



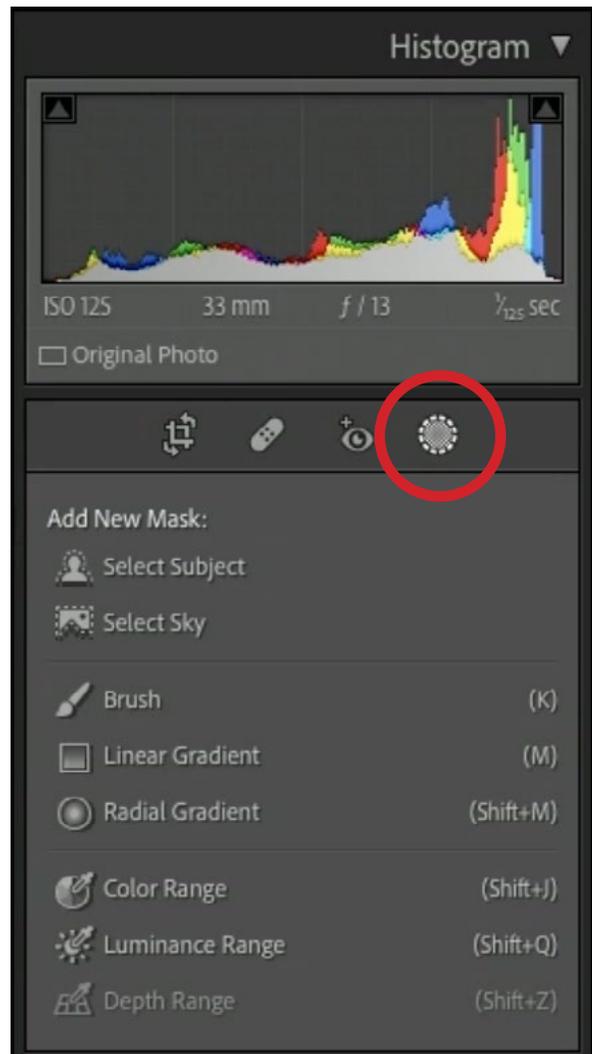
LrC & ACR Masking Practice

LrC & ACR Masking Practice

In this lesson, we're going to cover the new Lightroom and Camera Raw masking features in more detail. Adobe made significant updates to many of their apps last month, in October of 2021. I provided an overview of the updated masking features in the last lesson, titled "LrC & ACR's new Masking." You can find that lesson by using the search feature in the upper right corner of the site, or by clicking on the following link: <https://mastersacademy.com/course/lrc-acr-masking/>

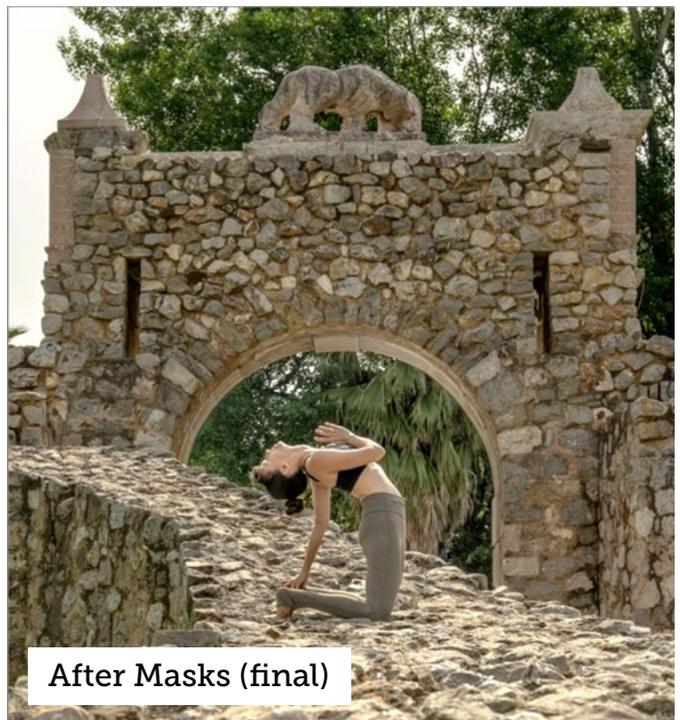
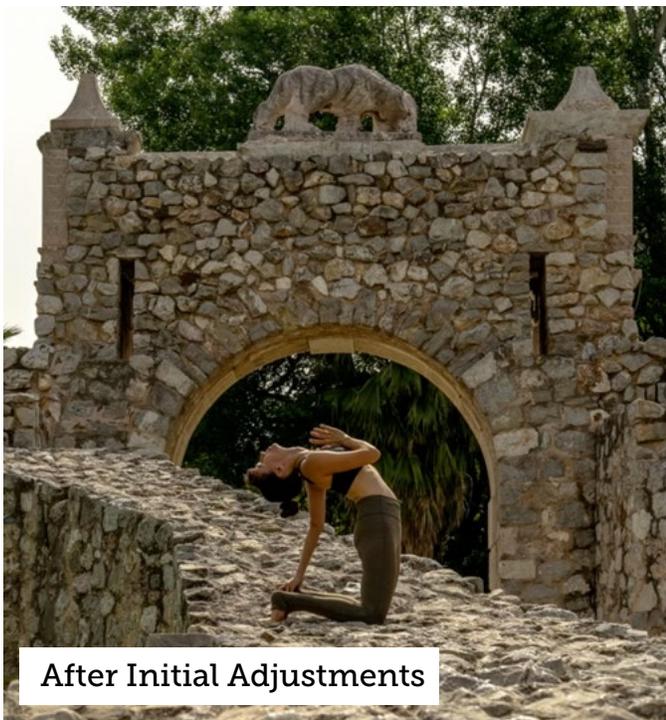
If you have not yet visited that lesson, I recommend doing so before moving on to this one. In this follow-up, I am going to work through a series of finished images, showing you what masks were used and why. This will hopefully give you a better idea of how these masking features can be used for all types of images.

In the Develop Module, you can create a new mask by clicking on the Mask icon beneath the histogram. It looks like a dashed circle. This will expand a menu that lists all of the different types of masks you can create. After choosing one, the Masks Panel will appear. You can expand or contract the Masks Panel by clicking on the little arrows in the top right corner of the panel. This panel will ultimately list all of the masks you add to the image. After creating your initial mask, you can add additional masks by clicking the New Mask button (+) at the top of the panel.



The Add New Mask menu can be accessed by clicking on the dashed circle icon beneath the histogram.

Image 1

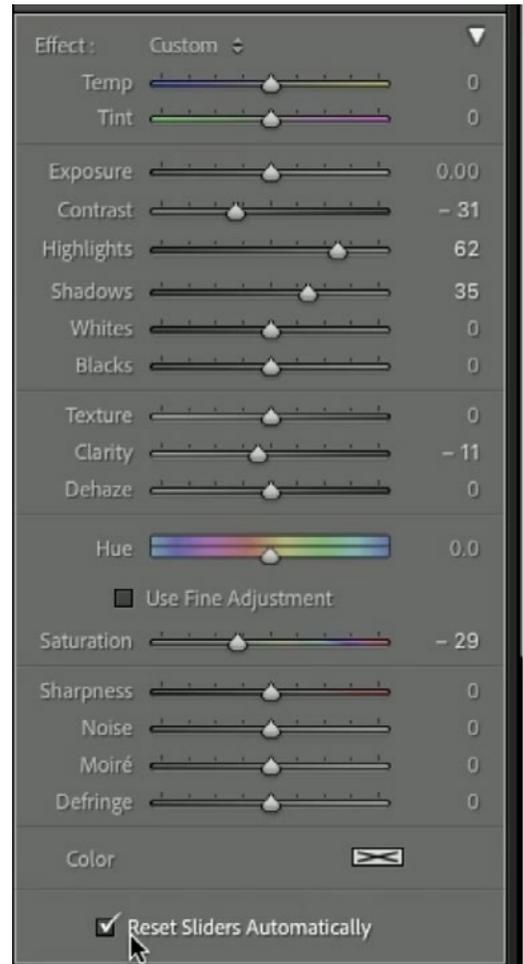
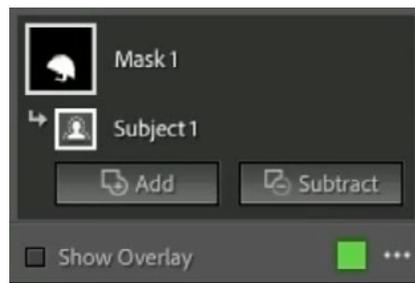
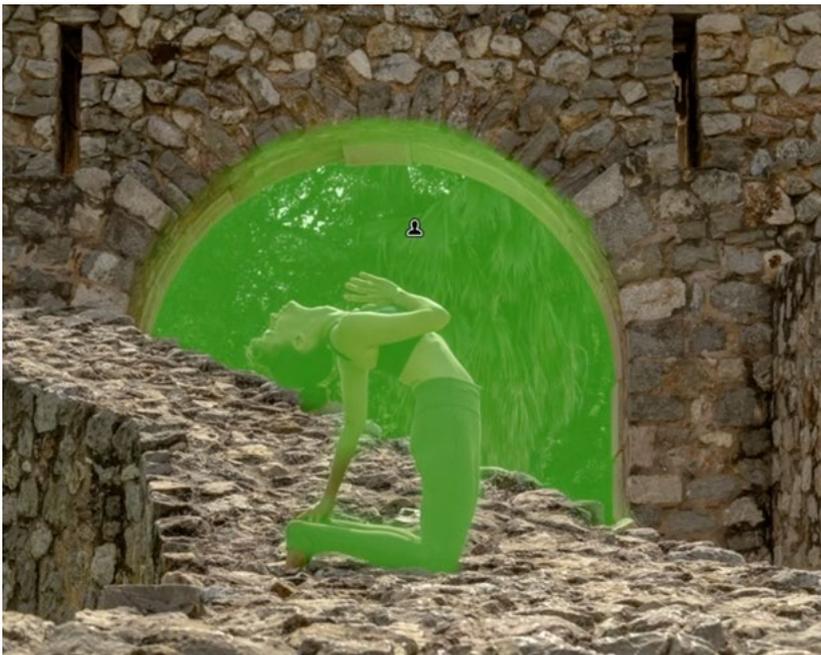


Stone Arch Image (Timestamp 2:02)

MASK 1 This mask was used to adjust Karen and the area inside of the stone arch. It was created using a Select Subject mask. This feature will attempt to automatically find and select the subject in the image.

After creating the mask, the following adjustments were made:

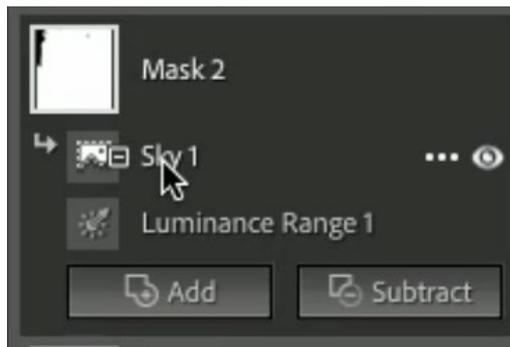
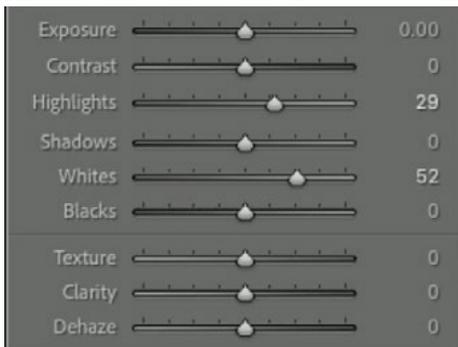
- Contrast was lowered
- Highlights and Shadows were brightened
- I Reduced Clarity to offset the Clarity effect that was applied to the entire image.



MASK 2 This mask was used to target everything except for the sky. I started by creating a Luminance Range mask, allowing the entire luminance range to be selected. Then I used the Select Sky feature on the Subtract setting in order to remove the sky from the mask. (In hindsight, I could have just created a Select Sky mask and then inverted the mask to target everything else instead.)

Adjustments:

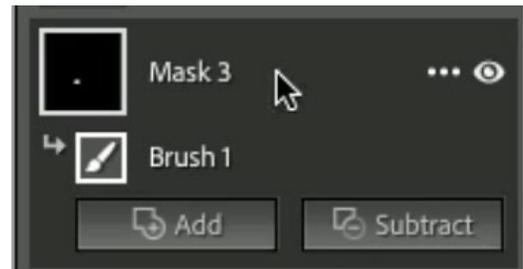
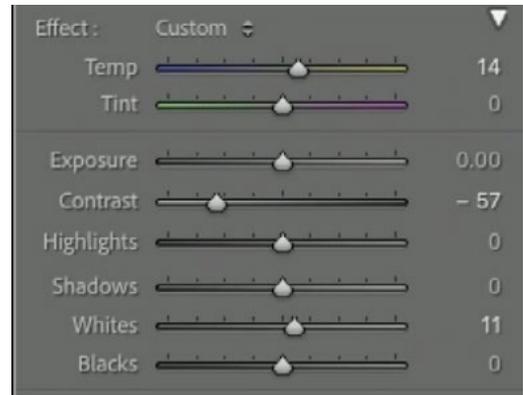
- Increased the Whites slider
- Increased the Highlights sliders. Both of these adjustments brightened the image while leaving the dark areas untouched.



ABOVE: A Luminance Range mask selected the entire image (left) and then the Select Sky feature was used to Subtract the sky from the selection (right).

MASK 3 The Brush Tool was used to create this mask, which isolates Karen's face. Adjustments:

- Lowered the Contrast
- Increased the Whites to brighten her face a bit
- Used the Temp slider to make her face more yellow and less blue.



MASK 4 The Brush Tool was also used to create this mask, which isolates the underside of the stone arch in the image.

Adjustments:

- Lowered the Saturation because I felt the area was too yellow.
- Lowered the Blacks slider to darken the very darkest parts of the targeted area.

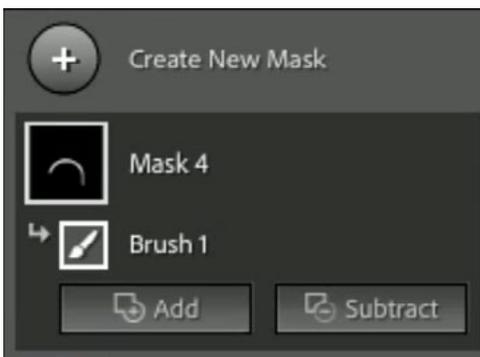
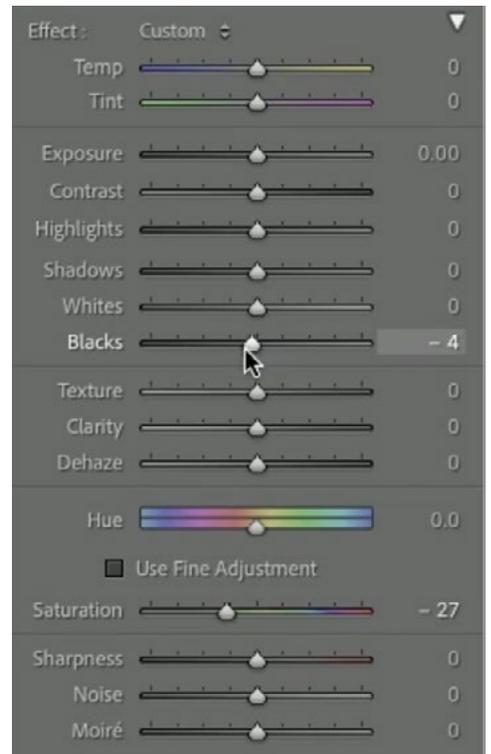
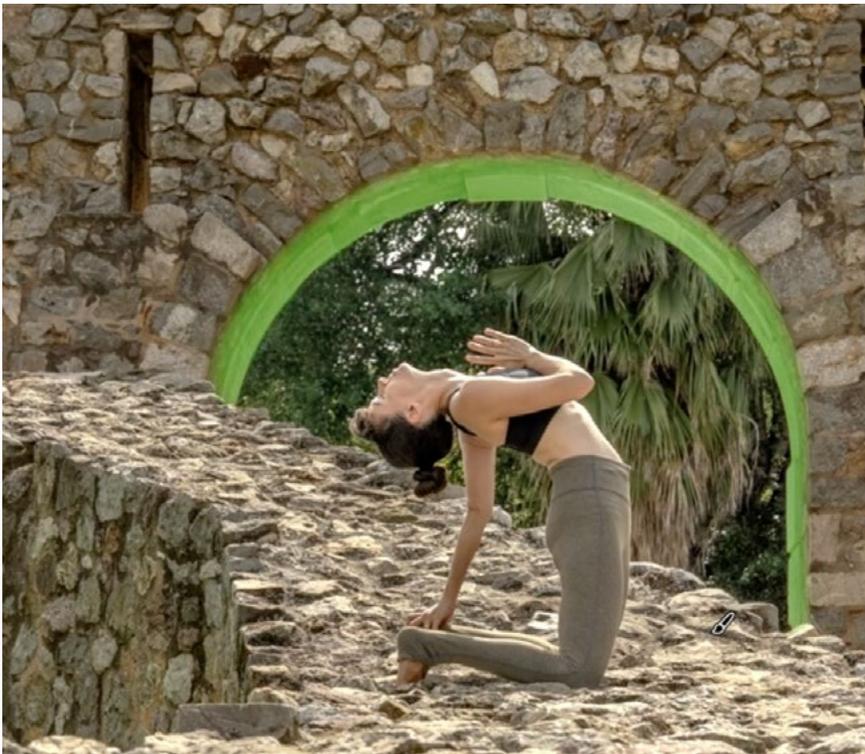


Image 2



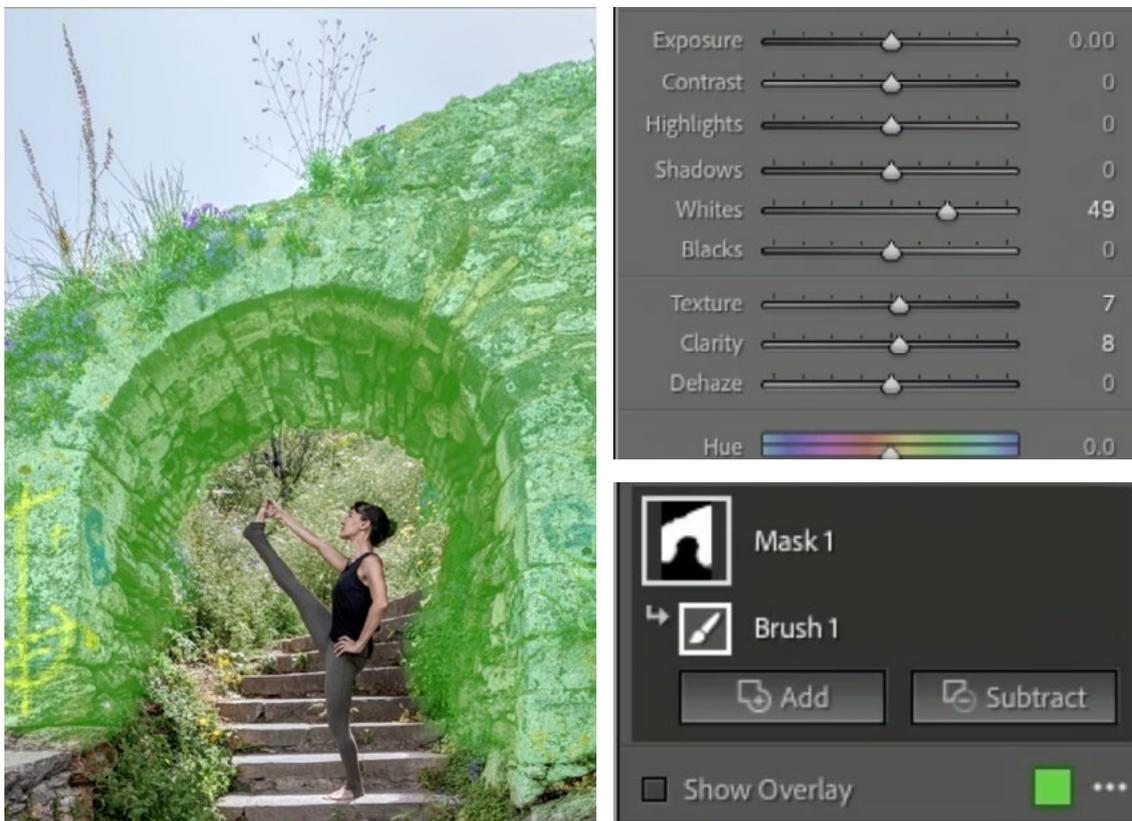
Arch & Stairs (7:54)

In this image, I first noticed that the sky was too uneven in that it was darker on the left and brighter on the right. I also felt that the greenery behind Karen was too bright, and therefore calling unnecessary attention. I used masks to correct these things and to enhance other areas.

MASK 1 The Brush Tool was used to create this mask. In order to get that precise edge around the top of the rock, I purposely overspilled the brush into the sky. Then, I set the brush to Erase and used the Auto Mask setting to ensure it was just removing the sky area and not the rock.

Adjustments:

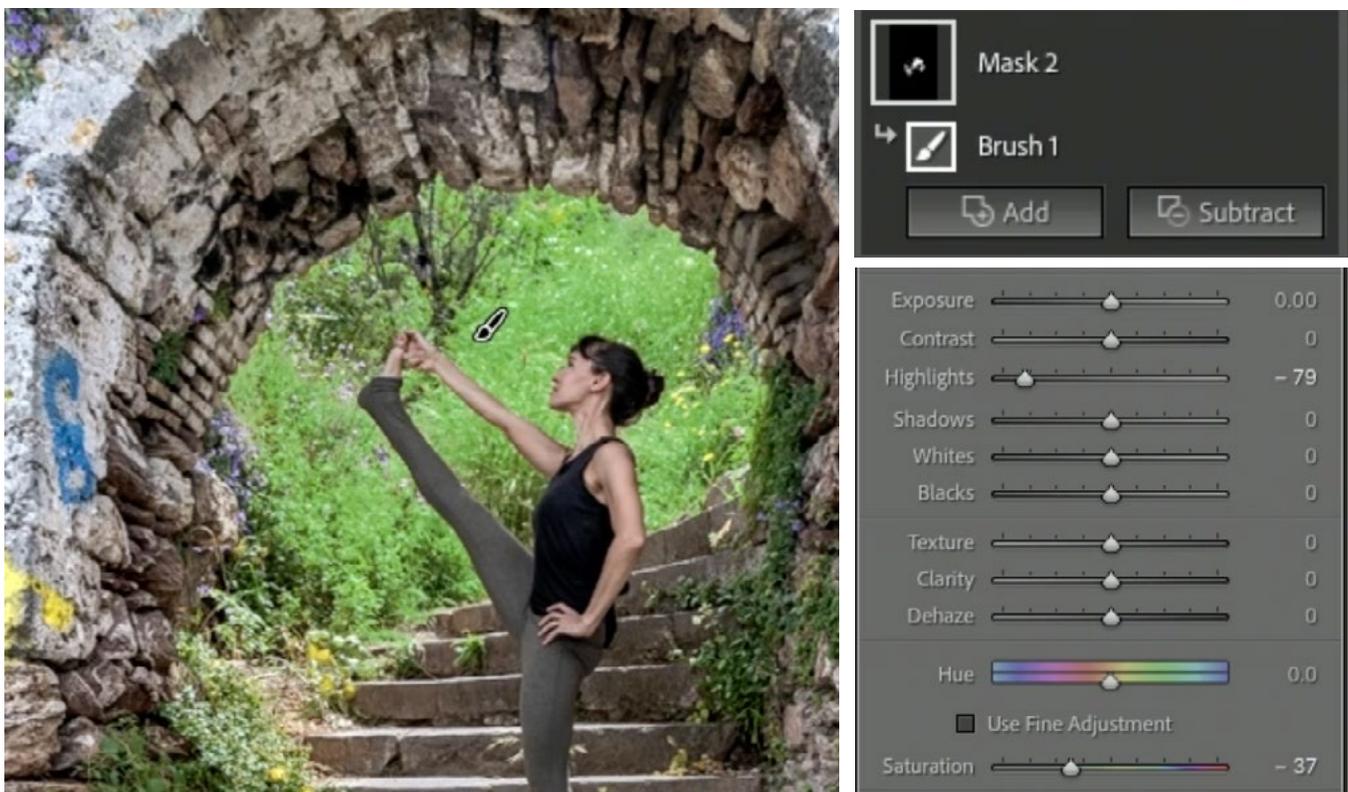
- Increased the Whites to add brightness to the rock area. This only brightens the areas that are already very bright. It leaves all of the mid-tones and dark tones alone.
- Moved the texture slider up to enhance the texture of the rock.



MASK 2 This mask was created to adjust that bright greenery behind Karen. I used the Brush Tool to create this mask. When doing so, I turned on the Auto Mask setting and used a really huge brush. With Auto Mask turned on, it will only mask areas that match the color and brightness of what's under that center brush crosshair when you click. This is designed to prevent overspill. I placed the crosshair over the green color I wanted to target and simply clicked once. This selected all of the greenery behind Karen (because the brush was that big).

Adjustments:

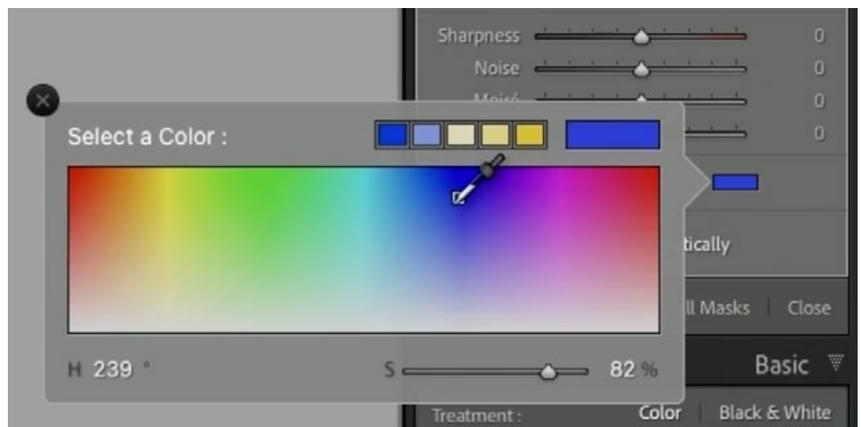
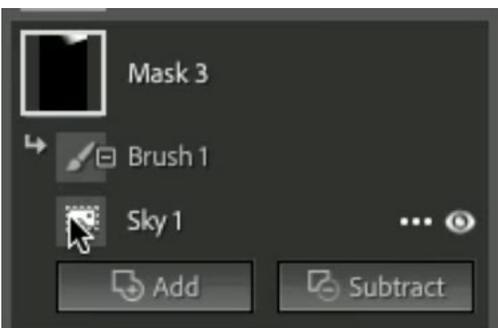
- Moved the Highlights slider down to darken the brightest portion of the area behind Karen.
- Lowered the Saturation so that it's not as colorful in that area.



MASK 3 I wanted to even out the brightness of the sky, so this mask was used to target the sky. It was created using the Select Sky feature, which did a great job of just selecting the right-side, brighter portion of the sky. It also got a little over-spill into the rock just below it so I clicked on the Subtract button (in the Mask Panel) and chose to use the Brush Tool to remove areas from the mask. I painted over the overspill that occurred in the rock to remove it from the selection. This made it so the only area masked was the right side of the sky.

Adjustments:

- Lowered the Whites slider to darken the right side of the sky until it matched the brightness of the left side.
- Used the Color setting (by clicking on the color swatch below the adjustment sliders) to inject some blue into the area.



MASK 4 This mask was used to isolate the center portion of the image, where I want the viewer's eye to go. It was created using the Brush Tool.

Adjustments:

- Increased the Whites slider to brighten the area.



Exposure	0,00
Contrast	0
Highlights	0
Shadows	0
Whites	44
Blacks	0
Texture	0
Clarity	0
Dehaze	0

Mask 4

Brush 1

Add Subtract

Image 3



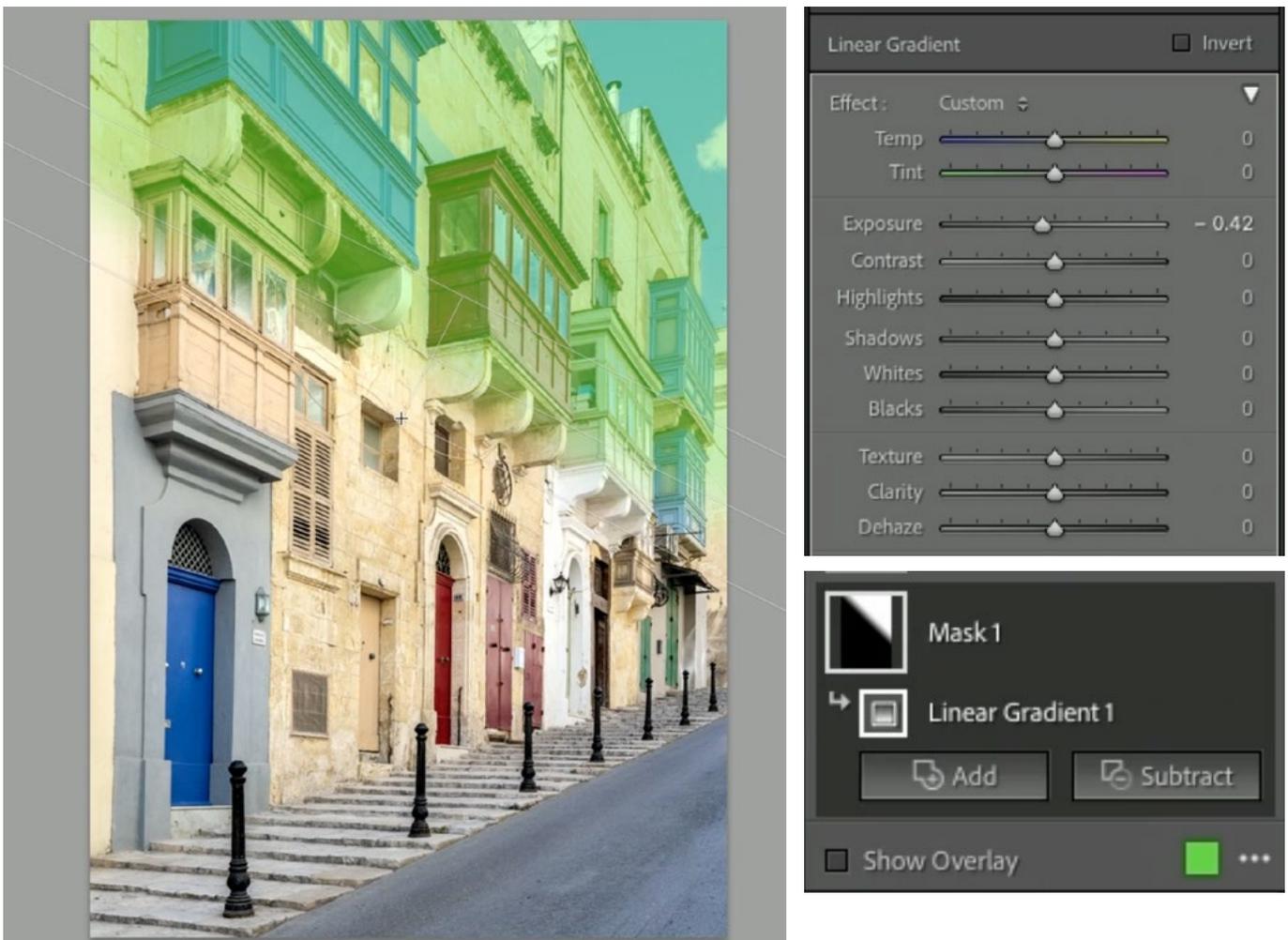
Malta Street Image (14:22)

In the original version of this image, I felt that the buildings looked a little dull and I wanted them to look more sunlit. I also felt that the wall on the far right side of the picture was way too bright and calling unnecessary attention over to that side. I used a series of adjustments and masks to correct these things.

MASK 1 The buildings are brighter on the top than they are on the bottom and I wanted to even them out. The first mask isolates the top right corner of the image and it was created using a Linear Gradient.

Adjustments:

- Decreased Exposure to darken the area so that it matched the brightness of the lower part of the buildings.

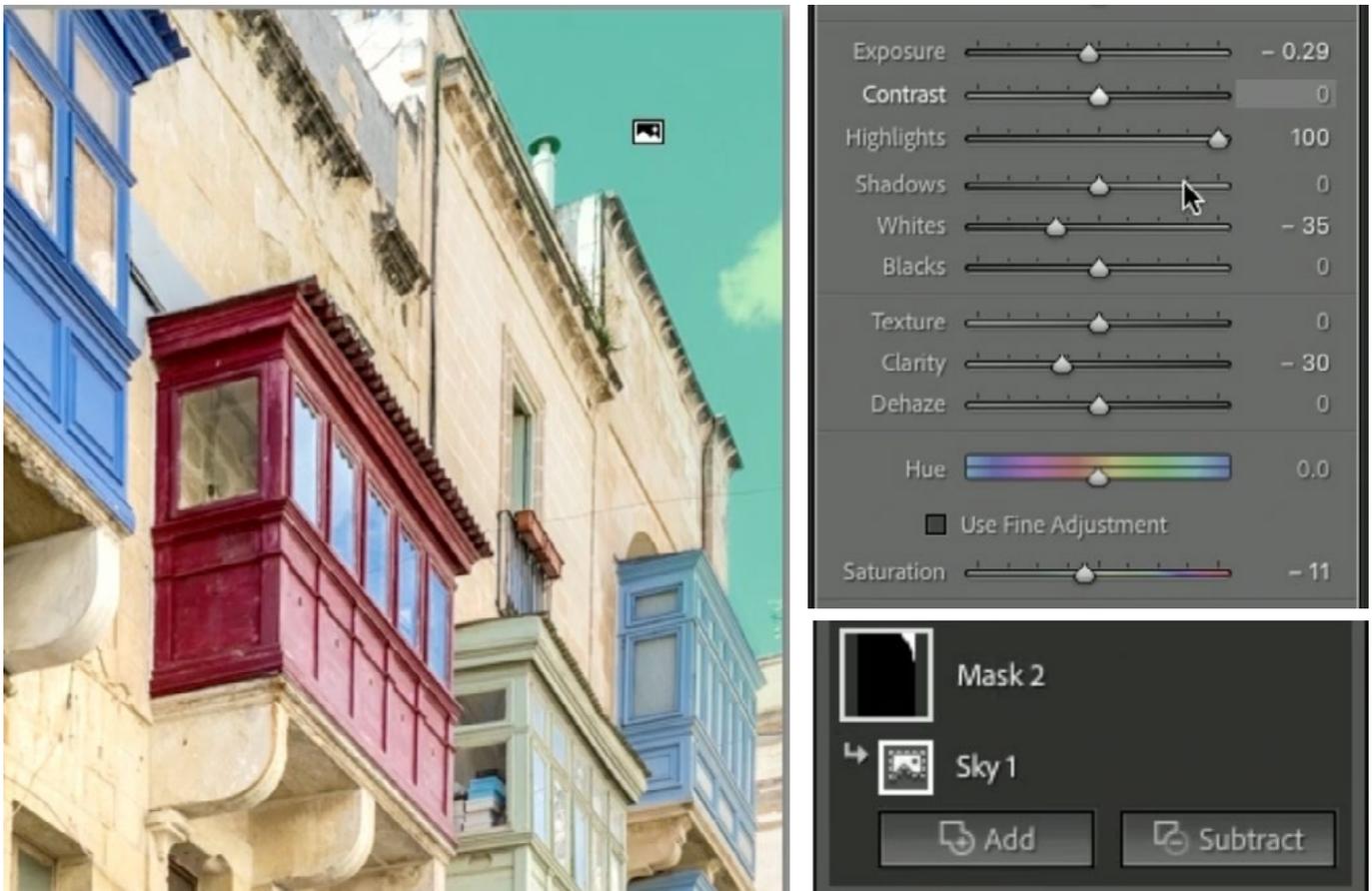


MASK 2 I wanted to adjust the sky, so the next mask isolates just the sky. It was created using the Select Sky feature, which did a great job of selecting just the sky.

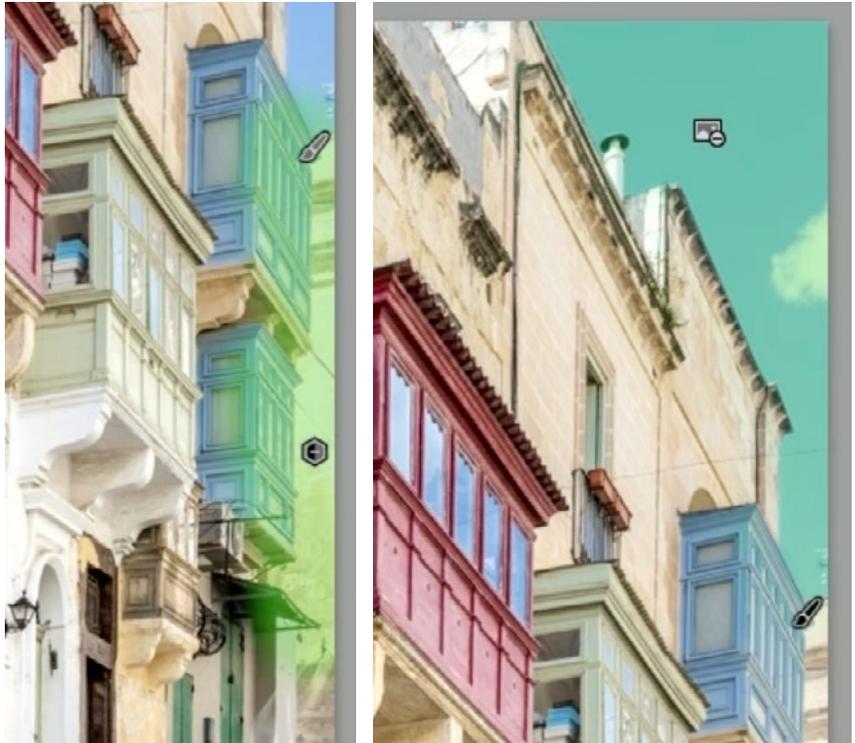
Adjustments:

Note: Most of these adjustments were designed to counter the adjustments that were initially made to the image as a whole.

- Lowered Exposure
- Increased Highlights
- Decreased Whites
- Decreased Clarity
- Decreased Saturation

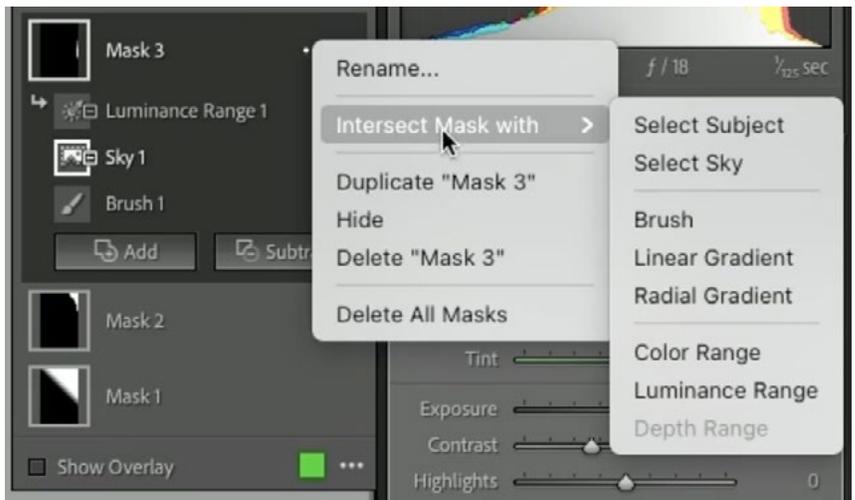


MASK 3 This mask isolates the overly bright building on the far right and will be used to darken the area. It was created using a few different features. First, the Brush Tool was used to paint over the general area. This of course created overspill that would need to be cleaned up. Part of the overspill extended into the sky, so the next thing I did was hit the Subtract button and chose to use the Select Sky feature. This targeted the sky and removed any masked areas from the selection.

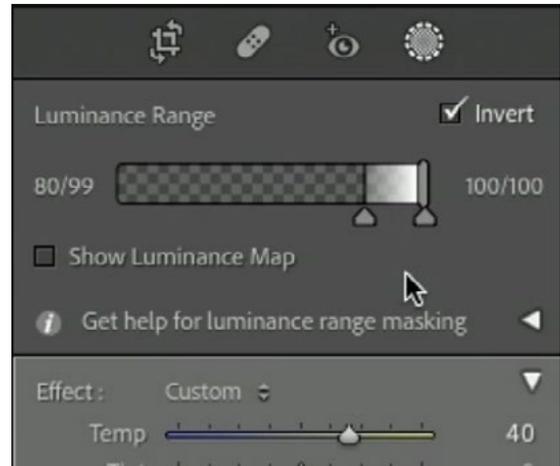


LEFT: The Brush Tool was used to paint over the general area. RIGHT: The Select Sky feature was used to SUBTRACT any areas that overspilled into the sky.

Finally, I needed to remove any overspill from the buildings. I only want to isolate the bright wall on the right (and its reflection in the nearby windows) and I can do that by intersecting the mask with the Luminance Range feature. I clicked on the three dots icon to the right of the mask thumbnail and chose Intersect Mask With > Luminance Range from the pop-up menu. When doing this, you will end up with the area that you already masked that ALSO contains the brightness range you specify.

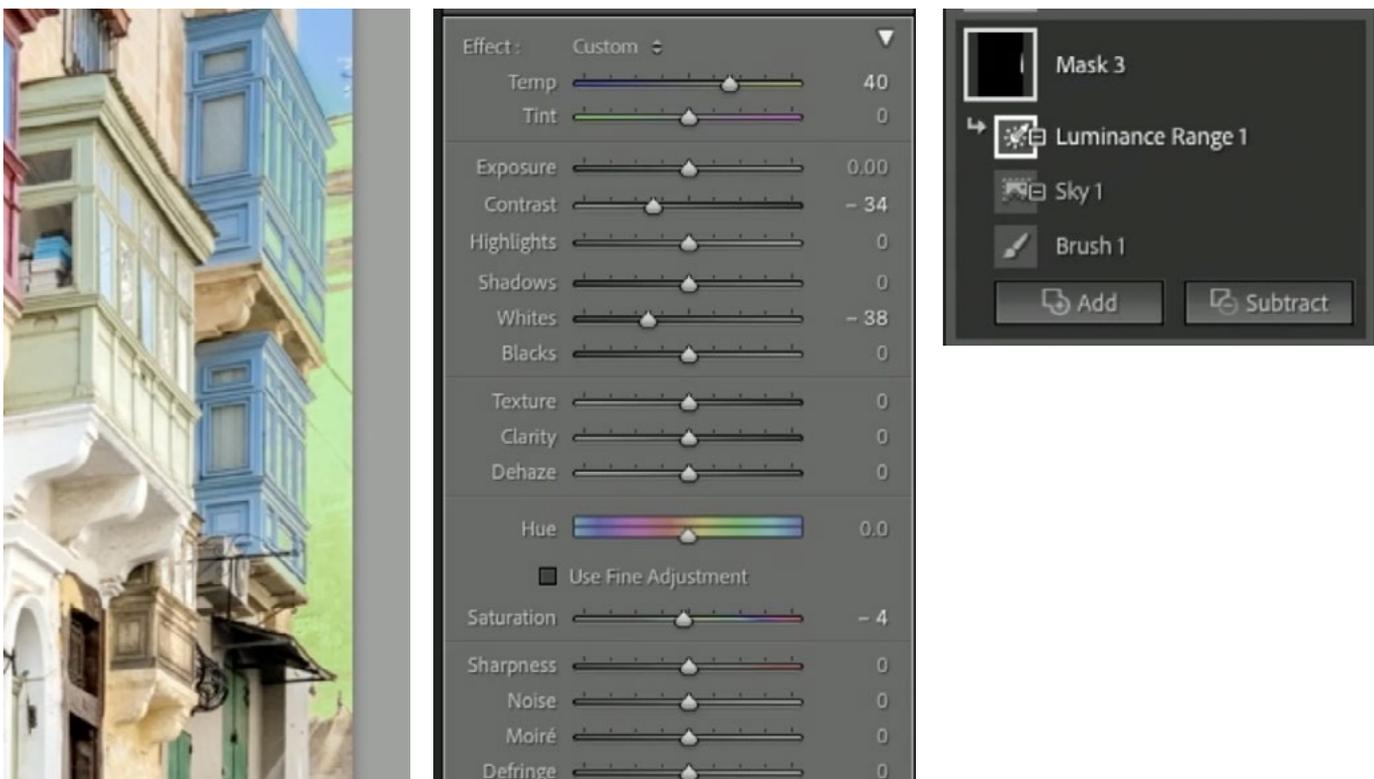


The brightness range gradient appeared on the right and this could be used to specify that I ONLY want the brightest areas selected. The slider handles beneath the gradient can be used to adjust the brightness range. Alternatively, you could click and drag on your image to specify the brightness range and that will automatically move the gradient sliders for you. That's what I did in this case, dragging out a rectangle on the area that is too bright.



Adjustments

- Decreased Contrast slider. This created less of a difference between the bright portions of the wall and the dark portions.
- Lowered the Whites slider. This is what ultimately darkened the wall.
- Lowered the Saturation slider to make the area slightly less colorful.
- Used the Temp slider to shift the color of the wall toward yellow.



MASK 4 I wanted the main portion of the buildings to pop out a little more. The next mask isolates the buildings and the Brush Tool was used to create it.

Adjustments:

- The Whites slider was increased, making the brightest portion of the masked area even brighter.

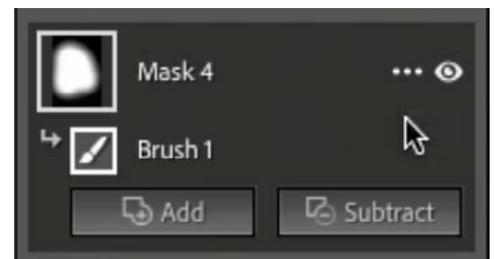
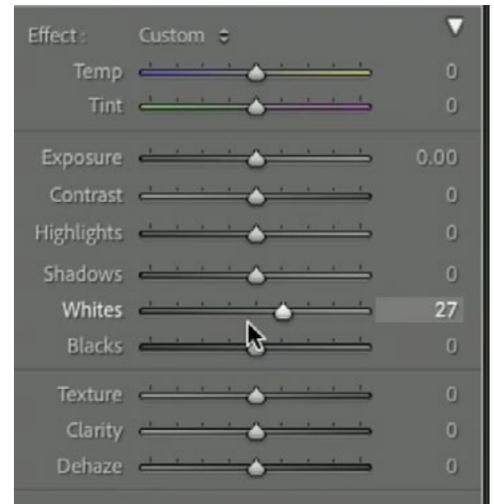
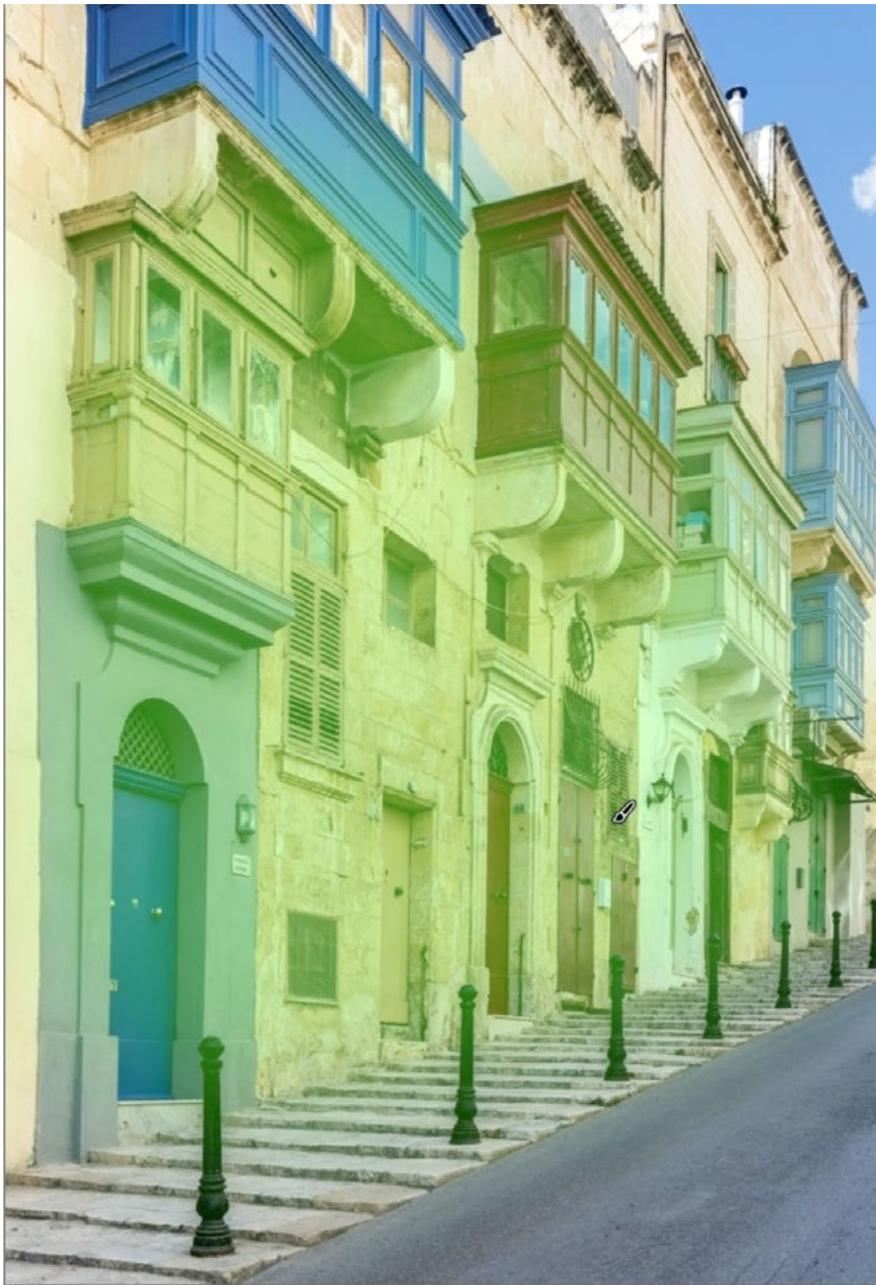


Image 4



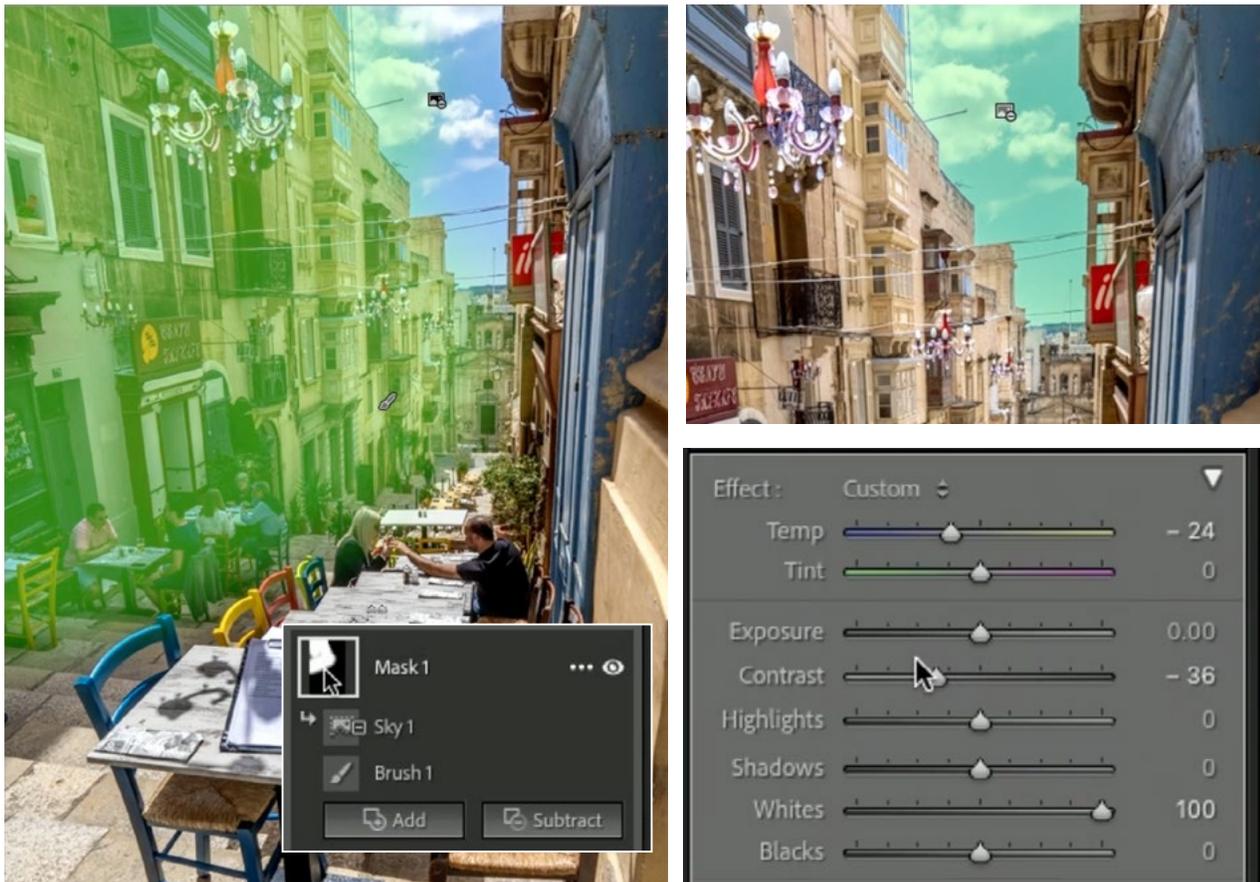
Street Seating (24:26)

This image was underexposed, creating lots of areas that were way too dark.

MASK 1 The first mask isolates the row of buildings facing the camera. This area was in the shade and felt too dark, so I wanted to make an adjustment to lighten the area and make it stand out more. The mask was created using the Brush Tool. This created overspill into the sky, so I clicked on the Subtract button and chose to use the Select Sky feature to remove the sky from the mask.

Adjustments:

- The Whites slider was increased a LOT, brightening the area.
- The Contrast slider was moved down, creating less of a difference between the brightest areas the darkest areas.
- The Temp slider was adjusted to make the area a little less yellow.



MASK 2 This mask isolates one particular area in the wall facing the camera. I wanted to adjust the area to draw more attention to that particular spot. The mask was created using the Brush Tool.

Adjustments:

- The Whites slider was increased to make the bright parts of the mask pop a little more.



Effect:	Value
Temp	0
Tint	0
Exposure	0.00
Contrast	0
Highlights	0
Shadows	0
Whites	69
Blacks	0
Texture	0
Clarity	0
Dehaze	0
Hue	0.0

Masks

- + Create New Mask
- Mask 2
- Brush 1
- Mask 1

Buttons: Add, Subtract

Show Overlay: [Green Square] ...

Image 5



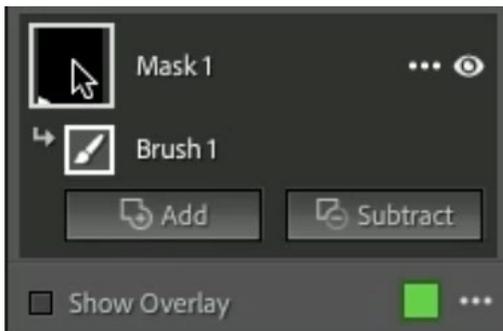
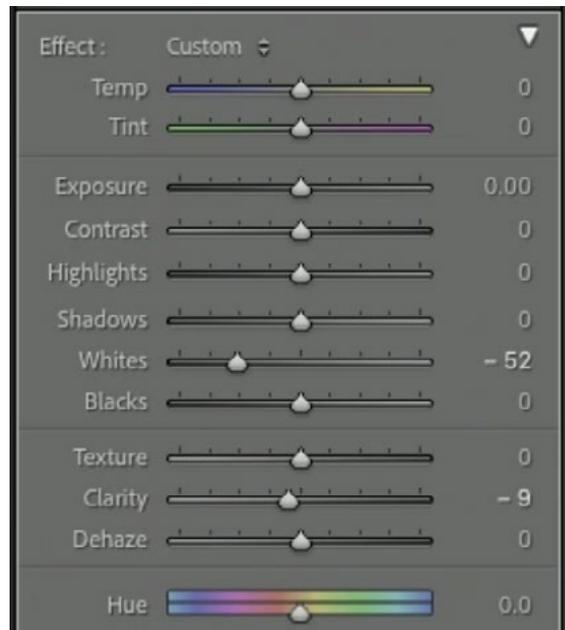
Orange Storefront (27:45)

In this image of a storefront in Malta, I felt that one of the windows was too dark, the area above the windows seemed too shady and I wanted to do something to pull the viewer in to the text.

MASK 1 The first mask isolates the bottom left corner of the image, which is occupied by sidewalk. I felt that this corner was a little too bright and wanted to darken it up. The Brush Tool was used to create a simple mask on this area.

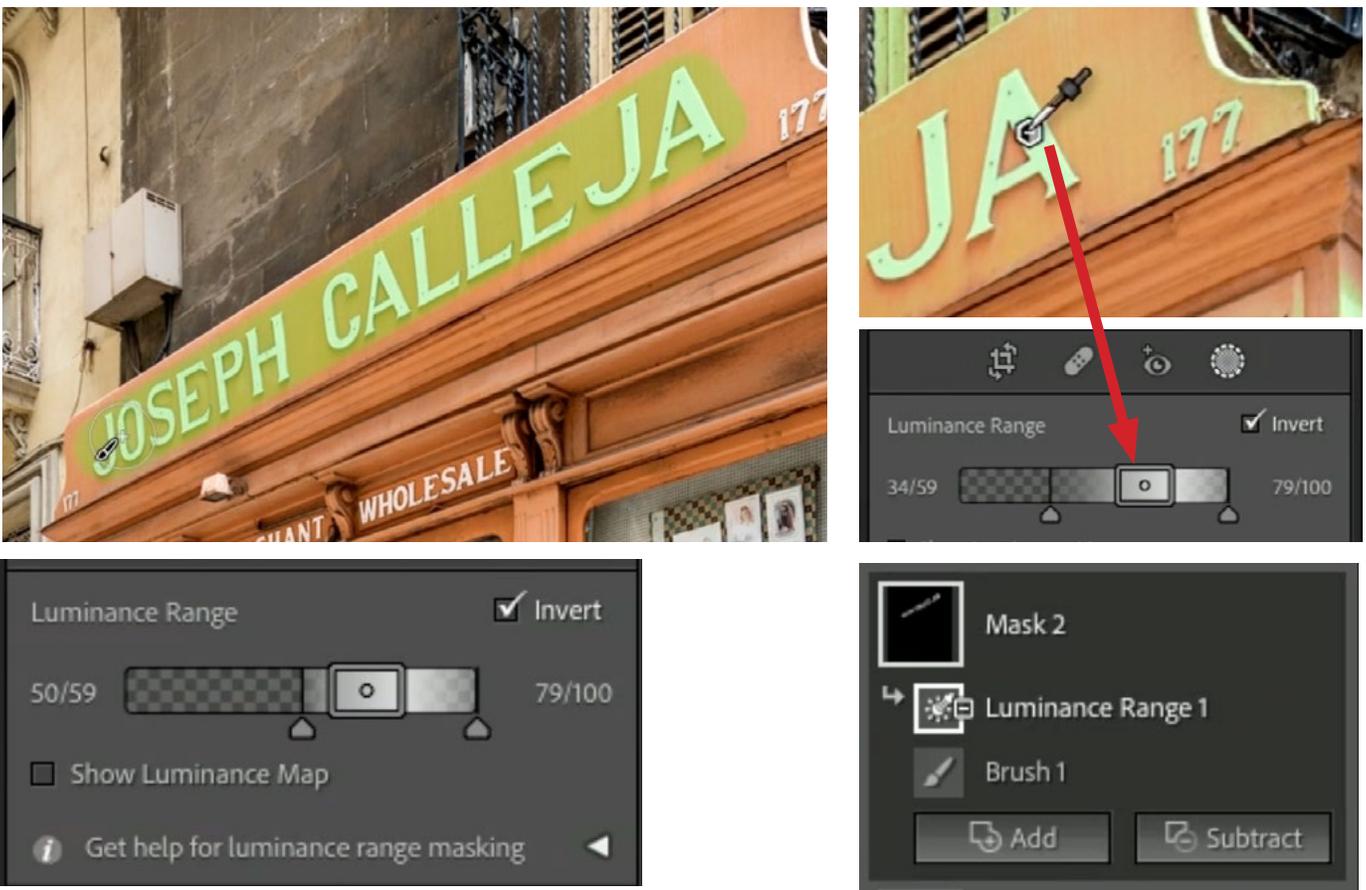
Adjustments:

- Lowered the Whites slider to darken the area.
- Lowered the Clarity slider to tone down the fine details in the pavement.



MASK 2 I wanted to call more attention to the shop name, so the next mask isolates that text. The Brush Tool was first used to mask the general area of where the text is. The text is very detailed and has hard edges, so there was of course a lot of overspill. I used the Luminance Range feature, set to Intersect mode, to isolate just the text. I clicked on the three dot icon (...) to the right of the mask thumbnail (in the Masks Panel) and chose Intersect Mask with > Luminance Range from the pop-up window. Then, I clicked within the text to set the Luminance Range I wanted to target. This took the previous brush selection and only kept the part of it that contained this brightness range. That part is the white text. Then, I adjusted the outer bars on the Luminance range gradient to fine-tune the mask, ensuring that only the text was selected.

Adjustments: Increase the Whites slider to brighten the text.

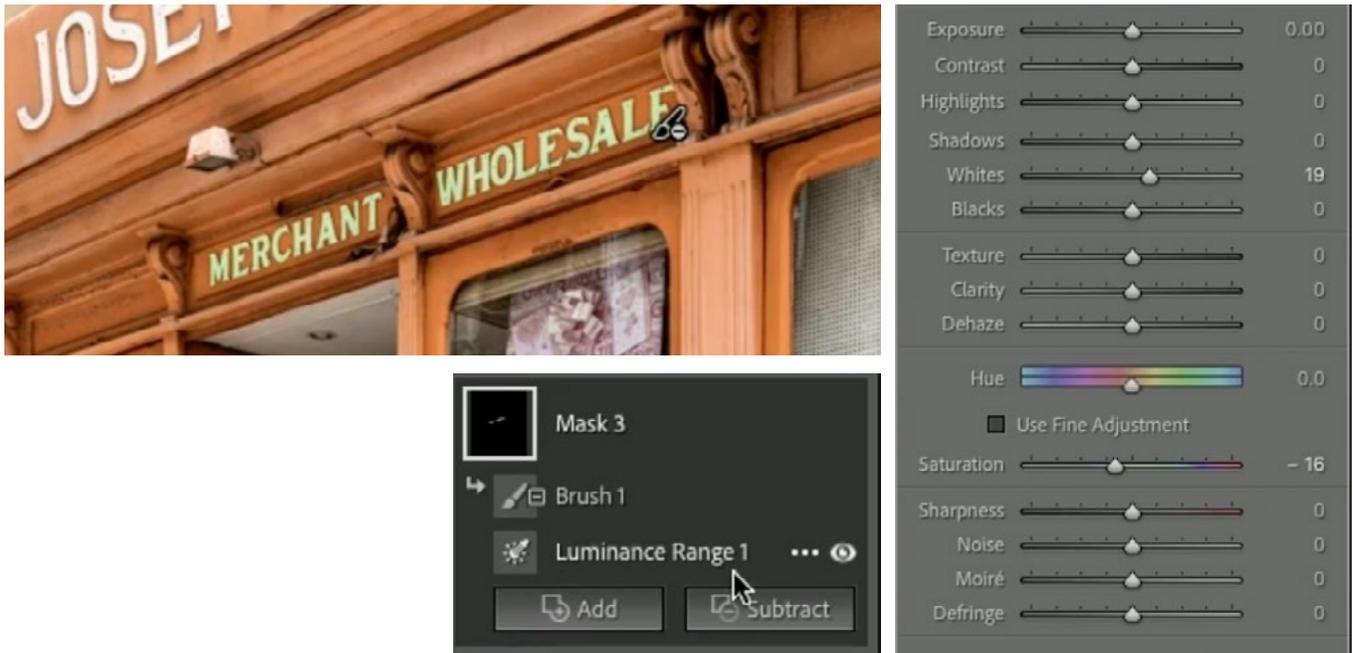


After the Luminance Range was initially set, the left and right gradient handles can be adjusted to fine-tune the range being targeted.

MASK 3 I also wanted the text above the doorway to pop out more, so I repeated that text selection process here. In this case, I did the reverse, where I used the Luminance Range feature first, selecting the brightness range of the text. Then I used the Brush Tool to intersect that mask, painting only over the text.

Adjustments:

- Just as above, the Whites slider was increased to brighten the text.
- The Saturation was lowered a bit.

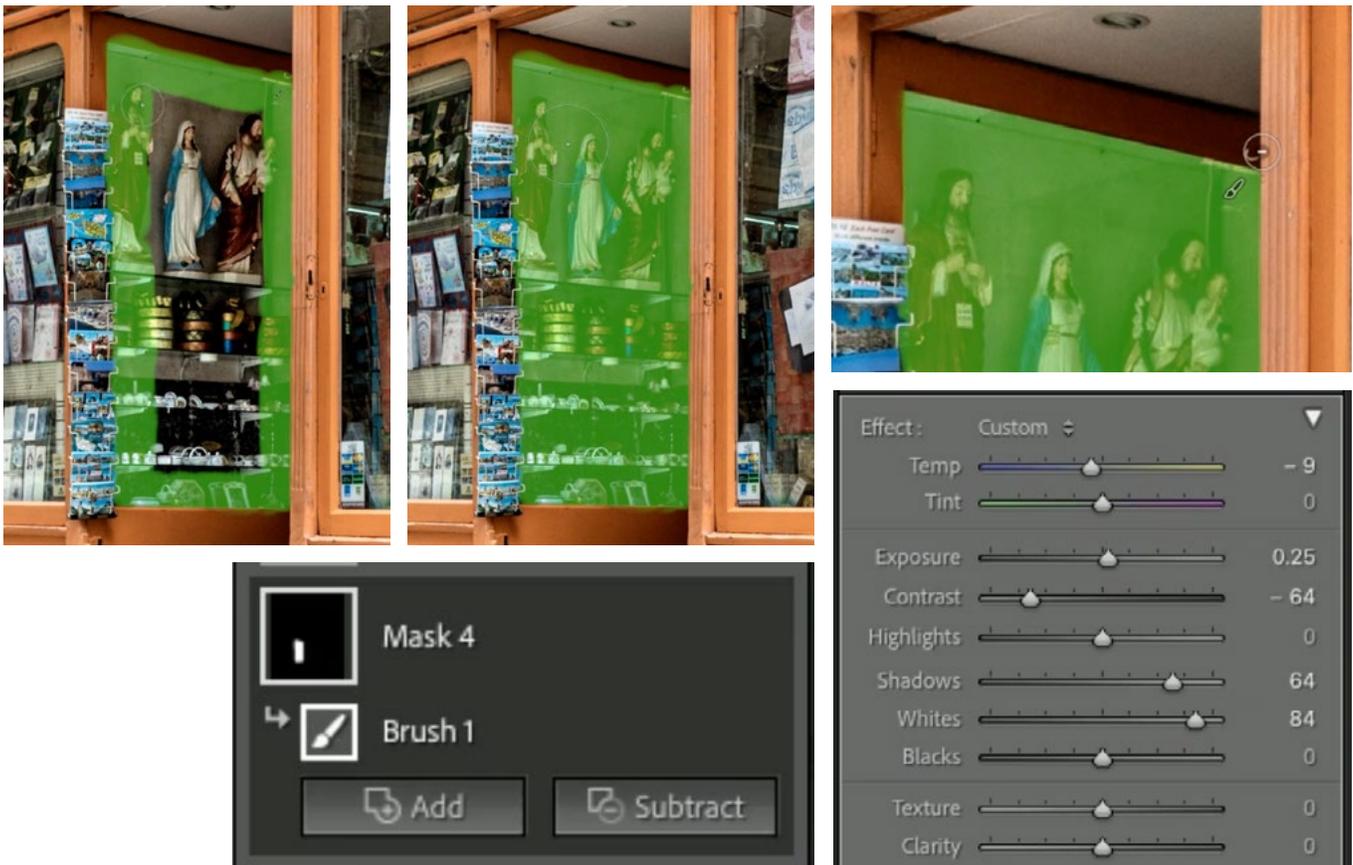


MASK 4 The fourth mask was created to isolate that dark window. I wanted that to stand out more. I used the Brush Tool to create this mask, making use of the Auto Mask feature. With the Brush Tool active, I turned on the Auto Mask setting in the panel on the right side of the screen. This will attempt to prevent overspill. Then, I carefully painted around the edges of the window. After that initial brush work, I turned the Auto Mask setting off and then painted the interior of the window. There was a bit of overspill onto the top window frame, so I set the brush to the Erase mode and used a small, hard-edged brush to paint over that top edge, removing it from the mask. I also did this to remove overspill from the postcards on the left side of the window.

With the colored overlay, it was difficult to see what areas were masked and what areas were not. This was mainly in the fine details of the post card rack. If this ever happens, you can change the Overlay Mode (the menu is below the image window) to White on Black. This will give you a view that looks like a black and white layer mask. That's what I did in this case, and I was able to refine the mask in this view.

Adjustments:

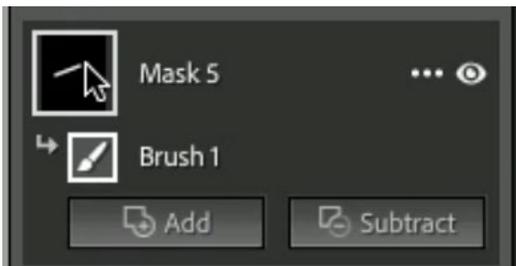
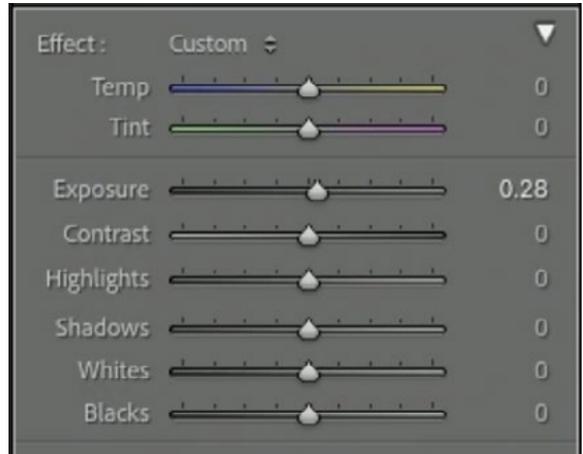
- Increased the Whites slider to lighten up the bright areas.
- Increased the Shadows slider to brighten the dark areas, bringing more detail back.
- Increased Exposure just a bit.
- Lowered the Contrast slider.
- Moved the Temp slider away from yellow to make the area a little less warm.



MASK 5 The area just above the windows appeared too shady, so the final mask was made to isolate that area. The Brush Tool was used to create this mask, using a soft-edged brush.

Adjustments:

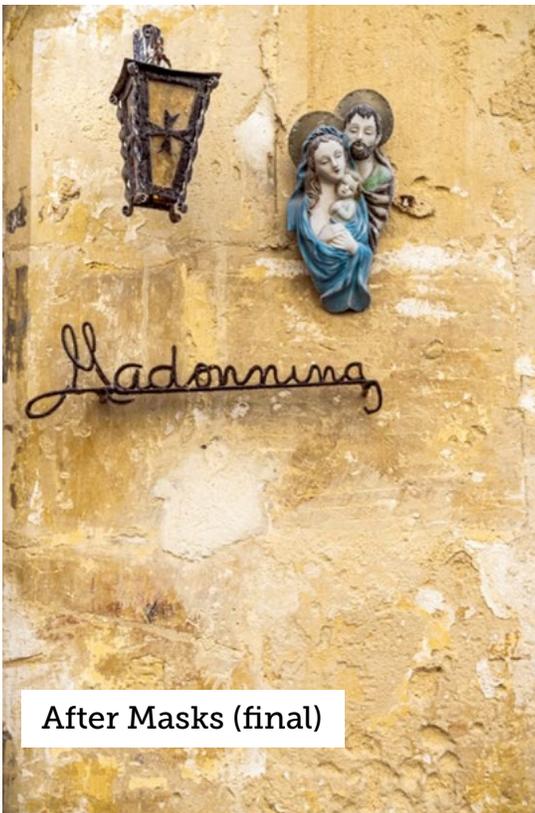
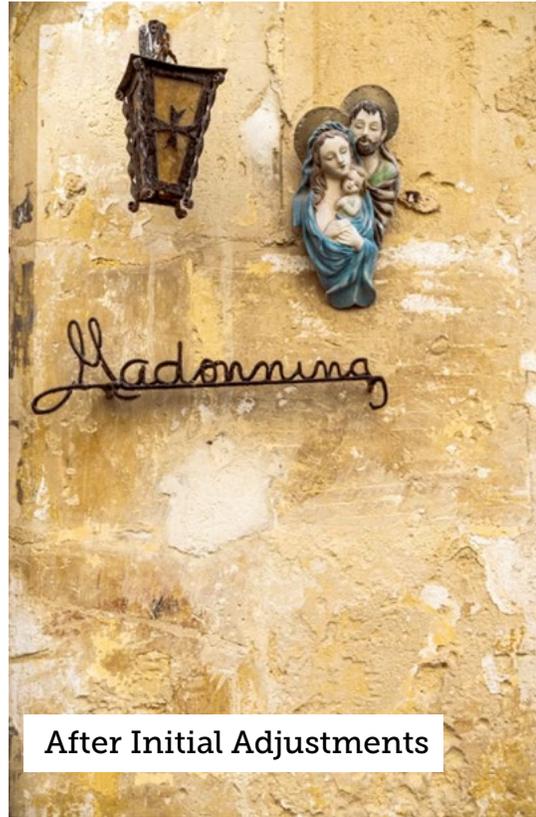
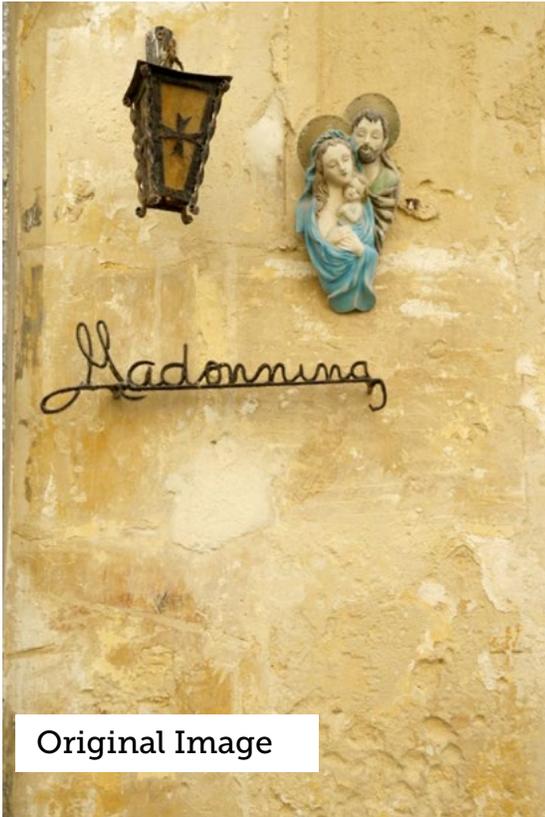
- The Exposure slider was increased to brighten the area overall.



Madonna Sign (42:00)

One of the things that I like to do with masks is make certain object stand out from their surroundings, making the image look like it has more dimension. That's what I did with this image. There are three objects against a weathered wall and I want to make them stand out.

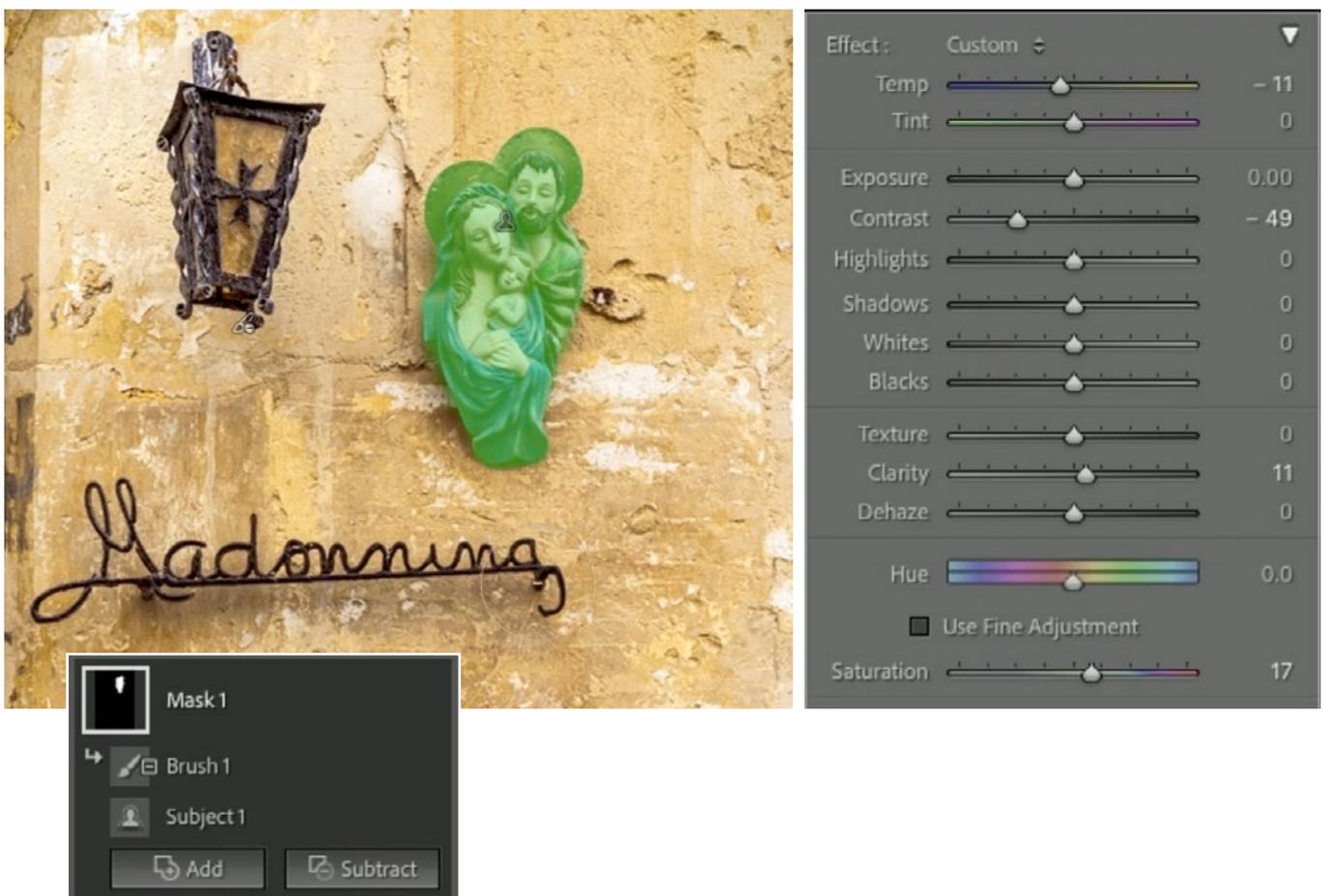
Image 6



MASK 1 The first thing I wanted to isolate was the wall hanging on the right. I used the Select Subject masking feature and it did a great job, getting only a small amount of overspray on the lamp and Madonna text. That overspray was easy to get rid of. I clicked the Subtract button and chose to use the Brush Tool to remove parts of the mask. I simply painted over the lamp and the text, as well as some small details in the wall that were accidentally selected. This left only the wall hanging masked.

Adjustments:

- Lowered the Contrast
- Adjusted the white balance to make the color feel slightly different from the surroundings, moving the Temp slider toward blue.
- Increased the Saturation to make the area a little more colorful.
- Increased the Clarity slider to add a little more pop.



MASK 2 The next mask was used to isolate the lamp and I used the Brush Tool to do this. I turned the Auto Mask setting on and then painted around the perimeter of the lamp. Then I turned the Auto Mask setting off and painted in the middle of the lamp.



Adjustments:

- Increased the Whites slider to make the bright areas pop.
- Increased Texture and Clarity to bring out the details.
- Adjusted the Temp slider to make the lamp a cooler hue.

MASK 3 The third mask was created to isolate the Madonna text. I used the Brush Tool to create this mask and made sure the Auto Mask setting was turned on. This helped to prevent the brush from getting overspill onto the yellow wall. Some overspray did occur, so I used the Brush in Erase mode to paint away the excess.

Adjustments:

- Increased whites to make the light areas pop more.
- Increased Texture to accentuate the details.
- Increased the Saturation just a bit.

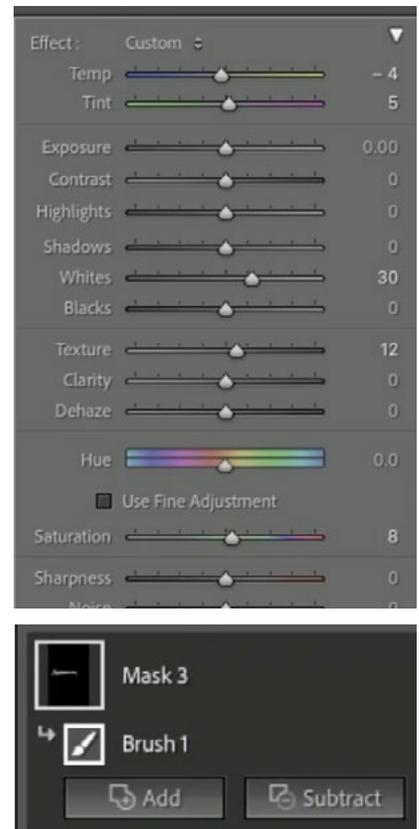
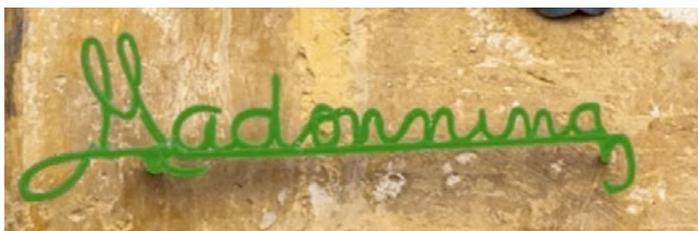
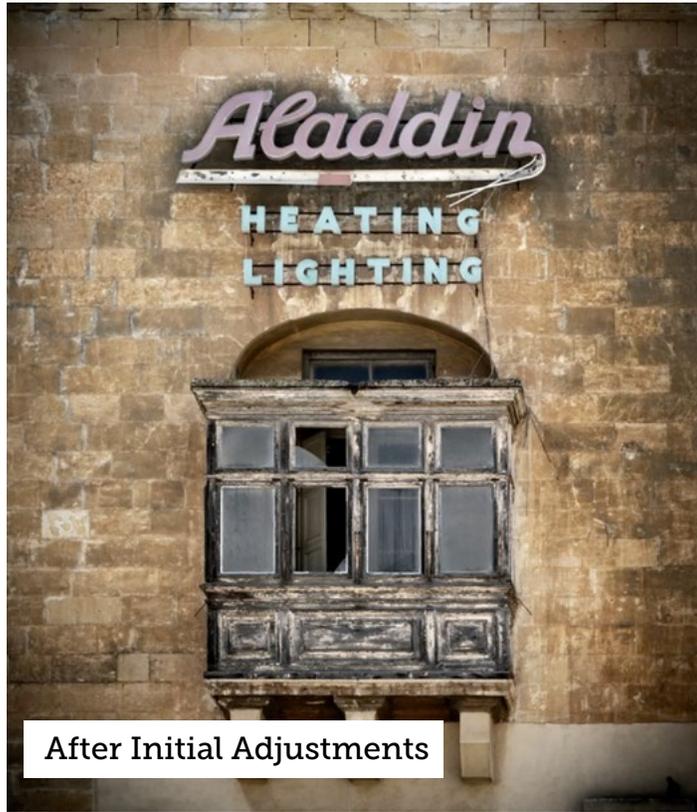


Image 7

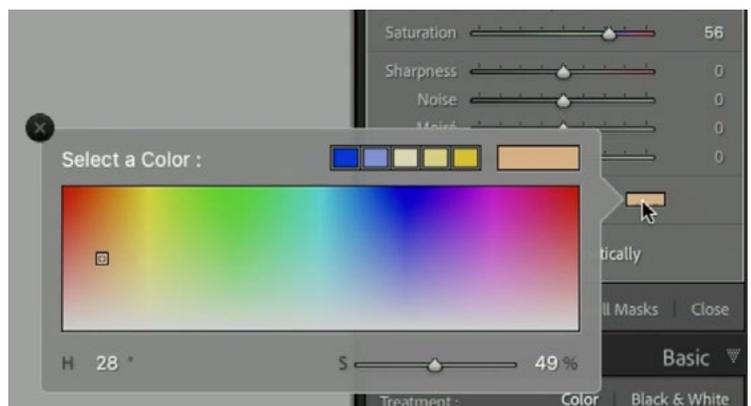
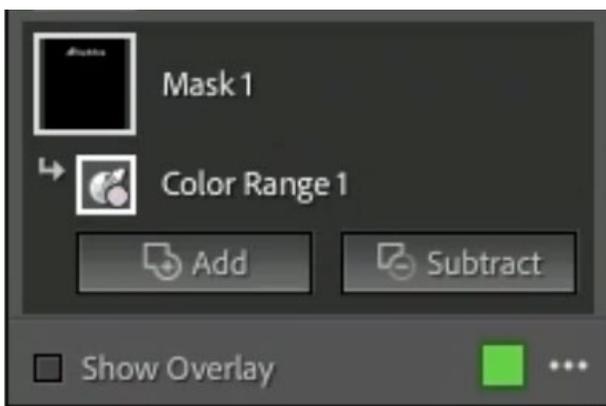
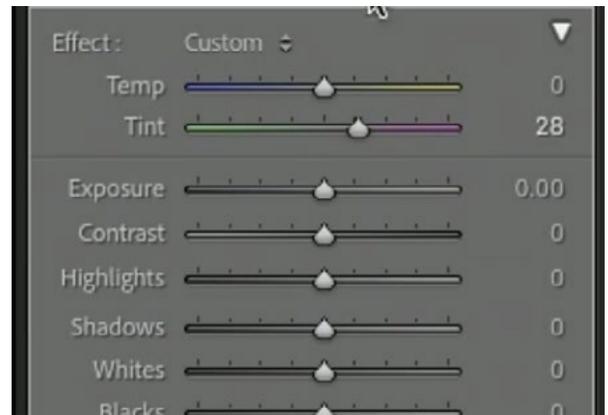


Aladdin Sign (49:00)

MASK 1 The first mask was used to isolate the Aladdin Text. The Select Color Range feature was used to create the mask. After choosing the Select Color Range mask, I clicked on the Aladdin text to select an initial color range. This caused some settings to become available in the panel on the right side of the screen. The Refine slider can be used to expand or contract the color range being selected. In this case, I was able to leave the slider all the way to the left and the Aladdin text was the only thing being masked.

Adjustments:

- Increased the saturation to make the sign more colorful.
- Adjusted the white balance, moving the Tint slider to the right, making the sign more magenta.
- The sign was still not the color I wanted, so I injected a peach color using the Color setting below the adjustment sliders.



MASK 2 The next mask was used to isolate the Heating Lighting text and the same Color Range technique was used. I created a new Color Range mask and clicked on the text to set an initial color range. I used the refine slider to ensure that just the Heating Lighting text was masked.

Adjustments:

- Increased Saturation to make the text more colorful.
- Used the Color setting to inject some blue into the sign.

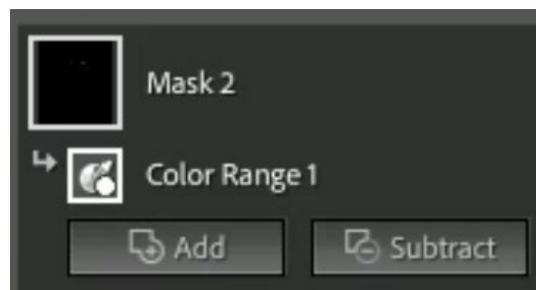
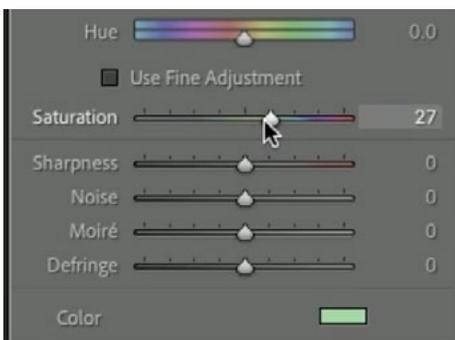


Image 8



Original Image



After Initial Adjustments



After Masks (final)

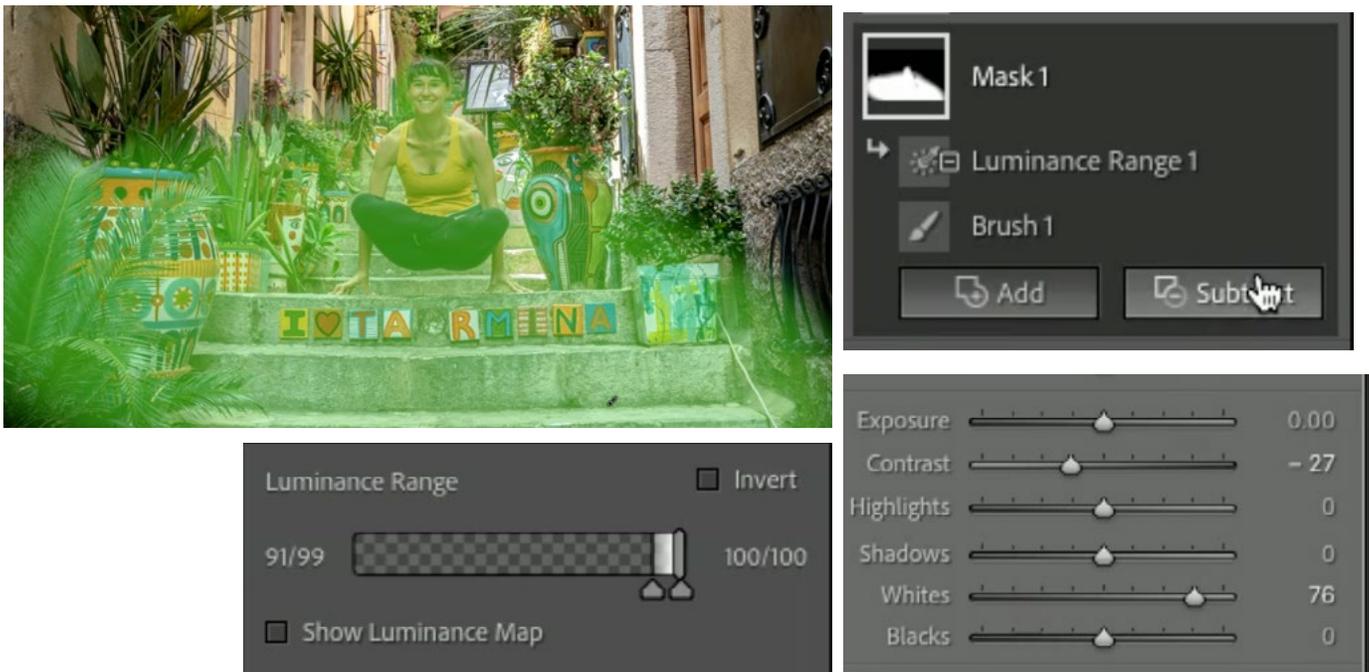
Taormina Stairs (52:30)

In this image, the background was very bright, so in order to correctly expose the photo, the foreground and subject ended up being overly dark. A combination of adjustments and masks was used to enhance the image.

MASK 1 The first mask isolates just the bottom part of the image, where the subject and foreground are. It was created using the Brush Tool and the Luminance Range feature. First, I used the Brush Tool to paint over that foreground area. I did not want any really bright areas to be affected, so I clicked on the Subtract button and chose to remove some areas from the mask using the Luminance Range feature. After choosing Luminance Range, I clicked on the brightest area in the foreground. This targeted all areas that were that bright and it removed them from the mask. I then fine tuned the Luminance Range sliders within the panel on the right side of the screen.

Adjustments:

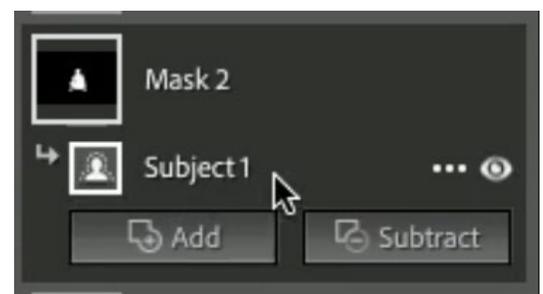
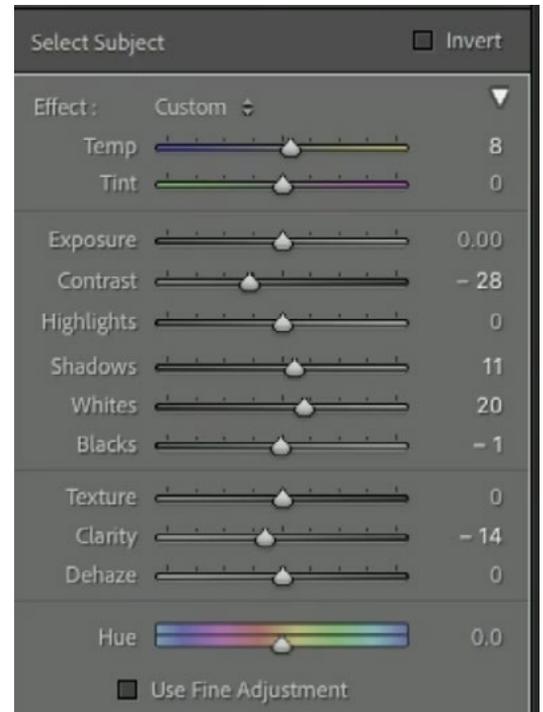
- Increase the Whites slider to lighten up the brightest portion of the masked area.
- Decreased the Contrast. This is something I commonly do for shady areas.



MASK 2 This mask was used to isolate Karen and the Select Subject feature did an amazing job at this.

Adjustments:

- Lowered the Contrast.
- Increased the Whites to lighten the bright area.
- Increased the Shadows just until I could see more detail in her hands.
- Clarity was increased to counter the Clarity that was added to the image as a whole.



MASK 3 This small mask was created to isolate Karen's teeth. The Brush Tool was used for this and it the Auto Mask setting was turned on to prevent overspill.

Adjustments:

- Increased Whites to brighten the teeth.
- Decreased Saturation to make the teeth less colorful.

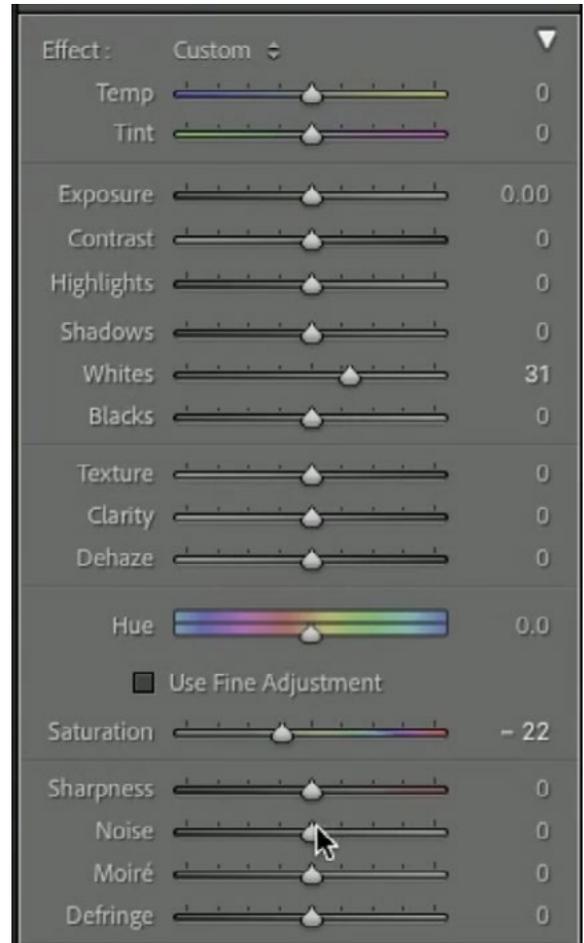
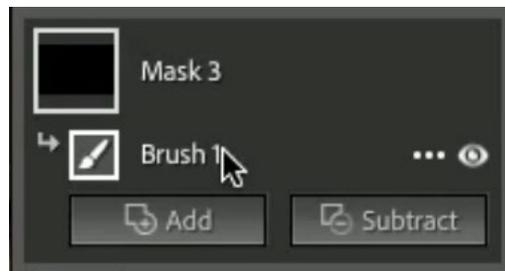


Image 9

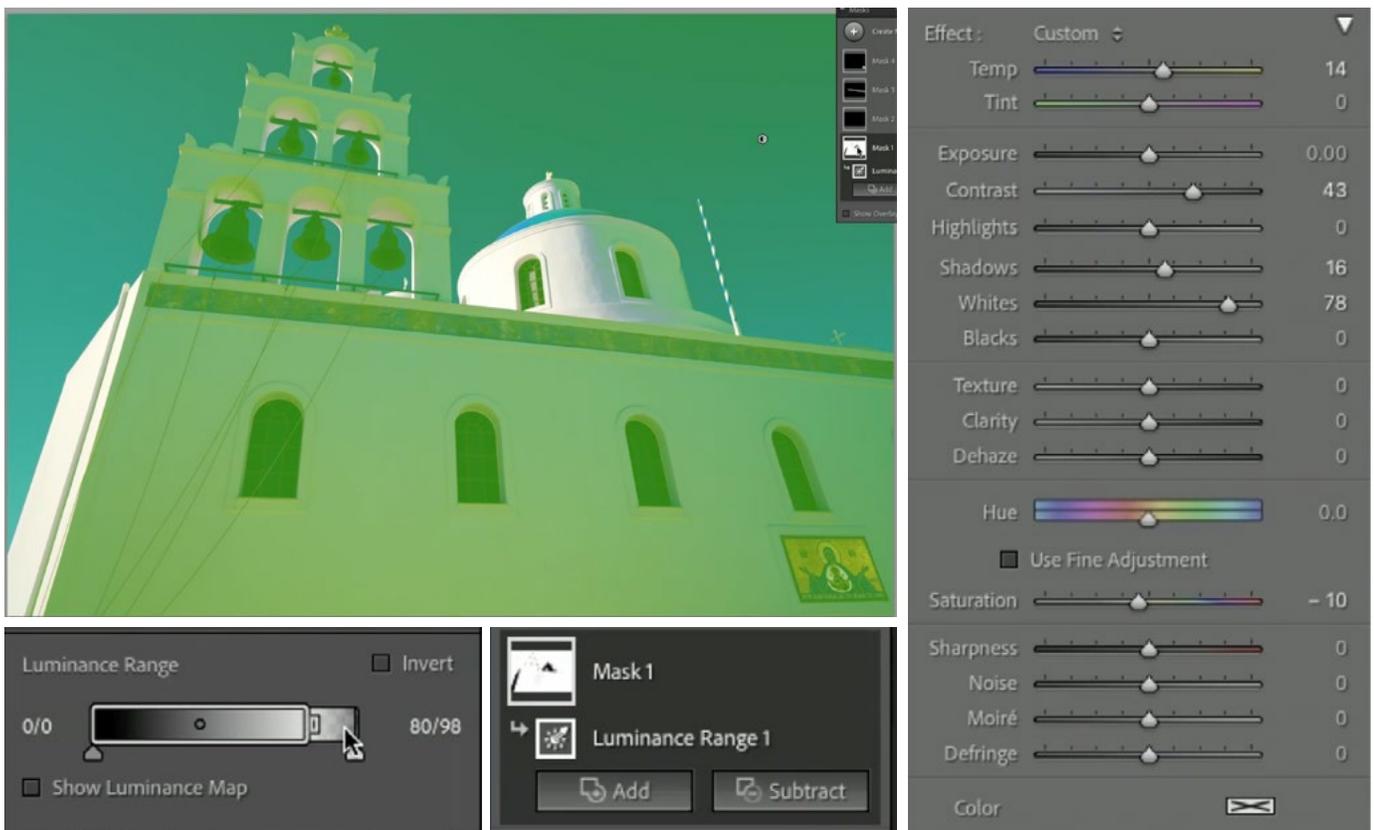


Church Bells (58:27)

MASK 1 The first mask was used to target everything except for the brightest areas in the image. A Luminance Range mask was used to create the mask. I used the sliders beneath the Luminance Range gradient, dragging the white end to the left until I saw the mask overlay disappear from those bright areas. Then I dragged the white slider to the right, which created a smoother transition.

Adjustments:

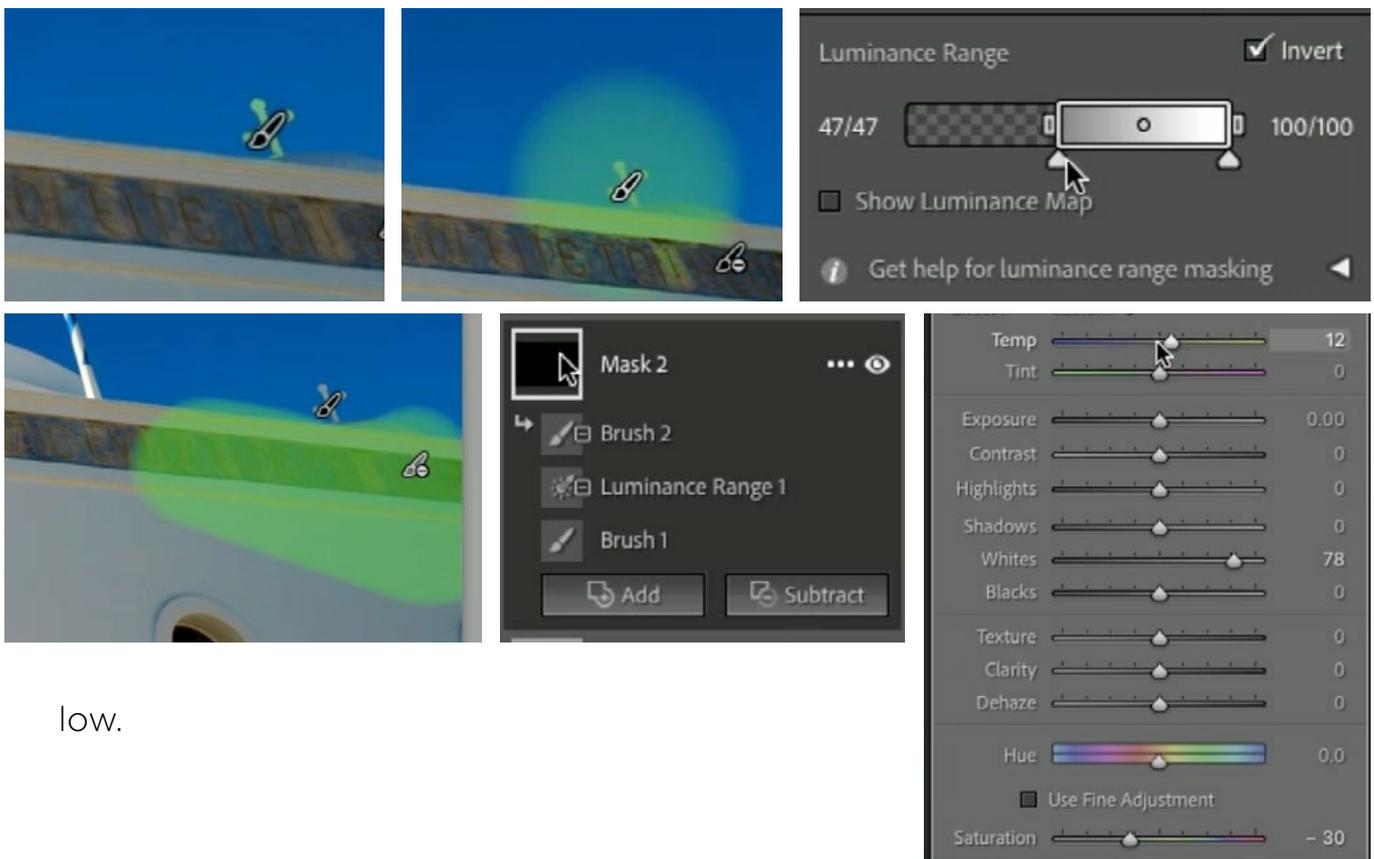
- Increased the Whites to lighten up the shady area.
- Increased the Shadows to get more shadow detail.
- Increased Contrast a bit.
- Moved the Saturation slider down to make the area a little less colorful.
- Moved the Temp slider to the right, making the area a little more yellow.



MASK 2 The second mask isolates just the tiny little cross on the right side of the church's roof. A few steps were taken to create this mask. First, the Brush Tool was used to create a small, circular mask surrounding the cross. This is to tell Lightroom that I want to work on this small portion of the image. Then, I used the Luminance Range feature to intersect the current mask. I adjusted the Luminance Range gradient sliders to isolate the brightest half of the image. Because this was set to intersect, it will remove any dark areas (the sky surrounding the cross) from the mask. The top of the building was still included in the selection and I needed to remove it. I clicked on the Subtract button and chose to use the Brush Tool to remove parts of the mask. Then I painted over the part of the building that was still masked, leaving just the cross.

Adjustments:

- Increased the Whites slider to brighten the cross.
- Lowered the Saturation to remove any color cast.
- Moved the Temp slider to the right, making the cross less blue and more yellow.

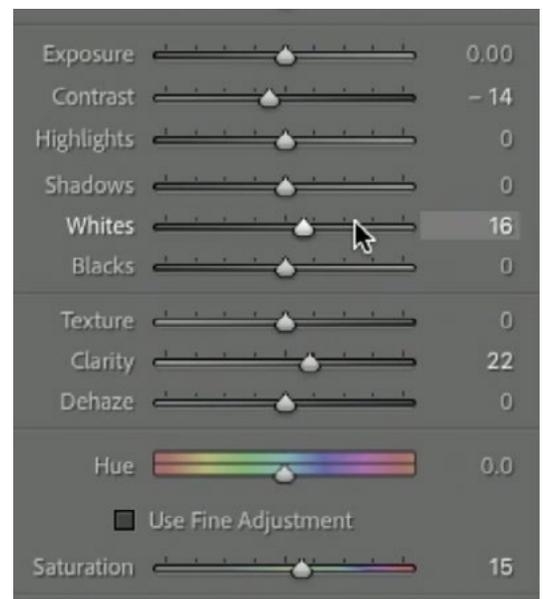
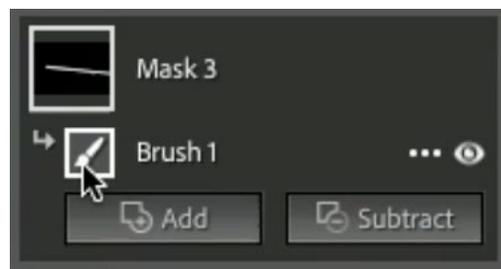


low.

MASK 3 There is a band around the top of the building with an inscription on it and I wanted this to stand out more. The next mask isolated this band and it was created with the Brush Tool. The Auto Mask setting was turned on and I used a low Feathering setting to paint over the band. I set the brush to the Erase setting to remove any overspill.

Adjustments:

- Lowered the Contrast.
- Increased the Whites to brighten the area.
- Increased the Clarity slider to bring out the details.
- Increased the Saturation to make the band more colorful.



MASK 4 The final mask was created to isolate the mosaic image on the side of the building. The Brush Tool was used to isolate this area. The Auto Mask setting was turned on to paint over the edges (preventing overspill onto the wall) and then it was turned off to paint on the interior of the mosaic.

Adjustments:

- Again, the Whites sliders was used to make the art brighter.
- The Shadows slider was brought up so you could see the shadow detail.
- The Contrast was lowered.
- The Temp slider was moved to the left, making the mosaic less yellow.

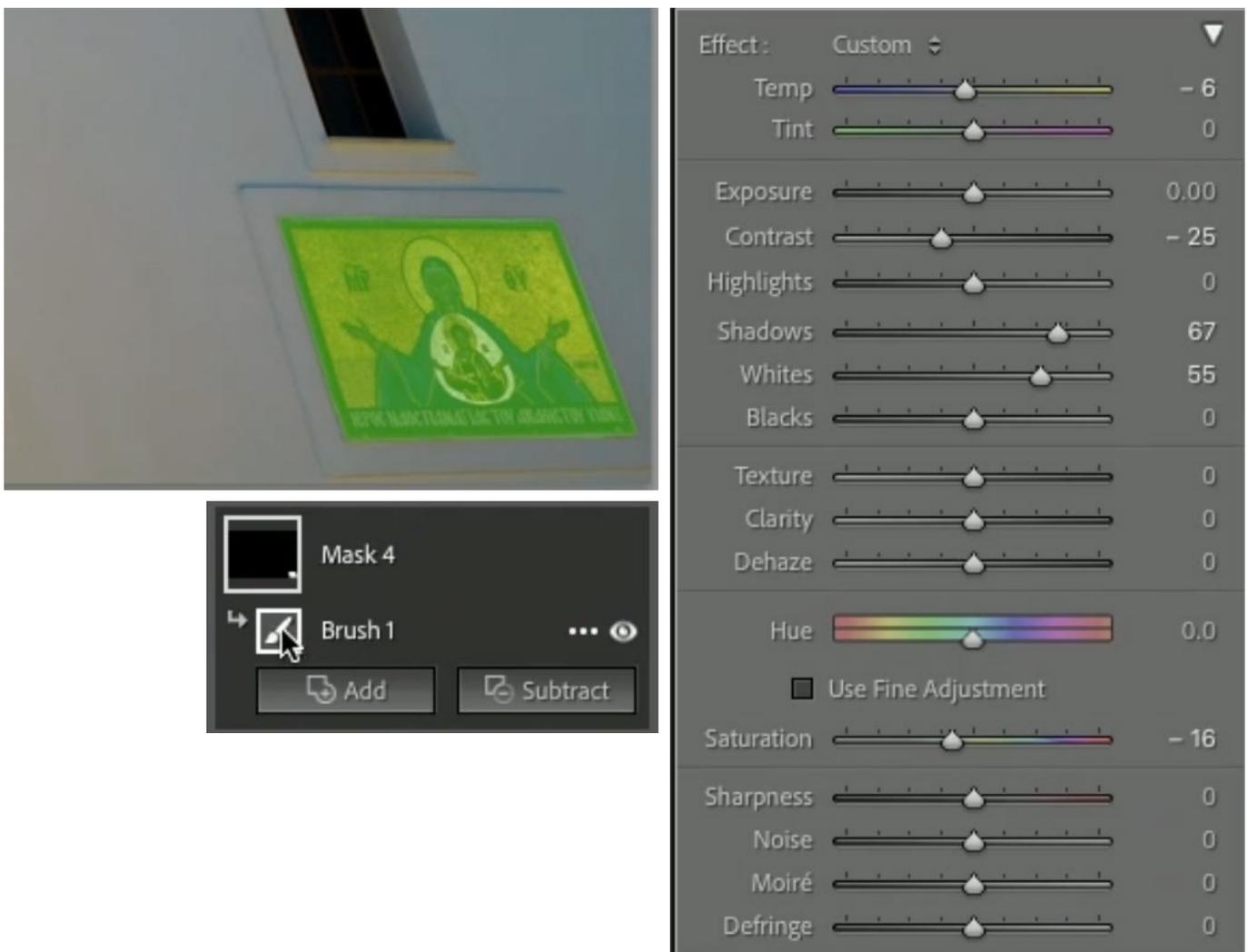


Image 10



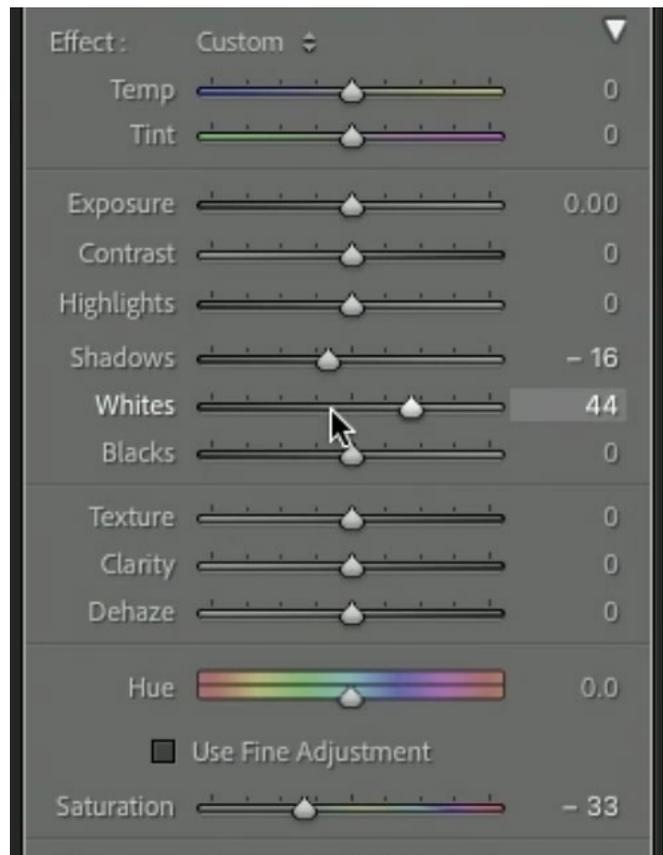
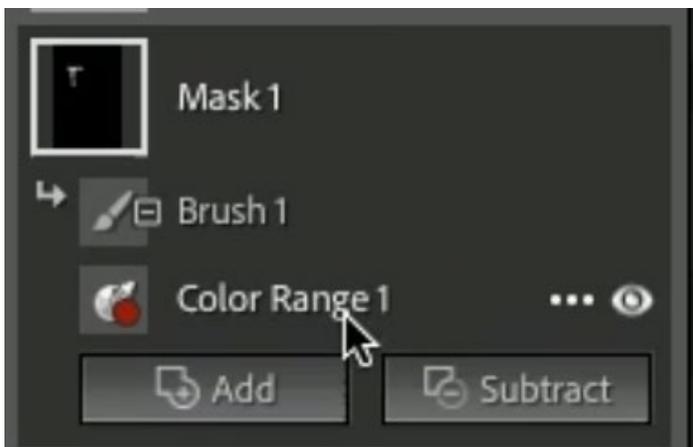
Baby Clothes (1:05:09)

MASK 1 The red ribbon on one of the outfits was overly vibrant and looked a little unnatural to me, so the first mask targets just this ribbon. The Color Range feature was used in conjunction with the Brush Tool to create the mask. I created a Color Range mask and then clicked and dragged out a rectangular shape within the ribbon to target that range of colors. Then I used the Refine slider to adjust the selection, so that just the red ribbon was selected.

A few other areas were accidentally included in the mask, so I used the Brush Tool using the Intersect option, painting over just the ribbon.

Adjustments:

- Moved the Whites slider up to brighten the area.
- Moved the Shadows slider down, darkening the areas that are already dark.
- Moved the Saturation slider down to make it look less unnaturally colorful.



MASK 2 The second mask isolates the pink fringe at the very top of the image. I felt that my eye was drawn there and I wanted to tone it down, therefore directing the eye away from the edges of the frame. This mask was created in the same way as the previous mask, using the Color Range feature and then the Brush Tool to remove the overspill.

Adjustments:

- Lowered the Saturation, making the area less colorful.

