FOOD

Photography

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@southernfatty

Southern Fatty

Dive into top-tier techniques in food styling and photography to craft the ultimate charcuterie showcase.

This workshop is designed to help you milk every photo-op, turning your online brand into a sundae sensation while crafting a vibrant social presence.




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WHO IS THIS GUY?
Commercial Food Photographer + Blogger
Clients include Kroger, Bon Appétit, Knob Creek, Loveless Cafe, Southern Living, Travel + Leisure, & ...The Dairy Alliance!
Nashville, TN
Blogging since Jan 2014
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About...

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Nutritionist

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Importance of brand identity.

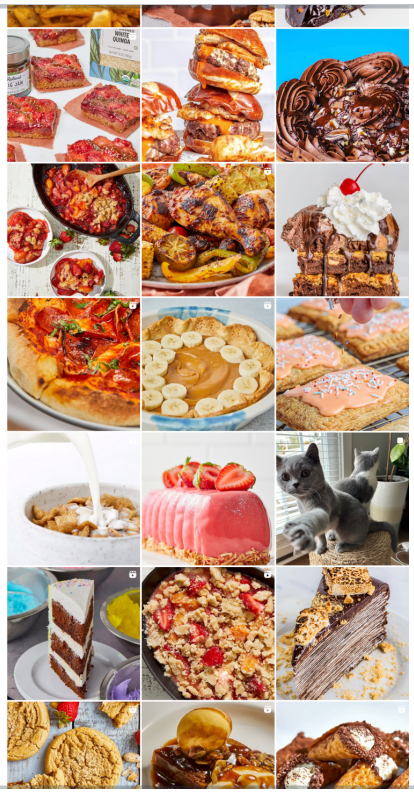
Creating good visual content is critical to engagement and building a community instead of just an audience.

Showing a clear brand will translate into authenticity. Obviously critical to practicing dieticians.

We're going to talk about how to be more authentic and elevate your visual aesthetics.

STORY

- How to give life to your idea?
    - “Work in Progress” → Flour on Board, Rolling Pins
        - a beautiful mess
    - Focus on focus shot
        - Single plate of food shot from above make for a premium, dramatic emphasis
    - Full spread
        - Mood of togetherness



How do you bring your ideas to life?

How you shoot and style your photos tell a lot about what you are trying to say.

Examples of that would be:

Typical "blogger shot" with ingredients scattered. This works well for me as a food blogger because I am obviously sharing these recipes from a home baker perspective.

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Action shots bring a mood of sharing, like pouring this banana cream pie and holding a biscuit that also has a bite out of it on the right.

(Note the Dairy board. I'll focus on photography skills but have lots of opinions on longterm partnerships if any of you want to chat about that sort of influencer stuff later).



I mentioned how showing a clear brand identity is obviously important, especially as someone offering such a personal service as you all do with regard to nutrition and lifestyle.

Your story and image online is really your one-shot chance to define that at a glance with your audience.

I'l a big numbers guy and the statistics about how much exposure time you get with viewers is pretty crazy (and kind of depressing), but you want to grab attention in hopes that they will decide to read more, reach out, etc.

This is why improving your skills for your photo and video work is so important.

-- Flowers Creamery --
Was going to try to think of a good audience joke with this picture. Something about herd mentality, but didn't any further than that...



How many of you take your photos on your iPhone? (If you are on Android... we need to chat).

SLR Camera?

Nothing wrong with either. Phones have amazing cameras. If (and only if) you have interest in moving to a SLR from a phone, which I would encourage you to do -- bit biased though), it will open a lot of opportunity.

iPhone fixed aperture of f/1.7. Pretty shallow. There are some digital variations when you shoot with that, but its a lot different than shooting with an SLR that has variable aperture.



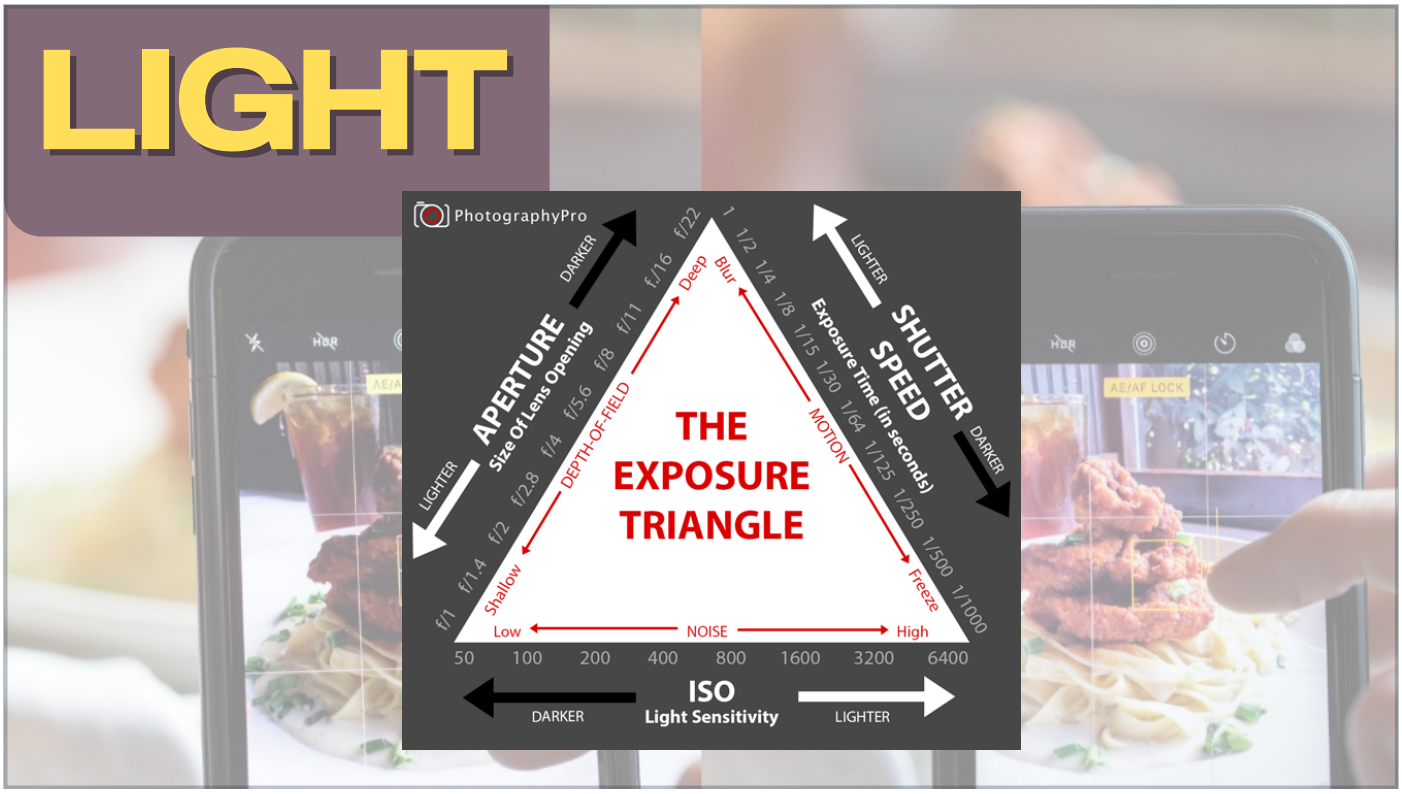
iPhone specific tips:

ProRes
Clean lens
Use the iPhone native app
Manual exposure
Manual focus lock
Grid options

EDIT

Fav apps:
Snapseed, Lightroom Mobile, Afterlight, Pixelmator

Edit to encourage your established brand identity and style.



I mentioned aperture, so some of you may already know this but I'll go over it. Lighting is the most important part of photography. It completely defines what your result will be and how it translates into messaging.

Aperture that I mentioned is how open the lens is. iPhone aperture of 1.78 is very shallow. Think about 1 being full open and 22 as almost closed.

Shutter speed is how long it is going to stay open to capture the photo. 1 second vs 1/100th of a second.

ISO indicates the sensitivity. Lower ISO means the image will be more detailed and precise, but at the cost of less light coming in.

This means for the most clear image, you want a lost ISO (say 100), but will need to adjust the other factors to keep it bright enough and in focus. Adjust any one of these factors will require you to adjust the others for balance.



Play a little game...

Guess the lights.

Left to right:

Artificial. Two shots. One without strobes for the candle and one with a single strobe with no diffuser from the back.

Both. Very dim overhead home lighting and that many candles helped a lot. Kept people close to the candles and didn't care for the background to be dark.

Natural. One window.

Natural but exposure stacked. That is when you take more than one photo at different brightnesses and have editing software pull bright parts from each one and stack them together. Sounds complex but really is quite simple. Can be done for focusing as well (something I use a lot for sponsored posts to keep product in focus when a brand wants it).

Artificial through a fake window. I think this one was just some dowel rods to create the shadow lines.

Natural with reflector on left.

LIGHT







Obviously there are a lot of different options for lighting.

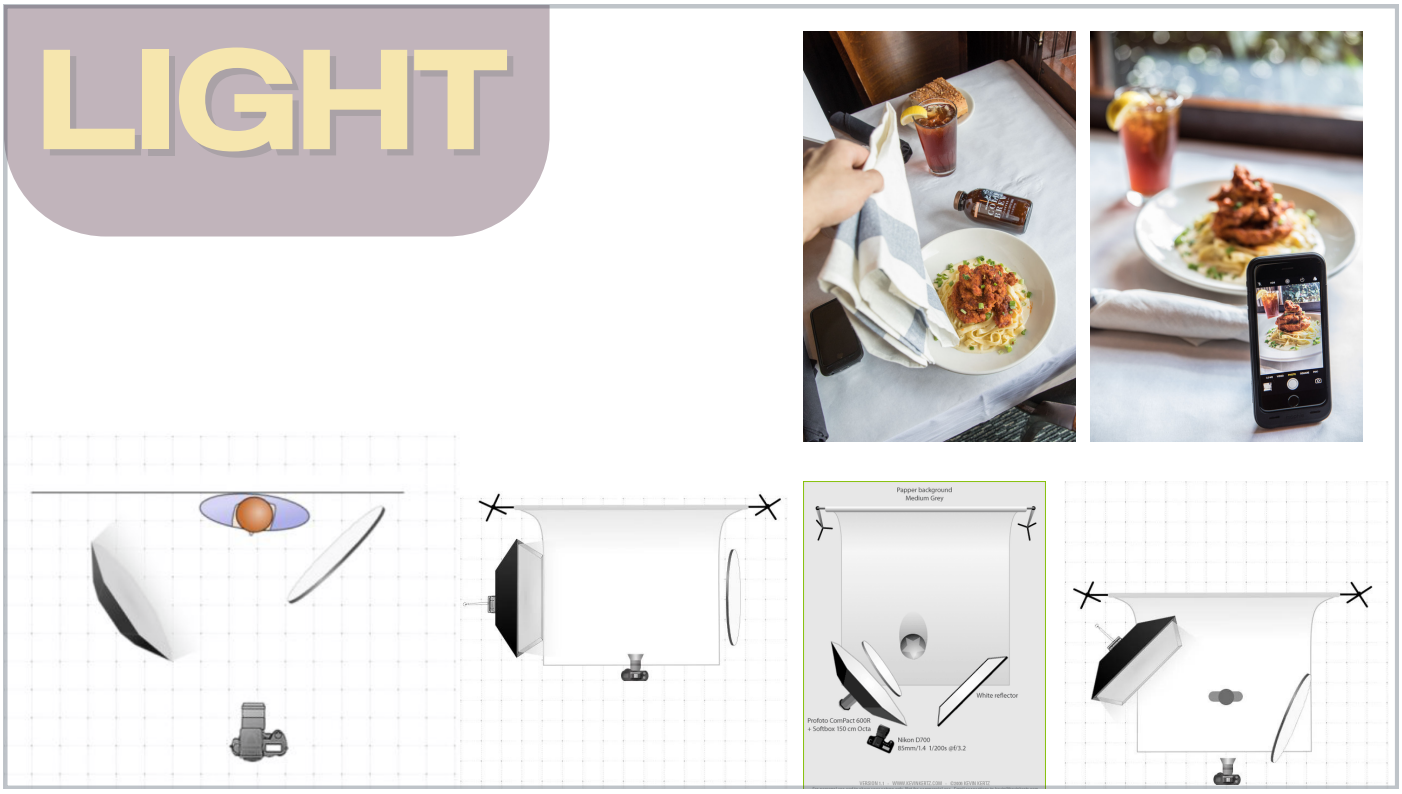
Natural light, constant light, strobe lights, LED, old school bulbs.

I know it can get really intimidating really quickly, but know that learning techniques and know that they work for every single lighting option out there. You can use the same concepts for strobe lighting as for natural and for the bulbs in your home kitchen.

My kitchen each bulb is a wifi smart bulb and I can adjust the color temperature and brightness. All same type of bulb.

Keeping the color of your light consistent is super important. You can't edit the white balance of photos if you have more than one light color temperature.

A lot of people mix lighting and don't have the same temperature. End result will not look good.



I'll focus today on using one light source. It is what I prefer to shoot with. Looks more natural (eg: sun = one source).

With one light you can do so much .... IF you learn how to manipulate it. (There is a good dietician joke about misinformation or something in there somewhere)

A few different ways that you can manipulate light.

Diffusion is one. Shooting your light through something to make it softer. That goes back to the triangle in that if you add a layer not will reduce the brightness and you may have to have brighter light to get that softer result. No diffusion give a nice contrast, sharp, kinda harsh look.

Reflection is the other element. Biggest mistake I see with creators is not using reflectors. It's super simple. A sheet of white paper, a big silver reflector, or a napkin.

Lighting diagrams search. Lots of nerds like me post these.

Remember this applies to both artificial and natural light. You just may not be able to move the natural light and might have to adjust yourself, your reflectors, and your food around it since you can't move it like a strobe.

Another napkin trick is using a thinner white napkin over your phones flash. Works better for video

with a constant light on, but helps diffuse that harsh flash.



Briefly about food styling.

Obviously you need to form your own brand style, but there are some good ways to nail that down.

1. Start simple. Focus on how you arrange the food with just a few objects first.

2. Don't be afraid to make a mess. Just be sure you shoot a few shots of it. You might be shocked at how it turns out. Adds relatability.



3. Be aware of proportions. Ingredients, how much is plated, etc. You want to lead the focus to the main event.

4. Best ingredients.

5 Color harmony or grouping. This is hard for me with a blog called Southern Fatty. I struggle with brown food on a daily basis. Balance with greens, blues where it makes sense. The tool shown here is Adobe Color Wheel. Online you put in a color and it will show all kinds of color theory pairs.

6 Layering. Just like they say to do with clothes, layers food helps create depth.

7. Props. Adds them when they fit. Can easily become unnatural looking. But for instance, a charcuterie board with fresh fruit, a paring knife, zester with zest around it, or oranges near the orange marmalade (I made the one here for you all today. You'll see candied zest in it because its's pretty).



Editing is a tough one because it takes a persons individual preference into consideration SO much.

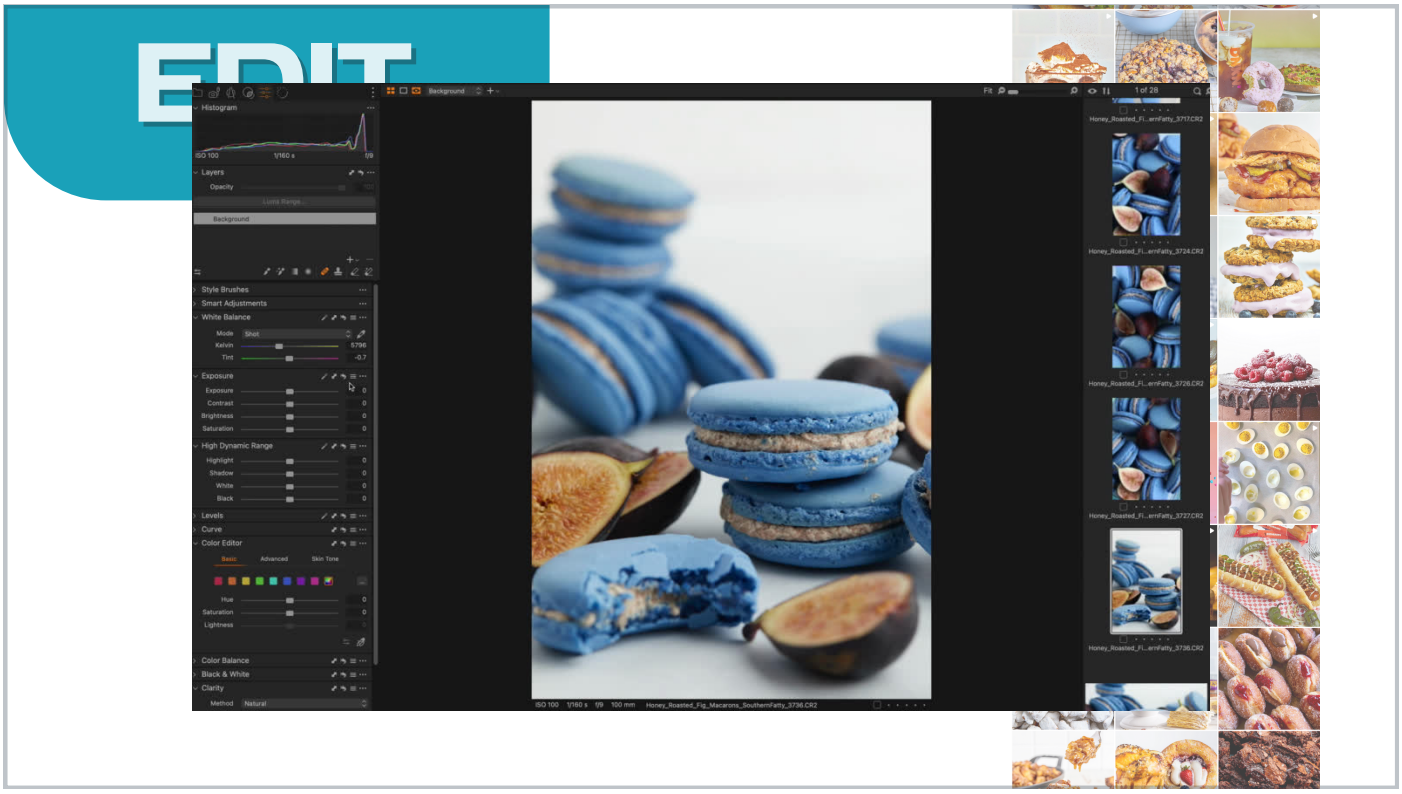
But, some things that I would encourage you to do.

iPhone or SLR photos alike.

My style tends to be pretty vibrant, added clarity and sharpness, and not a ton of empty space. It's what I like and there are plenty of people that don't and that's fine too.

Original on left and edited on right (hopefully that's obvious).

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CRAFTING CAPTIONS: CRAFTING ENGAGING CAPTIONS. A GOOD CAPTION SHOULD TELL A STORY, EVOKE EMOTION, OR PROVIDE VALUABLE INFORMATION, MAKING THE VISUAL CONTENT MORE RELATABLE AND ENGAGING TO THE AUDIENCE.

HASHTAG RESEARCH: ILLUSTRATE THE PROCESS OF SELECTING EFFECTIVE HASHTAGS USING TOOLS LIKE HASHTAGIFY. EXPLAIN HOW TO BALANCE POPULAR AND NICHE HASHTAGS TO MAXIMIZE REACH AND ENGAGEMENT.

WEEKLY CONTENT **CALENDAR**.
IMPORTANCE OF **CONSISTENCY** FOR GROWTH.


THANK
YOU



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