BEST BYTE

3.9" x 2.2" x 1.2", 5.8 oz. without battery, 5 megapixels, 2.5" HyperCrystal LCD, all-weather case, 5.8–17.4 mm lens (35–105 mm equivalent in 35 mm photography), lithium-ion rechargeable battery, 32 MB xD-Picture Card, QuickTime Movie Mode, A/V Cable



From Olympus the Stylus 500 Digital camera

The View

While shopping for a high-quality, pocket-sized digital camera to capture the last spring break of my college career, I checked out the new Stylus 500 Digital from Olympus (\$399.99). First impression? No squinting at the incredibly bright, crystal-clear 2.5-inch LCD.

Even though I ended up spending my week on frigid Long Island, New York,

my friends down in Cancún, Mexico, would have been envious of my new toy. Starting up in a mere 1.2 seconds, this 5-megapixel, compact companion didn't let any great photo ops pass me by—like my dad scraping ice off the car, or my mom bundled in her down jacket for a shopping trip. Although lightweight, it crammed in 12 levels of zoom and 21 shooting options. One for capturing sunsets, for instance, which my friends could have used, and one for snow scenes, which was perfect for me.

With plenty of time on my hands, I tried out all **21 options**—for photographing things in shop windows, for shooting documents, even for capturing fast-moving sports, like snowball fights. The cuisine option was especially good for pictures of eating takeout pizza. I could even take **a movie clip** of my Little Vincent's slice with extra cheese getting smaller and smaller.

Sure, my friends returned bronzed and beautiful from Cancún, but I was able to capture 12 albums of memories on the camera's internal memory—of my neighbor's dog, a pile of firewood, and lots and lots of snow. Back at school, everyone gathered around the camera for a slide show as I boasted about the screen's 160-degree viewing radius—perfect for showing pictures nobody really wanted to see.—Jane E. Bianchi

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