Where should the Nik Collection plugins be stored

On a modern Nik Collection install, you normally do not manually "store" the plugins; you let the Nik installer place them in the standard shared plug-ins location for your host (Photoshop/Lightroom), and then point any other editors (Affinity Photo, etc.) to that folder. [1] [2] [3]

Default locations (overview)

Where they end up depends on OS and host:

- **Windows – shared Adobe plug-ins folder:**
  `C:\Program Files\Common Files\Adobe\Plug-Ins\CC` is Adobe's recommended common location, and many users copy or install the Nik folder there so all Photoshop versions see it. [1]
- **Windows – Photoshop's own Plug-ins folder:**
  Some installs or manual setups use `C:\Program Files\Adobe\Adobe Photoshop 20xx\Plug-ins\Nik Collection\`. [4] [1]
- **macOS – Adobe support plug-ins folder:**
  On a Mac, plug-ins such as Nik are typically in `~/Library/Application Support/Adobe/Plug-Ins/` rather than inside the Photoshop app bundle. [2]
- **DxO default application folder** (stand-alone and plugin executables):
  The main Nik apps live under the standard "DxO/Nik Collection" program folder for your OS and are then hooked into Photoshop/Lightroom automatically by the installer. [3]

In all cases, you don't need to "move" the plug-ins unless a host app cannot find them.

macOS + Photoshop / Lightroom Classic

Given your Apple-centric workflow, the important bit is macOS:

- Nik's Photoshop plug-ins are placed under the user Library Adobe plug-ins hierarchy: `~/Library/Application Support/Adobe/Plug-Ins/`. [2]
- Photoshop then exposes them via the **Filter** menu as a grouped Nik Collection entry. [5]
- Lightroom Classic accesses Nik via the **Photo** > **Edit In…** external editor route rather than a direct plug-ins folder path, so you normally configure it from Lightroom's External Editor preferences rather than moving files. [6] [3]

If you are trying to point another app (Affinity Photo, Pixelmator, etc.) at Nik, you would typically browse to that Adobe plug-ins folder when configuring its external plug-ins path. [7] [8]

Windows paths (for completeness)

If you are working on a Windows machine as well:

- Preferred shared location: `C:\Program Files\Common Files\Adobe\Plug-Ins\CC`.[1]
- Alternative: drop the `Nik Collection` folder into `C:\Program Files\Adobe\Adobe Photoshop 20xx\Plug-ins\` if you want it tied to a specific Photoshop version.[4] [2]

Both strategies work; using the common plug-ins folder avoids re-installing when Photoshop updates.[1]

Practical recommendation

For a clean, low-maintenance setup:

- Let the **Nik installer** run and keep its default.[3]
- On macOS, confirm that `~/Library/Application Support/Adobe/Plug-Ins/` (or the folder Nik actually used) is what you point other editors at if they need a plug-ins path.[8] [7] [2]
- Avoid manually scattering copies of the Nik plug-ins into multiple custom folders; that tends to break when you update Nik or Photoshop.[4] [1]

Are you asking specifically about using Nik with Lightroom Classic, with Affinity Photo, or just wanting to standardise where they live on your Mac?

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With LrC and Photoshop) only. I have previously had a Lightroom Settings folder which had a Modules folder in it, in my Catalog folder - is that not the best way to go?

For current DxO Nik with Lightroom Classic and Photoshop, it's better to let Nik live in the standard system locations and use Lightroom's external-editor mechanism, rather than relying on a `Lightroom Settings/Modules` folder inside the catalog.[15] [16]

How Lightroom actually uses Nik

Nik is not a "real" Lightroom plug-in in the sense of a `.lrplugin` that sits in `Modules`; Lightroom uses the Nik tools as **external editors** that appear under **Photo > Edit In…** and, for HDR Efex, as an Export preset.[17] [15]
That means Lightroom doesn't care where the Nik binaries live, as long as the external-editor preset points to the correct app path.[15]

The old `Lightroom Settings/Modules` approach comes from using "**Store presets with this catalog**", which causes presets (including plug-in templates) to be duplicated into a folder next to the catalog.[16]
Adobe's own experts note that you can end up with presets in two places (catalog folder and

user Library), which complicates things and can confuse Lightroom after updates or catalog moves. [16]

Recommended setup for LrC + Photoshop

For a clean, low-maintenance configuration now:

- **Photoshop**
  Let the Nik installer register the plug-ins into the standard Adobe plug-ins folder so they show under Photoshop's **Filter > Nik Collection** menu. [18]
  You don't need any `Modules` or catalog-side folder for Photoshop.
- **Lightroom Classic**
  1. Turn **off** "Store presets with this catalog" unless you absolutely need catalog-portable presets. [16]
  2. In **Preferences > External Editing**, add or confirm Nik as an external editor by pointing directly to each Nik app you want (Silver Efex, Color Efex, etc.). [15]
  3. Once configured, Nik will appear under **Photo > Edit In…** or right-click > **Edit In**, independent of any `Modules` folder. [17] [15]

This way, when Nik, Lightroom, or Photoshop update, you are far less likely to break anything, and you avoid having orphaned copies of plug-in definitions in old catalog folders. [15] [16]

If you like, I can walk you through the exact macOS paths and External Editing entries to set up for, say, Silver Efex and Color Efex on your current system – which macOS version are you on right now (Sonoma, Ventura, or earlier)?

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So if you do have Presets and want them available on both my main MacMini machine, and my MacBook Pro, I should install presets in their default locations rather than having a Lightroom Settings folder duplicated?

Yes – for a two-Mac setup, it's generally better to keep presets in their **default, user-Library locations** on each machine and sync/copy those, rather than relying on a `Lightroom Settings` folder alongside the catalog. [25] [26]

Why not "Store presets with this catalog"

When you tick "**Store presets with this catalog**", Lightroom duplicates many presets into a `Lightroom Settings` folder next to the catalog (including plug-in templates and such). [26]
You then end up with two potential locations for presets: the catalog-side folder and the standard system presets folder under your user Library, which can cause confusion, version drift, and breakage when you move catalogs or upgrade Lightroom. [26]

On a multi-machine workflow like your Mac mini + MacBook Pro, this can get messy unless you are extremely disciplined about moving both catalog and `Lightroom Settings` together and never using other catalogs. [26]

Using default locations instead

For modern Nik + LrC + Photoshop:

- **Lightroom Classic presets**
  Let Lightroom keep its presets in the normal user Library hierarchy (with "Store presets with this catalog" turned off), and if you want them on both Macs, copy/sync those preset folders between the two machines rather than duplicating them per-catalog. [26]
- **Nik Collection presets / recipes**
  Nik's own custom presets/recipes live under `~/Library/Preferences/DxO/.../UserPresets` (Google-branded paths for very old versions) on each Mac. [27] [28]
  DxO explicitly recommends exporting/importing or copying those UserPresets folders when you want to move presets between machines or from the old Google paths to the current DxO paths. [27]

That keeps everything aligned with how Adobe and DxO expect things to be laid out, and it makes troubleshooting and backup (Time Machine etc.) much more straightforward. [29] [25] [27]

If you tell me which specific presets you're most concerned about (Lightroom develop presets, export presets, or Nik recipes like Silver Efex presets), I can give you the exact macOS paths and a simple "copy to second Mac" recipe.

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Lightroom develop presets, export resets, import presets, WP/LR Sync plugin (for Wordpress), LRPhotos plugin (for Apple Photos)

Yes, for that set of things (develop, export, import presets and those plug-ins), the "default" Application Support locations are what you want to use and then copy/sync between Macs, not a duplicated `Lightroom Settings` folder. [41] [42]

1. Develop presets (including profiles-style XMP)

On current LrC, most develop presets live as XMP files in the shared Camera Raw area so they are available to both Lightroom and ACR/Photoshop. [43] [44] [45]

- Main develop presets (XMP):
  `/Users/yourname/Library/Application Support/Adobe/CameraRaw/Settings` [44] [43]
- Older .lrtemplate-style develop presets, if you still have any:
  `/Users/yourname/Library/Application Support/Adobe/Lightroom/Develop Presets/` [46] [42]

Adobe's own guidance for moving presets between computers is to copy the contents of `CameraRaw/Settings` from one Mac to the same path on the other. [45] [44]

2. Export and import presets

Export, import, and other non-develop presets stay under the Lightroom branch.[42] [41]

Typical folders on macOS:

- Export presets: `/Users/yourname/Library/Application Support/Adobe/Lightroom/Export Presets/`[41] [42]
- Import presets (file-handling/import presets): `/Users/yourname/Library/Application Support/Adobe/Lightroom/Import Presets/` (same parent structure).[42] [41]

Again, Adobe suggest copying these preset folders from old machine to new if you want them identical.[47] [44]

3. Plug-ins like WP/LR Sync and LRPhotos

The plug-in bundles themselves (.lrplugin folders) normally live either in:[41] [42]

- The user plug-ins folder: `/Users/yourname/Library/Application Support/Adobe/Lightroom/Modules`
- Or a custom location of your choosing, which you then add via **File > Plug-in Manager**.

Third-party instructions (e.g. LRTimelapse) recommend keeping plug-in-related folders like `Export Presets`, `Filter Presets`, `Scripts`, and `Modules` under `~/Library/Application Support/Adobe/Lightroom` and copying those between machines, rather than depending on catalog-local "Store presets with this catalog".[48]

WP/LR Sync and LRPhotos follow the same pattern: keep the `.lrplugin` in a stable location (commonly `Modules` under Application Support), enable it via Plug-in Manager on each Mac, and if they create export presets or publish services, those definitions live in the same Application Support tree and in the catalog's internal data, not in the `Lightroom Settings` folder unless you've turned that legacy option on.[42] [41]

4. What to actually do for both Macs

On the "master" Mac:

1. Ensure **Store presets with this catalog** is off in Preferences, so everything uses the standard paths.[42]
2. In Preferences > Presets, use **Show Lightroom Develop Presets** and **Show...** buttons to jump straight to the relevant folders in Finder and verify their locations.[49] [50] [51]
3. Copy these folders to somewhere you can reach from the other Mac (network share, external drive, or a synced folder):
   - `~/Library/Application Support/Adobe/CameraRaw/Settings`
   - `~/Library/Application Support/Adobe/Lightroom/Export Presets`
   - `~/Library/Application Support/Adobe/Lightroom/Import Presets`
   - `~/Library/Application Support/Adobe/Lightroom/Modules` (for the plug-ins)[48] [41]

On the second Mac:

1. Quit Lightroom Classic.
2. Paste those folders into the same paths under your user account, merging with what's already there. [47] [44]
3. Re-open Lightroom Classic; confirm:
    - Develop presets appear as expected.
    - Export/import presets are present.
    - WP/LR Sync and LRPhotos show as installed and enabled in Plug-in Manager.

If you'd like, I can suggest a simple rsync or ChronoSync job to keep those specific folders in step between the Mac mini and MacBook Pro – are you comfortable running a periodic manual sync, or do you prefer something that just runs in the background?

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