

Mr. Giansante



PhotoShop Fake Travel Photos

February 2019

PhotoShop - Fake Travel Photos

A 21-year-old YouTuber faked an 8-day vacation all over Europe and found 'it is so easy to be deceitful online'

by Daniel Boan

Source: <https://www.msn.com/en-ca/lifestyle/whats-hot/a-21-year-old-youtuber-faked-an-8-day-vacation-all-over-europe-and-found-it-is-so-easy-to-be-deceitful-online/ar-AAQObP?li=AAggFp5>

London-based YouTuber George Mason tricked his followers into thinking he was on an eight-day European vacation.

He posted several edited photos and fake Instagram stories, then revealed the whole trip was a prank in a YouTube video.

Mason told INSIDER he thought it was "worrying" how easy it was to fool his followers.

Instagram pranks are becoming a popular trend on social media. One YouTuber to take on the trend earlier this year was 21-year-old George Mason.

The London-based vlogger used his photo editing skills to trick his Instagram followers into thinking he went on an eight-day vacation across five European countries. He eventually revealed the prank in a YouTube video titled: "I FAKED going on HOLIDAY for a whole WEEK *PHOTOSHOPPING MY INSTAGRAM* PRANK."

The video has racked up over seven million views at the time of writing (it was uploaded in January), and is an earlier example of the photo-editing trend that's started taking over social media.

"Social media is great in the fact that you can connect with so many people that you wouldn't have the chance to without it," he told INSIDER. "But there's this bad side of it where it is so easy to be deceitful online."

He says he noticed articles about influencers faking their lavish lifestyles and models Photoshopping their photos, and he decided to see how far he could take it.

"It got to the point where I decided I wanted to try it myself and see how hard it actually is to fake your life online," he said.

He officially started the experiment by uploading a photo that was edited to make it look as though he was in Spain.

Only a few commenters seemed to catch on to his prank, so Mason went ahead with his experiment, sharing two fake photos from Paris.



PhotoShop Fails

In one of the photos, he created a purposefully failed optical illusion that was meant to show him grabbing the tip of the Eiffel tower in an effort to throw people off.

He said even more people seemed to believe the photos from Paris were real, though he realized he was starting to lose followers. Despite the loss, he shared a fake photo that looked like it was taken in Amsterdam next.

The next day, Mason posted a fake photo from Rome. Unlike the previous day's photos, Mason received a lot of comments accusing him of editing the photo.

Mason then said he worked on an edited photo of himself in Mykonos, Greece, but ended up not posting the photo as he thought it looked too fake. He instead decided to end his experiment by posting an Instagram story that made it look like he was boarding a plane to return home.

Though some said they knew the whole time, most were surprised by the elaborate prank, according to Mason, who told INSIDER it was shockingly easy to fabricate the social-media vacation.

"I was surprised by how easy it was," he said. "For the first couple of photos, no one questioned it at all, which is kind of worrying in a way."

After Mason exposed his "vacation" as a prank, he said the response from some people was so enthusiastic that they asked him to edit similar photos of themselves. Mason featured these in a separate YouTube video.

"I think the problem is where people don't do it as a prank and do it to try and make themselves look better and create this fake lifestyle that they have," Mason told us. "That can lead to a lot more problems," he said, alluding to the fact that it can lead people to desire something that is not real.

Mason hopes pranks like his remind people to question the lavish lifestyles they might see on social media.

"I wanted to create more awareness to not believe everything you see online," Mason said. "It's so easy online to fake stuff [...] now anyone can go onto their phones and download an app for free where they can do the same thing [as Photoshop]."

He thinks the ease of photo manipulation becomes particularly troubling when it comes to self-esteem and self-image issues.

"Especially with Instagram where it's all about photos, and for the most part photos of yourself, there is a lot of pressure to look a certain way," he said. "It can be quite



a lot [...] everyone wants to show their best side on social media, so there's definitely a sort of pressure there to have to do that."

"Everyone wants to put their best self forward," he said. "They're only going to post the selfies that show their best angles or the poses of them where they're in their most expensive clothes because they're trying to impress people, I think even more than on social media."

Now that Mason's pranks have been a success, he says he will be taking an actual vacation soon, though he thinks nobody will believe him this time.

"Every time I go anywhere now, my followers just assume that I'm faking it," he told us. "So I'm going to have to prove to them that I'm actually there."