

## Picture Postcards from Heaven with Google Earth

*How to print real photo postcards from a satellite image of your street or neighbourhood*

February 21, 2006 (FPRC) -- The virtual earth simulation software "Google Earth" has become hugely popular amongst internet users across the world. The free application incorporates maps, driving directions, and satellite images. It allows users to zoom and pan over three-dimensional images of cities and landscapes, drilling down from space to overhead details.

With a few steps and tricks it is even possible to produce personalised aerial postcards of a street or neighbourhood without the costs that used to be associated with aerial photography. Google Earth works on Windows 2000, XP, or Mac OS X (10.4) and can be downloaded for free from <http://earth.google.com/>. Once installed it is easy to navigate to an addresses in the UK using a post code or place name. The aerial image displayed can be rotated and tilted for the best view, which can be saved as a jpeg. The application allows tagging places and buildings, e-mailing images or creating so called place marks, which work like a link which can be shared with other Google Earth users. Another convenient way to extract image data from Google Earth, is using one of the many screen shot applications available for free on the net. One such application is greenstreet SnapShot. Greenstreet software Limited, a 20 year old British developer of graphic software applications and their screen shot tools SnapShot can be downloaded for free from Electric Software, a site which promotes software offers, including several greenstreet applications and games.

The Google Earth Licence limits the use of the image data, but states: "You can personally use an image from the application as long as you preserve the copyrights and attributions including the Google logo attribution. However, you cannot sell these to others, provide them as part of a service, or use them in a commercial product such as a book or TV show without first getting a rights clearance from Google." The image data, though constantly improving (a new update was released in January), is still patchy in places, but from other areas images can be extracted, which are sufficiently clear to print satisfying aerial postcards of a street or neighbourhood. Google Earth images do not produce the crispest of prints, but are unique and a great surprise and joy for friends, a gift for a housewarming party or suitable image for an invitation card.

Once a suitable jpeg has been cropped and scaled to the size desired and it has been interpolated and saved this can be printed on an inkjet printer or through one of the online photo processing services like FotoInsight.com. FotoInsight claims that professional photo processing achieves a higher perceived resolution through the use of a larger number of colours and uses longer lasting inks.

Personalised postcards and greeting cards from satellite images are a welcome change to the Birthday, Anniversary-, Mother's Day, Season Greetings or Valentines Cards routine. FotoInsight picture postcards have a print area of 14 x 10 cm and the ideal resolution would be 866 x 615 pixel. Folding greetings cards have a print area of 13 x 9 cm where the ideal resolution would be a 799 x 556 pixel digital image file. For all printed cards the image jpegs should ideally exceed 100 kb in size. Once the photograph has been uploaded to <http://fotoinsight.com> or <http://fotoinsight.co.uk> the online photo service provides text tools ideal to insert a postcode, name or address details into the aerial photograph. FotoInsight's print products, like postcards, greetings cards, photo books and

photographic calendars are printed in high resolution using the long lasting indigo print process. The cards come in sets of ten cards per order and are delivered by mail in the Ireland, the UK and Europe. These images can equally be applied on shirts, mugs, mouse pads and other personalised photo gift items.

FotoInsight of Cambridge provides photo processing and a range of gift items to consumers and businesses in the UK, Ireland and Europe through its websites since November 2003. FotoInsight caters for all major operating systems, including Macintosh as well as for the main browsers like Internet Explorer, Firefox and Netscape with upload facilities which do not require additional software. From Cambridge Brumann comments: "Digital photos are an ideal starting point for personalised gifts. FotoInsight thrives to constantly provide new products and ideas to get more out of your digital images." In addition, FotoInsight also provides a free e-Card service, where professional and own photographs can be send as an online greetings card.

#### Information about FotoInsight.com

FotoInsight Limited runs a custom made and easy to use print processing service. Customers benefit from patented development processes and the experience of Europe's largest independent photo lab with an installed capacity of 18 million prints per day. Photos ordered in the UK or Europe are developed in one of 19 strategically located, state of the art photo labs, employing 3800 staff, with an output of over 3 billion prints per year.

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