



ALANA MCCLURE
photography



HOW TO CHOOSE THE RIGHT PHOTOGRAPHER FOR YOU.

Choosing the right photographer for your personal or professional portrait session, your modelling portfolio, your wedding, your commercial or advertising project, is extremely important.

We live in an era where everybody claims themselves as professional photographer. Those who dedicate themselves 100% into their work, make sure that their clients are satisfied, and are passionate about what they do – and those who don't put the necessary effort into their work, and who lack passion or have lost it – often appear to be in the same league.

Add to that it's so easy now for anyone to market themselves over the internet, and it can be difficult for most people to see the difference between professionals and amateurs. You want to make sure that the photographer you are hiring will deliver work that is up to your expectations.

How in the world are you supposed to choose?
How can you tell what's real and what isn't?



Thank u so much for our session on Monday- it was wonderful to meet you and the morning was just the time away from our home that we needed. Your baby expertise is unsurpassed! Thank u for the advice. I was also really really impressed by your makeup artist- ... she was extremely professional and did exactly what I wanted without asking any questions! -V-Sandhu



There are so many different ways to find a good photographer.

ASK AROUND. You can ask people around you for recommendations and make sure to get feedback on their experience with the photographer. This may seem too simple, but you can't beat word-of-mouth referrals.

Ask your friends and family if they know a good photographer. Your experience with a custom photographer doesn't start, or end, with just the session. And don't ask just about the photographer's quality of work or prices - ask your friends about their experience with him/her. Sometimes, that can make all the difference in the world with how you feel your session goes, and the results you get.

It was so much fun working with you Alana. You did exactly as we knew you would, which was beautifully capture not only our personalities but also our genuine emotions. These are not just "photos" but works of art that will leave us with lasting memories for many years to come. Looking forward to our newborn session once baby arrives! - K Capizio



You can also **SEARCH FOR PHOTOGRAPHERS ON THE INTERNET** & see if you can find testimonials from other people.

Always make sure to take a look at the photographer's work, and obviously, make sure that you like his or her work before going further.

Inspect Quality.

Crispness.

Composition and posing style.

Quality lighting.

Editing style.

Consistency.

These are all important areas to think of when evaluating a photographer's gallery.

Insider tip: Don't go against your own style when choosing a photographer (especially in favour of budget). Look for a photographer who will compliment who you and your family are. Going against your own style is a recipe for stress for both you and your photographer. If you have one thing in mind and your photographer has another, something is going to go wrong somewhere. You really want to feel like they know you and that you're both on the same page for the vision you have.

We are so grateful for the early but safe arrival of our precious baby boy! We couldn't be happier to have Alana capture these unforgettable memories of our family . We will cherish these beautiful images forever, she really is 'the baby whisperer' and her slogan truly says it all- Take nothing for granted - M. Boyde

Prior to booking, **YOU SHOULD MEET WITH THE PHOTOGRAPHER**, or at the very least have a conversation with them on the phone. In fact chat with a photographer or two. Before deciding who you'd like to be your photographer, arrange a consultation.

Consultations are wonderful for experiencing a photographer's personality and demeanor before a session. This is especially important when hiring a photographer for children. You want to make sure that you'll have some comfort with your photographer because your mood most definitely affects the quality of your final images. If the he/she sets a positive atmosphere, your session will be more enjoyable, and your images will have better expression! Consultations are great in-person, but can also be done over the phone or through video chat (like Skype).

Insider Tip: Ask if he/she has a recent police check if you are trusting them with your children



"Alana is a wonderful photographer. She captures the beauty and spirit in everyone she photographs. Her creativity and passion exceeds expectations. Highly recommend Alana." -C. Kuntz



EVALUATE THEIR PROFESSIONALISM. At the very least, your photographer should be registered as a business, insured and paying taxes.

A contract that sets expectations to protect both of you should be offered. Also, be sure to ask if they do work for charity or belong to any upstanding professional organizations (like PPOC, WPPI, PPA).

Remember there are no standards or legislation for offering creative services in Canada. Anyone can present themselves as a 'professional' and if you don't ask you will never know.

Make sure to ask a lot of questions. You can do some research beforehand if you don't have a clear idea of what questions to ask the photographer. You will get a better sense of who the photographer is and how he or she works when you ask him the questions directly (on the phone or in person as opposed to email).

"Alana is a wonderful photographer. She captures the beauty and spirit in everyone she photographs. Her creativity and passion exceeds expectations. Highly recommend Alana." -C. Kuntz



YOU'LL KNOW THEY'RE YOUR PHOTOGRAPHER IF,

1. YOU THINK THEY'RE A GREAT PERSON.

The best photographer-family relationships are the ones where you genuinely click with your photographer. Not in the, "I LOVE POPCORN" "OMG ME TOO!" type of way (although that's good too), but more of the same personality type and generally getting along and you get the sense they understand who you are.

For example, I'm super detail oriented, like to chat and I'm always full of sarcasm! So when I work with clients who get my funny outlook on parenting and raising a family we just have the best time. I am probably not the right photographer for super-silly people, and I think this comes across in my images.

No one is the perfect photographer for everyone! That's part of the fun: choosing someone to photograph your family in a style that represents you. Laid-back, goofy, adventurous, serene—there's a photographer out there for everyone. And chances are, you'll fall in love with their images for exactly that reason.

"I'm just in love with my pictures!

You're such a talented photographer, I was so nervous on the beginning, but you make me feel so comfortable...

You have captured the greatest moments in my life forever, thank you so much for that!!!" Valeska



YOU'LL KNOW THEY'RE YOUR PHOTOGRAPHER IF,

2. YOU FALL IN LOVE WITH THEIR IMAGES.

You'll know you potentially have found the photographer for you when you can't get enough of their images.

When you click through their blog/galleries and keep looking through more and more.

When you can envision your family in those images you're off to a great start.

*PPOC ON Image Salon 2013 - Merit & Judges Choice
"Brotherly Love"*

"Ryan just brought our pictures home. Ridiculously stunning. Ask anybody I know, I can't stop talking about how amazing everything was. Thank you so much! I can't wait to come back for the rest of our sessions!" B Barkley



YOU'LL KNOW THEY'RE YOUR PHOTOGRAPHER IF,

3. YOU NOTICE THEY UPDATE THEIR WEBSITE & BLOG.

Photographers should have updated websites. You'll want to see blog posts from the past year on their site so you know what the trends are and how their style is evolving. Blogs with the most recent post from 2013 say they don't care about their web presence, are too busy to blog (who knows what that means for turn-around time), or they haven't photographed anything they want to show off recently.

Don't get me wrong—we all have a month or two where we forget to blog/portrait season is crazy/life gets in the way, but there should still be fairly recent posts. For those who photograph exclusively outdoors, winter can be a tricky season, so don't expect a lot of new posts, but definitely look for effort to keep updated.

*"Thank you so much Alana! I truly love all of my images!
Taking portraits of myself when I felt bloated and unattractive was something I was really nervous about,
but you made me feel so comfortable the whole time and I had so much fun in the end! I can't wait for my bundle of joy to
arrive and to have another photo shoot with you and your crew! xo Shirah"*

YOU'LL KNOW THEY'RE YOUR PHOTOGRAPHER IF,

4. FINALLY (AFTER MEETING OR CHATTING WITH THEM) YOU THINK THEY'RE WORTH THEIR RATES.

Photography rates are impossible to compare. Each person is completely different in what they offer, and how they offer it. Some photographers charge a session fee and then you get to invest in prints/digital images/displays after the session, and some have packages that you pick ahead of time—some are totally different from that. Some have order minimums, and some don't offer digital images at all.

When you are budgeting for a session, make sure to ask what their average client investment is so you can estimate what you might spend. If you have something specific in mind, ask your photographer what it would cost (for example, if you know you want a portrait session and three images framed over your living room sofa with the accompanying digital images ask your photographer for a quote for that specific order).

Insider tip: Photographers sometimes don't offer/tell you about every product that they have access to— it would be an endless list. If you want something specific, say something you saw in your friends house, ask your photographer if they offer it. Chances are, they probably know someone or can find someone who makes just what you are looking for!



“What a pleasure it was to work with you Alana. You have so beautifully captured our precious family in a few moments in history that we will cherish forever. Thank you.” M. Katzman

YOU'LL KNOW THEY'RE YOUR PHOTOGRAPHER IF,

In a [Canadian Living](#) article about choosing a photographer here's what [Yuki Hayaski](#) had to say about cost "CONSIDER VALUE WHEN COMPARING QUOTES. Remember: You get what you pay for. Although there may be exceptions, in general, better photographers cost more. How about those cut-rate ones? Well, they're cheap for a reason. "

My final words on **pricing**; There are lots of people, websites, blogs and magazines who are going to tell you to try to haggle for the lowest possible price...

...They're wrong. It's not like buying a car where you're just purchasing an over-priced retail product. You are hiring a person or people for their time and service to you and the people you love most in the world. Hire the right person and you know they didn't become a professional overnight and they didn't win your trust and commitment by being lazy. Hagglng tells the photographer that you don't value them or their work; that they're just a commodity undeserving of your hard earned money or appreciation. Yes, this is a business and the right photographers are doing this to make a living, but any photographer who believes in their own work and art isn't just simply looking to get hired by anyone. They're looking to get hired by the right people who believe in them as well. They're interviewing clients just the same as you are interviewing photographers. Hagglng is a sure fire way to scare off a quality photographer who could have worked wonders for you. The bottom line is, the right photographer works hard with two grass roots goals in mind...your happiness and their own family's dinner.

"Whew...I did warn you I was chatty."



"I had a great time working with you, I can truly say you're in love with what you do! Thank you so much for the great pictures can't wait to have more babies lol" - R. Ujiri



*PPOC ON Image Salon 2014 -accepted
"Des Fleurs"*

"My husband and I went to Alana for our maternity photos. Not only was she professional but she anticipated our needs during the whole process. She knew what her shots were going to be and had a loose outline that allowed for us to be spontaneous as well. When we arrived on the day, there were no surprises and the process went very smoothly. She was amazing with us. She was firm and in control without feeling bossy. After the day, she kept us informed about how the process was going and gave us sneak peeks at our photos before she had finished. She was always available for questions by email and phone and always called us back within 24 hours. I felt extremely confident in her organization and professionalism.

Aside from all the technical qualities that Alana possesses, even more so she is artistically talented. We appreciate the art of photography and were hoping for photos that could be beautiful beyond the genre of "maternity pictures." Alana did all of that and more. She has an amazing eye to take something and make it beautiful and more meaningful. The angles she uses, artsy and abstract also, evoke emotion when you see her photos. When we saw her portfolio for the first time, my husband and I knew that she was the right person for us. Her passion for photography was obvious from the first moment we met with her.

The investment was nothing compared to the lifetime of memories they would evoke. We are so glad we went with Alana. My whole family is grateful for these photos. They are by far the most beautiful photos in our family. We will cherish them for generations to come. I know that anyone who chooses Alana for their maternity photos will feel the same way. I feel so grateful to have met her in time for my baby. She stands out most in her industry and has earned a great reputation.

Thank you" C. Best

Alana McClure
p h o t o g r a p h y