

A close-up photograph of a hand pouring a dark, thick sauce from a metal pitcher onto a plate of food. The food appears to be a roasted bird, possibly a chicken or turkey, with some pieces of meat and vegetables. The sauce is being poured in a controlled stream, creating a pool on the plate. The background is blurred, showing a person in a red shirt. The image is framed by a white border with corner brackets and a central 'X' mark.

10 ESSENTIAL TIPS TO IMPROVE YOUR

HOSPITALITY PHOTOGRAPHY

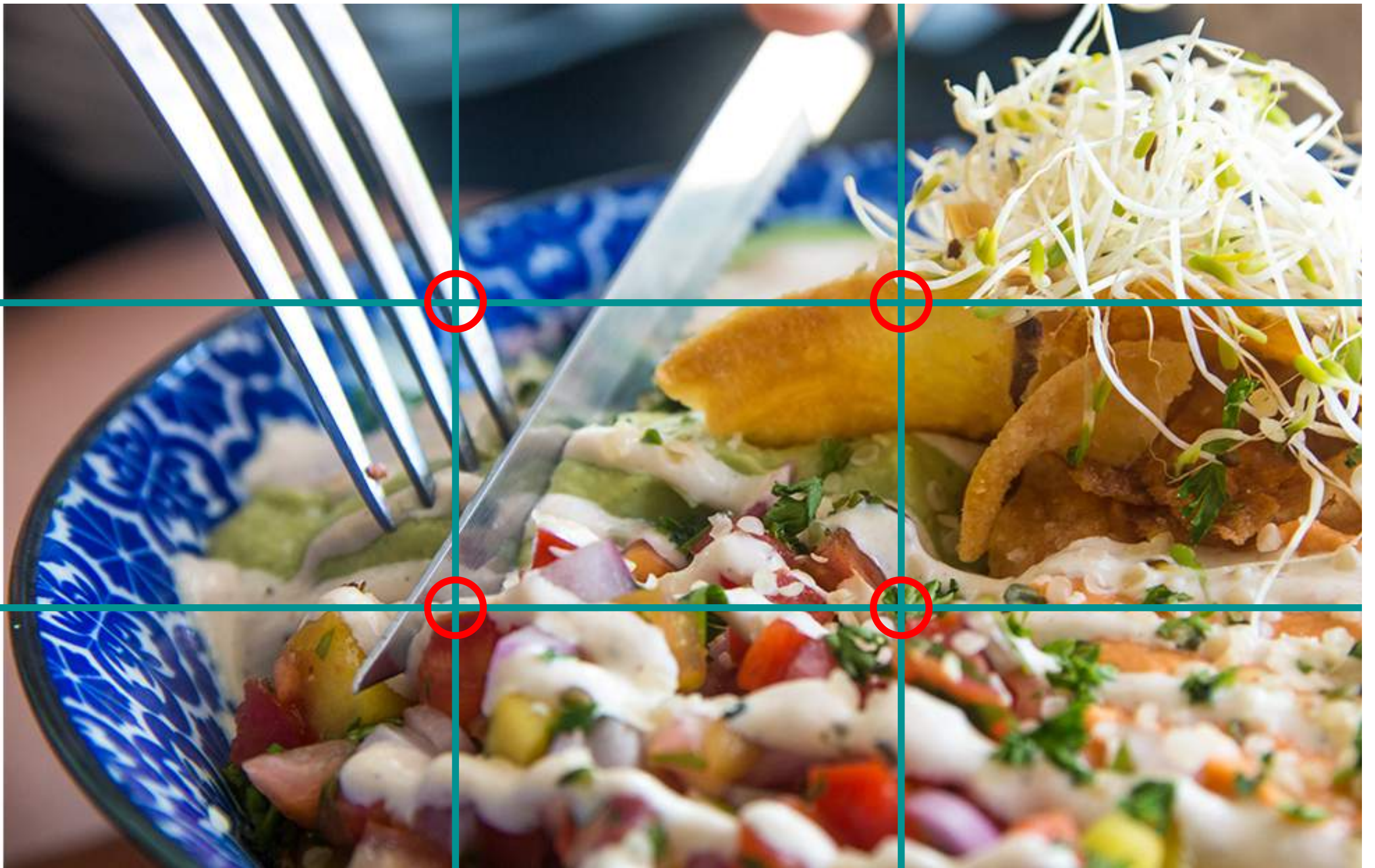
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Tip 1: Take advantage of natural light.



The most important aspect when it comes to photography is the light. In order to get a good quality picture you need to have a sufficient amount of light. Less light means more 'noise' in the picture. Lamps help, but the best light is natural light. So open the curtains and get as much light in as you can. Photographing food? Then go to the window!

Tip 2: Work with composition rules.



There are different ways you can compose an image. To make it easier for you to do this, it's useful to know about composition rules. One of them is the rule of thirds. Imagine breaking an image down into thirds (both horizontally and vertically) so that you have 9 parts (see picture above).

As you can see there are 4 intersection points (dots in the image). Place the main object near one of those intersection points to achieve a balanced composition. In the photo above, the knife is placed on the dot. Your viewer's eye will be attracted to the intersection point. You can also use a whole line instead of just the intersection point. An example of this will be showed on the next page.



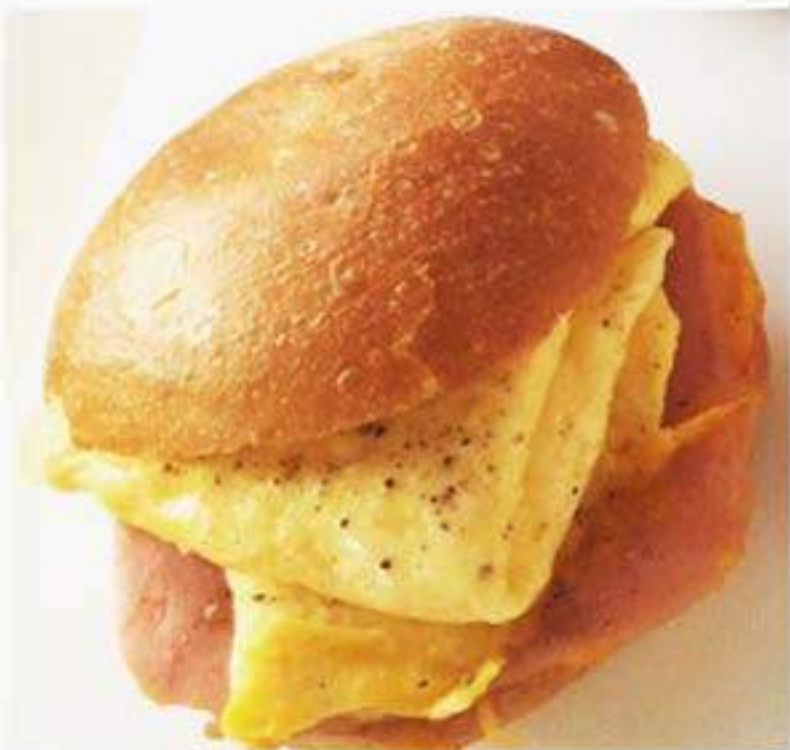
Tip 3: Use triangles for compositions.



Want to vary a little in your compositions? Then consider using a triangle set up. Grouping items in your picture in triangles creates structure and assures a certain amount of balance. It's also the perfect way to create a more dynamic image: there are multiple 'important' things for the viewer to focus on - without it becoming chaotic or *too much*.

In the example above you can see a triangle between the sandwich on the left, the cutlery in the upper right corner and the juice in the bottom right corner. Can you feel the balance? The red-purple-brown color scheme and the little touch of green for extra vibrance enhance the overall story: this is a healthy, tranquil hotspot to get some lunch and a drink.

Tip 4: Pick a color scheme & stick with it.



Sobremesa uses a brown-white-yellow color scheme with a touch of green.

Every brand should have a color palette. Using the same color palette in all your design does not only help to build brand recognition: it's also a key ingredient in your communication. Colors have meanings. And you should make use of them if you want to build a solid brand.

But how to pick your scheme? The trick is to not just go for random colors. Put some thought into your choices. We have set up a great step-by-step guide that guides you through the process. **Don't stress, you can do it in 5 minutes!** Curious about this? Then hit the button below.

CHECK THE GUIDE

Tip 5: Get rid of clutter, _____ clean up!



Pictures full of clutter never work. People like simplicity, especially on social media. We're not saying you need to get rid of everything though. Your photos should always match your brand's style. So if you got a bit of a funky, chaotic brand, then don't go all minimalistic in your photos.

BUT: you should remove all unnecessary stuff. Put focus on what's important in the picture. If you add props (a napkin, knife & fork, a plant, etc.) then make sure they enhance the overall story you're trying to tell. They should help to strengthen the message you want the image to convey. Otherwise: get rid of 'em.

Tip 6: Think about the overall context.



Something you should consider before even taking out your camera or smartphone to take pictures: context. What are you going to photograph and in which setting?

As a restaurant, you are highly likely to photograph your food. And as a hotel, you probably want to show off your rooms. But what about (the rest of) your property? And what about your other products? Your staff, your neighborhood or maybe even the behind-the-scenes?

Think about the overall story you want to tell first. If you are a Mexican restaurant and want to give your visitors a true Mexican experience, then add Mexican-style props to your food pictures (a sombrero somewhere in the corner, colorful backgrounds). All elements should work together.

Tip 7: Keep it simple. All of it.



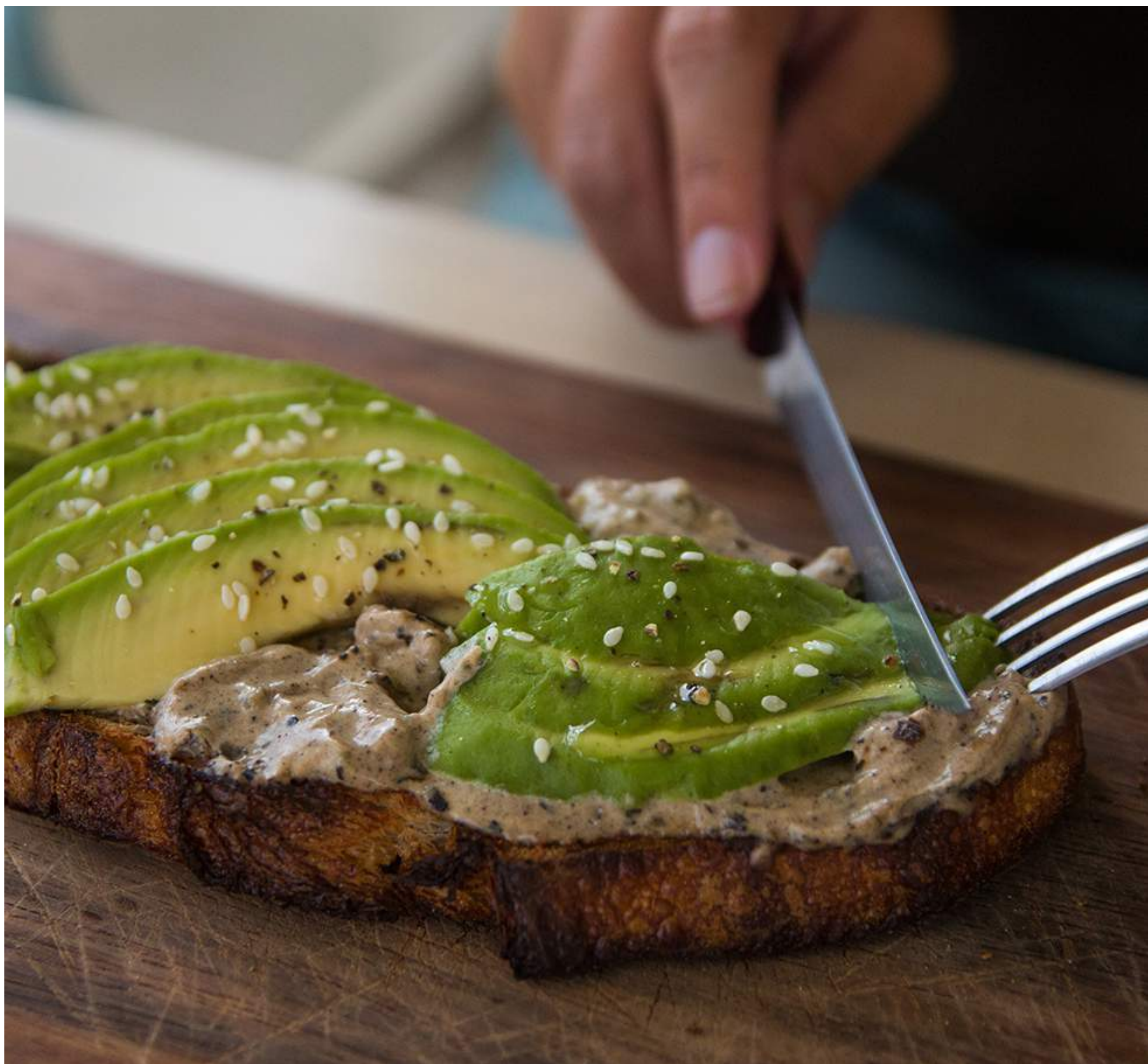
When you look at a food picture, you want to simply identify what you are looking at, right? Same goes for hotel pictures. So don't overcomplicate things. Keep both your photos and the copy that goes along with them simple and straightforward. Again: remove clutter. Less ingredients on the plate and less elements in the background. **Extra tip:** go for a 1 color or simple pattern as a background when photographing food.

Tip 8: Add some water or sprinkle some oil.



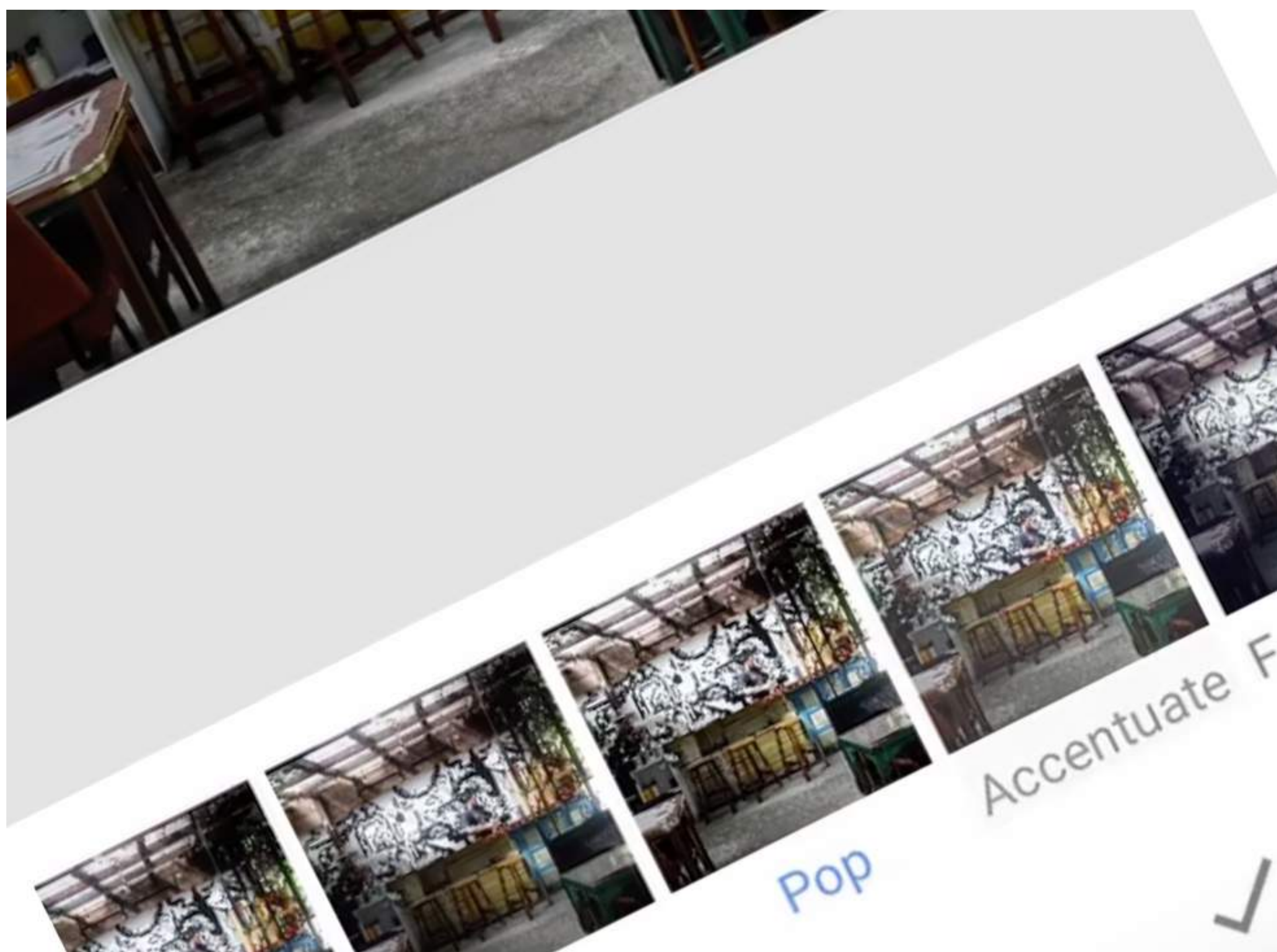
Wait, what? Water, oil? Yes, you got it right. When photographing food you want to make the items look as tasty as possible. Increase that 'straight from the kitchen'-feeling easily by sprinkling some water or oil over the dish. It will help to highlight the 'freshness' of the ingredients.

Tip 9: Clean plates, beds and rooms.



It goes without saying that a clean plate, bed or room looks better on a photo than a filthy one. Yet this is something many people tend to forget when taking a picture. That doesn't surprise us: *thinking about taking a picture* is hard enough! The only way to get this right is to truly make it a habit. Practice makes perfect. So start by photographing your own house and meals and try to remember yourself everytime: clean wins.

Tip 10: Edit your photos before posting them.



But really. Too often we come across hospitality brands who clearly don't understand the benefit of editing a picture. Yes, it takes a little bit of extra effort. But if you already went through the hassle of taking a good picture, it would be a waste not to do some post-production!

Editing - thankfully - doesn't have to be difficult. Especially when using the right tools. Did you take your photos with your mobile phone? Then install Snapseed from Google. This is a great smartphone app to edit any picture. The pre-set 'pop' tends to work best with food photos. You can adjust each picture exactly how you want. Just go through the 'improve picture' settings.

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We hope you find these 10 tips to be useful. We will be publishing many more tips on our Instagram @tremetohospitality, regarding photography but also social media usage, graphic design and more!