

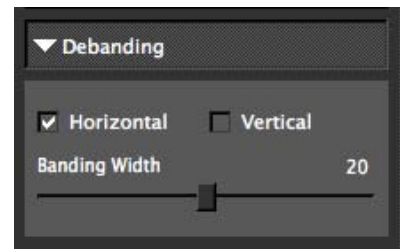
Topaz Labs

DeNoise 5 Review

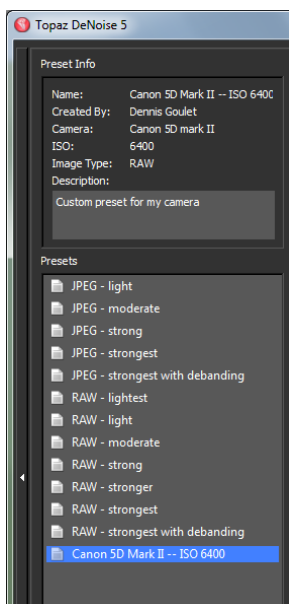
By Dennis Goulet

TOPAZ Labs recently released an upgrade to its noise reduction plug-in Topaz DeNoise 5. The more I edit images the more I find I rely on DeNoise 5 as the first thing I do after opening an image in Photoshop. I will do a few adjustments in Lightroom, then open the image in Photoshop CS3 or CS5, depending on which computer I'm using. A free plug-in, Topaz Fusion, is available to allow the use of DeNoise direct from Lightroom, but I have not tried that feature yet. Powered by unique Topaz Lab's Intellinnoise technology, the plug-in is fast and quickly reduces noise while preserving detail. Much of the noise adjustment controls work the same as previous versions and a review of DeNoise 3 can be found [here](#).

The interface hasn't changed much from DeNoise 4, but is a great improvement from DeNoise 3. There are also a few new features that are handy. The Correct Black Level parameter helps to remove hazy color casts that sometimes appear in the shadows. There is also a new Debanding tool to remove horizontal or vertical bands that sometime occur across a high ISO image.



The Detail Recovery Tool Panel provides a means to increase detail recovery, reduce blur, or add grain. I must admit I haven't used that last slider, but for the creative types it must come in handy. A series of images at the end of this article provide an example of how well detail recovery works.



DeNoise 5 offers a set of presets as a place to start noise reduction on an image. Greatly improved over version 3, the Presets are organized in two groups, JPEG and RAW, and offer increasing amounts of noise reduction (light, moderate, strong, etc.). All the controls in the noise reduction and detail recovery tool panels are available for adjustment, as the presets are just a place to start. I've found that I don't need to adjust much in the noise reduction panel, but do work with the detail recovery sliders. And there's more. A very nice feature found in DeNoise 5 (and in DeNoise 4) is the ability to create presets for your camera. Since noise is closely associated with the ISO used, and the capabilities of the image sensor, a unique set of presets developed for your camera at different ISOs is a great tool to have. Again, it is only a starting point, and additional adjustments can be made from there. You can see by the Presets list here I have added an ISO 6400 preset for my camera to my list.

One of the big advantages of the entire line of Topaz Labs plug-ins is the detailed user manual that comes with each product. Not only are the controls described in

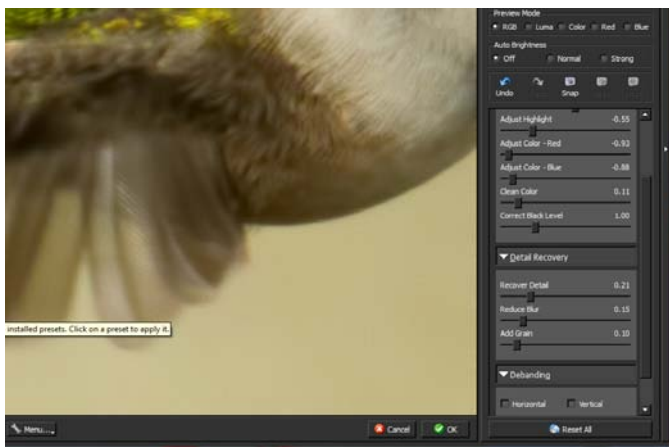
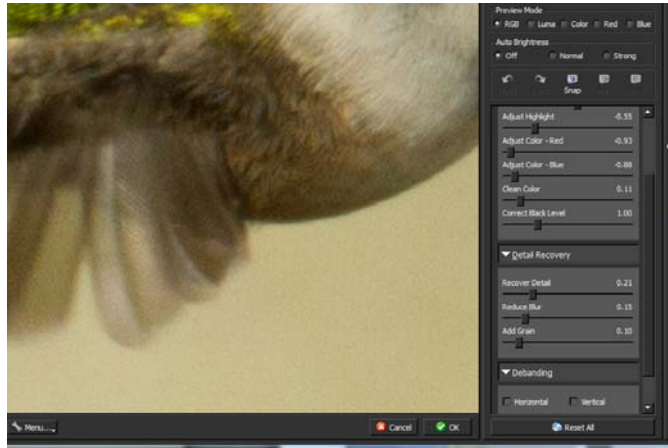
great detail in English that is understandable, there are several “projects” that are described step-by-step. And, there are vide tutorials on the Topaz website as well on YouTube.

Topaz DeNoise 5 plug-in works with Photoshop, Photoshop Elements, Aperture, iPhoto and Lightroom, and is available as a standalone plug-in, or as part of its suite of plug-ins at a considerable saving. Upgrade from previous DeNoise versions is free.

For more information, see <http://www.topazlabs.com/denoise/>

Detail Recovery Example

Original image, no processing.



With RAW – Moderate noise reduction presets.

Increased detail recovery, reduced blur.

You can see the additional detail in the feathers on the underbelly of this hummingbird.

