

Ricoh GR IIIx (40mm) vs GR III (28mm): The REAL Difference

What's poppin', people? It's Dante.

Today we're gonna be looking at photographs I made with the Ricoh GR IIIx, as I wanna discuss the difference between shooting with the 40mm versus the 28mm — and really highlight the key takeaways I've had after 3.5 years of using both.

The Difference Is Smaller Than You Think

There's a very small — but very important — difference between these two focal lengths.

And that difference shows up in **micro adjustments**.

It's your physical positioning.

It's your timing.

It's the exact moment you click the shutter.

When you're out in the street and life is moving toward you — people walking, running, passing — that timing shifts depending on the focal length.

And that instinct?

It only comes from time spent consistently using one focal length.

Focal Length Doesn't Matter Like You Think

Here's the radical idea:

Focal length doesn't matter as much as people think.

It becomes an extension of how you see.

When I'm shooting 40mm vs 28mm, I'm not thinking:

- "I need to get closer"
- "I need to frame wider"

I'm just recognizing:

The distance between me and the subject.

That's it.

Yes — 40mm is tighter.

Yes — there's more compression.

But at the end of the day:

Photography is physical.

It's where your body is in relation to the moment.

40mm vs 28mm — How They Feel

40mm (GR IIIx)

- More **intentional**
- More **precision required**
- Naturally pulls you into **details**
- Stronger **compression**
- More **structured compositions**

You start noticing:

- Hands
- Feet

- Textures
- Cropped relationships

You're not shooting the whole scene — you're **honing in**.

28mm (GR III)

- More **open**
- More **forgiving**
- More **environmental context**
- Looser edges in the frame

It lets you breathe more.

Which One Is Harder?

You could argue both sides:

- 28mm is harder because you have to get closer and control the edges
- 40mm is harder because it demands precision

But honestly?

Neither is harder.

It just changes how you move your body.

Instinct Over Everything

When I'm out shooting, I'm not thinking about settings.

I'm reacting.

For example — a moment on the beach:

- A boy looking up
- A grandmother coming out of the water

I don't think.

I just respond.

My Setup

- Snap Focus: **3.5 meters**
- Aperture: **f/9**
- Mode: **AV (Aperture Priority)**

This lets me shoot **without thinking**.

Pro Tip: Snap Focus + Autofocus

Here's something I use all the time:

I assign the **Fn button** to switch between:

- Snap Focus
- Single Point Autofocus

Why?

Because sometimes the subject gets *really close*.

And in those moments:

- Snap Focus won't cut it
- I need precise autofocus

So I tap Fn → switch → shoot.

Fast. Intuitive. No friction.

Most of the time I'm in Snap Focus — but I switch when I need to.

With 28mm, you can pretty much stay in Snap Focus all day.

With 40mm, there's more nuance.

The Real Takeaway

Consistency builds instinct.

You don't learn this stuff by thinking — you learn it by doing.

Going out. Shooting. Repeating.

That's how the timing locks in.

Using Both Focal Lengths

Even though I talk about “one camera, one lens”...

I do use both.

And honestly — with the Ricoh system — it's seamless.

I don't feel like I leave the flow state switching between them.

Still, when I choose one:

I commit to it for a season.

Final Thoughts

40mm gives you:

- Precision
- Detail
- Intentional framing

28mm gives you:

- Freedom
- Context
- Flow

But again:

It's not about the lens — it's about how you move.

If you're curious, I've uploaded over **13,000 photos** from the past 3 years using both cameras.

You can now toggle between GR III and GR IIIx on the archive.

Go study the work. Get inspired.

And most importantly:

Go outside and practice.

I'll see you in the next one.

Peace.