

NIKON LAUNCH NEW F60

Just before Photokina came the news of the Nikon F60. The original press release mentioned the launch in Japan. In Europe Nikon were not confirming that we would receive the camera. Come Photokina they were happy to make the announcement. Firstly, a bit of orientation. The F60 arrives as a superb entry-level camera. The first port of call for compact owners after their first serious camera perhaps.



If you will indulge me for a moment whilst I seem to digress, I feel I should relay something here. You know how some say that youth is wasted on the young? Well, there is something similar to be said of these entry-level models. In the right hands they can be very rewarding, providing the boundaries are respected. We always say that the F50 and now the F60 is aimed at the new photographer and try to steer others further up the range. Increasing numbers of, shall we say mature, persons with many years of photographic experience are trading in the manual gear for the F50. Like a well-driven small car they can give more expensive equipment a run for its money.

Whilst it would be unfair, and inaccurate, to call the F60 a repackaged F50, it is fair to say the basic spec is quite similar. What differs is the manner in which the functions are presented and the way in which some tasks are carried out. I liked the push button system of the F50 but it seems the wheel is the preferred method of input. So the half-dozen program exposure modes are ganged up on a neat wheel on the left of the top plate. The familiar abbreviations are used for manual, aperture priority, shutter priority and program mode. The 'special' programs such as sports and portrait mode use the standard icons to convey

the message. This wheel falls readily to hand but has strong enough detents to prevent accidental operation. There is no end stop and it will go round in either direction.

The F60 has a broad range of shutter speeds that runs from 30 seconds to 1/2000 in half-stop increments. It can do long exposures using a clever timed exposure mode. Pressing the shutter button immediately pops up the mirror. The shutter waits about half a second after you let the pressure off the release button before

Continued on page 2...

Featured in this edition of the Grays of Westminster Gazette...

- Tony Munday - Nikon Launch New F60
- Nick Wynne - ...Concluding Point
- Tony Munday - Second (Silent) Wave
- Richard Else - Clinging To The Face
- Gray Levett - Nikon Legend - Part LII

opening. To close the shutter just press the shutter button again. Using the self-timer would further reduce the chances of vibration. A bar on the top plate LCD (Liquid Crystal Display) pulses once per second to help you time the shot.

Metering is the excellent Nikon Matrix system. A six segment 3D Matrix when used with a D spec lens; plain Matrix when an older AF lens is employed. Like the F50 the F60 will not play when manual lenses are attached. It will only provide manual exposure and will not give any light meter assistance. Rather like the F50 the F60 will revert to centre-weighted metering when manual exposure mode is chosen. A new twist for Nikon, the F60 will switch to centre-weighted metering when the exposure lock button is pressed. There is good basis for this. Nikon have long stated that exposure lock is not necessary with Matrix metering. The F60 affirms the strength of their belief by changing to centre-weighted when you decide to take control of the exposure decisions by either using manual exposure or using the exposure lock.

For those unfamiliar with the F50 and its predecessors it is worth mentioning that the aperture ring is redundant on these models. Aperture control was via a wheel on the F-401 series and by push buttons on the F50. The F60 uses

the ubiquitous command wheel to change the aperture in aperture priority mode. In manual mode the same wheel will change the aperture if a handy button is pressed. Like the shutter speeds, the increments are half-stops. Alongside the aperture control button is the exposure compensation button. In conjunction with the command wheel the range of plus or minus 3 stops in half-stops can be set. In the simpler program modes this feature is not available.

Like hi-fi equipment, cameras have a change of finish every so often. The recent change to silver with the later F50s has been carried through to the F60. Some markets receive the F60 in black but there are no plans to import them to the UK. The red stripe set into the handgrip shows that the new camera is a Giugiaro design. The on-off switch around the shutter button is suggestive of the F55 whilst the sides of the pentaprism are like the F70.

Speaking of flash, the built-in unit packs a healthy power output, with a guide number of 15 (metres with ISO 100 film). It will cover a 28mm lens and as with any built-in flash it is recommended that the lens hood be removed. The F60 has a novel red-eye reduction system. For the first time Nikon have built a lamp into the body of the camera. It illuminates for a

second prior to the flash and shutter firing. The lamp (which could have been designed by Maglite such is the power output) doubles up as an AF assist and general warning beacon. The flash will synchronise to a maximum of 1/125 and has a slow-sync feature to give improved background detail.

The F60 has a clear, bright viewfinder and gives spectacle wearers a good view of the image and the viewfinder information. For the first time at this level Nikon are providing built-in dioptre correction to fine-tune the image. It will still take a standard correction lens should the range (-1.5 to +1) prove insufficient. The viewfinder comes fitted with a comfy rubber surround as standard too.

Given the enhancements it is natural to expect a price premium. But Nikon are having none of that. Whilst others offer cameras that are twenty or thirty pounds over the magic £300 mark Nikon are hitting hard at £299.00 including a 35-80 Nikkor lens. They are also throwing in a smart little gadget bag and the first two rolls of film. Given this and the metal chassis (increasingly rare on budget models) I am glad we do not have to try to sell anything to compete with it. Available now.

by Tony Munday

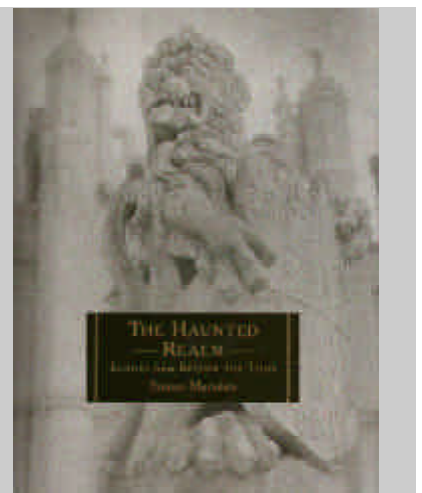
We are delighted to announce the first of what we hope will be a series of An Evening with...

The first of these will be **An Evening with Sir Simon Marsden** on Saturday 28th November 1998 at 7pm in The Great Hall, Saint Hill Manor, East Grinstead, West Sussex.

Sir Simon will give an illustrated talk in which he will describe and show a

number of his haunting beautiful photographs. This will be followed by a special signing of his new book, **The Haunted Realm**. The book costs £18.99, and tickets for the evening are £15 or £30 which includes a signed copy.

Simon is an internationally acclaimed photographer of unusual talent. His extraordinary photographs have been exhibited throughout the world.



A BEGINNERS GUIDE TO THE INTERNET - CONCLUDING POINT

I am to wrap up this subject this month and get back to my more usual topics of (1) what's been going on in the world of Nikon and, (2) What's been going on in the world of Grays of Westminster?

Nonetheless A Guide to the Internet might encourage you to make use of this strange new means of information provision and "visit our site". This expression does not mean travel to London, head south towards the river along Belgrave Road and take the fourth turning on the left into Churton Street and bowl into No. 40. All of which I heartily encourage you to do.

No, I'm talking more about the sort of visit the television presenter means when he says "Now we're going over to the House of Commons for an update". We are familiar with the concept that this is not a signal for us all to dress up warmly and reach for the nearest train timetable. He or she means that, via the television screen, information of the latest absurdities is going to be imparted to you in the comfort of your own home.

So too the Internet can provide information. In a different corner of your room to the TV you can have a similar screen linked to an electronic device connected to a phone line and a typewriter sort of keyboard to activate these. Ladies and gentlemen may I present the computer! So here is where our earlier question of (1) What's been going on the world of Nikon, and, (2) What's

been going on in the world of Grays of Westminster can be dealt with in a new and exciting way.

Upon your prodding the appropriate keys the aforementioned phone line will link you to darkest Berkshire where a service company has a huge computer facility and stores and will send you all the news and information about Nikon and Grays that we give them.

Imagine if *Practical Photography*, our favourite magazine and advertising spot, announced that they were giving us ten times the amount of space in the magazine. Imagine how much more detailed information we could provide on new Nikon, secondhand, accessories, early equipment, reviews, frequently asked questions, lens hood fitment lists (for Rex B of Sussex!), all kinds of useful information. If you added reprints of past issues of our Gazettes this would require about a hundred times more space. In short what we want to tell you in our enthusiasm for Nikon would require tons and tons of space in print. If you get a computer any of these "screens full" of reading matter can be selected by you for display on your screen to be read there and then. Alternatively an accessory plugged into your computer can make a printed copy. This is unsurprisingly called a printer and can reproduce just black and white or in colour to do justice to the photographs that accompany many of our writings. Finally speed of communicating news to you can be dramatically

increased.

By way of an example that happened this month, just after the monthly *Practical Photography* went to press we acquired a fine example of the legendary Nikkor 200-400mm f4ED. Yes this is the one you see countless times in the Heather Angel books as the instrument of her delighting us with her wildlife shoots. On average we offer one for sale every 2 or 3 years. There then ensues a bun fight between the wildlife and transport photographers to acquire it. Well this time instead of waiting a further month to announce its arrival we simply tapped the keyboard to add to our Internet secondhand list and presto: -

Nikkor 200-400mm f/4 ED, No. 58 pouch case exc + £4,650.00

Within a few minutes millions of people all over the world could be aware that it was sitting on a tripod on display in our little corner of Pimlico. I do like technology that serves man - certainly beats weapons technology as I pointedly remarked to an arms dealer who once visited us. Just the once!

by Nick Wynne

SECOND (SILENT) WAVE

Photokina saw the announcement of two new silent wave lenses. These are interesting in their own right but also due to the change in policy they represent. It seems unlikely that this is the start of an all-out conversion to lenses with built-in focus motors more like phase two in the project started in 1992.

Nikon built their first AF lenses in the early eighties. They were for the little known F3 auto focus. We do know of a prototype that was very heavily based on the technological camera of the day, the FA. But it was the F3 that first gained auto focus. Nikon made just two lenses, the 80/2.8 and the 200/3.5. Both had a motor built into the lens to perform the focusing. The camera body, just as now, contained the actual focus detection hardware.

When Nikon launched their first mass-market AF model, the F-501, none of the lenses had a focusing motor; that was built into the camera body. Nikon saw little advantage in building a motor into each lens and instead put the motor in the camera. Given the capability of the first auto focus systems I think this was a sound idea. As focus detection technology improved Nikon have continued to beef up the focus motor in the camera to keep up speedwise. The F90X and F5 provide great performance with many normal lenses.

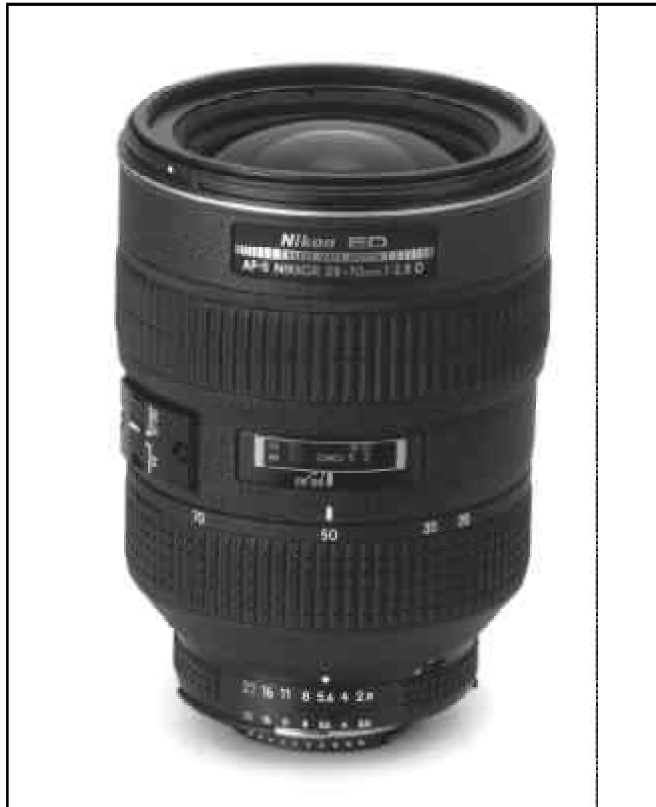
technology progressed, Nikon reviewed its decision. The new generation of focus detection pioneered in the F90 in 1992, plus the need to develop an AF telephoto lens like a 500mm led to a new approach. In mid-92 the new AF-I 300/2.8D and AF-I 600/4D appeared. They contained a fast motor to drive the focusing elements of the lens. These

the autumn of 1992. This proved to be more than a touch premature. Nikon's policy of orderly progress dictated a more considered approach. They concentrated their resources on developing the long telephoto AF lenses and then refined them. The change from the AF-I series and the development of the newer silent wave lenses pushed back the appearance of any other designs.

One lens that was hot favourite for attention was the 80-200. It is a strong seller for Nikon due to its world-class performance, useful focal length range and large maximum aperture. The tripod bush was welcomed, as were the incremental increases in focusing speed. Nikon have decided that now is the time to give the lens a real boost. At Photokina they announced the AF-S Zoom Nikkor 80-200/2.8D ED. This all-new design will be out around January 1999.

The other lens due to appear is the AF-S Zoom Nikkor 28-70/2.8D. Like the 80-200 this is an all new design. Nikon have thrown much of their optical expertise at these lenses and the 80-200 contains an amazing five ED glass elements.

We will write a more technical review of the lenses closer to the time. Expect the 80-200 to cost around £1400.00 and the 28-70 about £1200.00.



lenses are now a family of four AF-S lenses (the 400/2.8 AF-I having been dropped). The newer motor directly drives the elements for lightning quick response. The 'silent wave' bit refers to the current quiet piezo motor.

No sooner had Nikon launched the AF-I series did speculation start over where they were going next. Some even predicted the 80-200/2.8 would gain a motor in

CLINGING TO THE FACE

by Richard Else

*Our guest writer this month is Richard Else. Richard is one of Britain's most experienced producer-directors of outdoor programmes. His most recent series, **The Face - Six Great Climbing Adventures** was filmed in some of the world's most exciting locations. Previously **The Edge** (looking at 100 years of Scottish Climbing) was described by the Daily Mail as "a perfect documentary". It won a Scottish BAFTA together with prizes at mountain film festivals in Japan and mainland Europe.*

*He was the series producer and director of **The Climbers**, another critically acclaimed mountaineering series presented by Chris Bonington which has won awards at film festivals in Banff, Canada, New York, and Telluride, USA. He also coaxed Britain's best known guidebook writer, the reclusive Alfred Wainwright, onto television and made three award winning series with him.*

*He has filmed in many of the world's least hospitable places including Baffin Island, Himalayas, the Canadian Rockies, the High Atlas of Morocco and the European Alps. He is co-author of two books on climbing and wilderness travel and is a keen outdoors person with a special love of ski-mountaineering. He lives in Newtonmore, Inverness-shire in sight of the Cairngorm mountains. No doubt many will be familiar with his stunning series **Wilderness Walks** for BBC Television.*

Watching my last series of climbing films, *The Face*, being transmitted on BBC2 or sitting in my office looking at the book based around the films is an almost surreal experience. I think the blunt truth is that hard, adventure climbing and film making make uneasy bedfellows, for the more exciting and spectacular the action on the rock face the harder it is to capture that on film. Taking stills is an additional problem with yet another layer of complexity added to an already difficult project. The stills - be they action shots, portraits of the main climbers or landscape studies of the area - can often be the Cinderella of the whole operation, fitted in around a schedule that is never less than totally demanding!

Over the years Brian Hall and myself have devised our own systems based around Nikon equipment. Originally we were both attracted by the high quality of the Nikon optics but the

reliability of the cameras is equally impressive. The service Grays of Westminster provide has helped me out of many tight spots but even they might find it hard to get a replacement part to Canada's Cirque of the Unclimbables overnight. That is one of the most remote spots in the whole of North America and is some 360 miles away from the frontier outpost of Fort Simpson. Standing under its awesome third of a mile high rock face is no place to discover that your camera is not as robust as you previously thought!

The stills I take are needed for a number of different purposes and these include publicity shots used on air and in the press, for support material to accompany the films when shown elsewhere in the world, for use on Internet web sites, for video sleeves and, of course, for the book itself. Many of these different needs impose their own discipline and what might well work as a double page spread within the book, packs enough punch to be used in the television listings columns of a national newspaper. This results in a need to take a variety of images and to remember that television will only use a horizontal format image, whilst vertical format shots might be best for print based publications. Perhaps one of the most frustrating aspects is the weight penalties that are often imposed by filming. This often means that only one body and lens will be used in a specific location. To give just a simple example when we traversed over the Jebel Rum mountain in Jordan, there were, contrary to the

popular myths, no helicopters, no on site catering facilities or an army of extras to help with our loads. In the mountains safety is a vital consideration and that often means having as few people on location as possible. The result of this philosophy meant that our production team of 6 people (which itself includes 3 safety officers), 2 Bedouin guides and 3 climbers had to carry all the film gear, mountaineering equipment, food and water necessary for our stay in the hills. On such occasions it is hard to find room for even a single camera and lens in the rucksack! Similarly it is usually impossible

to wait around for a perfect light when speed often means safety. Anticipation is, of course, vital in much still photography but is especially crucial in the work we undertake, where I also often have to adopt a fixed position that involves making assumptions about the exact route to a climber will follow.

I currently use an F5 body and I am prepared to shoulder the weight of this for its ease of use and the stability it provides. It is a camera where I find all the main functions seem to come easily to hand and

that can be very important when perched precariously on a ledge where the natural inclination is to keep one hand free to grab the rock!

In spite of a wealth of features, I have found it easy to use and the results (barring the human element) rarely disappoint. I was a devotee of the F4 but the new model is even better! At one time I used an FM2 as a back up, arguing that its lack of reliance on electronics was a positive advantage. Whilst it is never far away, my second body is now an F90X equipped with an MF-26 back. I have found the latter extremely useful, not least for the occasions on which bracketing is essential, and have been delighted by how robust this camera has been. It has operated without a hitch at temperatures of -35° Celsius on Baffin Island (which dropped to an extremely chilly -100 when the wind chill factor was taken into account); It has been taken in to the desert in America and Jordan and has survived a hectic shoot off the coast of Vietnam. Often the situations we find ourselves in prevent the use of my favourite lenses (such as the 80-200 f2.8D), although I normally squeeze in my 20mm f/ 2.8D. Recently space has been at even more of a premium and I have found the newer 24-120mm zoom capable of superb images, although it would be wonderful if Nikon could magically transform the aperture from 3.5-5.6 to something like 2.8-3.5! Even a few years ago I would never have imagined using such a lens but its quality is, I think, quite outstanding for our type of work. Finally, space is always found for a Speedlight because a measure of fill in flash is usually necessary for the portraits, especially if they are for newspaper and magazine publication. Perhaps

surprisingly I often find that my tripod, even though a lightweight model, fails to make the journey to the rock face. It usually remains in the tent and is purely used for landscape shots around base camp. A good stock of lithium batteries is essential but the only other accessories I carry are the relevant polarising filters (Nikon, of course!). I am a great fan of the 35Ti with its exceptionally sharp lens and will always keep this handy in my pocket, for more informal shots or the times when the camera gear is safely stowed away and a superb image presents itself.

Often both Brian Hall and I wish there was more time available for the stills work knowing that it will be impossible to ever return to many of the places we visit. However, there are some compensations and there is nothing better than looking at the television pages and to discover that a particular image has been used in almost every newspaper!

GRAYS OF WESTMINSTER WEBSITE

A feature we recently added to our website is a few emailing lists. One can register an interest in, say, early Nikon and receive notification each time we update the Nippon Kogaku Room listing. This means seeing the stock available long before it reached any of our advertisements.

There are lists relating to Nippon Kogaku Room, new equipment and special offers, secondhand, gazette and our catalogue. All one needs to do is send us an email. The instructions are on our website. Just send us a note asking to be put on the list if you have trouble following the instructions. If you know anyone else that may be interested please let us have their details.

STOP PRESS

Bodies

F5	£1,550.00
F90X Pro (Inc MB-10 Grip)	£725.00
F90X	£640.00
F70	£325.00
F70 + 35-80 AF-D	£370.00
F70 QD	£375.00
F60 + 35-80	£299.00
F50	£225.00
F50 QD	£275.00
F50 + 35-80 AF-D	£275.00
F50 QD + 35-80 AF-D	£320.00
F3	£1,125.00
F3 HP	£1,225.00
FM2 Chrome	£400.00
FM2 Black	£420.00
FM2/T few left	£949.00
FE10 & 35-70mm Kit	£229.00

Compacts

Zoom 600	£149.00
Zoom 800	£199.00
Zoom 310	£129.00
Zoom 310 QD	£199.00

Speedlights

SB-28	£300.00
SB-28 plus SD-8A Kit	£360.00
SB-27	£190.00

Auto Focus Lenses

16mm f2.8 AF-D Fisheye	£700.00
18mm f2.8 AF-D	£1,200.00
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28mm f2.8 AF-D	£200.00
28mm f1.4 AF-D	£1,400.00
35mm f2 AF-D	£260.00
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50mm f1.4 AF-D	£300.00
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85mm f1.8 AF-D	£300.00
105mm f2 AF-D DC	£850.00
135mm f2 AF-D DC	£1,100.00
180mm f2.8 AF-D IF-ED	£650.00
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AF-S 500mm f4D	£5,250.00
AF-S 600mm f4D	£6,900.00
60mm f2.8 AF-D Micro	£350.00
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200mm f4 AF-D Micro	£1,225.00

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20-35mm f2.8 AF-D	£1,300.00
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28-80mm f3.5-5.6 AF-D	£200.00
28-85mm f3.5-4.5 AF	£470.00
28-200mm f3.5-5.6 AF-D	£400.00
35-70mm f2.8 AF-D	£540.00
35-80mm f4-5.6 AF-D	£135.00
35-105mm f3.5-4.5 AF-D	£350.00
35-135mm f3.5-4.5 AF	£530.00
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70-300mm f4-5.6 AF-D	£269.00
80-200mm f2.8 AF-DN	£825.00



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The Nikon Legend - Part LII

by Gray Levett

Perhaps the most sought after and yet difficult to find accessory for the Nikon rangefinder camera is the S-36 motor drive. It was released alongside the wonderful Nikon SP in September 1957. The SP was the first rangefinder camera designed with the facility for motor drive photography. Incidentally, six months prior to this event Nippon Kogaku revealed a motorised S2 rangefinder camera, the S2E, to a select audience. This discreet viewing was to gauge the response of the photographic press to the concept of motor drive photography.

Press reaction to the new SP and motor drive was widespread and enthusiastic. Leitz produced an electric motor drive for their Leica 250 from World War II but this had long been discontinued. It was the Nikon S-36 that started Nikon's dominance in motorised photography.

Like most classic designs the S-36 is extremely simple and easy to operate. The SP has, a detachable back which must be removed in order to load and unload film. The S-36 was produced with an integral back. The motor drive is attached and detached in exactly the same manner as the standard back. This elegant and compact unit added a little over one inch to the camera's height and a mere 8 ounces to its weight. The S-36 fits comfortably in the hand and provides a reassuring balance since there is more to get hold of. A minor service centre modification of the camera is required to use the S-36.

On the back of the S-36 is a three-position ring which may be set at lock for manual operation or continuous operation. Film may be shot in bursts of two or more exposures at a rate of approximately three frames per second or as single frame advance. The S-36 may be set for rapid single exposures (at all speeds except

"T") using the shutter release on the top of the camera. Next to the three-position ring is a frame counter that may be set for any number of exposures from 1-36. The frame counter is subtractive and indicates the unexposed frames remaining. The motor drive will stop automatically when the counter registers zero. However if the drive has been set for exposures beyond the length of the film there is a clutch, which will automatically slip to prevent the film being torn off the film spool.

The S-36 is powered by a separate battery pack. Three different battery packs were made for the S-36. The first was a small, flat grey metal, battery pack known affectionately as the "sardine can" which accepts six 1.5v penlight batteries. A brown leather, oblong version that requires six type "C" batteries, replaced this model. The final version was made of grey vinyl. Nippon Kogaku also produced a small voltmeter which reads up to 9V to check battery pack capacity.

To be continued...

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