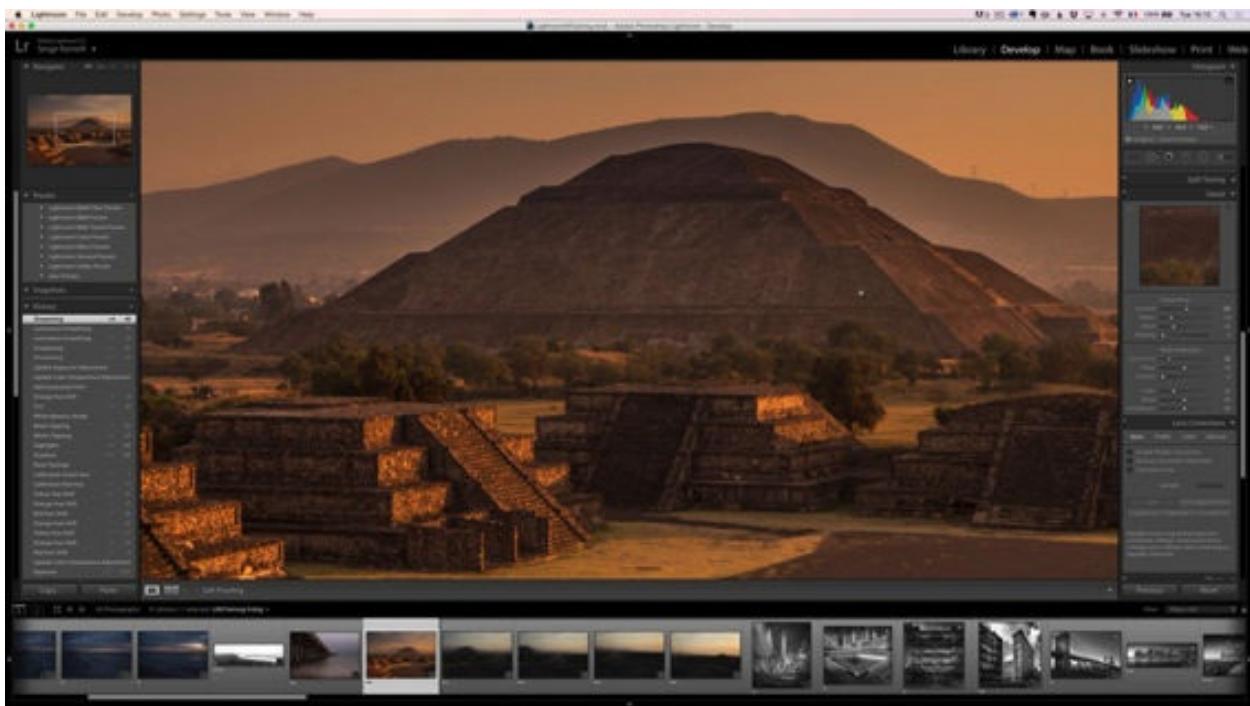
From the **Local Adjustment tools** I am going to add a **Grad Filter** at the top of the photo and bring some blue back into the sky by pushing the **Temp slider** to -29 and then drop the **Exposure slider** to -.92 so that it is more intense.



Now before, I would have to wait to do all my sharpening and noise reduction after I had made the panorama, but because Lightroom preserves the RAW settings I can do it whenever I want, so now if I wanted to, I could do some initial sharpening.

## 7. Add Sharpening and Noise Reduction.

In the **Detail panel** I am going to zoom in so I can clearly see the details and then I'm going to move the **Sharpening slider** to 85 and to balance this out for my “equals 100 formula” I am going to move the **Luminance slider** for Noise Reduction to 15.



## 8. Apply Lens Corrections.

Go to the **Lens Corrections panel** and **Enable Lens Corrections** and **Remove Chromatic Aberration**.



## 9. Synchronize Your Retouching to the Other Photos in the Pano.

And this is some more Lightroom magic to save you a lot of time on your retouching. Go ahead and hold down [Shift](#) and select all 5 photos of the pano.



And now below the Adjustment panels on the right, you will see that where it used to have buttons saying **Previous/Reset** at the bottom of the adjustment panels it now has buttons for **Sync/Reset**.

Click on **Sync** and a pop-up opens with all the retouching settings that you have been working on that you can transfer over to the other photos. Amazing! Click on **Check All** and **Synchronize**.



What this is going to do is take the information from the first photo and it's going to retouch all the other photos with these instructions. You will see the small previews in the **Filmstrip** show them as retouched. Because they were shot in manual, with the same speed, the same settings, they're all retouched exactly the same without having to make individual changes!



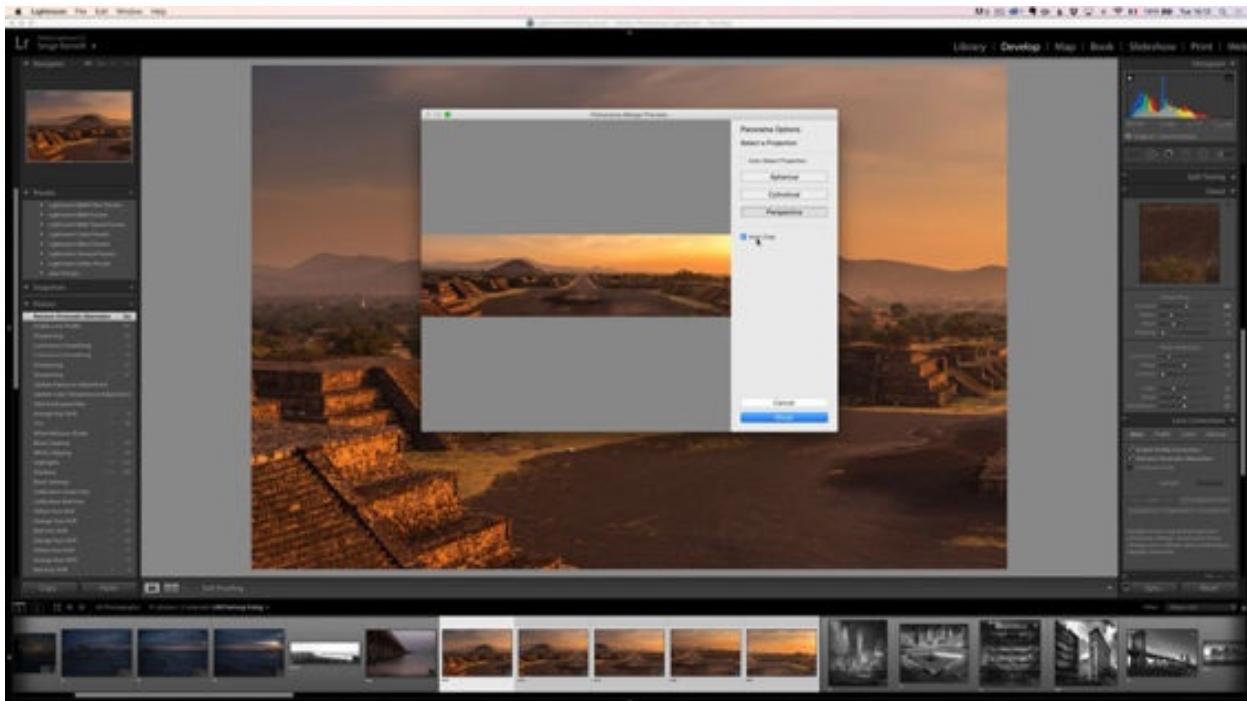
#### 10. Select the Photos and Turn Them into a Pano.

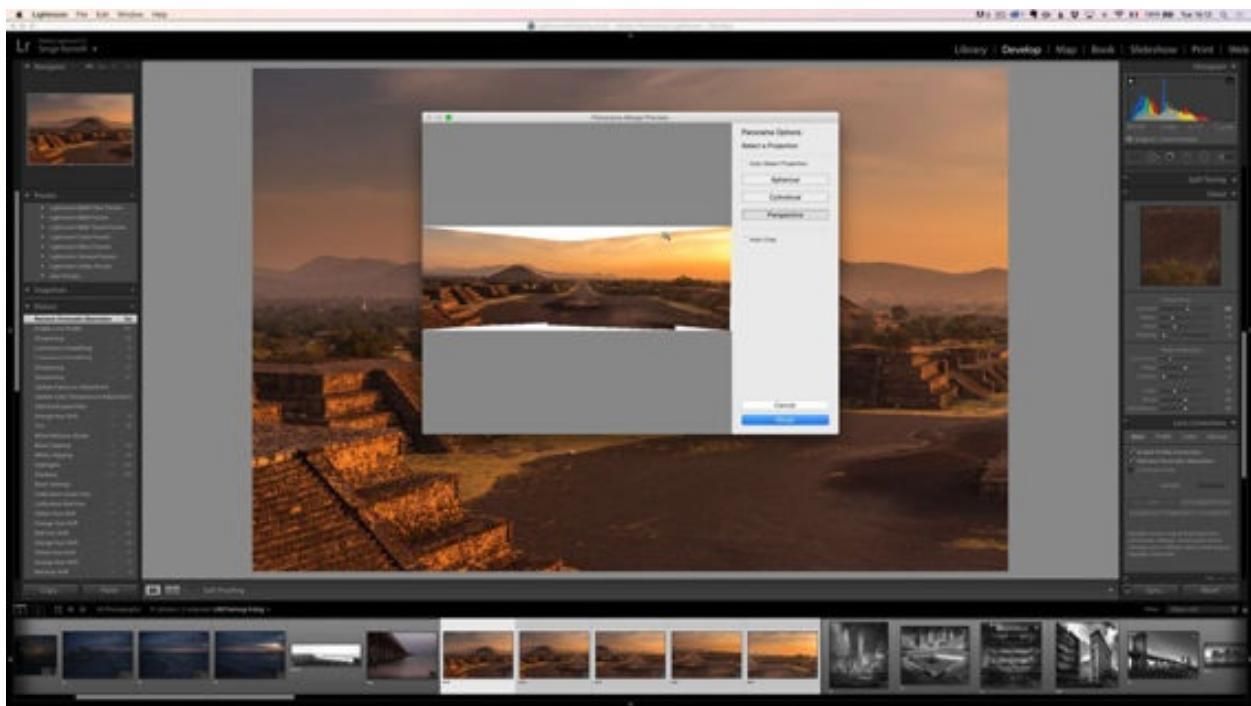
In the past, you would need to go into Photoshop or other dedicated panorama programs to be able to make this panorama, but now check this out. Make sure you have all 5 photos selected in the film strip, right click on them with your mouse and choose **Photomerge> Panorama**. The keyboard shortcut is **Control+M**.



## 11. Adjust the Pano Settings.

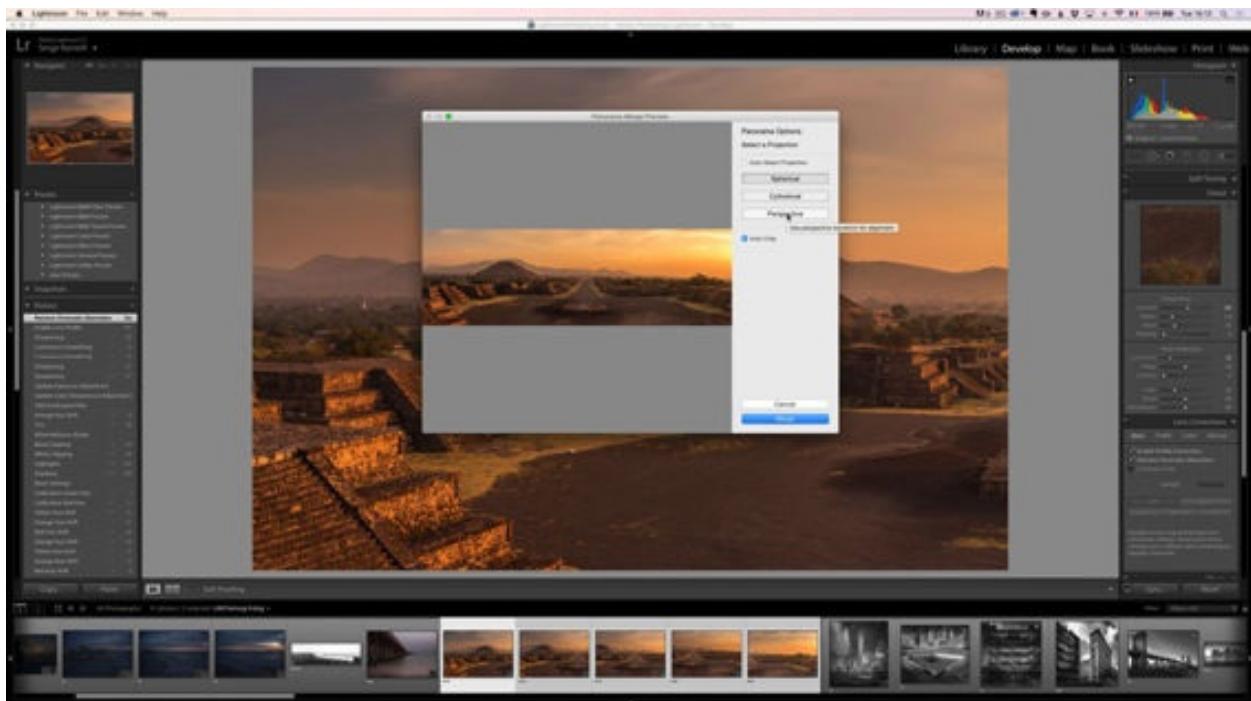
The **Panorama PhotoMerge Preview** window is going to open up. Go ahead and turn **Auto Crop** on to get rid of transparent parts of the image and show how the pano will look cropped.





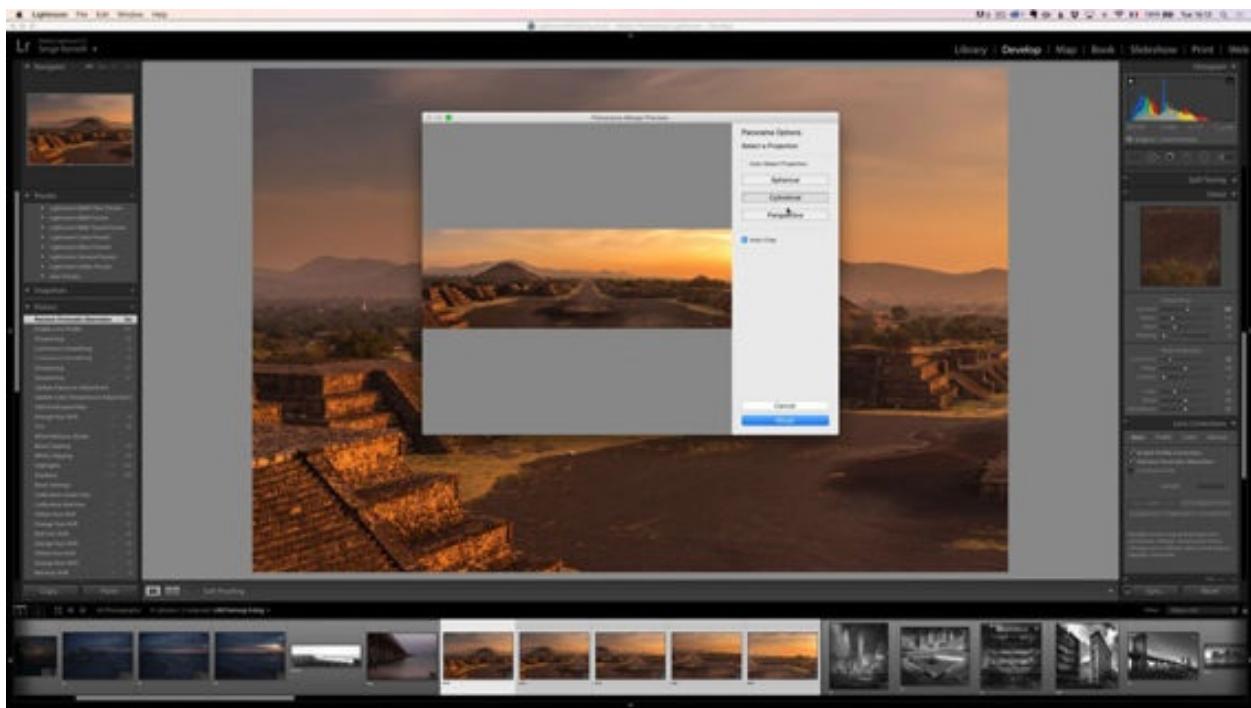
You will see that you have three different layouts to choose from: **Spherical**, **Cylindrical**, and **Perspective**.

**Spherical** - Treats the images as if they were mapped to the inside of a sphere. This works really well for super wide or multi-row panoramas.

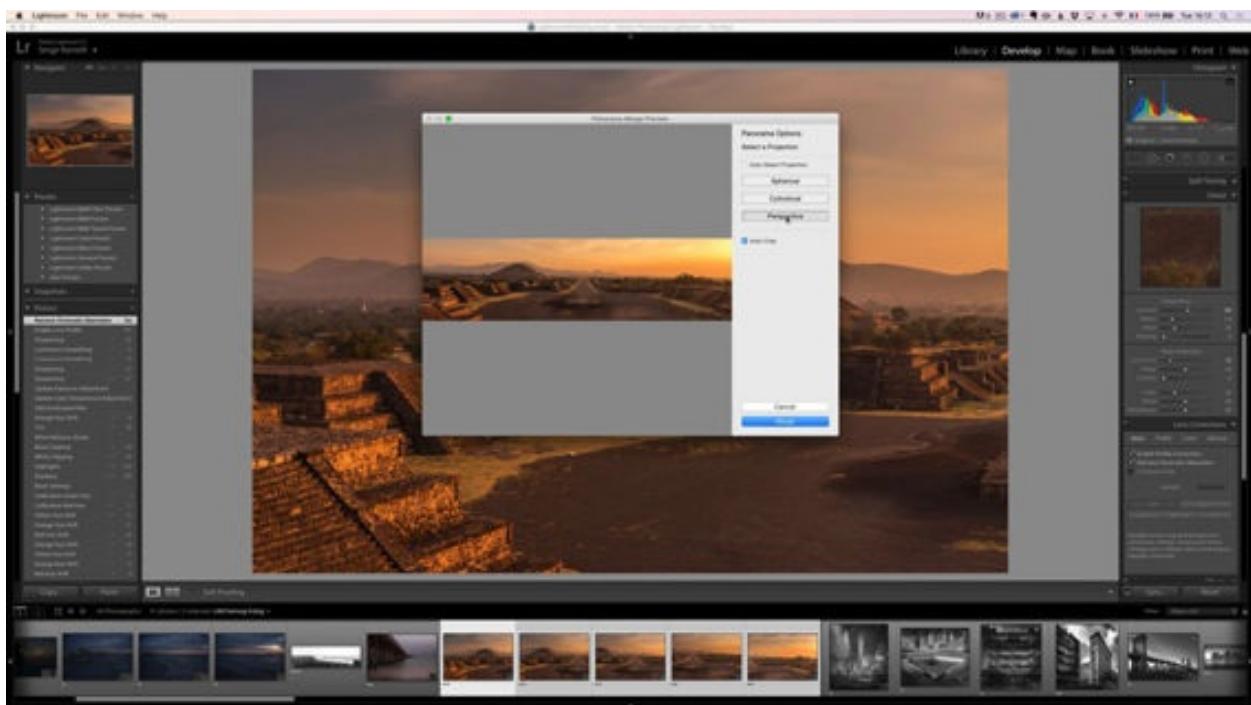


**Cylindrical** - Treats the photos as if they were mapped in a cylinder. This works

great for wide panoramas while also keeping the vertical lines nice and straight.



**Perspective** - Treats the images as if they were mapped to a flat surface. This keeps your straight lines straight so it works great for architectural photography. Adobe cautions that very wide panos may not work well because of distortion near the edges.



I would advise you on every panorama to just check each mode to see what

works best, I'm going to use perspective because it will make it a little wider.

Click on **Merge** and it'll take a minute because it's going to create one big panorama from these 5 photos.

For those of you just getting into Lightroom, you may never have experienced the pain of having to leave Lightroom and go into Photoshop or other dedicated panorama programs and then be locked into the settings. So trust me when I say, this is a revolution for Lightroom and for panos in general. Now this is the first implementation, so it probably won't always work perfectly and you still might need to go out for a set of photos that it can't handle, but Adobe has proven that they will work tirelessly to perfect their toolsets. My point being, I'm sure it will only get better. This is a pretty complex panorama and it's doing a great job.



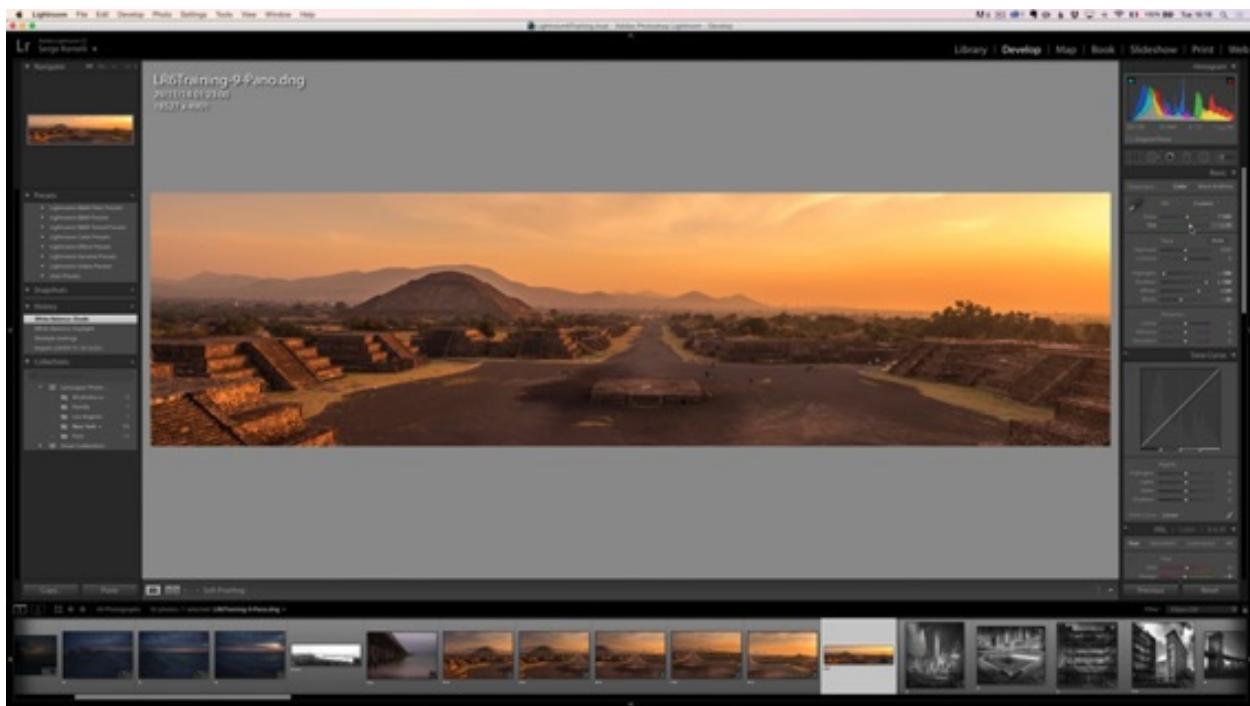
What is truly amazing about this and what no software on the planet has done before, is that it's now one big RAW file. Check it out, if you change the **White Balance** to **Daylight** it applies it!



All the retouch settings are still there. That's really amazing. If you want to go for a completely different look, it's going to deal with the entire file as if it was just a one big RAW file. Amazing.

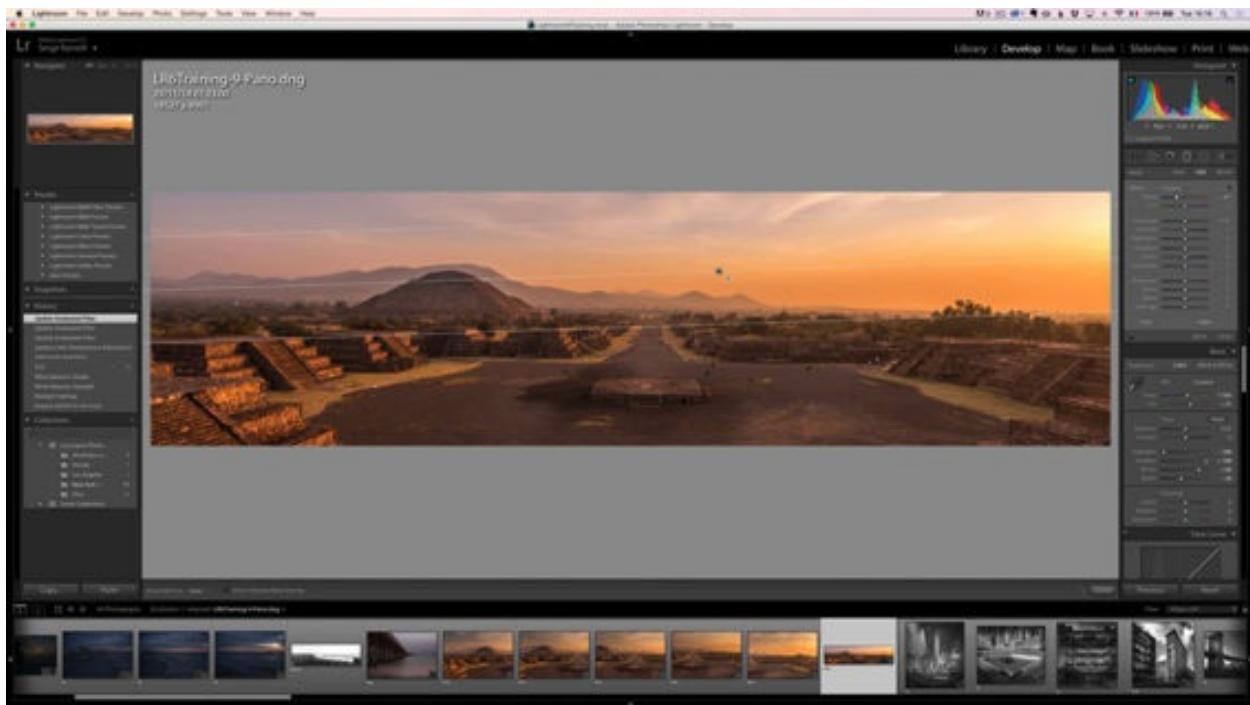
## 12. Adjust the Overall White Balance on the Pano to Suit Your Taste.

Okay, I like it better warmer so go ahead and put it back to **Shade** on your **White Balance**. Next add a touch more **Magenta**.



### 13. Add Grad Filters at the Top and Bottom to Close the Photo.

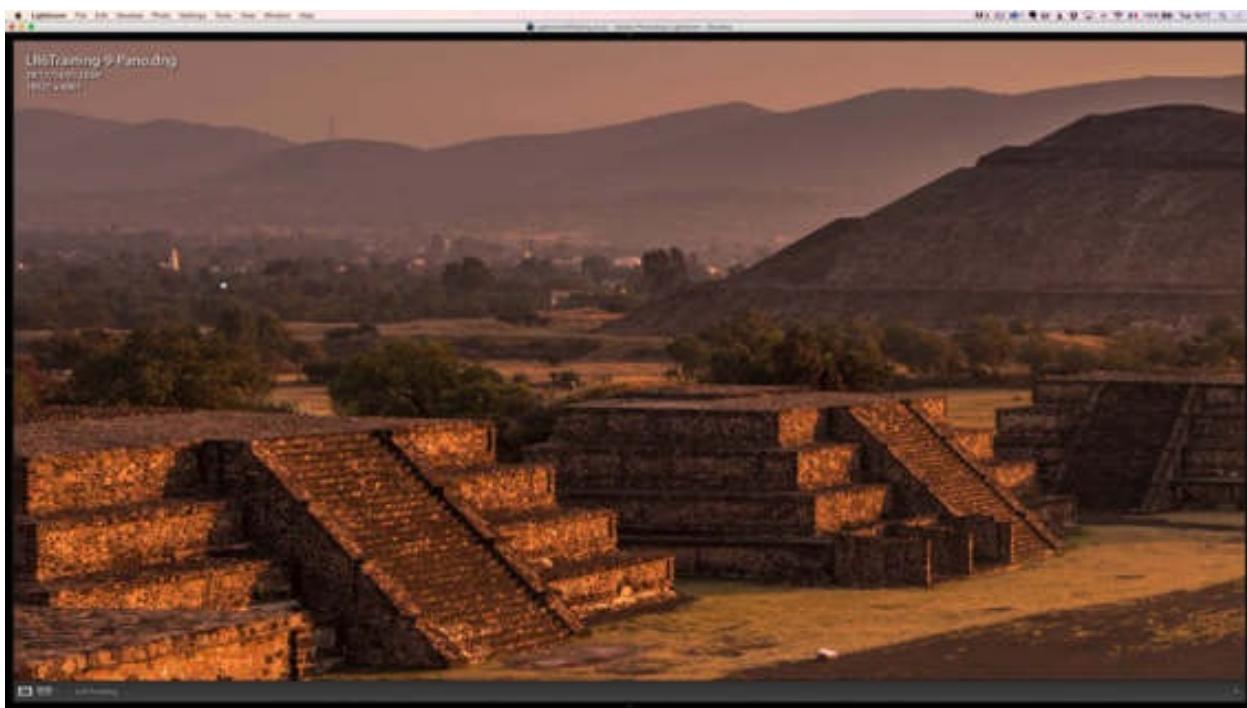
Put a graduated filter at the top of the pano and push the **Temp** a bit blue to around -47. Next, lower the Exposure to around -.50 and the sky now has more presence.



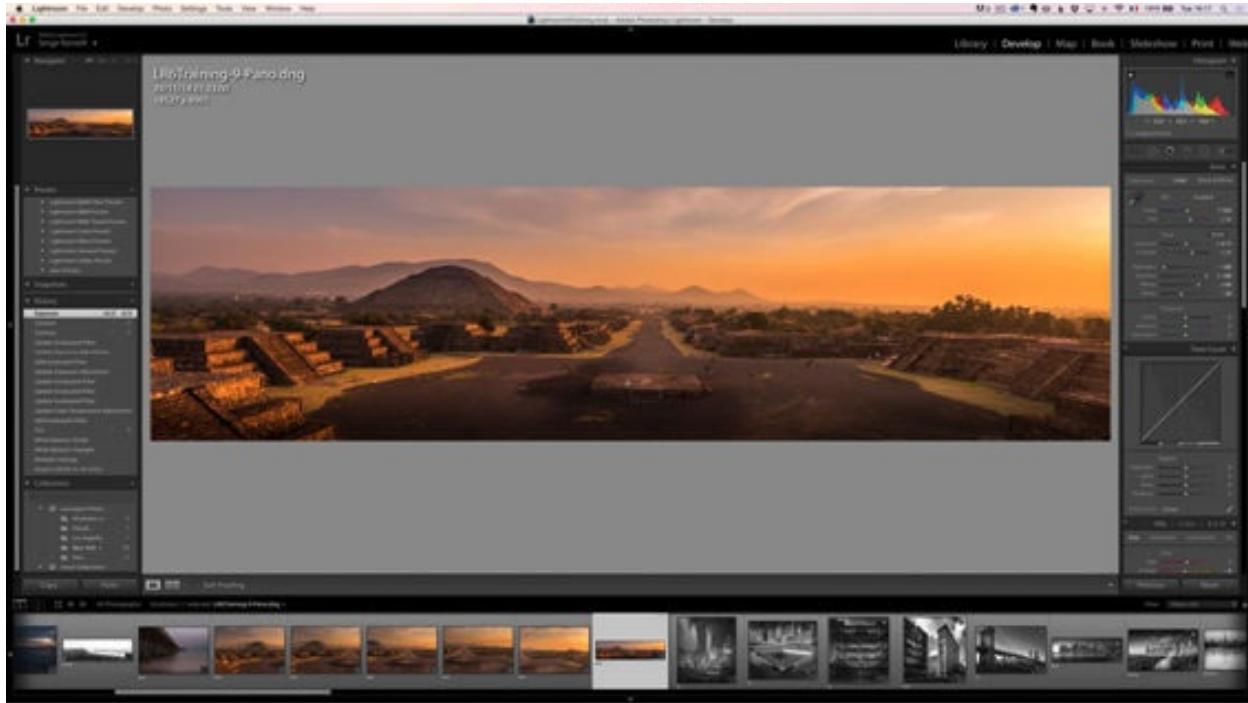
Create a new **Grad Filter** and bring it in at the bottom and lower the **Exposure** to around -.96. And as you can see, we've closed the photo to visually, subtly direct the eye to the center of the panorama.



And because it is a RAW file, the details that the pano has retained are amazing, zoom in and press **Shift+Tab** and have a look.



**Shift+Tab** back out and maybe add a bit more overall contrast by moving the **Contrast slider** to +33 and then lighten it up a bit by moving the Exposure slider over to +.15.

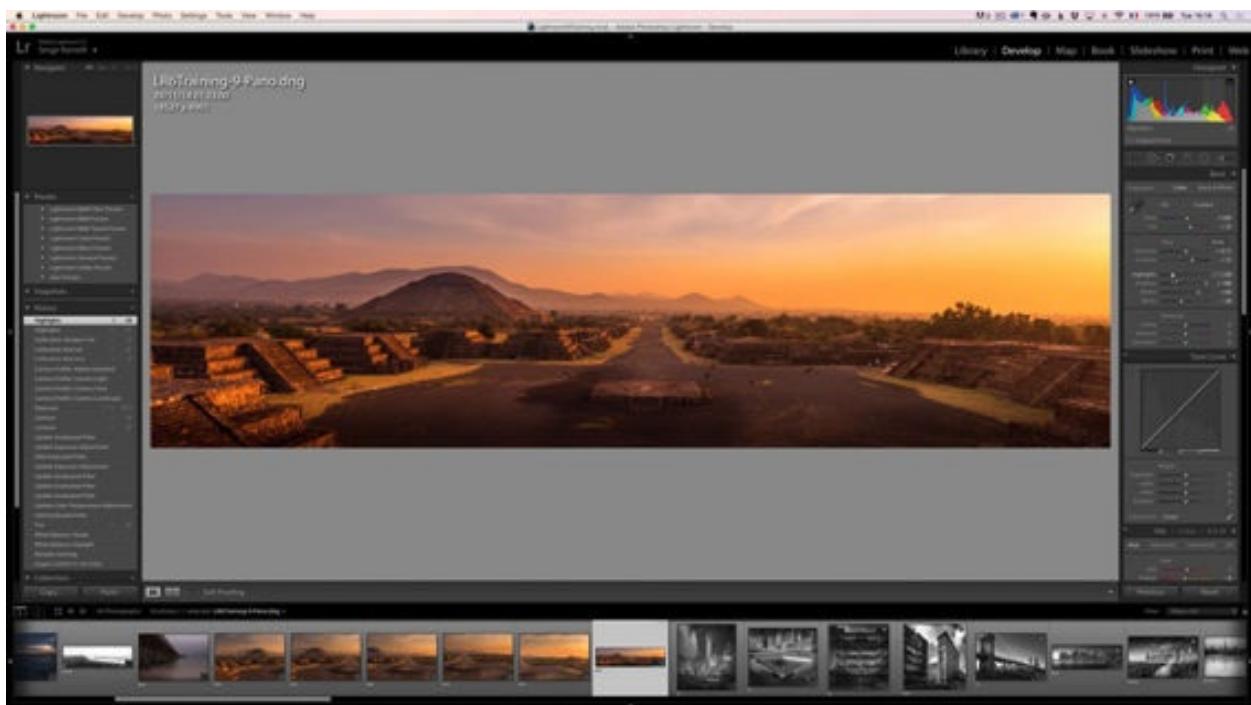


#### 14. Adjust Camera Calibration.

Now because this pano is RAW you can move the colors around even more in the **Camera Calibration panel**. You could try different profiles like **Camera Landscape** or **Camera Clear** but I like how it looks in **Adobe Standard** so I'll just use that and shift the hue of the **Red Primary Hue slider** to -6 and the **Saturation slider** to +27.



And that looks nice but I am also going to add just a touch more magenta in the **Shadow slider** moving it to +13. Looks good.



And there we go! Done! That's how you make a panorama in Lightroom and the fact that it retains RAW information is a game changer, for me at least!

# Project 2: Panorama Merging Options Skills you will learn:

- How to adjust Panorama PhotoMerge settings to get a better pano.

**Time to execute:** 20 minutes

I want to give you another example of a panorama and this really is the power of this new feature and also why it's important to choose different merging options. This project is going to be of the Griffith Park Observatory in Hollywood.



Now if you wanted you could do the merge right away, but I still think it's a better work flow to do the basic retouching on one photo and then sync the settings before doing the merge.

1. Open up the Shadows and Bring Down the Highlights.

In the **Basic panel** go ahead and grab the **Shadows slider** and bring it up to 100 and grab the **Highlights slider** and bring it down to -100.



## 2. Set Your White point.

Hold down the **Alt key** while moving the **Whites slider** until the photo goes black and keep pushing it until you get a little bit of red at around +54.



## 3. Set Your Black point.

Hold down the **Alt key** again while moving the **Blacks slider** until you see the photo go white and then start to see some black or colored speckles coming in, somewhere around -27.



#### 4. Boost Exposure and Add Clarity.

Let's brighten up the photo by moving the **Exposure slider** to around +.65.

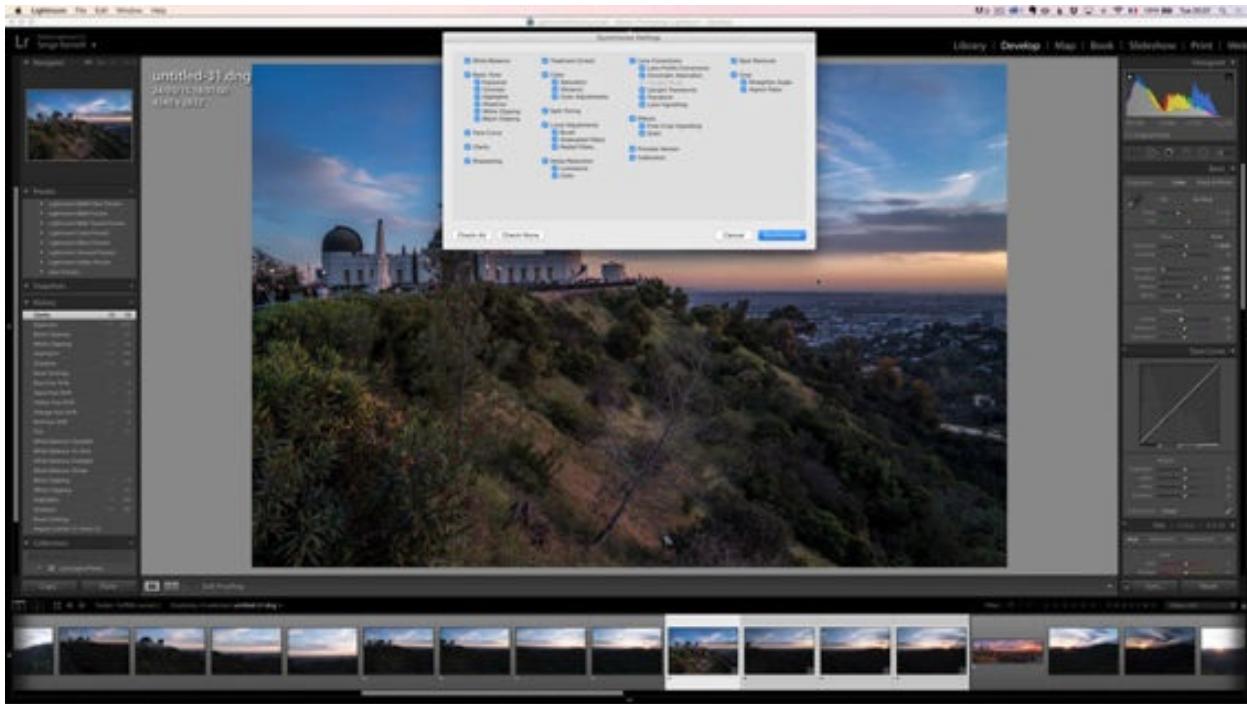


And then soften it a bit by moving the **Clarity slider** to about -15.



## 5. Synchronize Your Retouching to the Other Photos in the Pano.

Go ahead and hold down **Shift** and select all 4 photos of the pano and click on **Sync**. The Sync window will pop up. Click on **Check All** and then **Synchronize**.



## 6. Select the Photos and Turn Them Into a Pano.

Make sure you have all 4 photos selected in the **Film Strip**, right click on them with your mouse and choose **Photomerge> Panorama**.



It'll take a minute to preview it, and while it's doing that you can once again take a deep sigh and smile at how amazing it is to be able to have RAW

panoramas inside Lightroom. Or sip your coffee. Or think about no matter how fast a computer is, it's never fast enough!

## 7. Adjust the Pano Settings.

The **Panorama PhotoMerge Preview** window is going to open up. Go ahead and turn **Auto Crop** on if it isn't. And now look at how this is coming out in **Perspective**. Doesn't look good does it?



Okay let's try **Spherical**.



Nope. That's not quite right either.

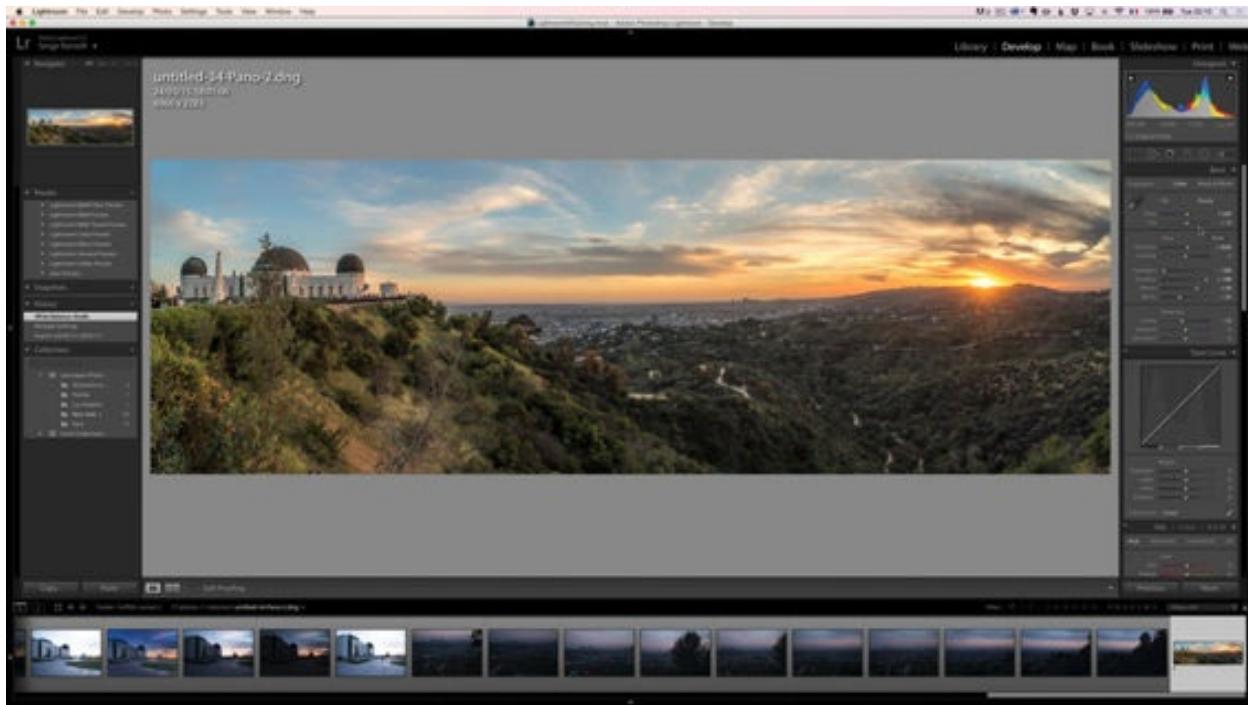
**Cylindrical** it is!



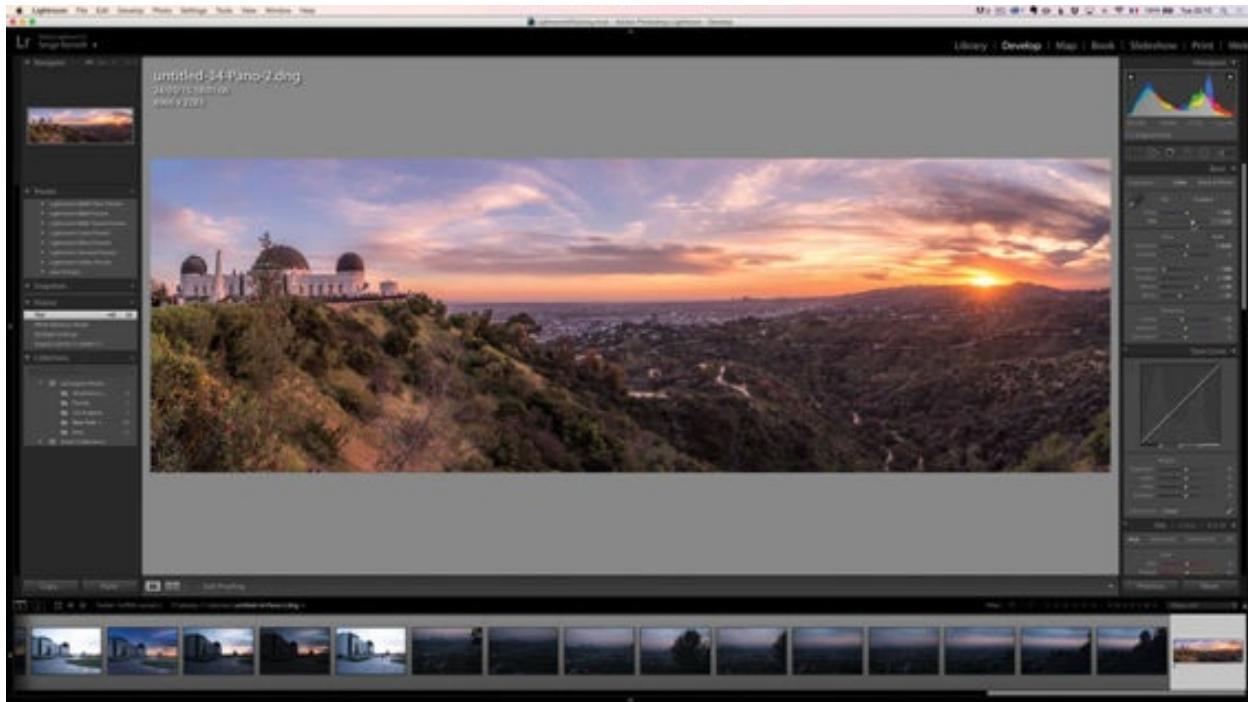
Go ahead and click **Merge**.

8. Set Your White Balance.

So because it's in RAW format you can adjust your White Balance! Such a game changer...because White Balance is so important to me, it really makes or unmakes a photo. OK I promise I won't say it again, I just think RAW pano is that awesome...oops did that count as saying it again? Whatever, moving on. Click on the **WB drop down menu** and choose the **Shade** white balance. I've chosen this one because I like the warmth that it gives the photo.



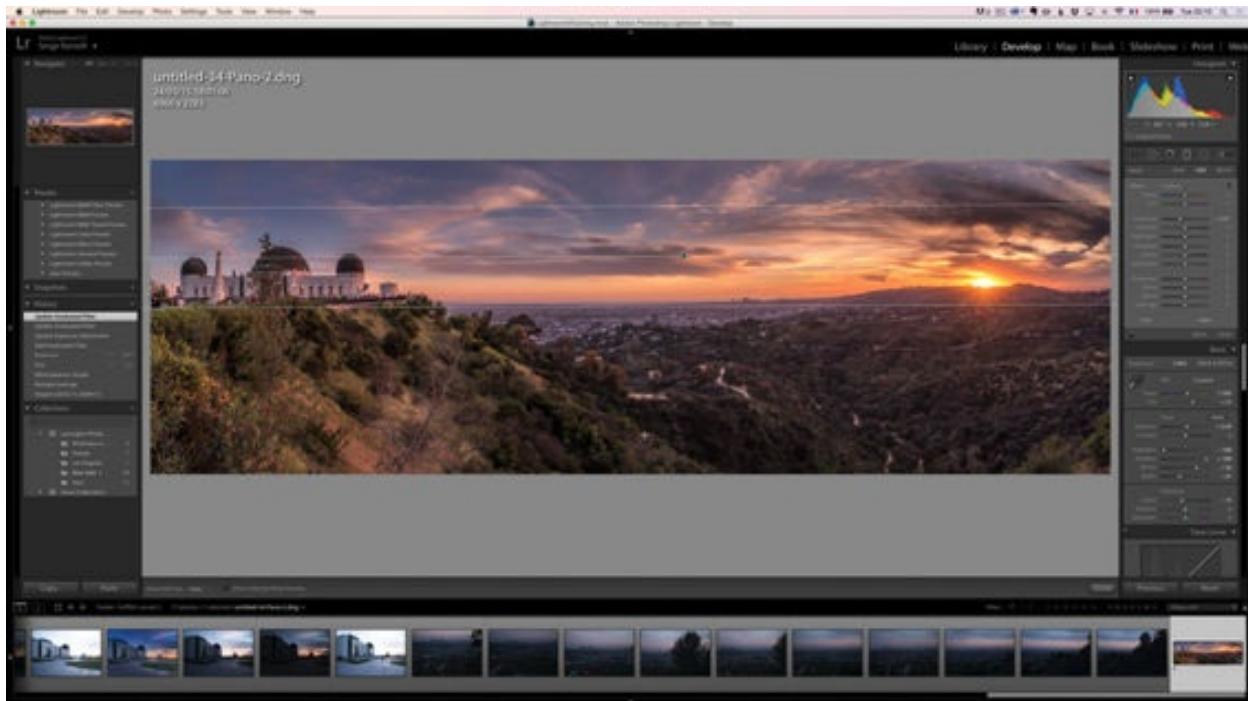
And then go ahead and add just a touch of Magenta into it by tweaking the **Tint slider**, not too much, maybe just +53.



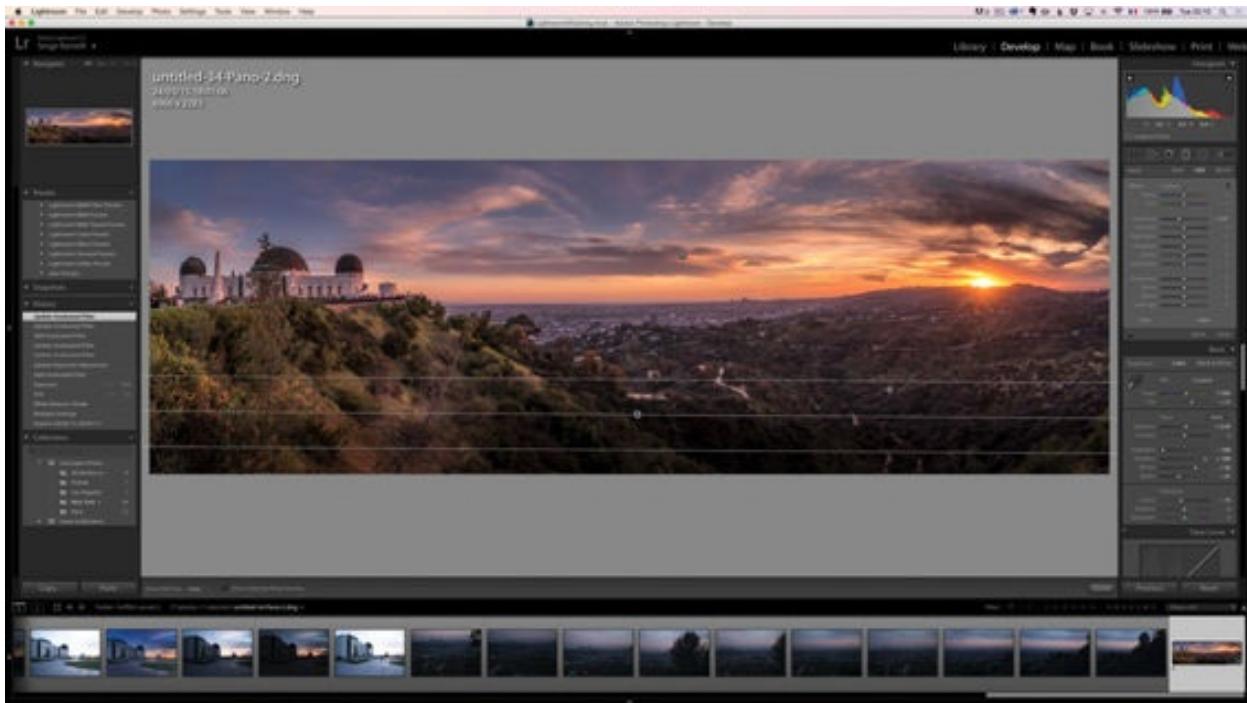
And you know what, tweak your **Exposure slider** to +.40.

## 6. Intensify the Sky and Close the Bottom with Grad Filters.

From the **Local Adjustment tools** put a **Grad Filter** at the top of the photo and then drop the **Exposure slider** to -.97 so that it is more intense.

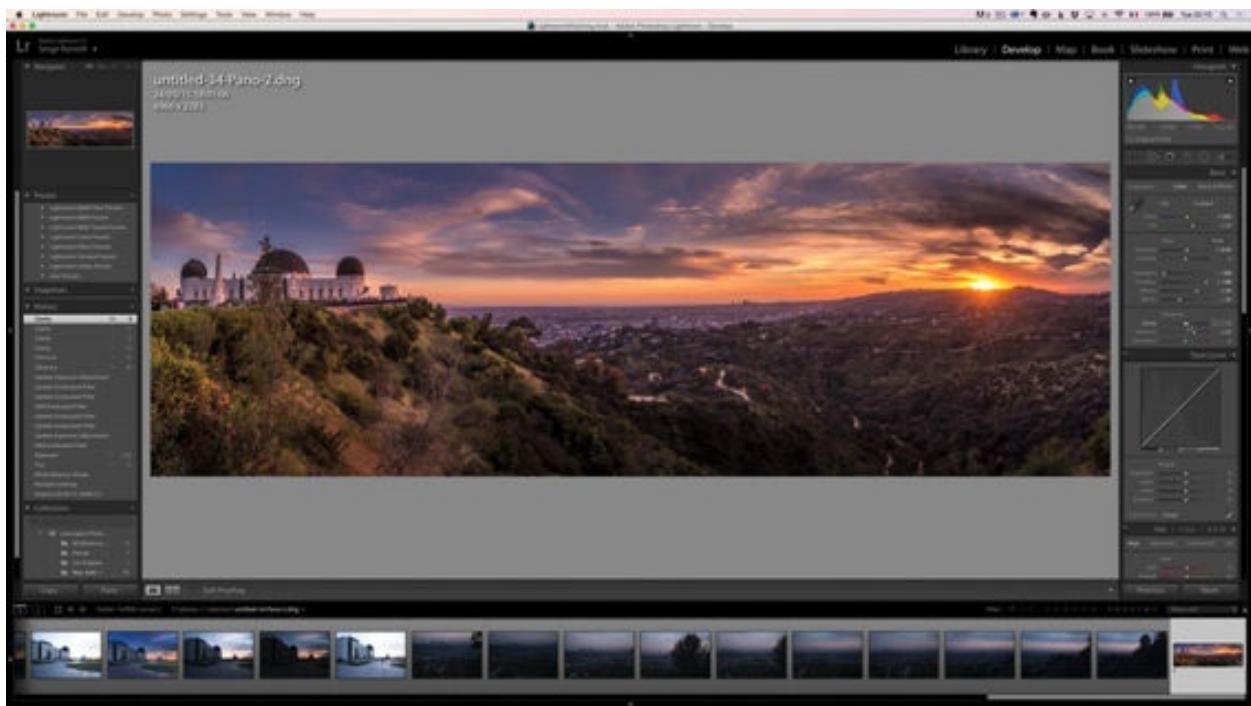


Now go ahead and put a Grad Filter at the bottom of the pano with the **Exposure slider** at -.51.



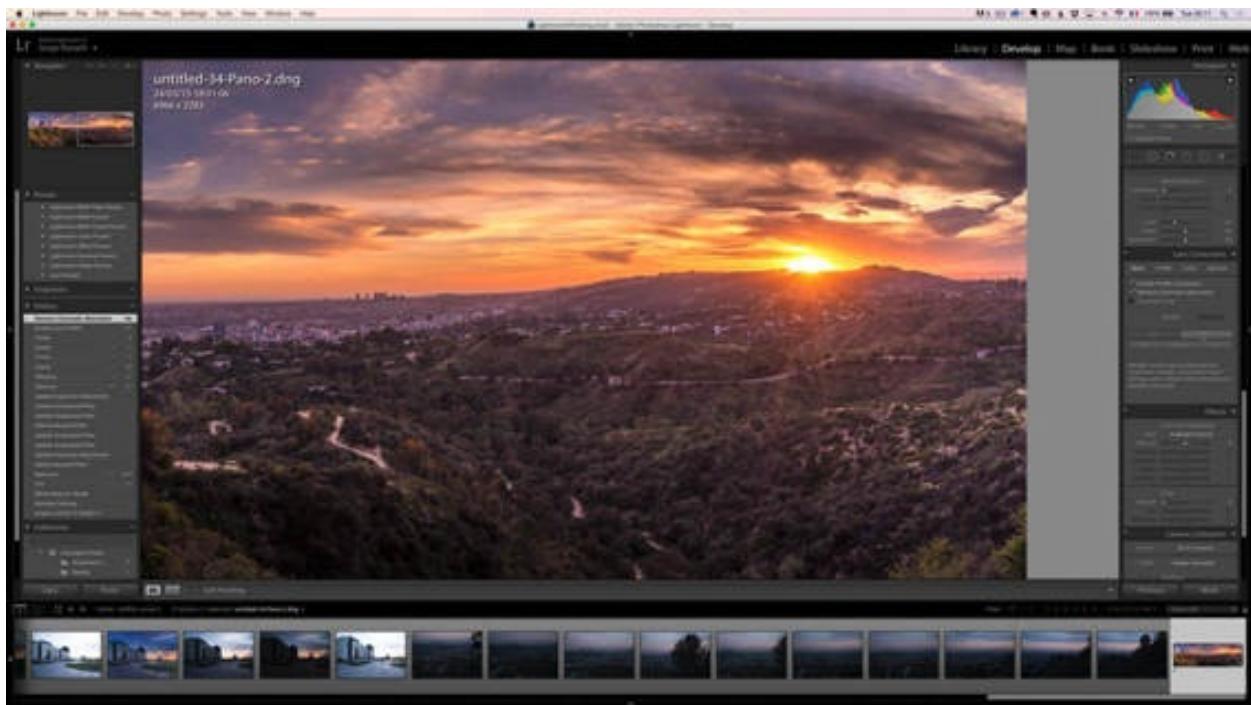
## 7. Adjust Your Presence.

From the **Basic panel** push the **Vibrance** slider to +42 and then push the **Clarity slider** back up to 0.



## 8. Apply Lens Corrections.

Go to the **Lens Corrections panel** and **Enable Lens Corrections** and **Remove Chromatic Aberration**.

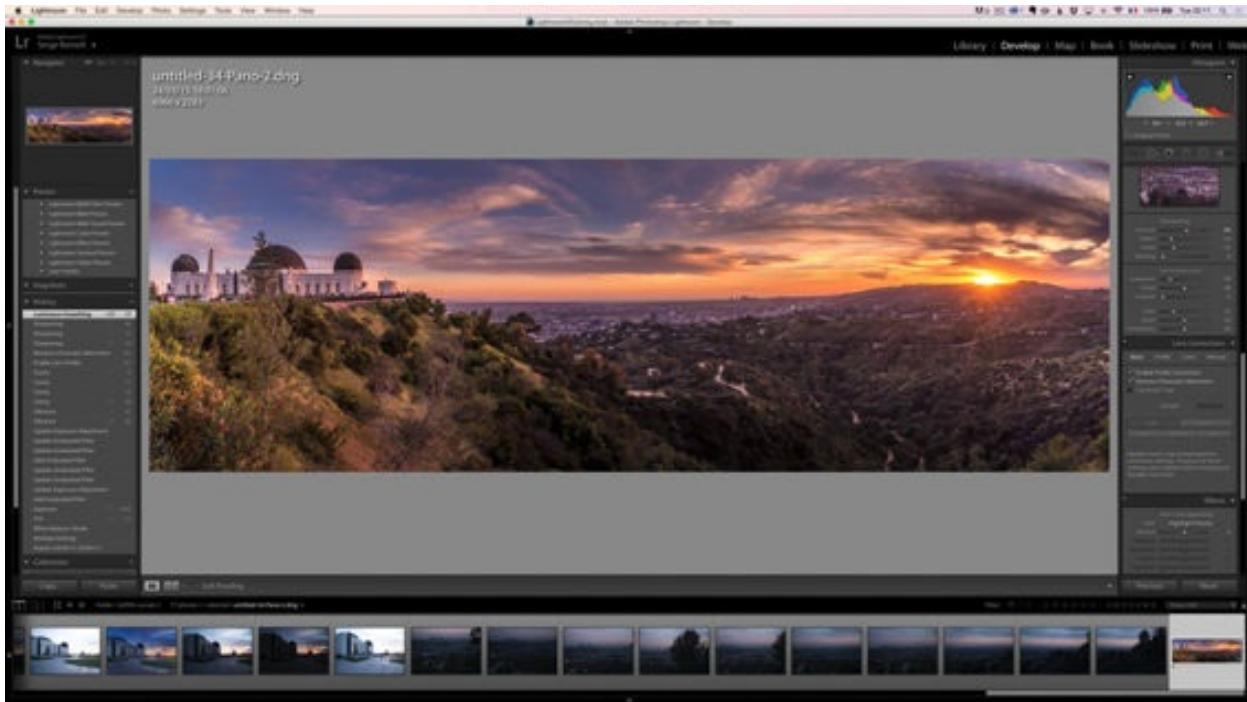


## 9. Add Sharpening and Noise Reduction.

In the **Detail panel** I am going to zoom in so I can clearly see the details and then I'm going to move the **Sharpening slider** to 85 and to balance this out for my “equals 100 formula” I am going to move the **Luminance slider** for Noise Reduction to 15.



Voila! We've got a nice panorama and we've been able to edit it a little bit, merge it and continue on editing it and hopefully by now you understand how amazing that is so you don't have to hear me say it again! (It's amazing!!!!!!)



## Project 3: An Introduction to HDR in Lightroom Skills you will learn:

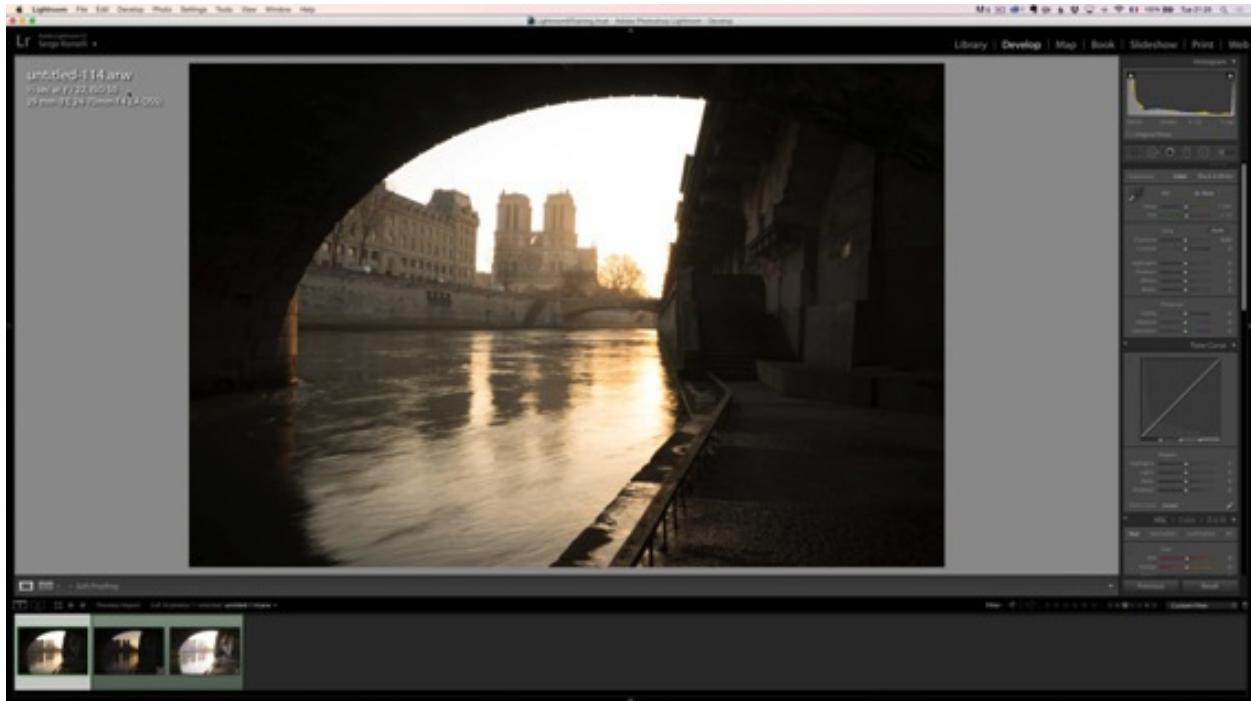
- How to create HDR photos in Lightroom.
- How to retouch an HDR photo.

**Time to execute:** 30 minutes

There is another very cool feature in Lightroom 6/CC2015, which is the ability to process HDR photos.

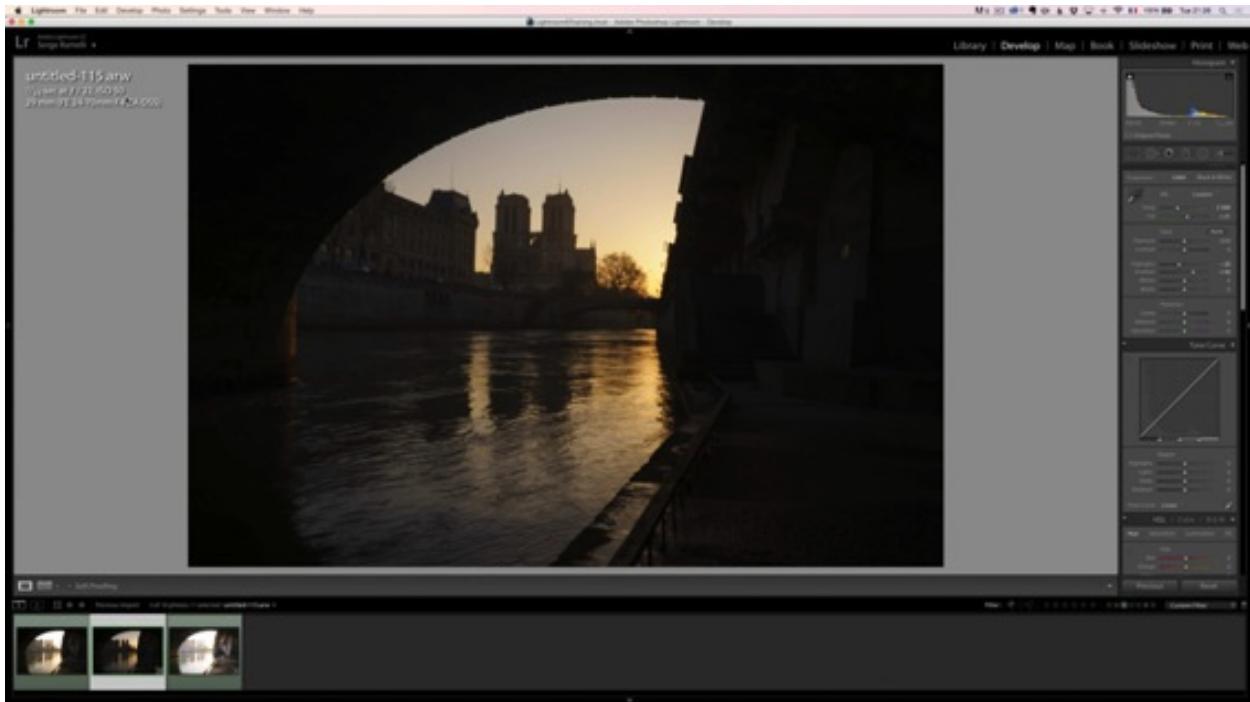
HDR means High Dynamic Range and is generally describing when two or more photos have been combined to allow for brighter highlights and darker shadows in the same image. And you can find a full explanation of HDR on my blog at [www.photoserge.com](http://www.photoserge.com) and youtube channel. Now why do we use the HDR technique? Well the problem is that sometimes when there's a lot of sun and there's a lot of very bright information and very dark information in the same frame that even a very advanced camera has trouble getting all the information. This photo is a good example. I shot this last month in Paris.

This is what I call the **Normal exposure** because I'm not shooting to capture highlights or shadows, but the range of exposure in the middle.

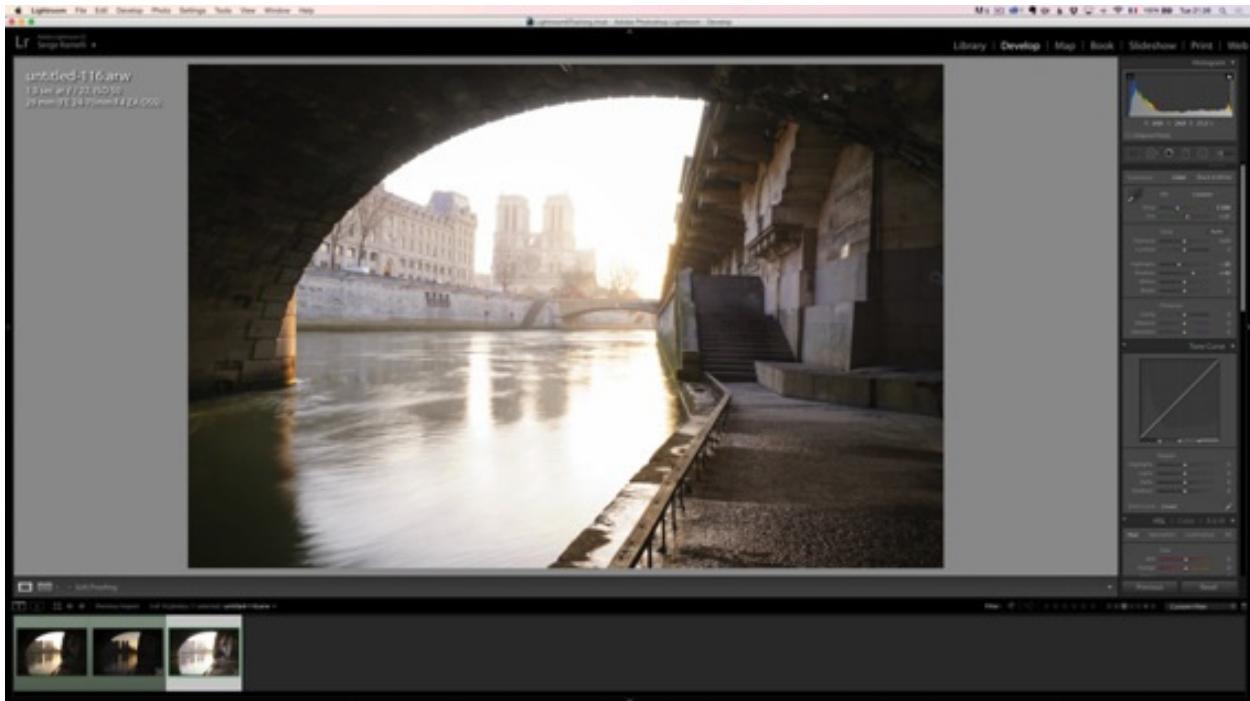


If you press '**L**', you will see it was shot at 1/3rd of a second at f/22 and ISO 50. The reason why I was at f/22 was that I was trying to get the silky water and to do this I needed to get all my exposures as long as possible, but I was shooting into the sun! So I put the ISO as low as it would go, and I put my camera on a tripod and at f/22, with 1/3rd of a second of exposure, I did get the water a bit soft and silky.

I had the camera set-up to automatically take bracketed shots so shot number 2 was at 1/13th of a second, still at f/22 ISO 50. It's a much shorter time so it's **underexposed** for the darker areas but it's getting the details in the highlights such as the gradient in the sky.



And then the third shot, this time at 1.3 seconds making it **overexposed** for the highlights but doing a good job catching the details in the darker parts of the image like the bricks under the tunnel.

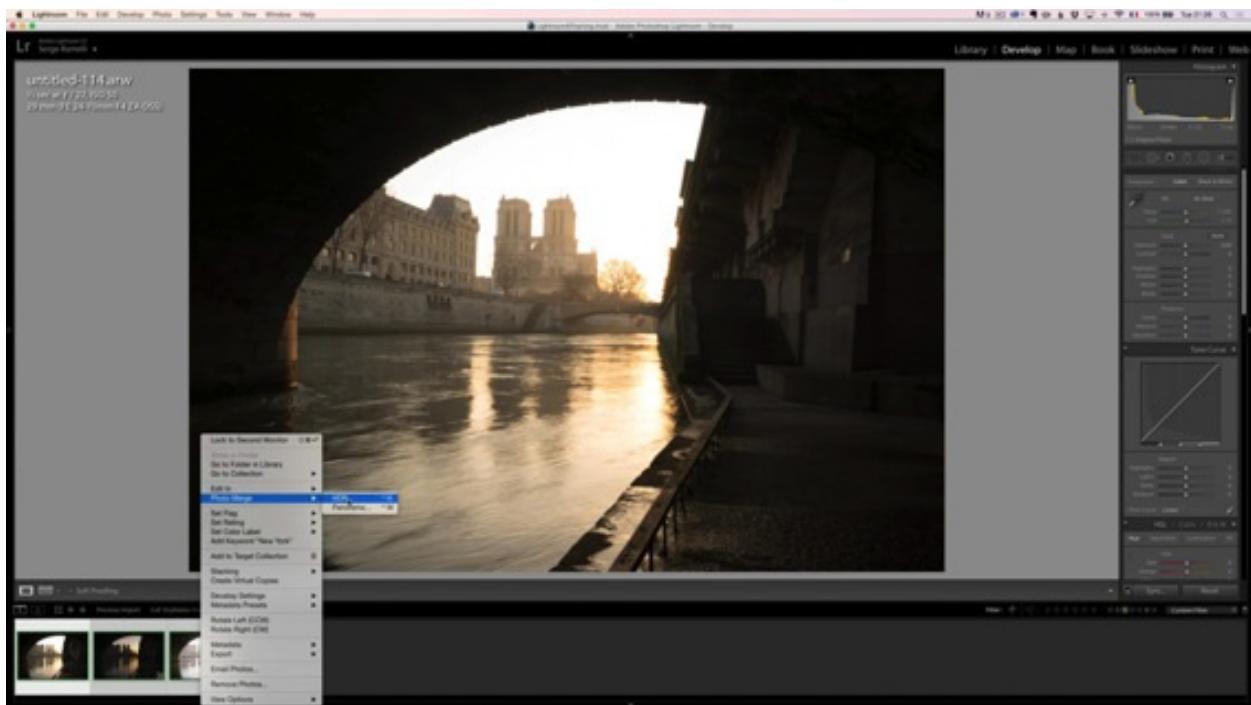


So the overexposed got the information about the bricks here under the tunnel, the underexposed photo got the gradient with the sun and the normal photo is sort of a mix of both and we are going to take the best image information from

each photo to create one High Dynamic Range photo. I hope that makes sense, if not, keep reading.

## 1. Merge Your Photos Into an HDR.

Similar to pano, in the past, you would need to go into Photoshop or other dedicated HDR programs to be able to make this HDR. Not anymore! Select the three photos in the **Film Strip**, right click on them with your mouse and choose **Photomerge > HDR**. The keyboard shortcut is **Control+H**.



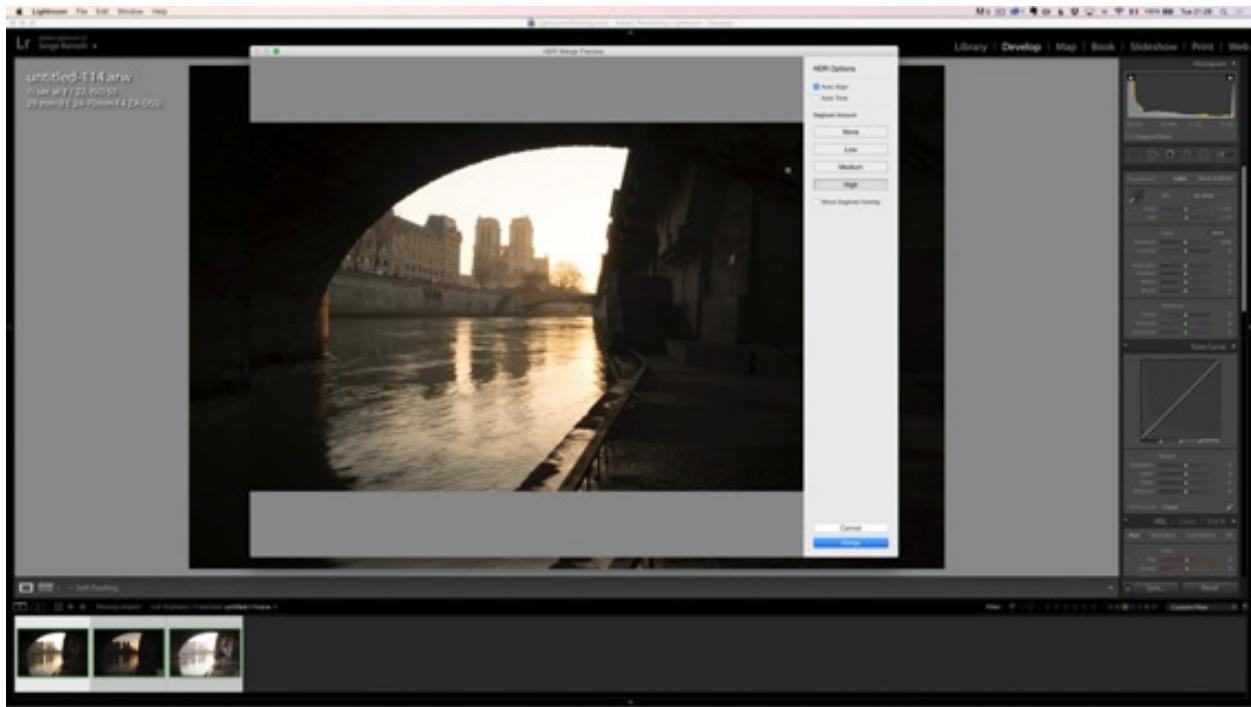
What it's going to do is create sort of a super RAW file that's going to include all the dynamic range of the three photos. Meaning it will have all the data of the gradient in the sky and all the data of the bricks under the tunnel. It takes a little while to create the HDR preview for high megapixel photos.

## 2. Adjust the HDR settings.

The **HDR PhotoMerge Preview** window is going to open up. Go ahead and keep **Auto Align** selected. It just makes sure that if there was any movement between the photos that it is adjusted for.

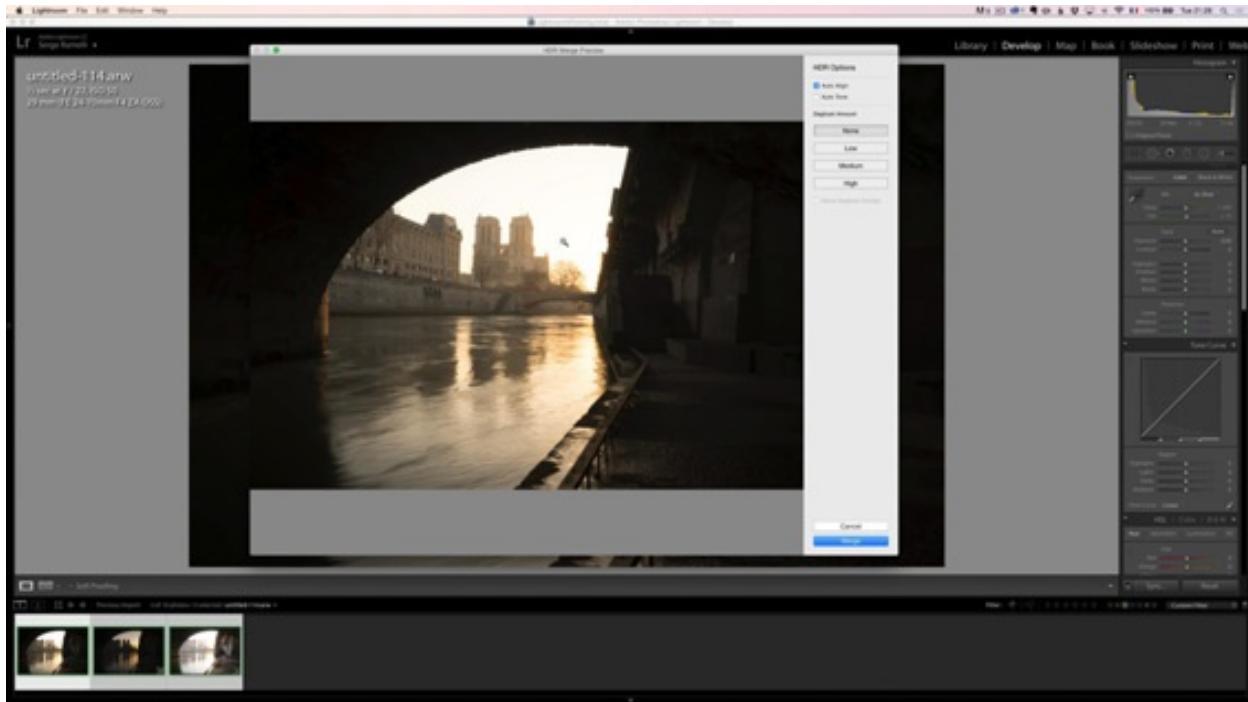
Then, we have the **Deghosting** effect with **None, Low, Medium, High**. Deghosting is hugely helpful when you have objects shifting in photos, like people moving. If elements were moving or you weren't on a tripod, you will

want to keep it on **High**.



I don't like how the water looks because this setting usually takes the information from the underexposed photo because that's the one that's got the fastest shutter speed. That's the one that's got the less blurry information in it.

But because we want to preserve the silkiness of the water, select **None** and as you can see the surface of the water is now smoother. It's a better result for this photo.



The next project will show you how to use the **Deghosting** effect in full, for now let's carry on with this photo project.

Go ahead and click on **Merge**. It's going to take a while but it's going to create sort of a super RAW file where you have the combined information from all three photos and then when it's ready, your new HDR photo will appear in Lightroom as a DNG. It's still a RAW file but now it's got more dynamic range.



### 3. Open up the Shadows and Bring Down the Highlights.

Now is when you are going to start seeing the power of HDR photography, granted it's not right for every occasion, but in photos where there are drastic differences between darks and highlights you want to preserve, it's just what the doctor ordered!

In the **Basic panel** go ahead and grab the **Shadows slider** and bring it up to 100. This brings back in all the data of the tunnel and bricks.



Now grab the **Highlights slider** and bring it down to -100 and you will reveal a nice gradient in the sky.



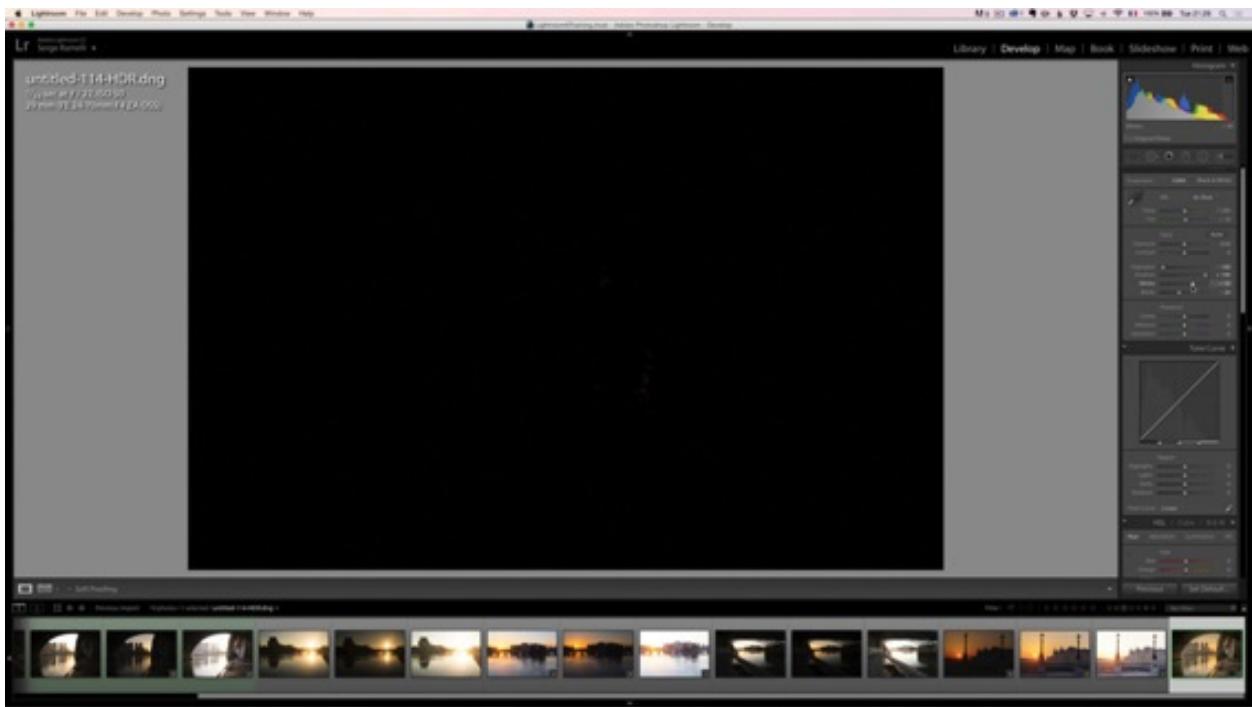
#### 4. Set Your Black point.

Hold down the Alt key again while moving the **Blacks slider** until you see the photo go white and see some black or colored speckles coming in, somewhere around -24.



## 5. Set your White point.

Hold down the **Alt key** while moving the **Whites slider** until the photo goes black and keep pushing it until you get a little bit of red and then adjust it by eye looking at the color photo, probably to around 64.



## 6. Set Your White Balance.

One of the most powerful features about working with RAW is the ability to change your White Balance in retouching. Click on the WB drop down menu and choose **Shade** to preserve that warm and sunny look. And then go ahead and add just a touch of Magenta into it by tweaking the **Tint slider** to about +53.



## 7. Adjust Contrast and Apply Local Adjustments to the Sky.

Looking at the photo now, it seems too bright overall. So boost the **Contrast** to +32. It'll look better but we still need more, but really only in the sky area to get more of the sunshine.

From the **Local Adjustment tools** I am going to select a brush and lower the **Exposure** to about -.80 and paint over the top of the sky and that now looks much more like a strong sunset.



## 8. Spot removal.

There was some dirt on the sensor so go ahead and zoom into the sky and take out the four spots you see up there.



## 9. Apply Lens Corrections.

Go to the **Lens Corrections panel** and **Enable Lens Corrections** and **Remove Chromatic Aberration**.



Now the photo needs to be leveled slightly but if you press **Auto** to align the photo the result isn't perfect.



So I'm going to switch off **Auto** and do it manually, rotating it slightly to make

sure Notre Dame, which is a church in Paris here, is pretty straight vertically as my main visual cue. Then, I'm going to click on **Constrain Crop** to remove the white areas created.



#### 10. Add a Vignette.

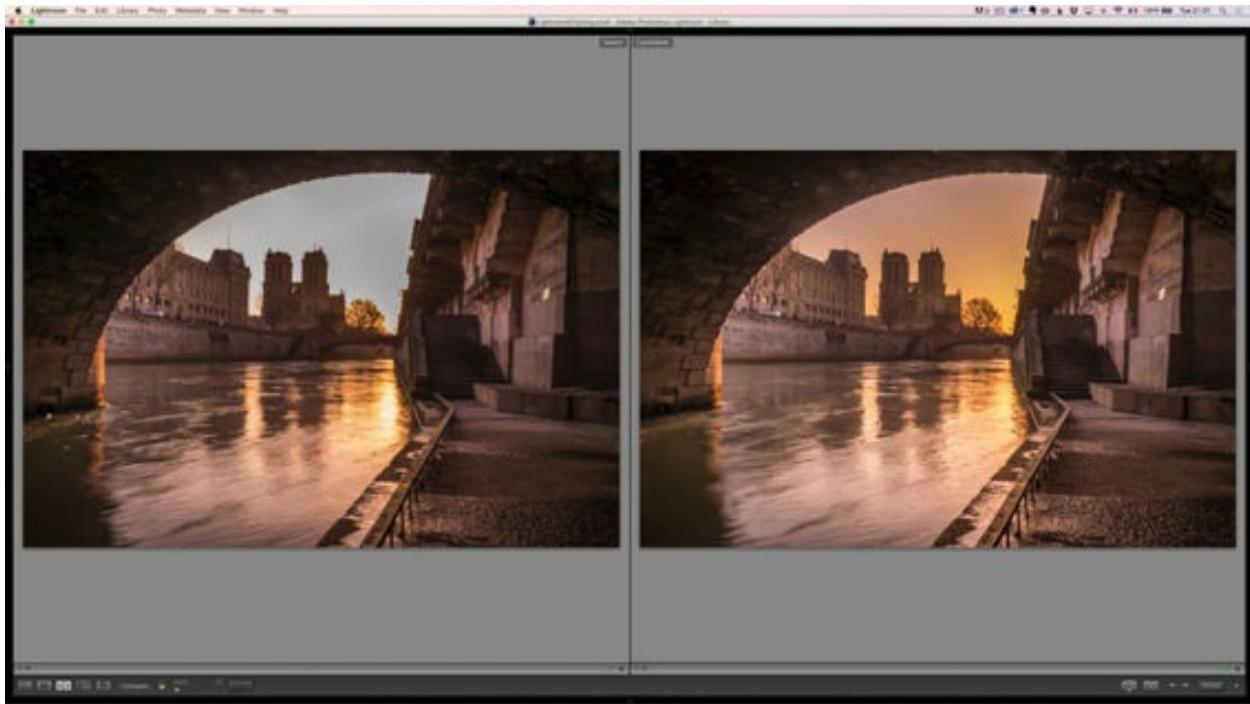
From the **Effects panel** I am going to apply a slight **Vignette** to the photo by moving the **Amount slider** to -15.



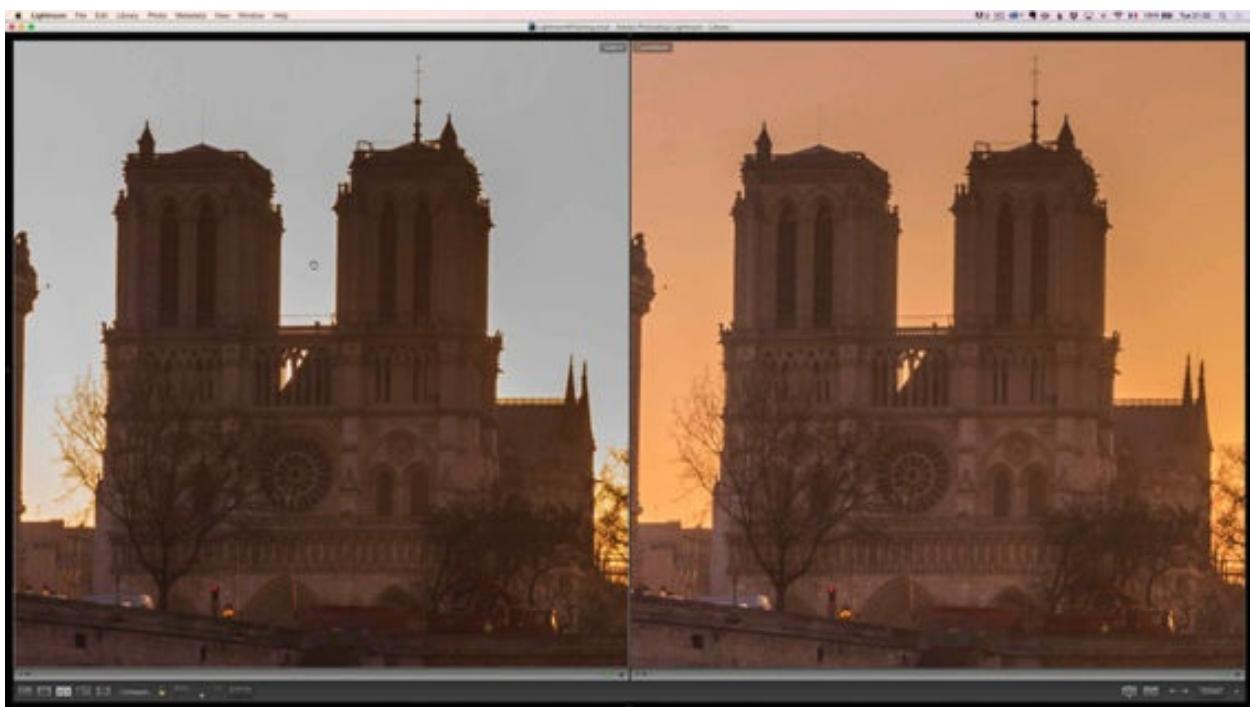
And that's basically done! It's a good looking photo.

Now just to give you a comparison so you can see how much more you can push an HDR photo over a regularly exposed photo. Press Command+Shift+C and copy all the retouch settings that we did and select the normal exposure photo of the three photos we used to make the HDR and press Command+V to paste all what we've been doing so far onto this photo. And as you can see the difference is drastic.

The spots in the sky will be a bit weird so just erase them and look at the differences between your HDR and this normally exposed photo. The sky is completely burned.



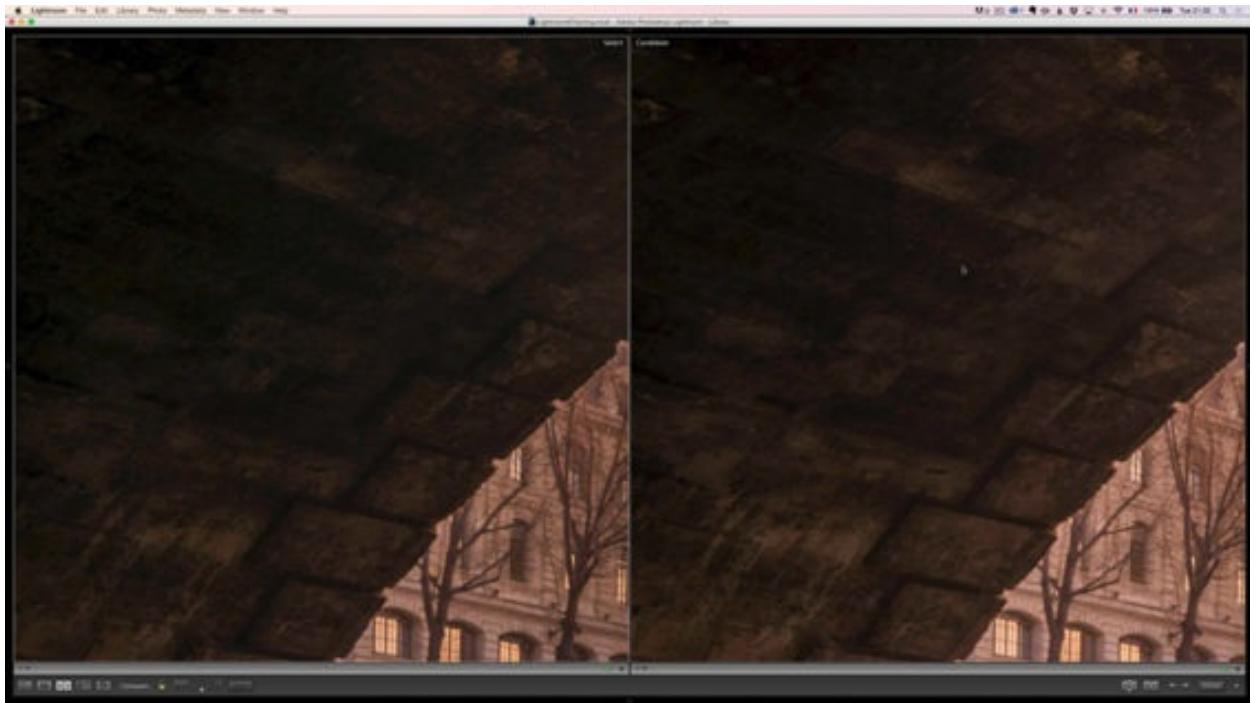
Zoom in and you'll see the HDR retained the full gradient of colors from the sunlight.



Look how much more details you get on Notre Dame. It's amazing because the HDR is a super RAW file allowing you to keep the maximum amount of information to play with.

Now, if you go to the left, on the tunnel, you will see in the non-HDR photo how

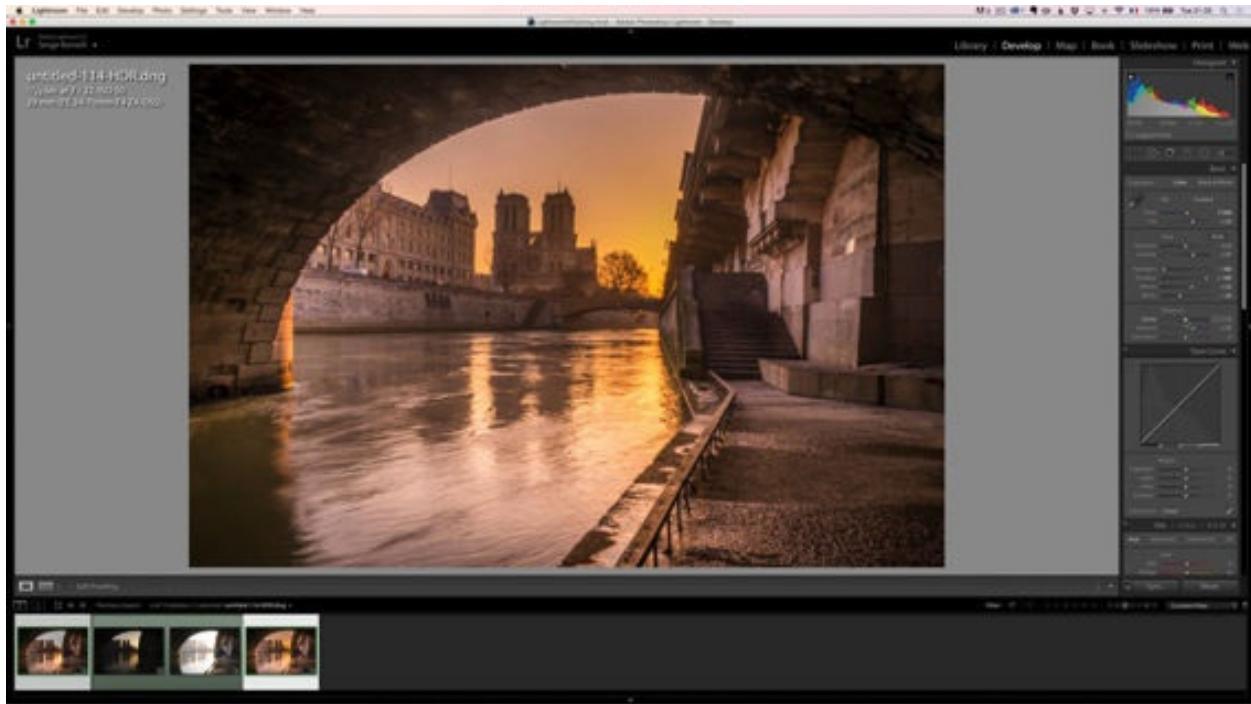
much noise there is because we opened up so much shadows on one RAW file. But on the HDR photo, there's hardly any noise.



It doesn't work on all photos but when it does work like on this one, it's truly fantastic. Whereas the regular photo is completely unusable, the HDR is a super RAW file and is completely usable. I could make a nice print out of it. But let's go ahead and add some final touches.

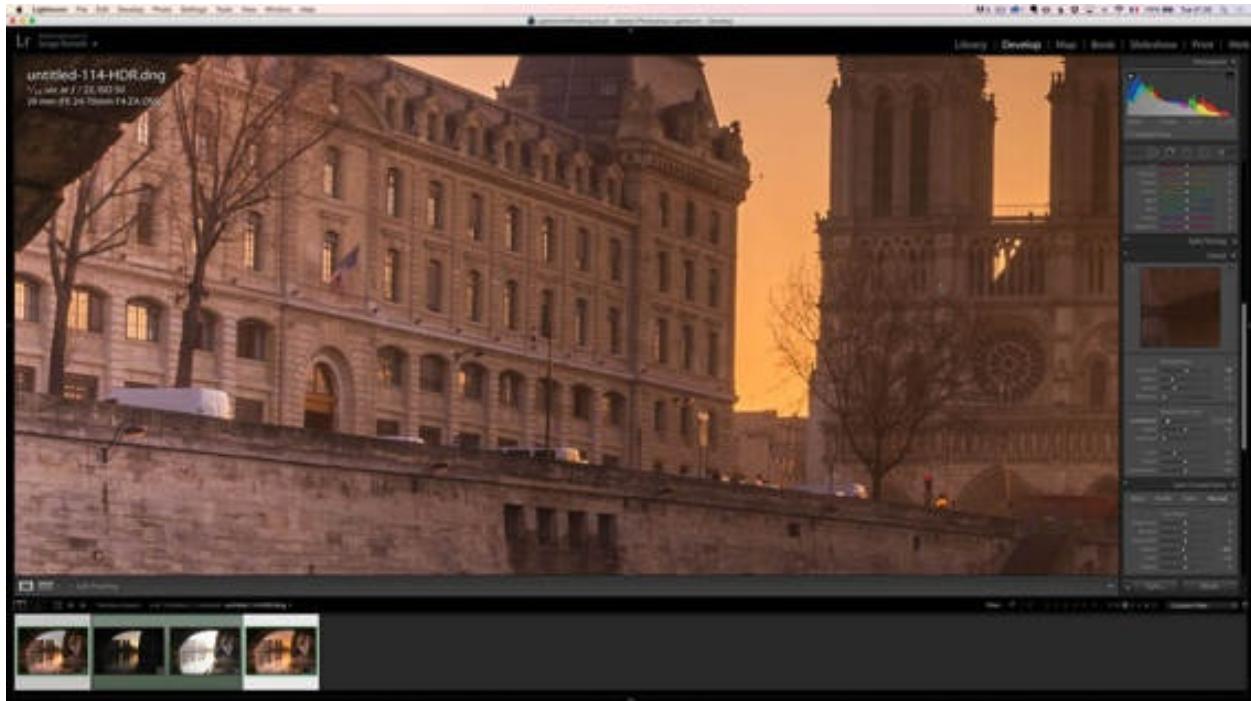
#### 11. Add Some More Pop to the Photo by Adjusting the Overall Contrast and Presence.

To finish off this HDR file, I'm going to move the **Contrast slider** to +37 and the **Vibrance slider** to +37.



## 12. Add Sharpening and Noise Reduction.

I am going to zoom in so I can clearly see the details and then in the **Detail panel** I'm going to move the **Sharpening slider** to 80 and the **Luminance slider** for Noise Reduction to 9 which is close to 100 when added together.

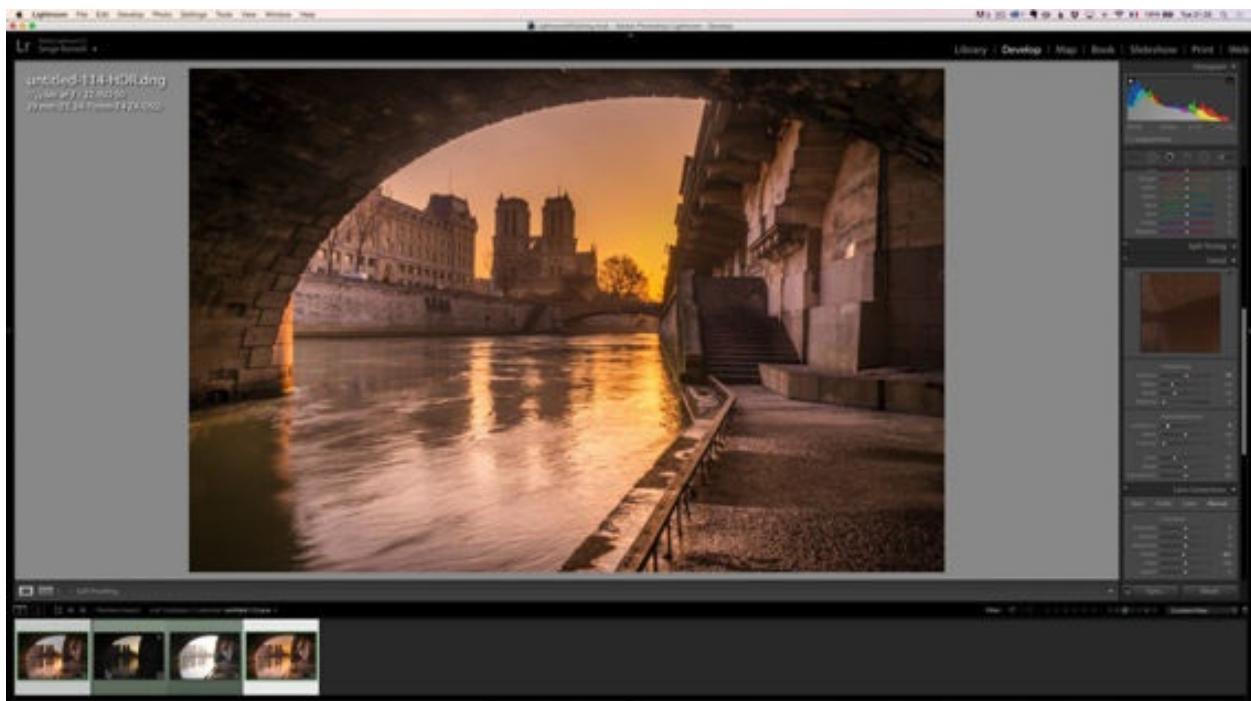


Without that HDR technology, that photo would be completely unusable. This is

an extreme case because I'm really shooting right straight into the sun but that happens. Again, let me show you. This is a non-HDR photo, not usable.



This is the HDR photo, which is completely usable.



And that's a great new function added to Lightroom to handle HDR photos. Now let's jump to the next project and dig a little deeper into the Deghosting function of HDR in Lightroom.

or this in English.

# Project 3B:

## Learning to Use HDR Deghosting in Lightroom

### Skills you will learn:

- How to use the Deghosting function of HDR in Lightroom.

**Time to execute:** 20 minutes

I want to show you something else about HDR Deghosting so that you can see what it's used for.

Let me just take another set of photos here that I have. This is a more extreme situation because I was not on a tripod. This is a normal exposure:



This is the underexposure:



And this is the overexposure:



Not only was my camera moving between the three shots but the people were also moving. Look how the person in the photo changes his head position between the shots as he turns his head towards the sun. This is when the HDR Deghosting comes into excellent use.

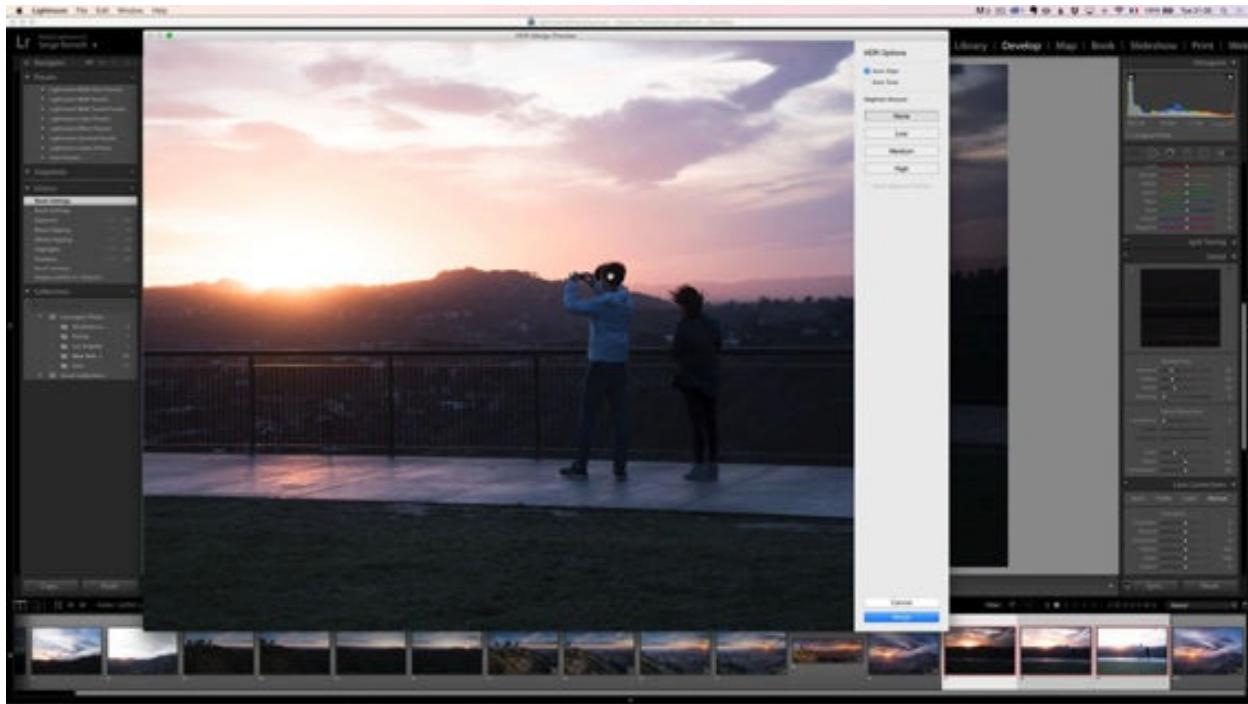
## 1. Merge Your Photos into an HDR.

Select the three photos in the film strip, right click on them with your mouse and choose **Photomerge > HDR**.

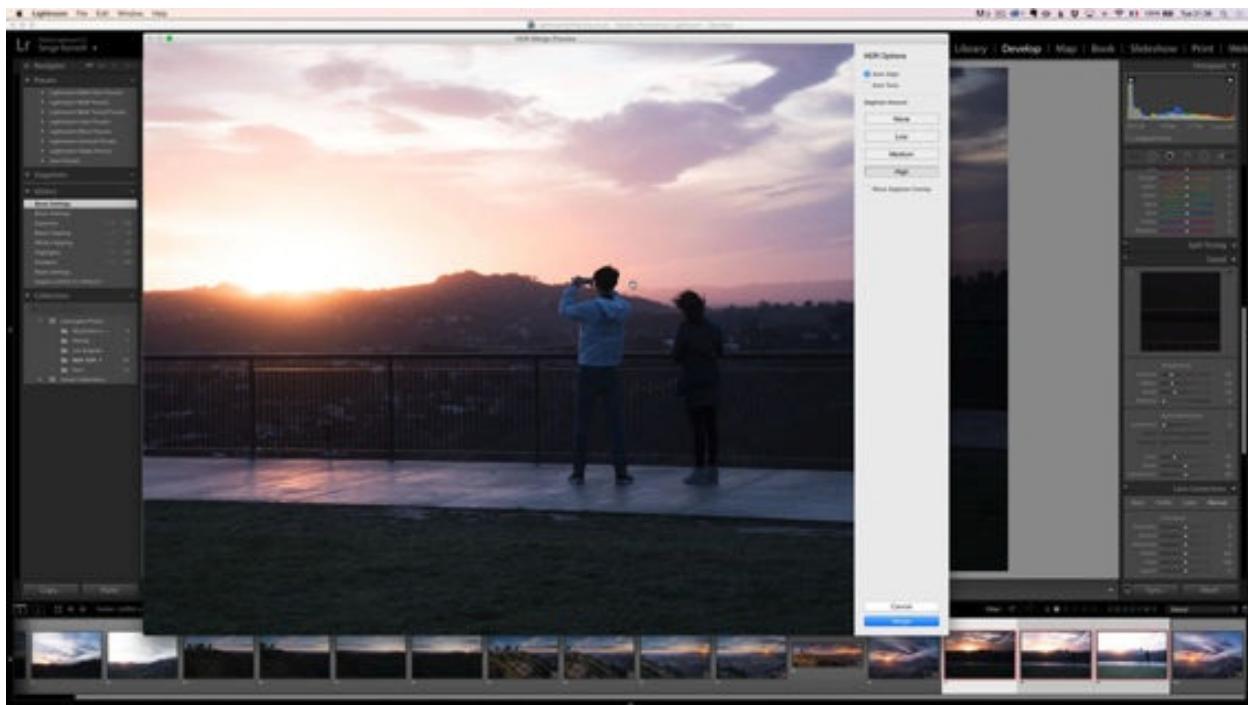


## 2. Adjust the HDR Deghosting Settings.

The **HDR PhotoMerge Preview** window is going to open up. Go ahead and keep **Auto Align** selected. Select **None** on the Deghosting and use the preview window to zoom into the guy's head and you'll see it's kind of weird because he's got two heads!



Now if you click on **High**, you will see that this second head is going to disappear. Boom! There you have it.

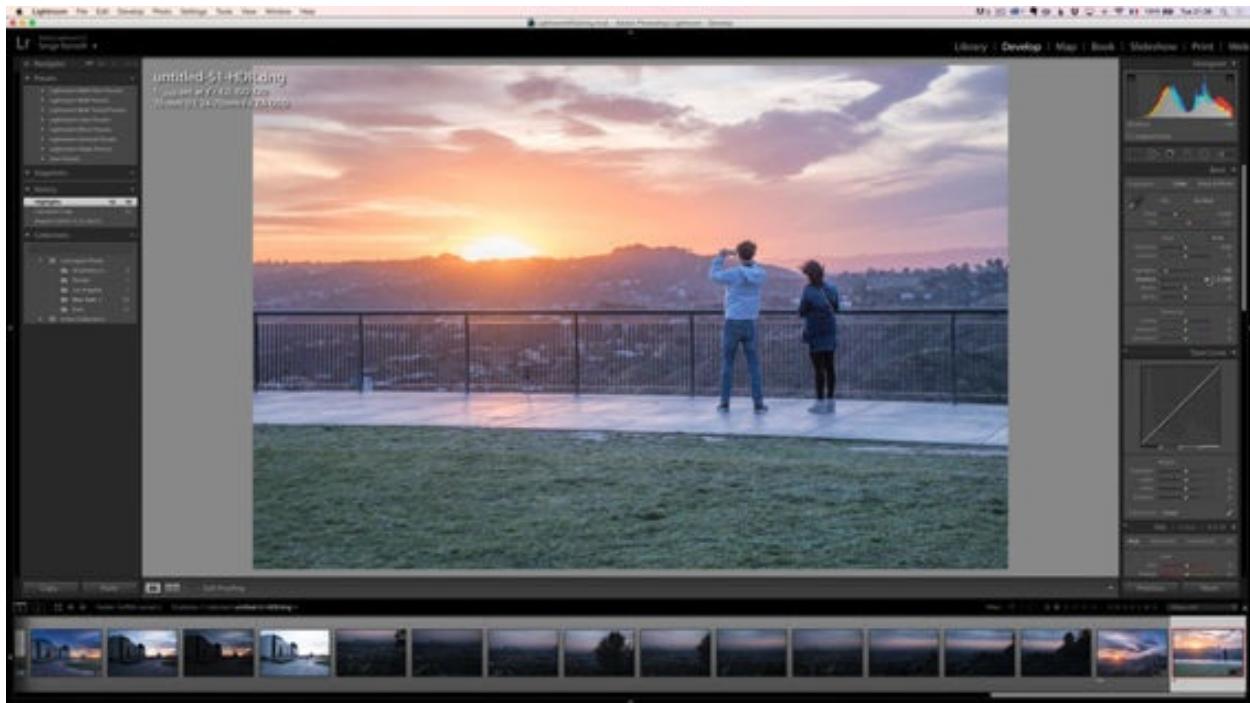


As a word of caution, this doesn't work 100% especially if you aren't using a tripod. We got away with it in this photo, but it's **ALWAYS** better to do HDR photos on a tripod.

OK, go ahead and click **Merge** to start retouching the HDR photo.

### 3. Open up the Shadows and Bring Down the Highlights.

In the **Basic panel** go ahead and grab the **Shadows slider** and bring it up to 100 and grab the **Highlights slider** and bring it down to -100



Remember this is HDR and look at how much information we've got! It doesn't need to be so bright so you can tweak that. Maybe try the **Highlights** at around -92 and the **Shadows** at +46

### 4. Set Your White and Black points.

Try moving the **Whites slider** until around +27 and the **Blacks slider** until around -25.



The white balance looks fine so let's skip to the **Presence** controls.

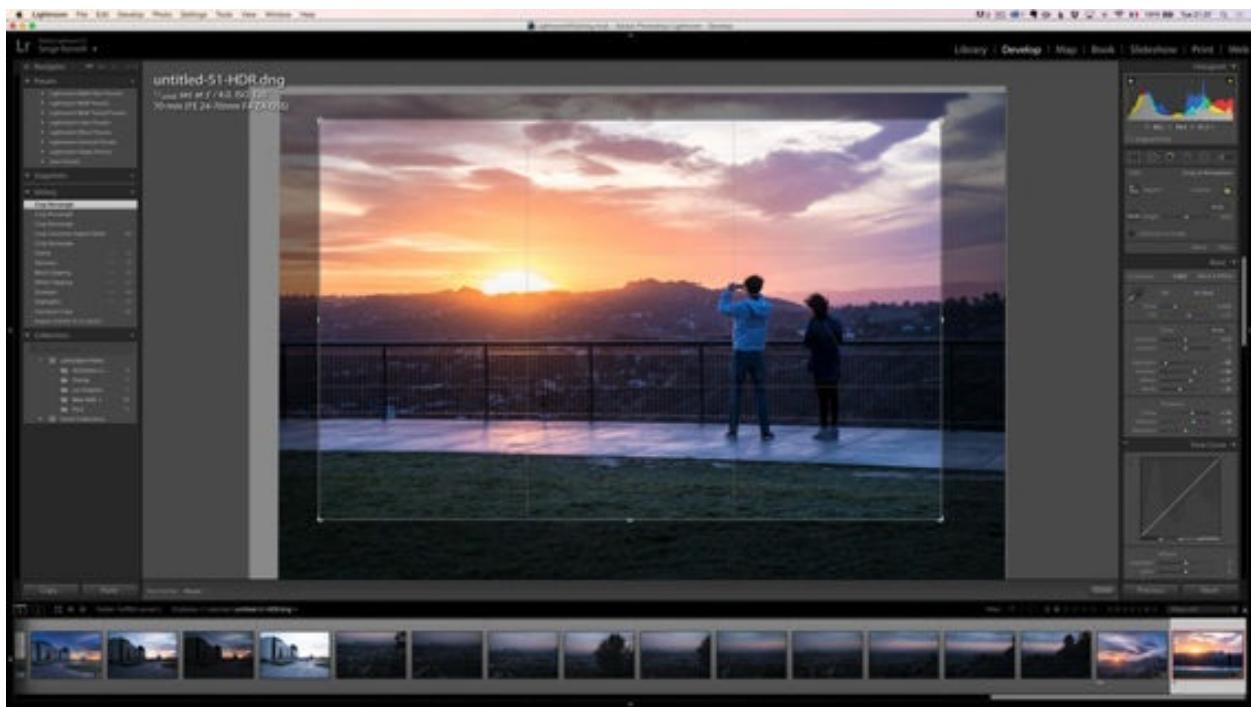
## 5. Add Vibrance and Clarity.

Move the **Vibrance slider** to around +39 and the **Clarity slider** until around +33.



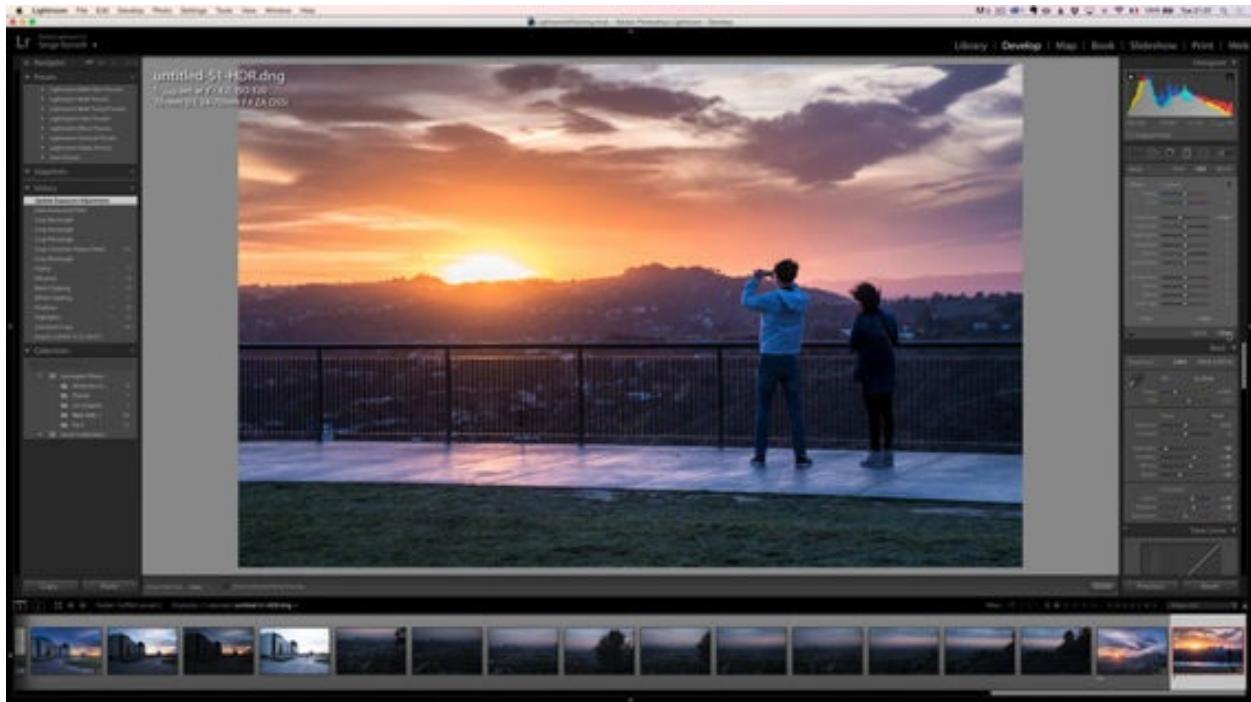
## 6. Crop the Photo.

I'm going to crop it because there is just too much lawn for my taste.



## 7. Apply a Graduated Filter.

Let's do a little grad filter at the top with the **Exposure** set to -81 to really bring out more details in the sky.



That's what HDR is for. It's to make this high-dynamic range photo where you have a lot of information in the dark areas and a lot of information in the bright areas and the **Deghosting effect** helps when there is movement between the photos.

You get the idea? Great! Moving on.

# Project 4: Retouching a Daylight Photo Skills you will learn:

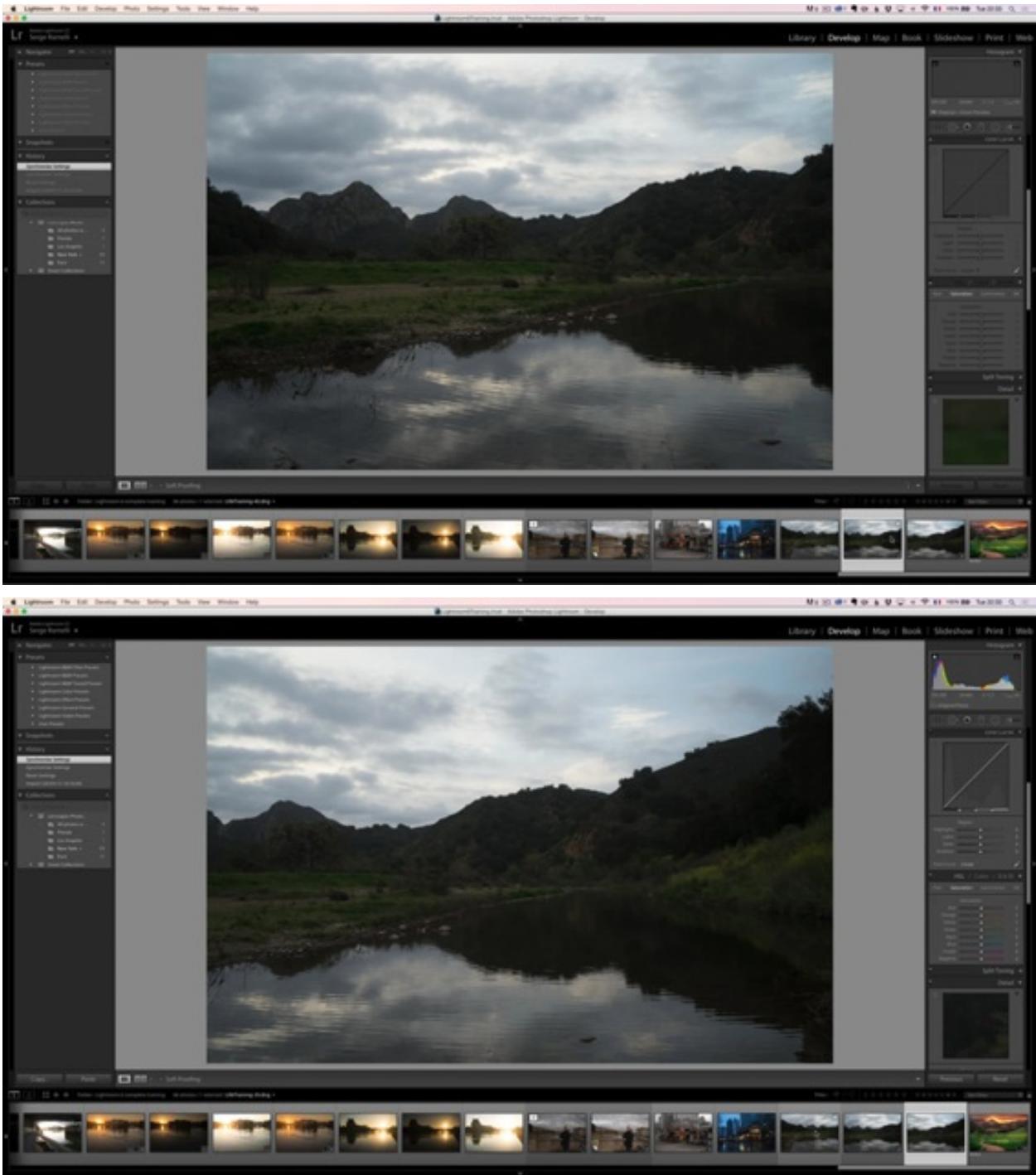
- How to retouch a panorama that is already merged
- Adding grad filters and deleting specific areas from them.

**Time to execute:** 30 minutes

All right, let's do a retouching project and this time something which is not a sunset. It's again going to be a panorama, but this time I'm not going to do any retouching before making the panorama.

These are the unretouched RAW files we are going to be working with. I shot them by hand, and we have end of afternoon light.





## 1. Merge Your Photos into a Pano.

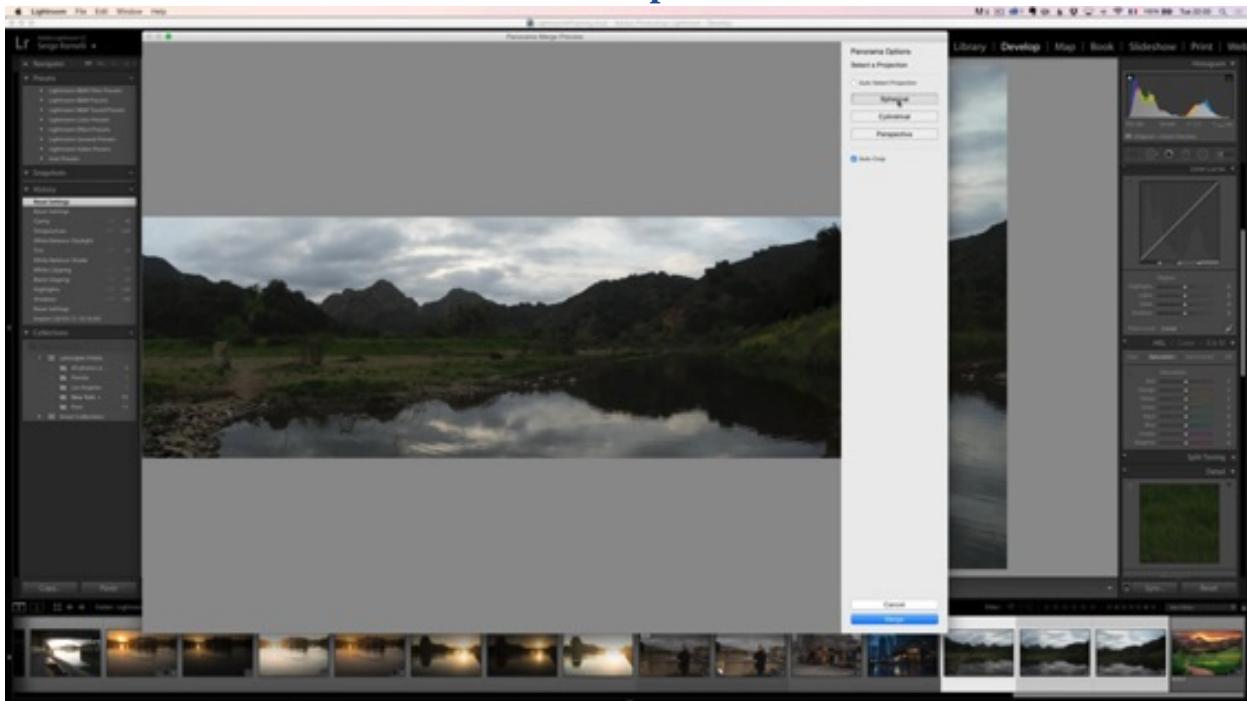
Select the three photos in the **Film Strip**, right click on them with your mouse and choose **Photomerge> Panorama**. The reason I'm doing it this way is because now it has become so easy to make RAW panorama files, it will be easier to retouch seeing the whole scene all at once.



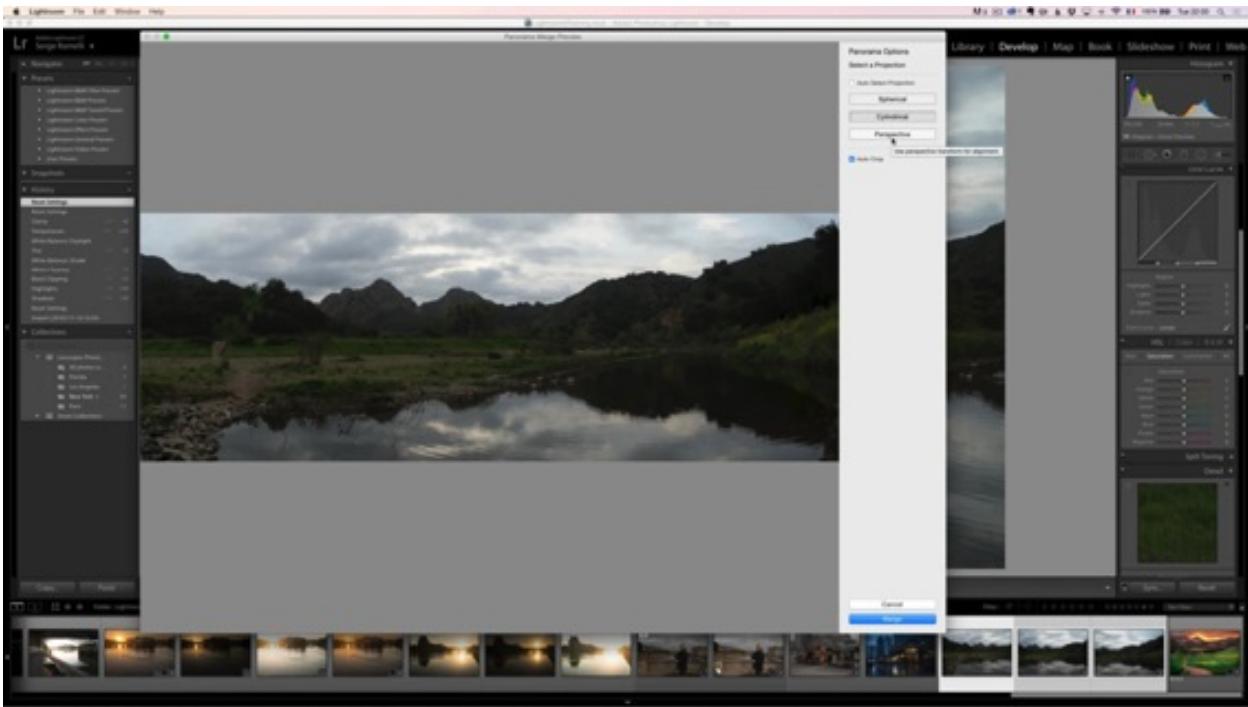
## 2. Adjust the Pano Settings.

The **Panorama PhotoMerge Preview** window is going to open up. Go ahead and turn **Auto Crop** on if it isn't.

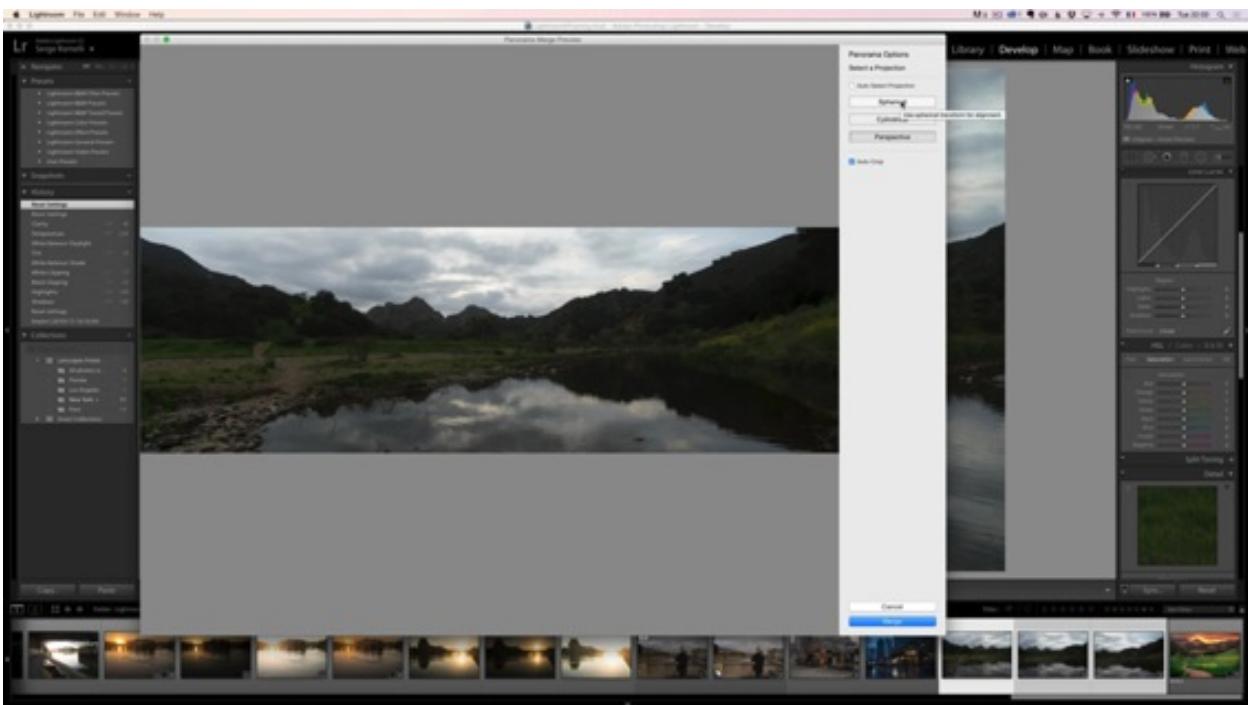
Now check each of the different modes: **Spherical**:



## Cylindrical:



## And Perspective:

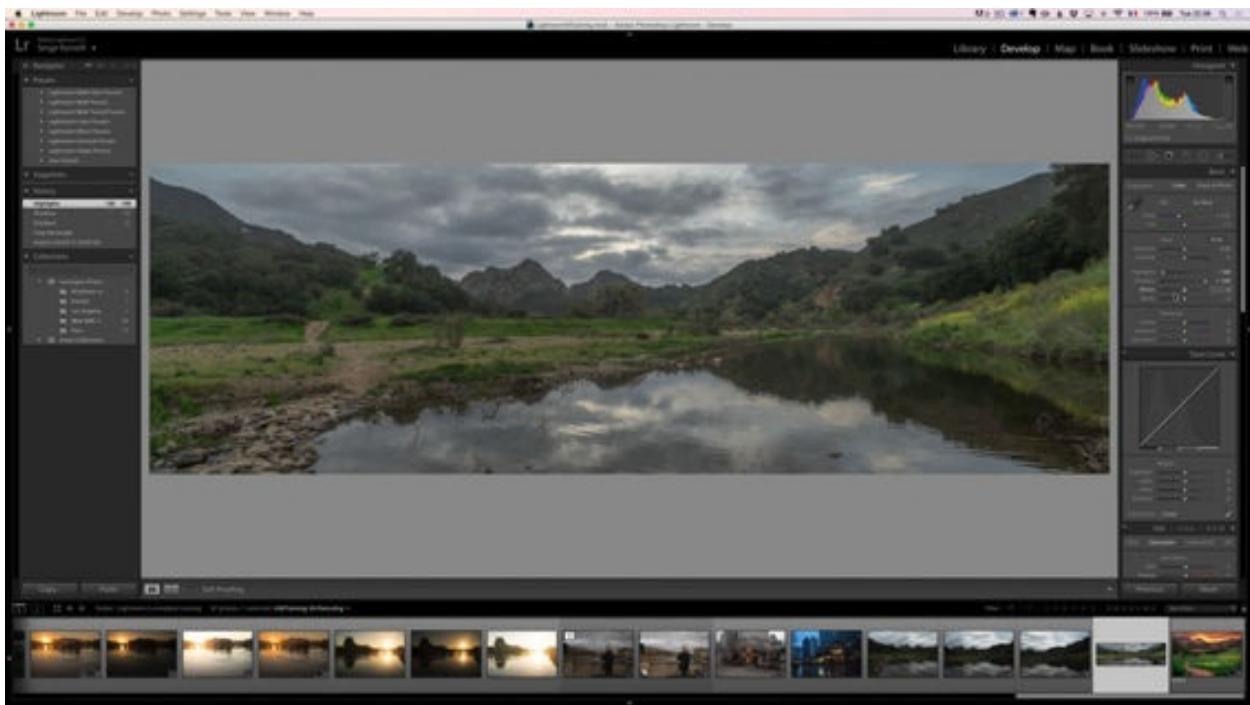


**Perspective** will make the mountains look much further away and give the photo more space, so let's choose that one.

OK, go ahead and click **Merge** let's start retouching the panorama.

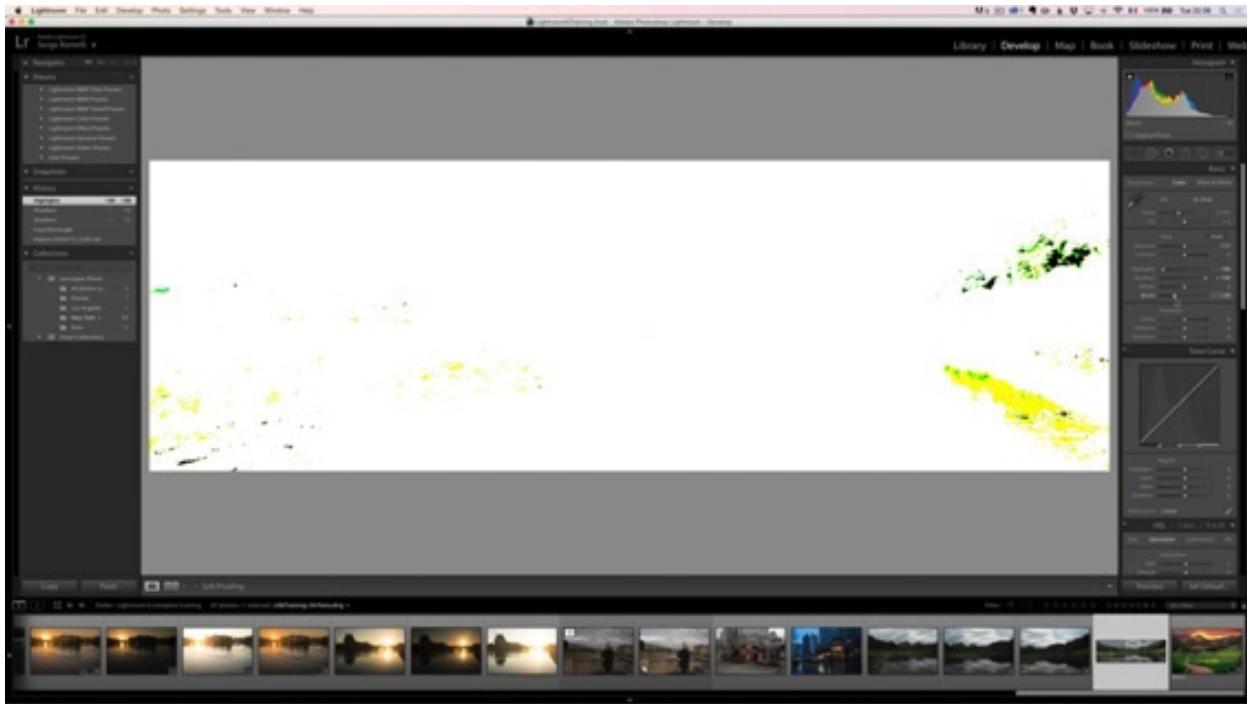
### 3. Open up the Shadows and Bring Down the Highlights.

Okay, so now that the panorama is made, let's retouch it using my regular work flow. In the **Basic panel** go ahead and grab the **Shadows slider** and bring it up to 100 and grab the **Highlights slider** and bring it down to -100.



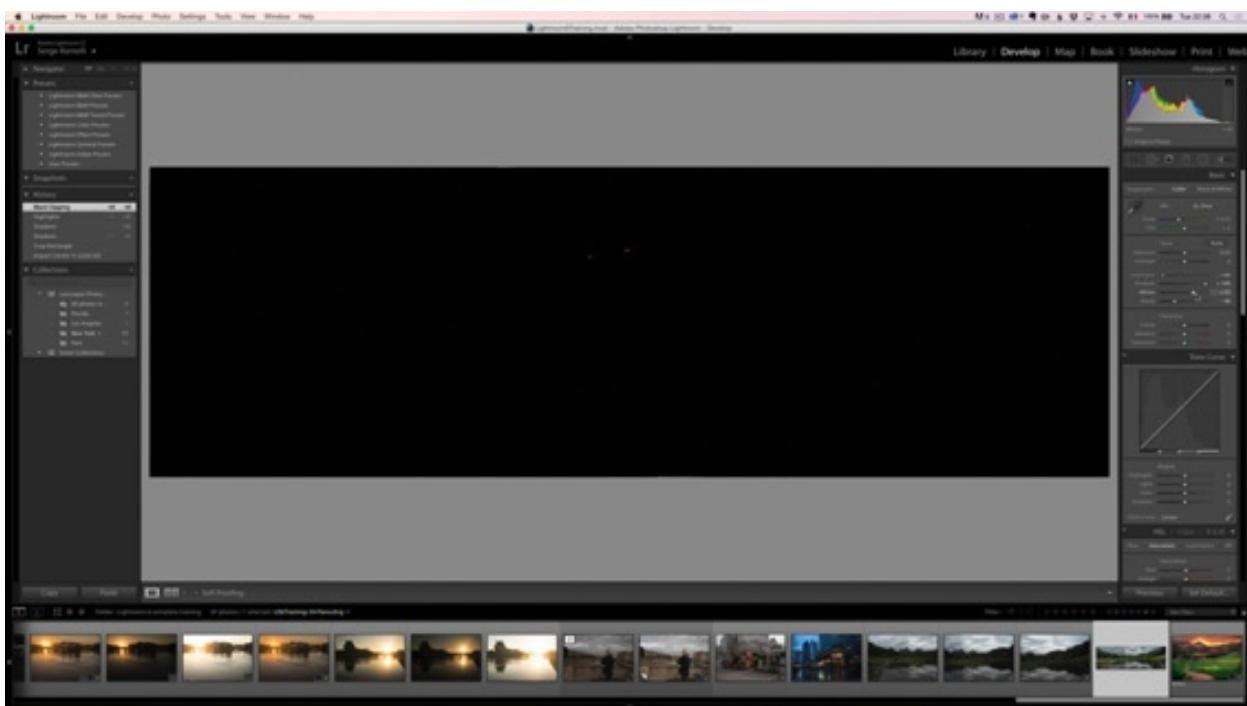
### 4. Set Your Black Point.

Hold down the **Alt key** again while moving the **Blacks slider** until you see the photo go white and then start to see some black or colored speckles coming in, somewhere around -44.



## 5. Set Your White Point.

Hold down the Alt key while moving the **Whites slider** until the photo goes black and keep pushing it until you get a little bit of red, somewhere around +42.



And that really evens out our histogram nicely.

## 6. Set Your White Balance.

I don't like the White Balance how it looks right now, but the amazing thing is that I can change it after having made the panorama, which is completely new in the world of pano photography. Let's set the WB to **Daylight**. And now add a little more blue on the **Temp slider** to about 5240. And then push the **Tint slider** to around -10 to add in some green. Remember this is a late afternoon photo so we aren't trying to add warmth as if it were a sunset.



## 7. Add Some Contrast.

Let's pump up the contrast slightly, so go ahead and move the **Contrast slider** to somewhere around +31.



## 8. Add Some Local Adjustment Brushing.

It's time to start adding some artistic flourishes here. Choose your Brush tool and set it for **Exposure** and adjust the sliders to be **Exposure +1.01**, **Feather 100**, **Flow 81** and **Density 82**. And let's add a bunch more highlights in the water on the reflection of the sky to make it even more like a mirror



Go ahead and create another brush set to **Exposure** and put the sliders on **Exposure** .63, **Saturation** 42 and let's now add some strokes to the grass and on the flowers to help complexify the light on these foreground elements as well.



#### 9. Add Some Grad Filters.

Let's add a **Grad filter** at the top of the screen to lower the **Exposure** on the sky to -0.63.



Now we don't want the grad to be applied on the top of the mountains, but remember we have this amazing new option by selecting the brush option from within the Grad Filter and then holding down the [Alt key](#) we can delete it from the mountain range.



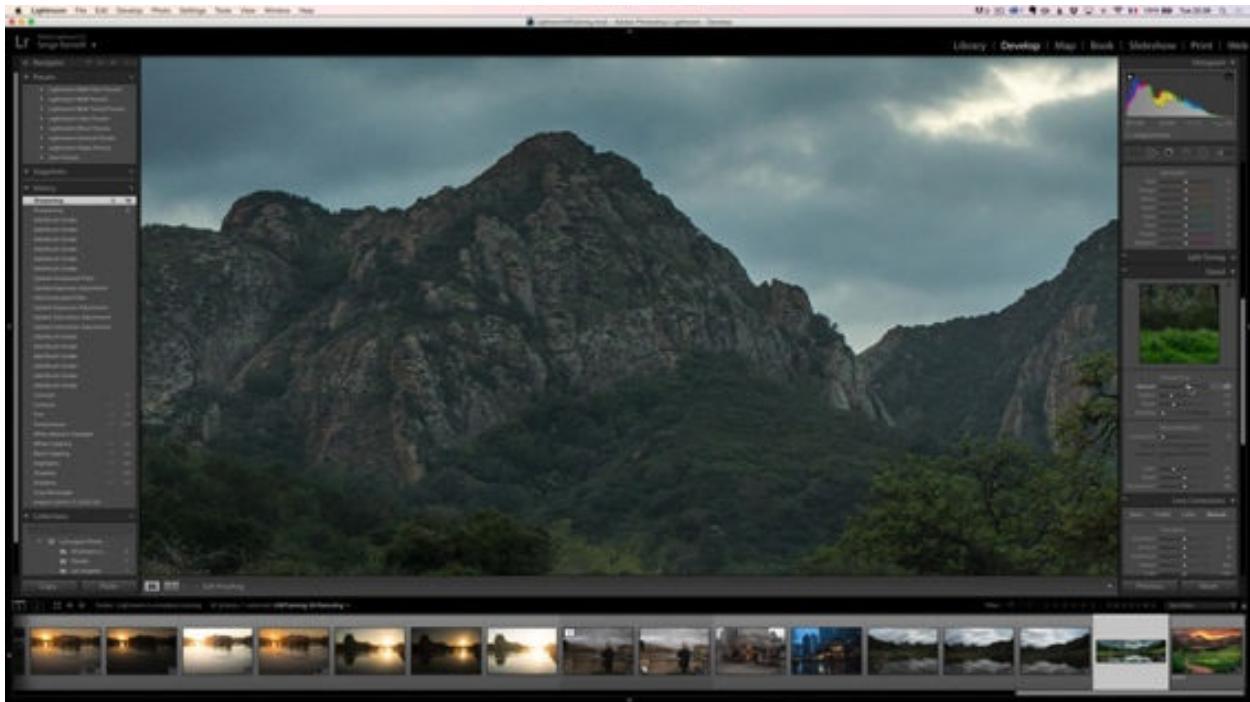
Remember to leave **Auto-mask** off until you come to the edges of the mountains and then turn it on to get that final edge so that you end up with the grad filter

just on the sky.

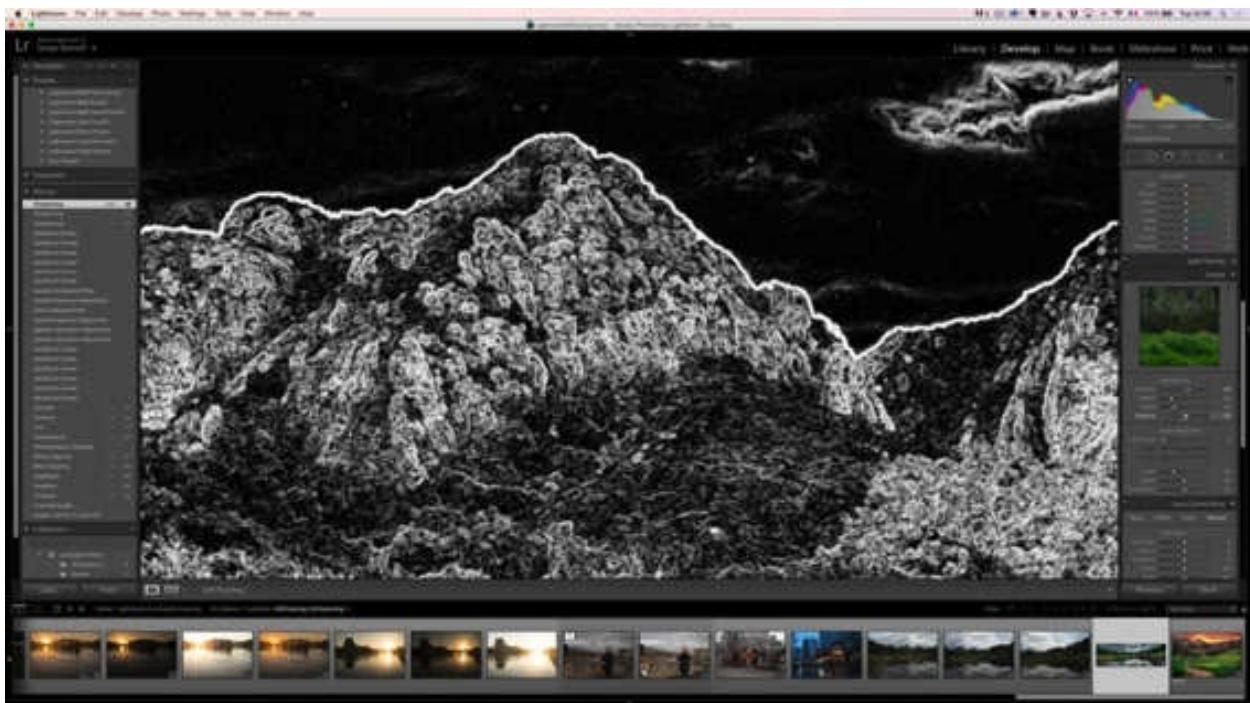


## 10. Add Sharpening and Noise Reduction.

It already looks great with really crisp details, but we can still add a touch of sharpening. Move the **Sharpening slider** to 90. Unfortunately the sky is getting a little grainy.



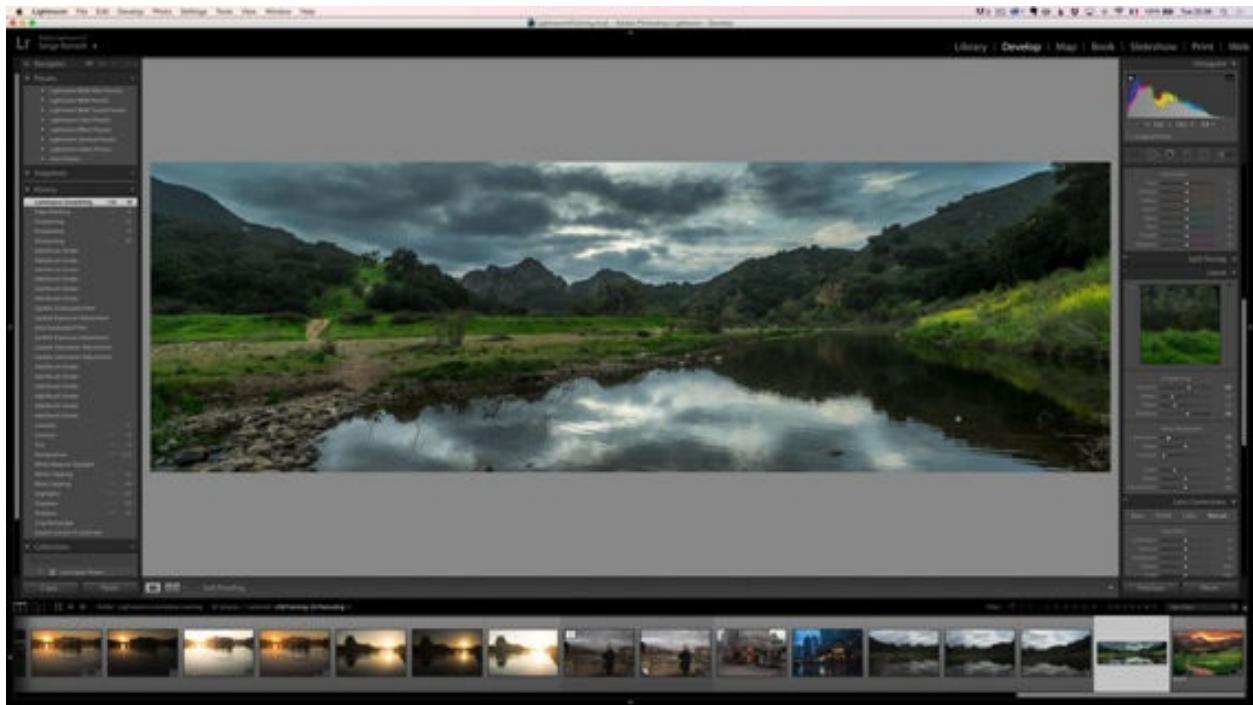
So go ahead and hold down the **Alt key** and slide the **Mask slider** to get the sky blacked out so there is no sharpening being applied to it.



And to balance this out for my “equals 100 formula” move the **Luminance slider** for **Noise Reduction** to 10.

11. Do any other tweaks you like.

This looks great! There we go, you've just retouched an afternoon panorama.



You are welcome to try different settings, tweak color or anything else you wish to adjust the photo to your taste. Or you can join me on the next project!

# Project 5: Converting Color Landscape Photos to Black & White

## Skills you will learn:

- How to convert a color photo to Black and White
- The basics of how to retouch a Black and White photo

**Time to execute:** 30 minutes

All right. There is one option I didn't show you yet which is the conversion of color photos to black and white. It's very interesting because as I said earlier, it is an art form by itself.

1. Select Black & White Treatment.

On this photo I took in New York.

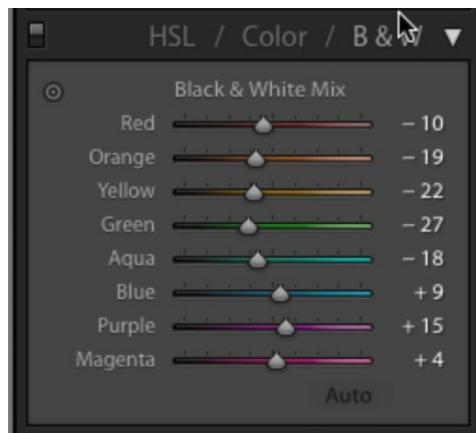


What I would do is directly at the top of the **Basic panel** on the right side choose **Black & White**. It's going to put the entire photo to black and white.



## 2. Make Adjustments in the HSL Panel.

If you go down to the HSL panel you will see that all the sliders in the B&W panel have changed. And the basic idea of conversion is that you are taking color tones and turning them into darkness values in black and white.



Let's take the blues for example. If you move the **Blue slider** and **Aqua slider** all the way to the left at -100 it will take anything which is blue here and make it darker.



You can also use the **Targeted adjustment tool** and click on any area to and drag it to make it lighter or darker. As I warned earlier in the book, when you start to go above values of +30 or -30 you can start to get a lot of noise in your photos. You might not see it in the small images in this book, but you will definitely see it on your screen at 100%.



It takes a lot of experimenting and a lot of practice to get good on this, and I'm

not trying to spend a huge chunk of time on this, so for now, choose **Auto** at the bottom of the **HSL panel** and this will give you a pretty good result that certainly works for this exercise.

### 3. Open up the Shadows.

In the **Basic panel** go ahead and grab the **Shadows slider** and bring it up to 100.



### 4. Blow out the Highlights.

Normally we would bring our **Highlights slider** down to -100.



Now, bringing down the highlights is giving me a lot of detail in the sky, which is cool. But for this photo I don't want to bring the details in the sky, I want to make the sky brighter. I'm going for a high key effect because a lot of the old black and white photos had that in common because the film they were using wasn't good enough to get all that detail. So move the **Highlights slider** to +100.



## 5. Straighten up that Bridge!

I don't know if the crooked bridge is annoying you as much as it's annoying me but go to the **Lens Corrections panel** and choose **Auto Upright**. There! Whew. So much better.



## 6. Set Your Black point.

Hold down the **Alt key** again while moving the **Blacks slider** until you see the photo go white and then start to see some black or colored speckles coming in, somewhere around -50.



Go ahead and adjust it by eye, maybe bring it to around -43



## 7. Start Adding Haze and other Local Adjustments.

Now, it's time to do some art, because that's just the basic start of the black and white conversion. This is a photo of Brooklyn taken from Manhattan Island. There was a bit of rain that day. If you zoom in on the photo, you can see all the

rain. So now let's do some retouching to really take advantage of that and boost it even more.



Create a new Local Adjustment brush and set the sliders to **Exposure** 1.01, **Clarity** -48, **Feather** 100, **Flow** 80, **Density** 80. And ensure **Auto Mask** is off. So now we are going to brush over the buildings so they look like they're in the fog.



As you paint, Brooklyn is going to disappear in the fog. I want to put the whole island into the fog and the back of the bridge as well.



Let's do it even more. Increase your brush **Exposure** to 1.63 and drop the **Clarity** further to -75. Also start brushing in the sky, to make the sky even more white.



Okay make sure you press the **Alt** key to delete any brushing that happened to far onto the bridge. Turn on the overlay and you should have something like this photo.



## 8. Adjust Your Exposure.

It's a little bright so go ahead and push the overall **Exposure slider** down to .84.



#### 9. Add a Grad Filter.

Create a new Graduated filter and put it at the bottom of the frame and move the **Exposure slider** to -1.12 and the **Clarity slider** and set it to -48 and that will help darken and close off the bottom of the photo.



## 10. Add More Contrast.

This could use a bit more contrast so take your **Contrast slider** and push it +40.



## 11. Add some More Fog and Haze.

Let's try and push Brooklyn even more into the haze. Create a new **Local Adjustment brush** and set **Exposure** to 1.83 and **Clarity** to -100 and once again brush over the buildings and the other bridge on the bottom right.



## 12. Adjust Your Exposure.

It has gotten a little too bright again so go ahead and push the overall **Exposure slider** down to +.50.



Let's have a look at the **Before/After** view of the photo.



It's an interesting conversion. You can obviously play around with this however you want to suit your taste, and when you are ready, let's do the next project on black and white portraits!