

Introduction

This lens has quite a reputation and with good reason: It is a great lens. No question about it.



Tamron Adaptall SP 35-80mm f/2.8-3.8 CF (Model O1A) is not only an old lens; it also has an old fashion look.

Maybe inspired by the beer-can-lenses, I don't know. The lens has tons of numbers, colors and text on it but once you have mounted the lens on your camera; the impression change. The lens is solid.

The lens seem to be very durable. Metal and glass. It is not big. The length is between 72 and 92mm and the filter used is 62mm.

The lens does not have a bayonet. Tamron made lenses without bayonets and when you bought the lens, you also bought the adaptor with the bayonet you needed. It is possible to find adaptor rings to modern DSLR's. You have to have both lens and the adaptor plus a adaptor ring when using the lens on modern DSLR's.

The "CF" stand for "continuously focussing" which Tamron invented: Instead of pushing a bottom for placing the lenses in "macro mode", you just keep turning the zoom-ring beyond the 80mm. That will set the lenses in macro mode allowing the lens to focus at 27 cm and providing 1:2.5 magnification. That is not true macro of course but the lens will work with the 2 x teleconverter providing a 1:1.25 magnification. Still not true macro but very impressive considering the lens is a zoom.

The lens weighs in at 400 gr.

Turning the focus will turn the front of the lens. That makes it hard to use POL-filters. The focus ring give you almost 360 degrees turn. The first 180 degrees will cover the range between 27 cm and 55 cm. That is really a lot of turn for such a small focusing range. In other words: Focusing at close range (macro) is very easy. The focus ring has good rubber diamond pattern and the grip is excellent.

The zoom ring is just half the width as the focus ring. The zoom ring has no diamond pattern but instead grooves. These grooves are in rubber and the grip is just as fine as you want it to be. It is very nice that the zoom ring and the focus ring has different grips. This make it more easy to find and turn the wanted ring.

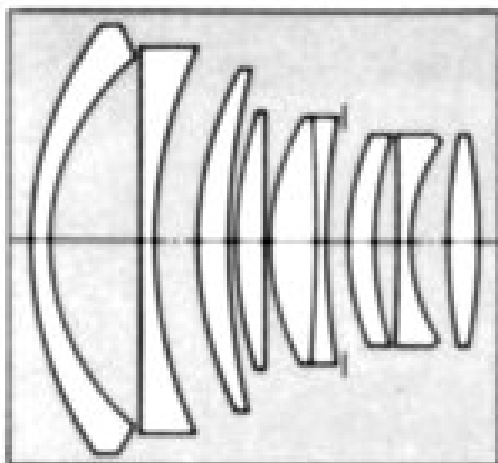
The aperture ring is very thin – too thin in my opinion and it does end up too close to the camera.

Data:

Taken from: <http://www.adaptall-2.org/lenses/01A.html>:

Lens Model	01A
Focal Length	35 — 80mm
Aperture Range	f/2.8~3.8 — 32, AE
Angle of View	64°~30°
Optical Construction (Groups / Elements)	8 / 9
Min. Focus from Film Plane	10.6" (0.27m) at f=80mm
Macro Mag. Ratio [w/2X Converter]	1:2.5 [1:1.25] at f=80mm
Filter Size	62mm
Diameter	2.5" (64.5mm)
Length at ∞ [w/Nikon mount]	2.8" (72mm) [3.0" (76.5mm)]
Weight	13.6 oz. (386g)
Lens Hood	Push-on type #25FH (optional extra).
Accessory	Accepts SP 2X tele-converter #01F.

The lenses:



From <http://www.adaptall-2.org/lenses/01A.html>:

Tamron SP 35-80 F/2.8-3.8					Tamron SP 35-80 F/2.8-3.8				
F/no.	RESOLUTION at 35mm		CONTRAST at 35mm (30 lines/mm)		F/no.	RESOLUTION at 60mm		CONTRAST at 60mm (30 lines/mm)	
	at 1:50 magnification		Center %	Corner %		at 1:51 magnification		Center %	Corner %
	Center Lines/mm	Corner Lines/mm				Center Lines/mm	Corner Lines/mm		
2.8	56	35	46	21	2.8	46	46	42	36
4	70	40	65	26	4	51	51	66	38
5.6	63	40	65	35	5.6	65	57	67	40
8	63	56	65	35	8	65	57	72	48
11	63	56	66	50	11	57	57	68	50
16	63	50	60	50	16	57	51	58	48
22	63	44	50	45	22	46	46	48	48
32	56	35	42	42	32	46	41	32	38

Tamron SP 35-80 F/2.8-3.8				
F/no.	RESOLUTION at 80mm		CONTRAST at 80mm (30 lines/mm)	
	at 1:65 magnification		Center %	Corner %
	Center Lines/mm	Corner Lines/mm		
3.8	65	52	52	24
4	65	52	52	24
5.6	68	52	68	34
8	73	75	72	42
11	73	73	75	53
16	73	65	68	56
22	65	65	58	48
32	52	52	45	36

The data and the professional tests show that you can get a lot out of this lens from f:4 and topping at f:8. Not a great surprise; most lenses will perform better at f:8 than f:4.

Price

The lens was produced from 1979 and discontinued in 1985. It is therefore not very wrong to say that the lens has reached a mature age. At least 26 years now (2011).

Looking at eBay and having a bit of patience should give you the possibility to get the lens for between £ 100 and £ 150.

Some might find that expensive; I don't. I agree that it is a lot of money for an old lens; but the lens is worth it. Just look at the pictures.

Pictures

80mm, f/5,6 – off shoe flash



80mm, f/5,6 – off shoe flash



Above: Distance is about 1 meter. In my opinion: Nice sharp pictures with very nice bokeh and an excellent color control.

80mm f/5,6, distance 80 cm:



80mm f/5,6, distance 150 cm:



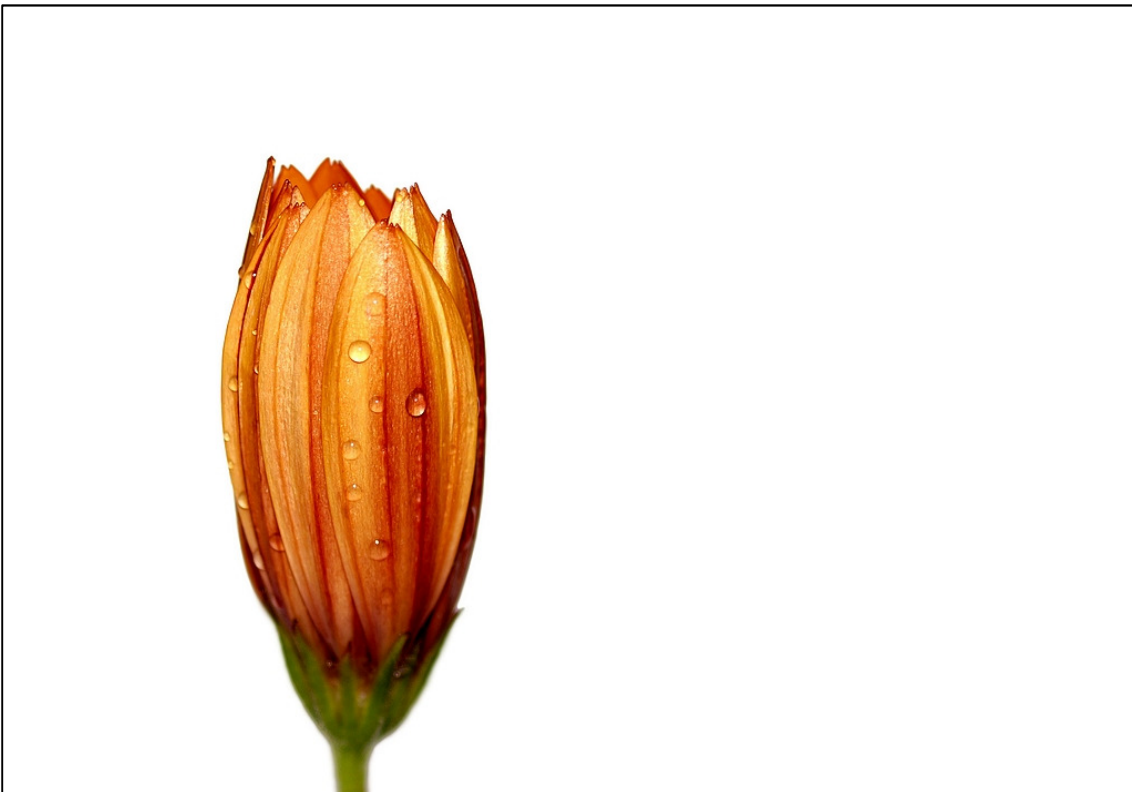
80mm f/5,6, on shoe flash, distance 30 cm:

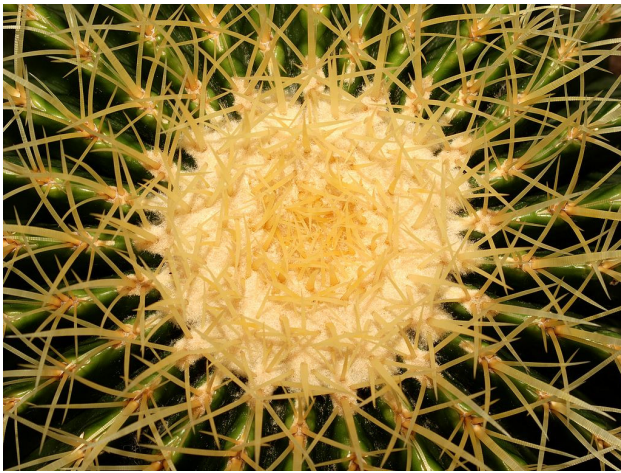


The pigeon is 5 meters away. 80mm, f/4, on shoe flash.



Below: 80mm f/4.8. Of shoe flash. Distance 80 cm.





Above: 80mm f/5.6. On shoe flash. Distance 50 cm.



Below: 80mm f/4. Distance 60 cm.



This page: 80mm f/5.6. Distance is about 2-3 meters.



Macro

The lens will give you a fine magnification, but Tamron was on a leap when they printed “macro” on the lens. The magnification is 1:2.5 without the teleconverter

Below: 80mm f/11. Distance is 27 cm.



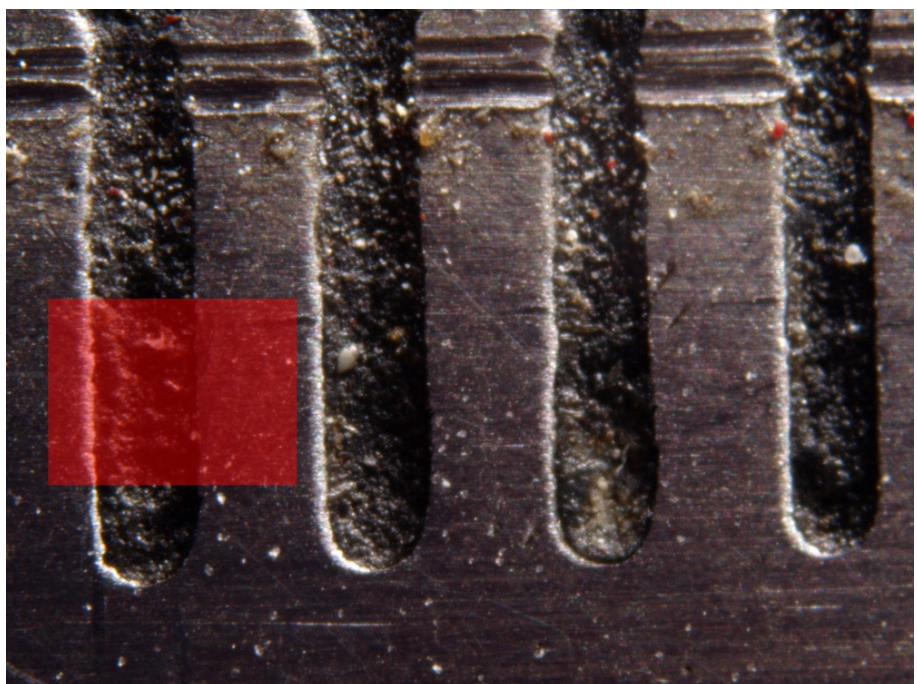
In my opinion: sharp, clear and very nice.

Using a bellow will give you a much better magnification. Here is the whole picture, just resized. The picture holds about 4 mm of reality:

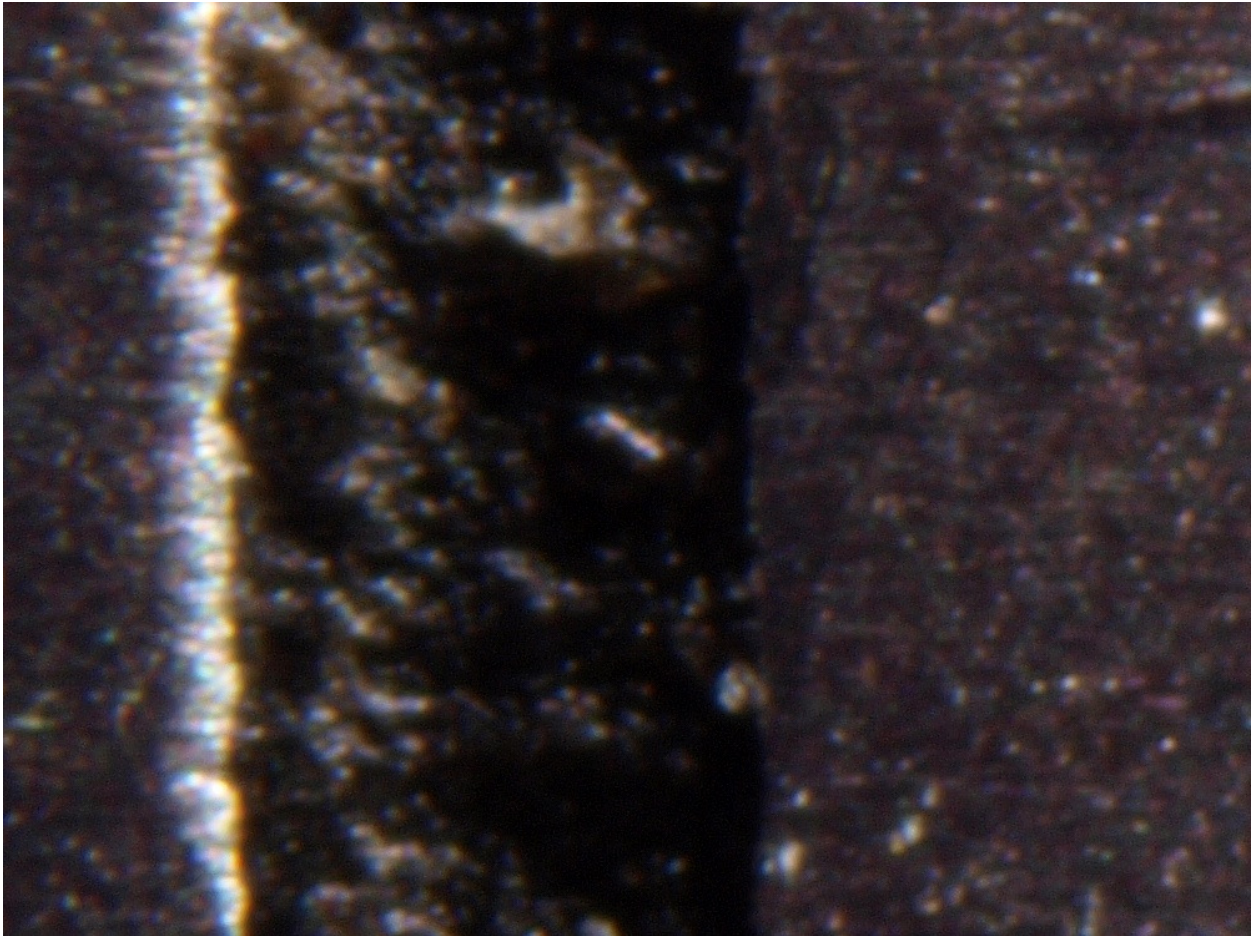
I use Olympus E-30 and the picture is then magnified 4.3:1. The “bars” in the picture is the 1 mm marker.

The red square in an indication of a 1000 x 750 pixel crop...

In my opinion: A very nice result with proper sharpness and fine reproduction of the details.



And the 1000 x 750 crop is this:



----- <-this is the width of a mm marker

In my opinion: The 100% crop does show the problems. This magnification will give noise and the sharpness is not the best.

Using a 2 x teleconverter will up the magnification from 1:2.5 to 1:1.25. Close to true macro level.

On the next page you will find a picture of one coffeebean and a crop from the picture.

Above: 80mm f/8. Distance 27 cm. 2 x teleconverter used. The grey square indicate the size of a 1000 x 750 pixels crop.

Below: The crop.

In my opinion: Very nice reproductions.



Conclusion

At www.adaptall-2.com the Tamron Adaptall SP 35-80mm f/2.8-3.8 is described like this:

”without question, the best zoom lens ever manufactured within its class and price point”. That is big words and will of course step up the expectations to the lens.

I have no way of knowing if the Tamron Adaptall SP 35-80mm f/2.8-3.8 is the best zoom lens ever manufactured. But I do know that I think very very highly of the lens.

The build is very good. It handles good and the sharpness, the contrast and the color rendering is well above average.

As a close up lens it is more than good. It has a very nice and open reproduction.

Adding that the lens also handles more normal motives it is clear that this lens is a winner.

Out of 5, I give the lens 3.75.