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PRINTER FRIENDLY   SEND TO A FRIEND

Editor's Choice 2007: Imaging Software

(continued)

Nik Dfine2.0

Increased image noise is inevitable at the high ISO settings so useful for low-light handheld shooting, and that's where this program can help. It relies on the same U Point technology that Nik contributed to Nikon's Capture NX -- allowing one-click selection and automatic noise reduction of specific areas. You can vary the degree of reduction from one tone or color to another, according to how pronounced the noise is, keeping areas that look fine from acquiring artifacts related to the sharpening process. You can even apply noise reduction with a brush tool. About $100.

Lexar Image Rescue 3

Image Rescue has long been the go-to program for photographers who fear all may be lost. It recovers and repairs damaged files on memory cards, even resuscitating photos you thought were long deleted (provided you haven't overwritten them by filling up the card). Image Rescue 3 is a totally redesigned and faster-working version of the program that can now salvage video and audio files too. Even if your memory cards are in working order, regularly wiping them clean with the software's Secure Erase can help maintain their performance. About $30.

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Image Trends Fisheye-Hemi

Fisheye lenses take in an angle of view of up to 180 degrees, but that coverage comes at the cost of distortion -- the bulge that gives them their name. Rectilinear wide-angles keep straight lines from bending but don't go as wide as fisheyes and cost much more. If you want super-wide coverage without the distortion or the high price, run your photos through Fisheye-Hemi, which has plug-ins for full-frame and circular fisheye lenses. The program not only straightens the fisheye's extreme curvature but does so without the usual need to crop either side of the image. About $30.

American PHOTO Editor's Choice 2007

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