

5 Tips to Say it with Food

Photos of food are expected

When communicating about food, audiences expect and demand more than text alone. Whether the communication describes a specific food, a food group, ingredients for a recipe, or a finished product, a photograph is included to help tell the story and enhance the message. Food photos provide detail and context that words alone cannot convey. Take a picture.

Photos of food serve a purpose

Before taking a food photo, determine your objective. Is it to illustrate a food's appearance or physical characteristics? Is it to show ingredients or demonstrate a food preparation task? Is it to showcase a finished creation? Is it to provide information about how to serve, garnish, or accompany a dish, or what is considered a sensible serving size? Know the "why" for a photo.

Photos of food tell a story

The setting of a photo, props used, lighting and camera angles, and use of hand models and action all contribute to the mood and the story it tells. Is the food part of a celebration, a family meal, or a snack? Is it food for one, a couple, or a crowd? Is it fun or formal? An effective photo keeps the focus on the food and the props play a supportive role. Create a compelling story.

Photos begin with food styling

Before the first photo is taken, careful planning and preparation are needed. Test and retest all recipes, purchase and assemble food and props, prepare adequate quantities for multiple shots, and use professional food styling tips and tricks to achieve the desired appearance. Quality photos appear realistic yet aspirational. Convey a message of "I can make that."

Photo skills improve with practice

Equipment needed for taking great food photos is no longer only in the hands of professionals. Smartphone cameras take excellent photos of food. Adequate lighting is essential and can come from natural or artificial sources. Use poster board for a simple reflector. Experiment with different camera angles and be creative.

Above all - practice, practice, practice! Say it with food.