

by Alan J. Pierce, EdD

Vivitar 787HD Waterproof Camera (\$119 MSRP)

My water testing video is on YouTube at:
www.youtube.com/watch?v=tDkAnj7n8fU&feature=youtu.be

The Vivitar 787HD waterproof camera is the perfect camera to catch the action around you when you are swimming, surfing, biking, boating, fishing, skiing, or snowboarding. If you are into more extreme sports it is also the perfect camera to record those activities. The remote control that comes with the camera can be used to take photos or start and stop video recording while the camera is attached to your safety helmet.



When you shoot video at the beach or at a swimming pool, do you only catch the action that is going on above the water? If you answered yes you are missing at least half of the fun. Most underwater cameras are too

big, too expensive, or just too fragile for you to give to your young kids; so most families never experience their children at play through their children's own eyes.

The Vivitar 787HD, inside its waterproof case, is 3 inches wide, 2 ½ inches tall and 1 ½ inches deep. See photo 1. It records onto a micro SD card that you must supply. Since Vivitar set the camera SD card capacity at 32GB I used a 32GB Kingston micro SD to test out all of its features.

What I believe makes this camera special is its waterproof case which fits the camera like a glove. The case gives waterproof protection up to 30 feet under water. In my humble opinion the camera in its case is a fantastic little recording device. However, if you are looking for a video camera for humdrum video shooting that doesn't require a waterproof and dust proof case this is not the camera to buy. See not so cool for my reasons.

When not in its waterproof case you can use its 2.4 inch touch screen to change its shooting modes. You can select your picture resolution from the following possibilities (5, 8, 10, 12 megapixels). Select your video resolution from the following possibilities (FHD 1920 x 1080 @30 frames/sec, HD 1280 x720 @ 60 frame/sec, or HD 1280 x 720 @ 30 frames/sec). The zoom feature is also activated by touching the screen. You do need to make these selections before you seal the camera into its waterproof case. Once the camera is in the case you can see the screen but not change any of your selections. The two buttons on top of the case will

allow you to turn on the camera and shoot pictures or video in the mode that was selected before the camera went into the case.

Reasons to Drool

The camera's small size and the rugged construction of its waterproof case make it ideal for all kinds of extreme sports and water fun recording. It comes with all the mounting gear for you to use to attach it to a helmet or bike handlebars.

Not so Cool

The camera does not have speakers so when you are in playback mode on the camera you see your video on the little screen but not hear the audio part of your video. In bright sunlight it is extremely difficult to see the screen which makes it very hard to use the zoom and other functions that must be controlled on the screen. The camera and its waterproof case both lack a place to attach a safety strap. Something Vivitar could have easily provided by just designing a strap that screws into the camera or waterproof case tripod socket.



The flimsy plastic covers that Vivitar designed for each side of the camera doesn't actually serve any real function. They are however difficult to snap in place and in my opinion if they are used often they will soon become inoperable. See photo 2. The remote control must be facing the front of the camera for it to work. A sensor on the back of the camera would have increased this remote's functionality.



The camera comes with all the accessories shown in photo 3. Not shown is the software CD that includes the camera manual and software.

*Alan is co-author of **Introduction to Technology Glencoe McGraw-Hill 2010** and a **TechDirections Magazine** Columnist . Visit www.technologytoday.us for past columns, reviews, and resources.*