

Getting your Images to Pop!

I was always amazed at how the great masters got their prints to really have brilliance. They seemed to have a life that I could not achieve. Then I learned that they achieved this result by applying bleach to certain areas of the print. They would apply bleach with a cotton swab to certain areas on the print. Many times their prints would dry down too dark and lose the life it had before it dried down. This bleaching process would bring back the life or brilliance to the print. They would rewash the print and when it dried it would have this magical brilliance that made it such a great print.

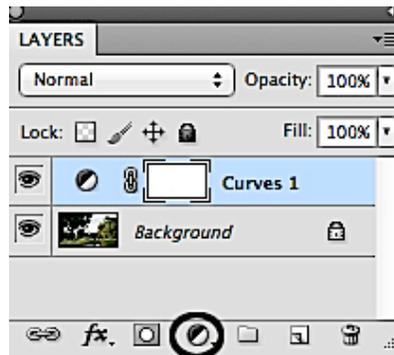
Here's how to achieve that same effect in Photoshop.

First prep your digital file the best you know how. Then analyze the tones in the image. Look for areas that look a little dull and could use some pop or brilliance.

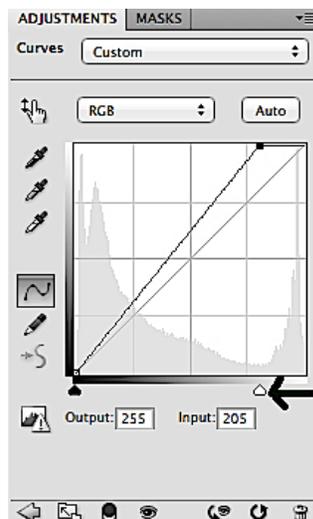


In this image it might be the trees and or the ducks in the water.

Make a “Curves” adjustment layer.



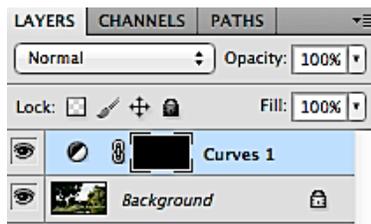
Move the right slider to the left to force the tones in the image lighter.



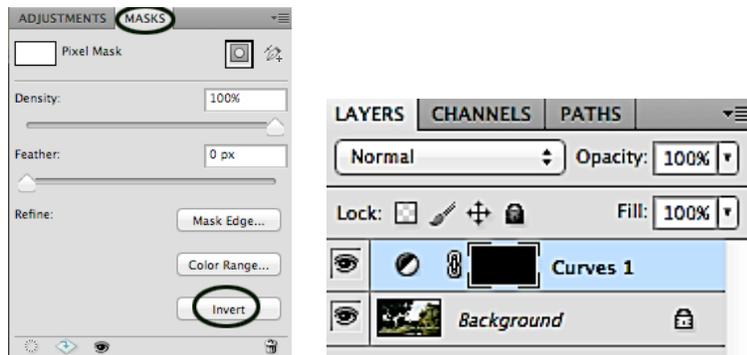
Now invert the mask. So it is filled with black. If you have older versions of Photoshop press the letter “X” on the keyboard until the Foreground color on the toolbar is set to Black.



Press Alt/Delete (PC) or Option/Delete (Mac) to fill the mask with black.



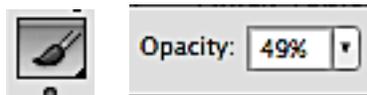
If you have CS5, press the “Mask” tab and then “Invert”.



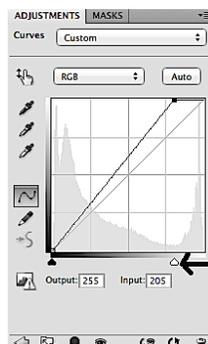
Press the letter “X” on the keyboard to set the Foreground color on the toolbar to White.



Choose the “Brush” tool and set the Opacity of the brush to 50%.



Now click and drag across the areas in the image that you want to add some brilliance. Drag across the area twice to get the full effect. Press the letter “X” to set the Foreground color on the toolbar to “Black” and paint across any areas you want to undo. Finish the technique by going back to your Curve and adjusting the slider.



With practice you will love this simple technique to get you images to pop!