



ALASFOOR
MEDIA PRODUCTION

Menu Photography Guideline

نسخة (ب): ١٠ اغسطس ٢٠٢٤

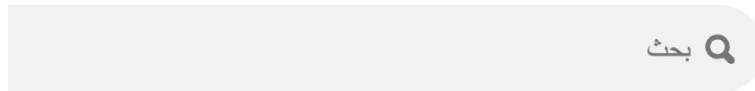
Revisions:

Revision	Edited by	Date
A	Ahmed ALAsfoor	8 Aug 2024
B	Ahmed ALAsfoor	10 Aug 2024

**NOTE: THIS DOCUMENT SHOULD BE FOLLOWED FOR ANY RESTAURANT
PHOTOGRAPHY PROJECTS!**

Planning

The first thing to do always is proper planning. Pinterest can be used for taking new ideas, while Miro can be used for brainstorming.



While searching, the keyword is important. Use

- Pasta Photography
- Mushroom burger photography

Food Presentation

- The most **critical** and **important** point is the **presentation** of the dish. The dish is what the client will buy, not the surrounding of the pictures.

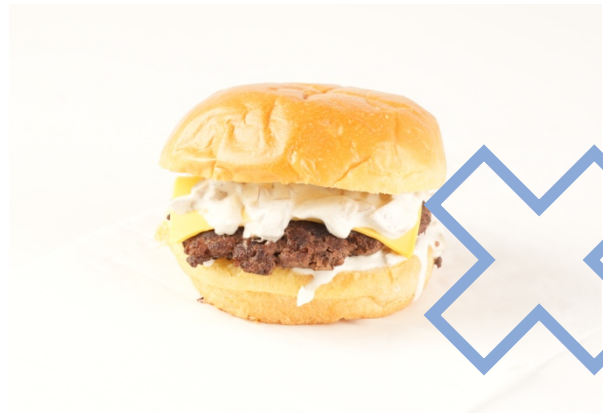


If the burger example is taken, the upper left picture shows:

- Poor bread quality.
- Cheese and pickles hidden.
- Meat unclear and burnt.

In contrast, the upper right picture shows:

- Excellent bread quality.
- Clearly defined layers.
- Distinct colors.



It's crucial to present the dish as it will be delivered. For example:

Avoid adding three pieces of meat if the restaurant serves only two.

Don't exaggerate the sauce quantity if the actual portion is minimal.

Adjustments like changing the bread or lettuce during a photo session are possible but not recommended.

Decoration

It's important to keep the decoration simple and not chaos.

In the images below, the choice of background is poor, lacking balance.



Advice:

- Choose the proper Backdrop which has a relation to the restaurant identity.
- Make it simple.
- Focus on the dish not on the surrounding of the dish.
- It is possible to decorate the picture with food ingredients, but in an organized manner, not in chaotic and scattered way.
- Make the colors harmonious.
- A beautiful restaurant décor can serve as a natural background for dish photos, eliminating the need for a separate backdrop. For example:



On the other hand, have a look how ALAsfoor Media made the updated Menu for the same restaurant:



- The décor is simple and minimal.
- Colors are harmonious and match the restaurant environment.
- The focus remains solely on the dish.
- Only two colors are used, and a shadow was created using a shadow-making tool.



Proper Light

Proper lighting is everything. The art is how to show the dish in the best way.



- It is obvious, how the light could affect the quality of the dish.

Light Techniques

We have to choose either:

- Soft Light
- Hard Light
- Soft Light & Hard Light

There is not correct choice, it is about the photographer taste.



Combined: Hard & Soft light



Soft light

Composition

Composition is an art form in itself. Apart from light, it is one of the most important aspects in food photography.

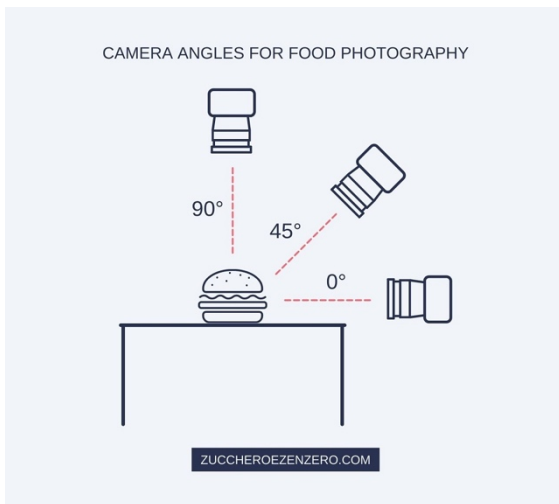


Look how the left picture is unbalanced, we can notice the empty space in the top. While the right picture is balanced.

Angle

Before beginning to shoot, it's crucial to decide on the best angle to shoot your food. The right choice will depend on your subject.

Foods with several layers, like burgers or stacks of pancakes, look best when shot at eye level, so every element can be seen. On the other hand, flat foods like pizza and cookies look best shot from overhead or at 90 degrees, as this angle puts everything on an even plane and brings a graphic element to the subject.



90 Degree



45 Degree



0 Degree

Camera Focus

When approaching a shoot, you also need to be aware of where the sharpest focus should land. Typically this will be more toward the front of the food. In addition, think about how much of that area should be in focus. This will influence the f-stop (aperture) you choose.



We can notice that the dish is out of focus. To solve this, we have to shoot above F-6.0 in menu pictures. However, in lifestyle pictures we can go to F2.0.

White Screen - Food Photography

In this type of photography, we have to make sure that the dish is proper bright.



We can see the whole picture is overexposed, which is not good.

The solution is to ignore the whiteness of BG and fixed it in post, but the most important matter is the brightness of the dish.

White Screen - Food Photography

Camera Setting:

Light Flash | $\frac{1}{4}$

Aperture | F7-F11

Shutter Speed | 1/160 – 1/120

Iso | Minimum

White Balance | Flash

Good Example of Food White Screen Photography



Menu Photography Checklist:

Item	(✓)	Note
Follow the instruction of the last revision of Menu Photography Guideline		
Call the client, check the number of photos required, what dishes will be photographed? and confirm the appointment.		
Confirm the services required with the client, E.G. White screen, Menu, Lifestyle?		
Plan by using Pinterest and Miro (if required)		
Buy items such as backdrop which match the client identity (Confirm with your direct manager before buying)		
Be in location 15 minutes before the appointment		
Spot equipment as soon as you arrive		
Arrange with the client and the Chef by putting a plan for the day.		
Setup camera& flashlight settings		
Take your time in picturing the first dish		
Confirm with the client and show him that all the result will be the same as this setup.		
Start the photo session and picture all required dishes, always confirm with the client.		
Market our services to the client (give him our business card, share with him our profile)		
Make sure to return all equipment to office as exited.		

Project Name:

Supervisor Signature:

Supervisor Name: