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**Front Cover:** Dog behavior expert Cesar Millan playing with a pack of dogs in National Geographic Channel's *Dog Whisperer*. © National Geographic Channel



# Fine Living Travel in High Definition

by Thomas Strodel and William Kearney



Top: Tour boat motoring in Halong Bay, Vietnam.

Above: Host Joanne Colan and Guide Somchat Wammusot ride an Asian Elephant at the Nosey Parker Elephant Camp, Krabi, Thailand.

In March, 2005, 24 FPS Productions started a ten-month journey to create a unique travel show for the FINE LIVING TV Network. Our goal was to produce a show that depicted travel the way we like to do it: a bit of luxury without losing touch with local culture and adventure. The logistics of placing our crew and a half-ton of equipment in thirteen different countries in under ten months was a challenge.

The series was shot mainly with the Sony 700A HDCam camera at 60i. A second unit Sony Z1U was used underwater, in low light conditions, and as a second camera for cooking segments, as it's difficult to keep the spontaneity of a cooking demonstration using single-camera shooting methods. To synch the cameras we used an electronic SMPTE clapper feeding from the HDCam, and simply pointed the HDV at it from time to time. This provided the necessary visual timecode reference back in the edit.

Meshing the HDCAM and HDV footage worked quite well. However, there were

some logistical issues specific to integrating the HDV footage into the post production workflow that required special processing. The downconverted DV signal out of the HDV camera does not include matching timecode, so we needed to develop a lengthy workflow around which included digitizing in all the HDV footage, and then applying a timecode generator filter in Final Cut Pro, then exporting them to QuickTime DV files the editors could easily use.

With our tight schedule, we developed a method for remote rough-cut reviews which included making small, low-rez movies which Bill and Tom viewed and critiqued via e-mail. All the edits were conformed on 24fps's FCP-based HD editing system in New York.

The series, which premiered in October, can be seen on Fine Living Monday through Wednesday nights at 10:30 p.m. ET. **HD**

*Thomas Strodel is an independent producer and director and owns NYC-based 24fps Productions. tom@24fpsproductions.com, www.24fpsproductions.com.*