

Nikon Capture NX "How To..." Series

Article 5 - How to enhance the colors of a sunset, while preserving the natural blending of colors for a more dramatic landscape photo using the "Selection Gradient Tool".



Before Enhancement: Colors are rather shallow, creating a subtle image

After Enhancement: The top portion remains blue while the enhanced colors of the sunlight continue to blend naturally within the scene



Process:

Step 1- Open an image.

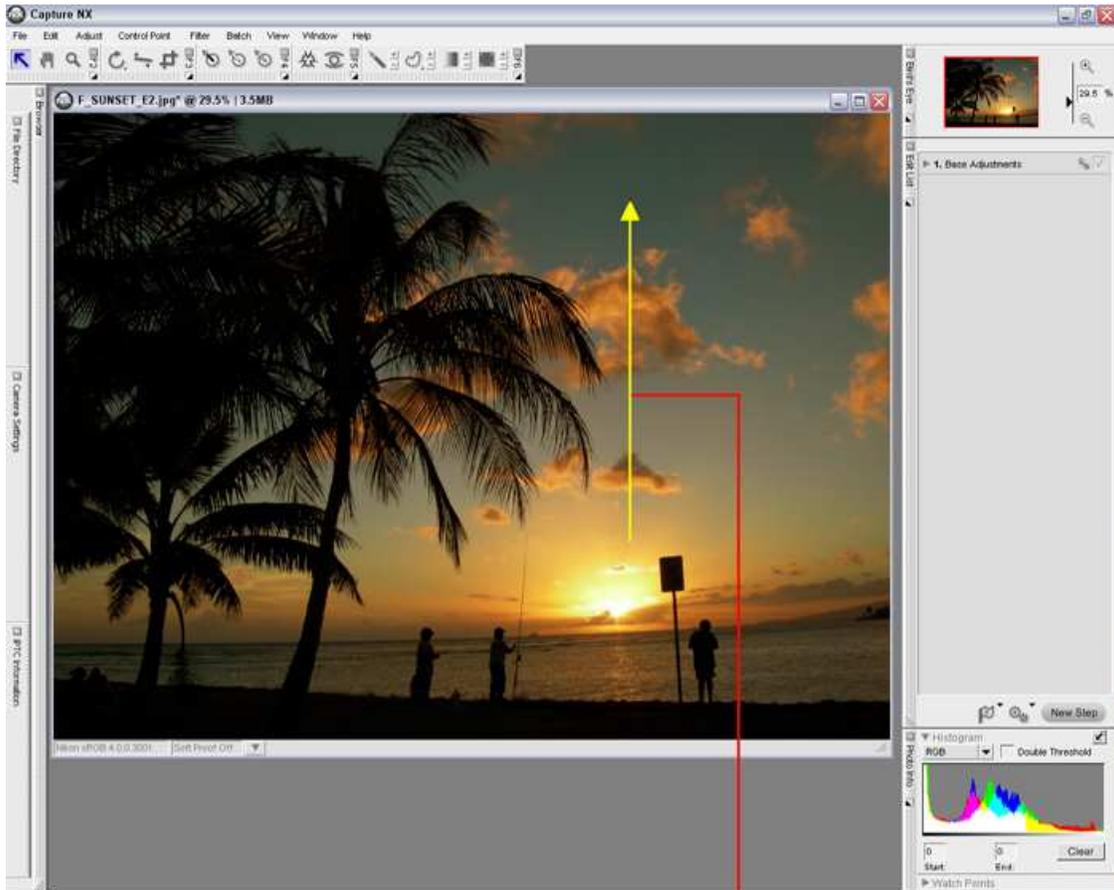
Step 2 - Apply a sunset-colored tint to the entire image.

Step 3 - Remove the effects of enhancement from the top

Step 4 - Check results

Step 1 - Open an image

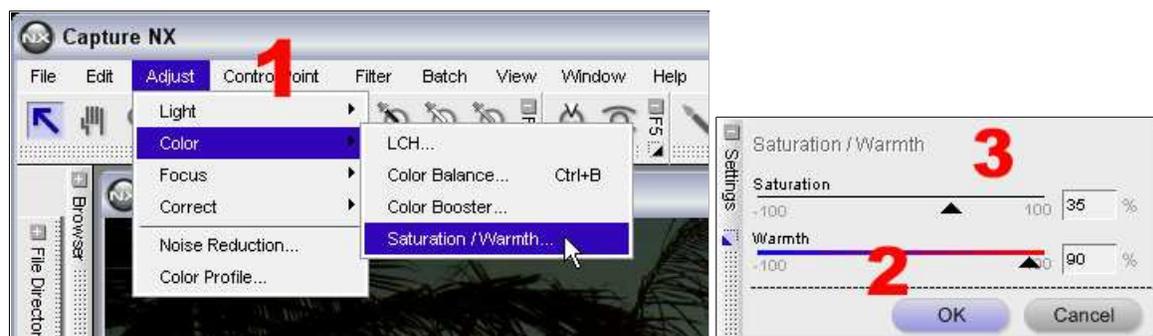
This is the image before to enhancement. For this image, we will leave the top portion as it is and add a red tint that blends naturally with surrounding colors to the lower portion.



We'll enhance this image so that the colors of the sun gradually fade away towards the top of the image.

Step 2 - Apply a sunset-colored tint to the entire image.

- 1) Select "Saturation / Warmth.." from the "Color" submenu in the "Adjust" menu.
- 2) Slide the "Warmth" slider to the right (image will take on a red tint).
- 3) Slide the "Saturation" slider to the right (image will become more vivid).
- 4) The entire image is tinted with the warm colors of a sunset.
- 5) A "Saturation / Warmth" step is added to the "Edit List".

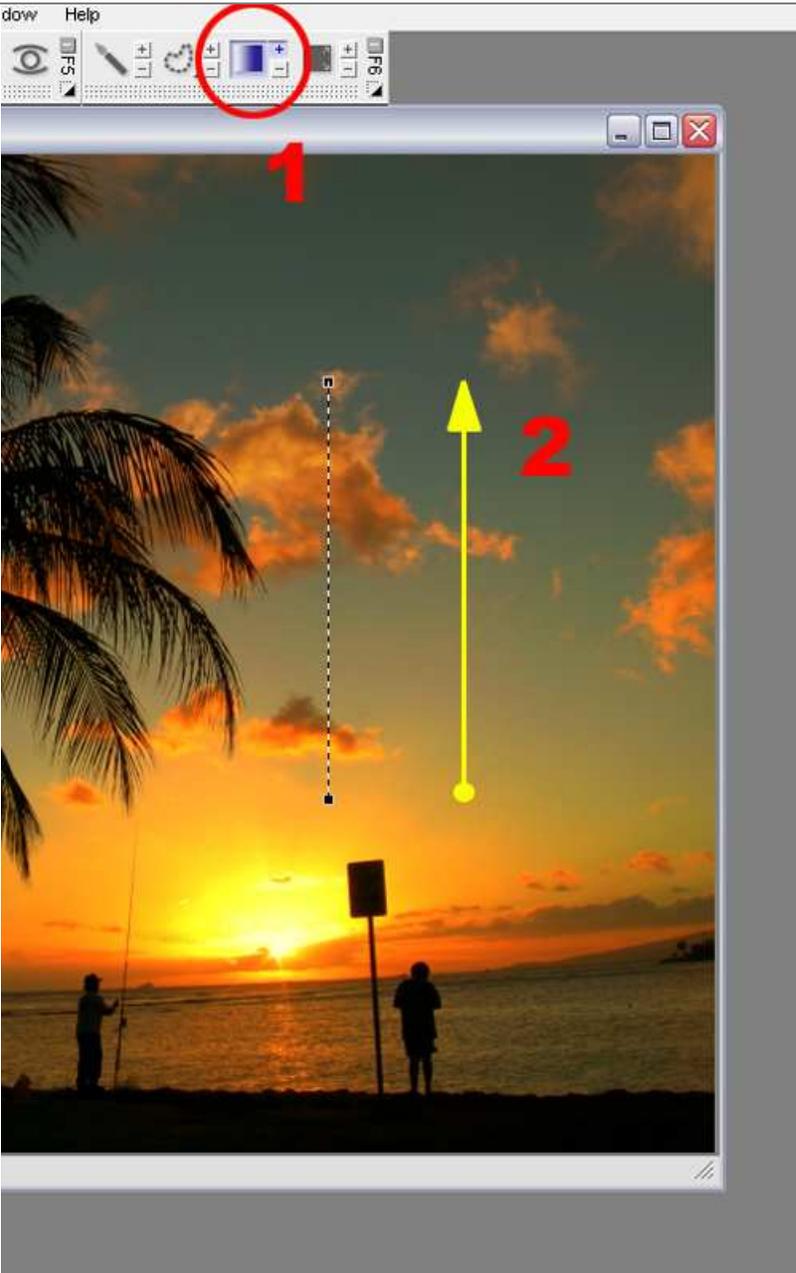




Step 3 - Remove the effects of enhancement from the top portion of the image.

1) Select the "Plus Gradient" (add gradient)

2) Click and Hold, then drag the "Plus Gradient" up, towards the top of the image, from a position near the sun. The effects of enhancement are gradually reduced along the path of the "Plus Gradient" towards the top of the image. You can also press and hold the SHIFT key to maintain a straight line.

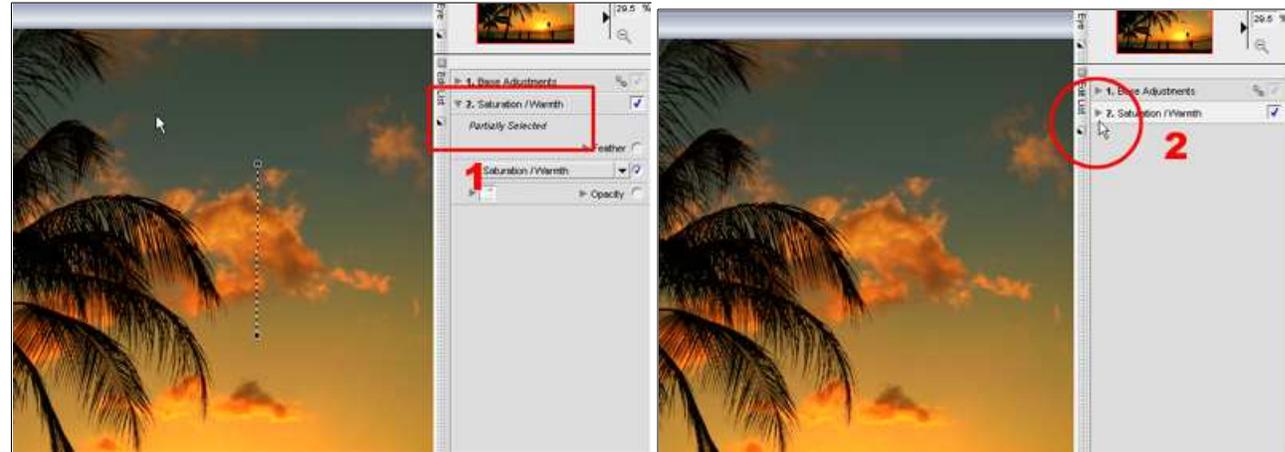


This is the effective range of the "Plus Gradient". As we dragged the "Plus Gradient" up, enhancement applied with STEP 2 gradually fades toward the top of the image.

Step 4 - Check results.

1) The first image below shows the image to this point. Since we used the "Plus Gradient", "Partially Selected" is displayed under the "Saturation / Warmth" step in the "Edit List".

2) To remove display of the dotted line used for the "Plus Gradient", click the show / hide triangle next to the "Saturation / Warmth" step to close the step. View the image full size. You can always adjust these variables easily, just reopen the option and readjust the sliders to suit your preferences.



Dragging the Selection Gradient from top to bottom: The image below shows the effects of dragging the Plus Gradient in the opposite direction, from the top down. In this case, the effects of enhancement applied with STEP 2 gradually fade towards the bottom of the image. Experiment with the "Gradient Tool" for different blending effects.

