The Nano S is a 360 camera built for social media

Over the past few weeks, I've been testing out the Nano S 360-degree camera from Insta360. It's a cute little camera that clicks into your iPhone's Lightning port and takes 360-degree photos and videos. The camera itself is very compact and can easily be held in the palm of your hand or slipped into your pocket.

I'm fairly new to 360 cameras. I generally shoot using my Canon 7D DSLR or Fujifilm X-T10, and this is an entirely new experience altogether. Instead of concentrating on framing a particular shot, you can just click the shutter button and worry about framing later, so it's good if you're on the go and don't want to think too much. The most engaging experience the camera offers is that it places you in the center of your environment: it captures where you are and what a particular place looked like at a particular moment in time.

Looking back at the photos I took, what really stands out are the pieces that perhaps you didn't notice or intend to capture. There are many small details that stand out – from the mundane receipts on the table to ground coffee beans and the patterns on wooden panels at the markets. It's special in its own way, because memories fog up over time, and having something like this while you're on holiday could literally bring you back to *that moment* when you were, for example, feeding pigeons in Piazza San Marco. The camera also does a decent job of capturing your whole body, though it does have a fish-eye like distortion.

The camera is simple to use – you just click it in and open the Insta360 Nano S app, which takes a couple of seconds to load. The app opens to the camera screen, where you can use your finger to move the viewfinder around in any direction to

see what the 360 capture will look like.

Photo by Thuy Ong / The Verge

For me personally, this camera would be great for traveling and in particular places that have lots of details I'd want to remember, like theme parks or something like the Harry Potter Studio tour here in London. Daytime shots came out fine, though the camera does struggle in low light conditions, especially when I took it out for a jaunt at night.



The only other qualm I have is that the photos, when cropped to a particular part of the 360 capture, aren’t as high in quality as I had expected and can be a little pixelated at times. It is fine though, if you’re just posting to the web or social media. (The Nano S shoots 20MP photos and 4K video).


vodafone UK
5:47 pm
35%
Edit
Save
Happy Valentine's Day
POOF!

What happened to my hands?

The camera comes equipped with Instagram-like filters that are applied in real time, and a beauty mode that smooths out complexions and allows you to control how strongly it’s applied. Other customization options include stickers, and choosing different angles and layout when sharing your photos to social media. One odd thing, though, is the camera automatically erases your phone from the photo so it looks like you’re holding nothing.

There’s also a 360 call feature available in beta, but when I tested it out, it worked fine. When you select the option, the app generates a link for you to send to the person you want to call. Once they click on it, the call starts. It’s essentially the same as a regular video call except you have the option of sliding your finger around the screen to see what part of the surroundings you want the other person to see. There’s also a MultiView option that divides the screen into different configurations and you can choose different angles to display simultaneously.

That said, the camera really seems to be built for social media because it’s super easy to use, plus editing and sharing can be done directly from your phone. That’s an advantage over something like a GoPro, where you might need to upload the photos onto a computer (or deal with a wireless pairing process) before posting online. It’s up to your preference and what kind of photos you want, but the Nano S just captures it all and is good for landscape shots or showing off where you are without hassle. It’s a camera I’d most likely use while I’m traveling. But if you’re into selfies and outfit photos, it could also serve as a handy workaround instead of, say, asking your insta-boyfriend.

https://www.theverge.com/circuitbreaker/2018/2/17/17012330/nano-s-360-camera-hands-on