



Food Photo Shoots: Tips & What to Expect

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Scheduling & Preparing for your Food Photo Shoot:

To ensure that shoots flow smoothly, here's what you need to know.

- Send us a complete list of EVERY plate that you want shot, before the shoot. Include ALL items (sides, etc...) that will appear on the plates, not just the center of plate items. Knowing ahead of time helps us make better suggestions for placement.
- We can generally shoot about 10 to 15 plates an hour, so the customer should set aside enough time for the shoot, depending on how many plates they want done.
- Shoots should be scheduled either BEFORE or AFTER the lunch rush, and BEFORE dinner.
- The restaurant will need to provide a darkened area for us to work in. The darker the space, the better the photos will turn out.
- Once a plate of food has left the kitchen and has been photographed, it is illegal to serve that plate to the paying public. The restaurant should know that they will have to provide all the food for the shoot at their own expense.

PRICING
\$250
for a 2 hour shoot

Tips for Great Food Photos:

- If any of the plates have gravy, cheese sauce, dressing, or any type of topping that covers any of the food, you should only use 1/3 (or less) of the amount you would normally. Very lightly drizzle the topping over food so that you can still see the center of the plate item. You can always add more sauce later, if it doesn't look right, but you'll usually have to completely re-do the whole plate if you use too much.
- If the plate calls for sides (like fries, vegetables, beans, rice, etc...) USE LESS than you would normally on a plate. They will be featured in the background of the picture & slightly out of focus. The main focus of the shot should always be the center of the plate item. Also, if the amount of fries (or whatever) that customers receive is GREATER than what they saw in the picture, they won't complain. If the amount they receive is LESS than what is in the photo, they will always complain.
- Often you can re-use side items from picture to picture. So, if several of your pictures will (for instance) feature fries, you can use the same fries from shot to shot.
- We use a photo box with a plain black background. We've found that a black background really helps to focus your attention on the food, rather than the scenery around the plate.
- BE VERY CHOOSY when it comes to the items that you are placing on the plate. If a piece of meat (like a steak) has an odd deformity or large lump of fat right in the middle, don't use it. If it looks strange or unappetizing to you, it will look that way to a customer as well.
- Very Hot drinks (like specialty coffees) should be shot at room temperature, so those add-ons like whipped cream do not melt too fast. Also, drinks should be shot in CLEAR glasses whenever possible.
- It's also very difficult to shoot COLD items (like gelato) because they start to heat up and melt quickly. Cold items (like desserts) should be kept in the freezer until the last possible moment before shooting. It's better (generally) to shoot hot and cold items all together either in the beginning or the end of a photo shoot.

After the Photo Shoot:

We will edit and choose the best photo of each plate, but still provide all the photos to the customer.

See more examples of our food pics @ [facebook.com/MenuSurgeon](https://www.facebook.com/MenuSurgeon)



focus is on center of plate item, side is minimized



artful arrangements "look good enough to eat."



food with "height" or the illusion of height, looks more appealing



less rice & veggies were used to make the shrimp seem bigger



careful placement screams "quality - buy me!"



decoration can really spice up the presentation



dressing presented on side so it doesn't cover up food



chunks of fish put on taco last, so they weren't covered up



ingredients scattered on top to indicate type



"less is more." seeing the food = selling the food.



shot from high angle to feature meat & au jus



turn drinks into an impulse buy. colorful drink pics WILL sell!



dressing was brushed on chicken before slicing to give "wet" look



odd shaped serving dishes can add interest and appeal to food photos



each sandwich layer is visible & fries are hidden



pile some foods into stacks & your profits will soar higher as well



vertical presentation adds a "WOW" factor especially for up-sell items



used less gravy so item is still visible



it isn't necessary to fit the entire plate within the shot