



Media release

## **A Guide to photographers by Canson® Infinity: 3 main qualities to look for when choosing fine art papers for prints**

*Finding the right paper for any artistic project can be a challenge. Canson® Infinity explains the main qualities to look for when choosing the right fine art paper and why it makes such a difference to the story the artist wants to convey.*

Transforming a digital image into a fine art print involves one of the important artistic decisions for any photographer; what do I want to convey with my final print? The aesthetic of the fine art print is a critical part of that decision process and all too often, one tends to rely on well-known preconceptions or formulas, such as high contrast papers for black and white images, smooth papers for portraits or art papers that hold details well for landscapes or nature-photographs.

Any photographer looking to reproduce their work as either a fine art open or limited edition print, will need to think about what they are looking to achieve with the final print and how the final choice of paper will impact the mood, aesthetic and feel of the final piece of art. Ultimately, how does the chosen paper support the artistic vision, rather than drawing attention to itself?

The main qualities to look for when choosing a fine art paper, can be broken down to 3 broad areas, which will each impact or complement the image printed. Rather than choosing one paper for all photographs, unleash the creative possibilities, by thinking beyond subject matter or genre, and consider each individual image on its own merits.

- **Surface texture**

The choice of surface texture is crucial for the final printing result. Photography is an art that appeals above all to the eye: that of the photographer and that of the viewer. But touch also comes into the equation. The handling of a fine art photo is unique and creates new sensations. But between smooth or textured paper, how to choose?

The smooth Baryta type paper will give the best rendering to the photo. It is the quality of paper which is closest to a silver print. The colours are well saturated and the contrasts are striking. Textured photo papers offer a pleasant touch, the grain of the surface creating material for the photo. The grains of the paper will be visible in bright areas of the image such as clouds, while the blacks will be less prominent. It is a more nuanced print that brings a different feeling with a more "physical" approach to the image. Whether it is for the handling or the look, we are closer to a painting.

To summarize the difference between smooth and textured paper:

- Smooth paper is at the service of image, colour and visuals. In general, a smooth paper will be more suitable for a photo exposed under glass.
- Textured paper is more interesting in terms of the sensations and emotions that can emerge from the image. It will give more character to an unglazed photo.

- **D-Max (black density)**

D-Max indicates how much black ink a paper can hold. The maximum Dmax of a paper can vary according to several criteria (printing mode, choice of printer and associated ink technology, etc.) This is important to keep in mind, as the more black a paper can hold, the more contrast it will have. Because of the higher contrast, a photo including for example shadows, will have more detail in both dark and light tones. In summary, the higher the contrast, the more “dramatic” the final image will look.

- **Surface finish (reflectivity)**

Surface finish indicates how reflective the surface of the paper is and, depending on this, will give the paper and print a certain look. Gloss, luster or satin paper all have less reflectivity than other papers, satin paper in particular reflects very little light on its surface. This is a real advantage when printing for photo exhibition. When aiming for the least possible amount of reflection, matte paper is preferable. Not only is it more resistant to glare from the light but it’s also more robust and less sensitive when it comes to fingerprints, ideal for photo exhibitions and for photos which will be regularly handled or moved. Matte paper is equally suited to photo books which are viewed, passed around and handled by hand.

All of these are the qualities that photographers have to think about, considering how they match up with the image. Different papers will create different feels, different way of viewing the image and that’s very important taking into consideration, when choosing a paper. This will allow any photographer to elevate the printed photographs to a whole new level, while ensuring a personal, creative style.



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Printed on Canson® Infinity PrintMaking Rag,  
which has a unique pure white without optical brighteners  
and an incomparable, fine and silky touch.



© *Alain Guillemaud*

Printed on Canson® Infinity Baryta Prestige,  
which have an outstanding  
Black optical density (D-max)

**For additional information or to test Canson® Infinity fine art papers, please  
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#### **About Canson® Infinity**

Looking back on a long history in the field of photography, today **Canson®** is the last pioneering photographic paper manufacturer that is still in business!

In 1865, **Canson®** filed and acquired an international patent for the improvement of albumen papers, one of the first processes for the production of photographic paper to be developed at the time. This patent consisted of the improvement of the final rendering of the image, while avoiding the costly gold toning process generally practiced when performing the original process.

Today, **Canson®** retains its spirit of innovation and combines centuries of experience with cutting edge technology in the manufacture of its paper. **Canson®** favours the use of natural minerals and the purest of materials, without optical brighteners, to provide you with printing materials that are resistant to ageing. The papers and canvases within the [Canson® Infinity range](#) for photography and digital art publishing deliver unparalleled and durable printing results, as well as optimal chromatic rendering with a large colour gamut, a strong D-Max and excellent image sharpness.

To find out more, visit: <http://www.canson-infinity.com/en>