INSTAGRAM CAROUSELS & OTHER GROWTH HACKS YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT

BY KIMBERLY ESPINEL



Introductions



Hi, my name is Kimberly Espinel...

- Food & lifestyle photographer
- Educator
- Food blogger - The Little Plantation
- Author
- Creative business mentor
- Podcaster - Eat Capture Share

What are carousel posts?

What are carousel posts?

- A multi-slide post displayed on your Grid.
- Allows you to share multiple images, short clips, text based content or a mix of them all.
- Great for deeper storytelling, more in-depth value and adding extra context.
- Currently, carousel posts are performing super well as Instagram rewards more time spent on the app
- Keep people engaged with your content for longer; it's why it's likely to stay!



When carousel posts are especially useful

- Step-by-step content (recipes, tutorials, how-tos, teaching opportunity).
- Before/after, transformation, photo dumps, story telling
- Showcasing multiple aspects or details of food, products, or services for a cohesive set of visuals
- Educational content (tips, myths, breakdowns, lists, comparisons, trends, updates).





Carousel posts continues...

- As carousels are performing well (at present), they should be part of your content strategy, especially if you enjoy sharing content in different formats.
- Carousels are favoured by Instagram and users; the former because they encourage people to spend more time on the app, the latter because content is more in depth and at a slower pace.
- Prospective clients love carousels as they can view more of your work, helping them make a more informed decision about collaborating with you.



The case against carousels

- Posting more content requires more time for creation, so plan accordingly.
- Instagram algorithms change often — what's favoured today (like carousels) may not be tomorrow - so stay abreast of changes.
- NOTE! Make the first 1 (-3) slides in your carousel the eye catching (think HOOK) and the ensure the last has a CTA!





Carousel post examples

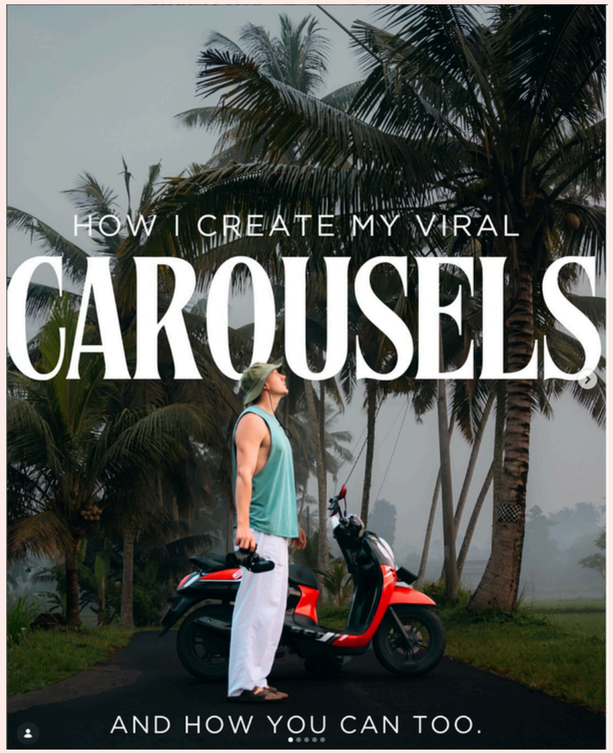
Your carousel cover!

COVER

Needs to be an eye catching hook! Think about how it will display on the explore page!



Text



Text & Photo

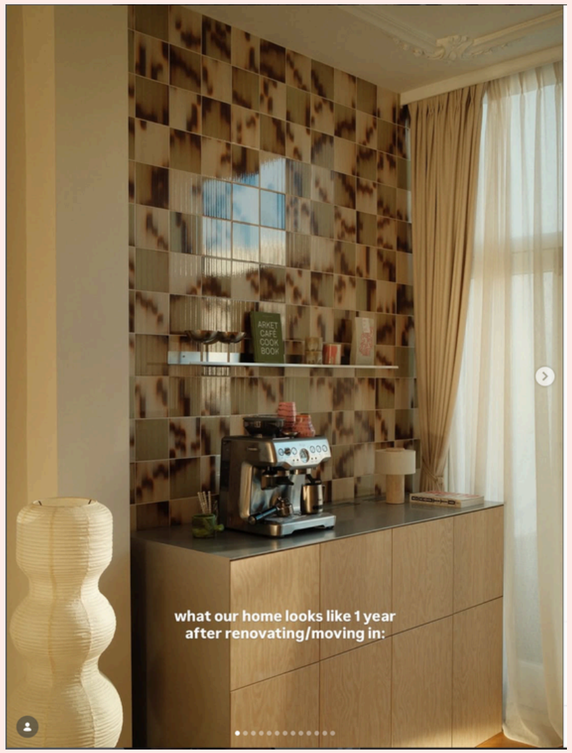


Photo led

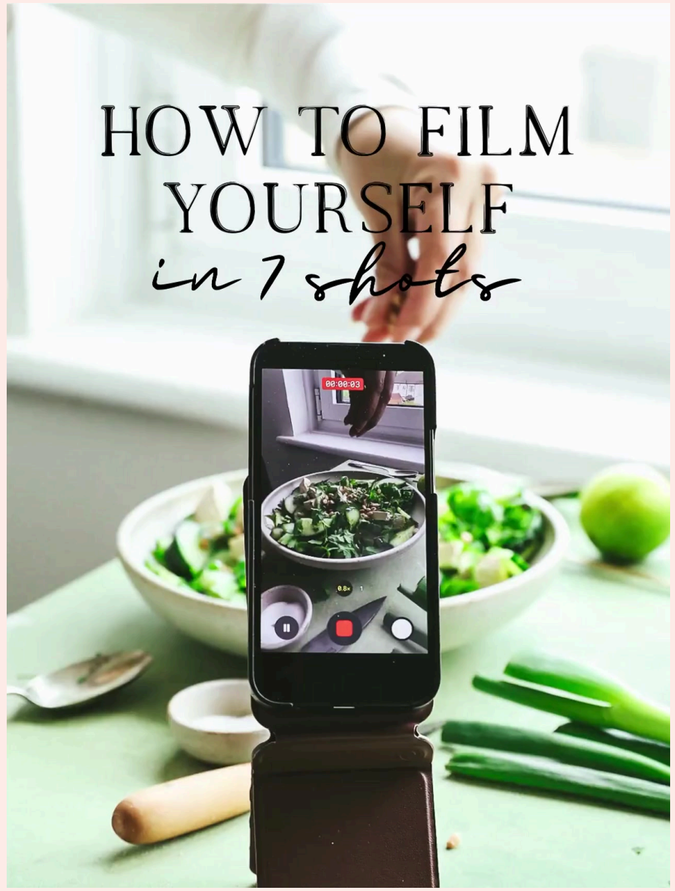
Your carousel cover!

COVER

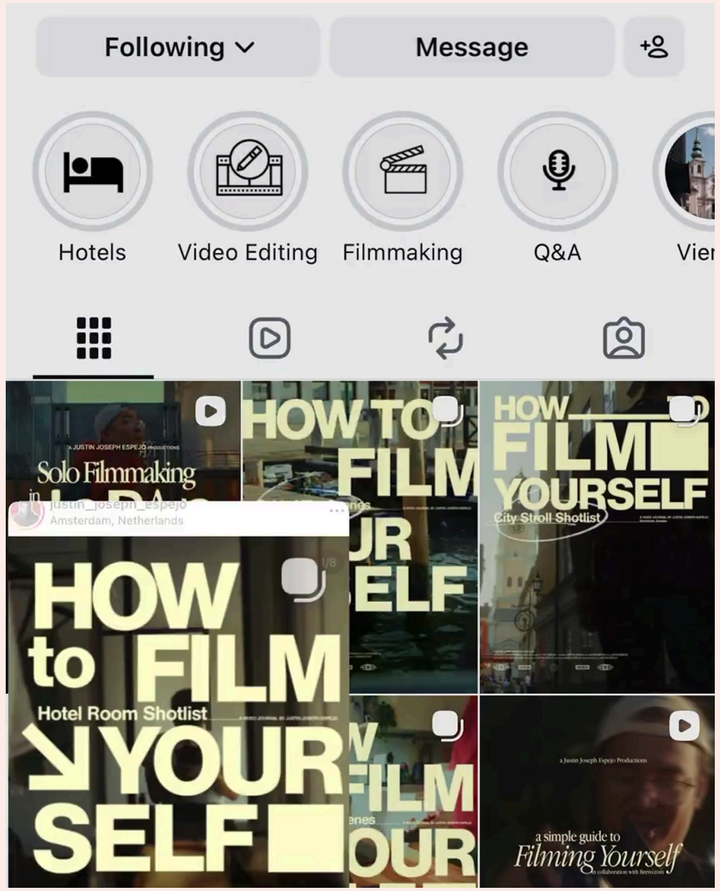
Top Tip! Using a moving image aka a video as your carousel cover is extra powerful!

Top Tip! Use something short that can loop.

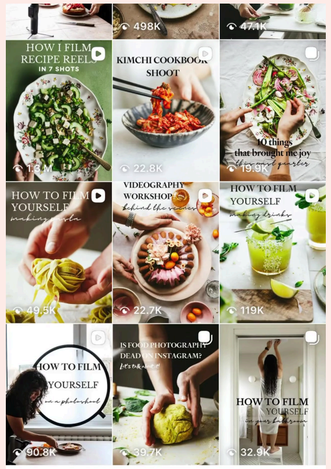
Top Tip! Soothing music, you're setting a gentle pace.



Text & Video



my inspiration



a nono

Your carousel cover!

COVER

A personal photo only will most likely serve the audience you already have and not lead to further growth!

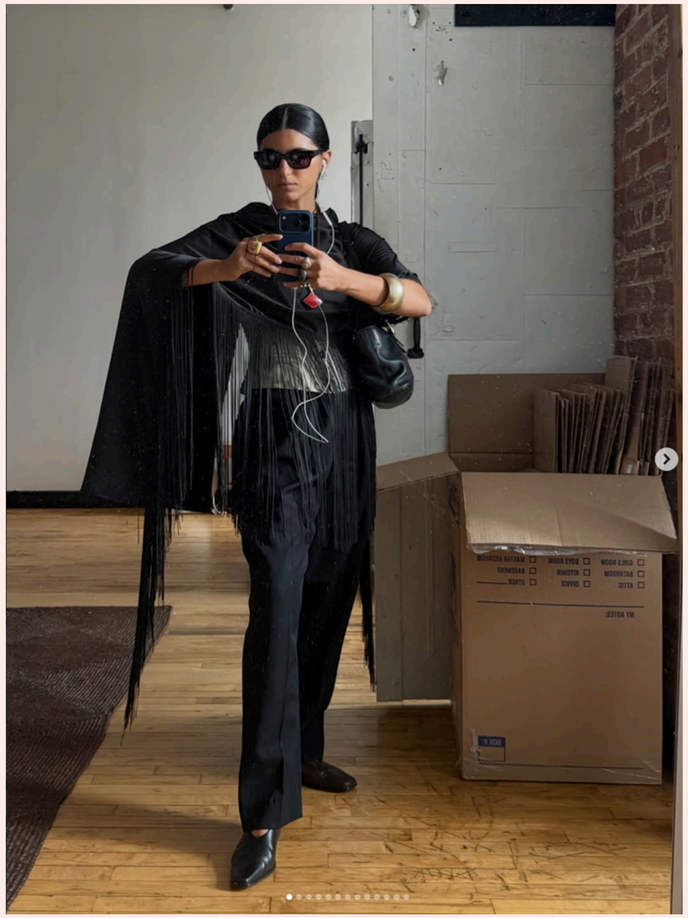
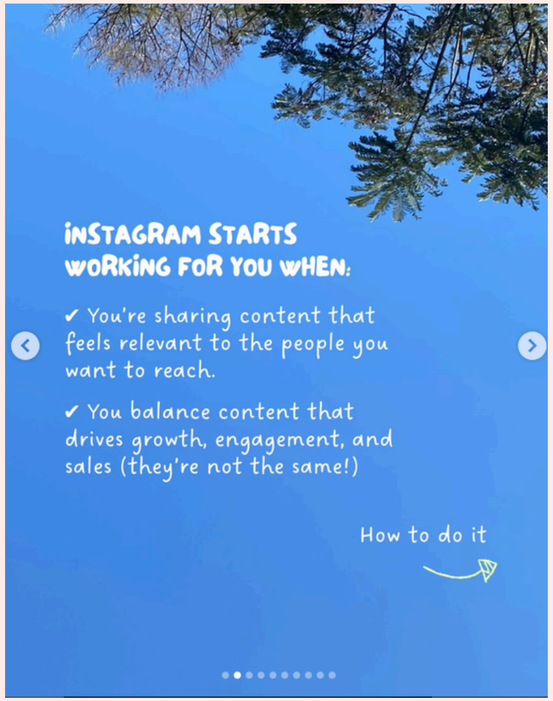


photo only

Your carousel continues

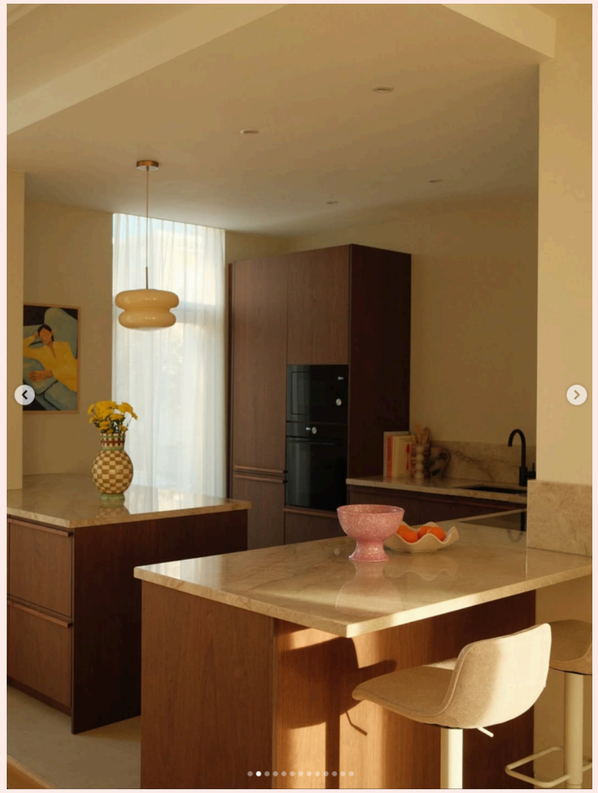
SLIDE 2
&
SLIDE 3 – 9ISH



SLIDE 2 -
enticing, provides context, keeps people hooked, story telling

SLIDE 2 - tie in with the hook, but give us something more, something different





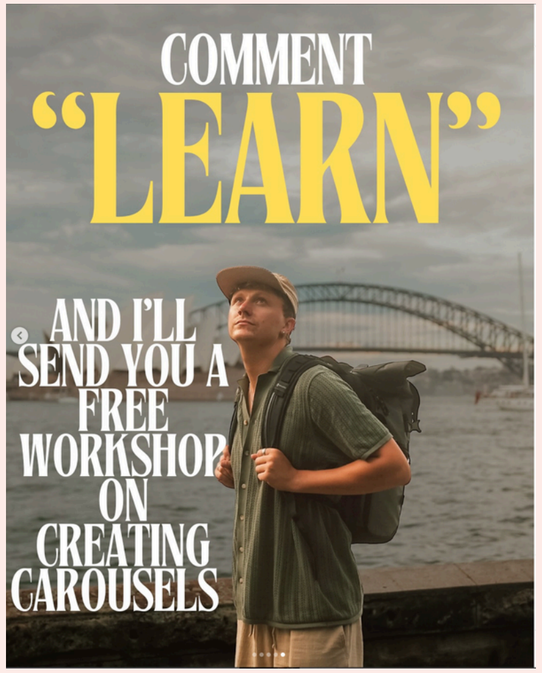
SLIDE 3-9ish -
value packed with tips, lists, story with headers

Your carousel continues

FINAL SLIDE



LAST SLIDE -
a strong CTA to follow, save, buy, visit link in bio etc.





Is this a lost opportunity?
Or in keeping with the post?

CAROUSEL SPECIFIC EXAMPLE



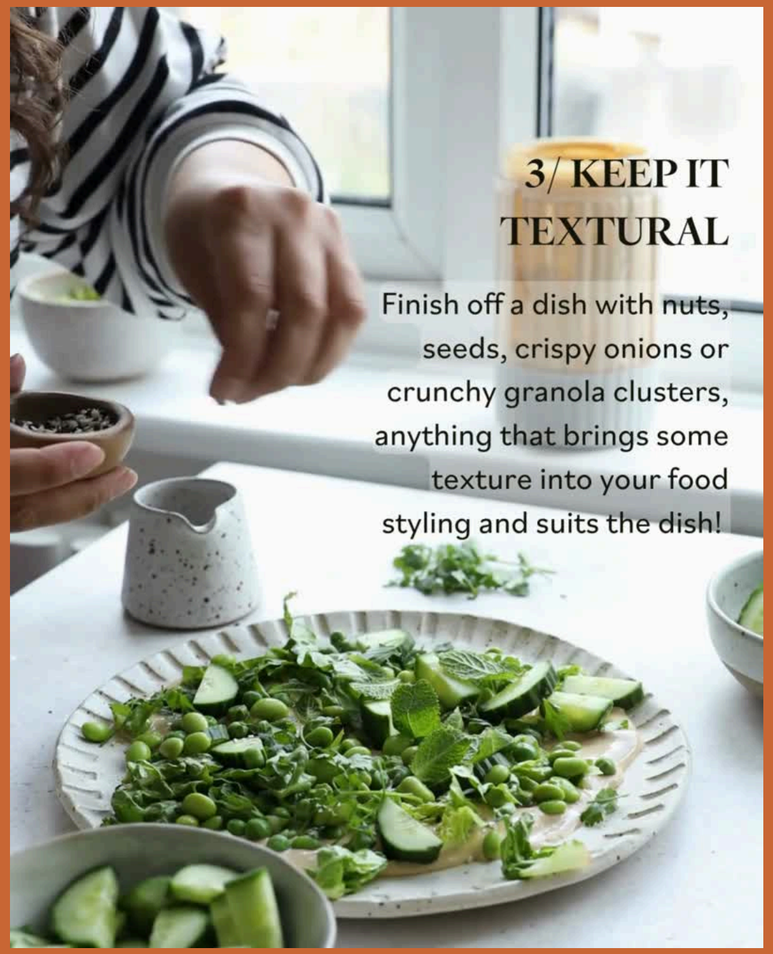




TOP TIP! Test cover on Instagram stories.

CAROUSEL SPECIFIC EXAMPLE

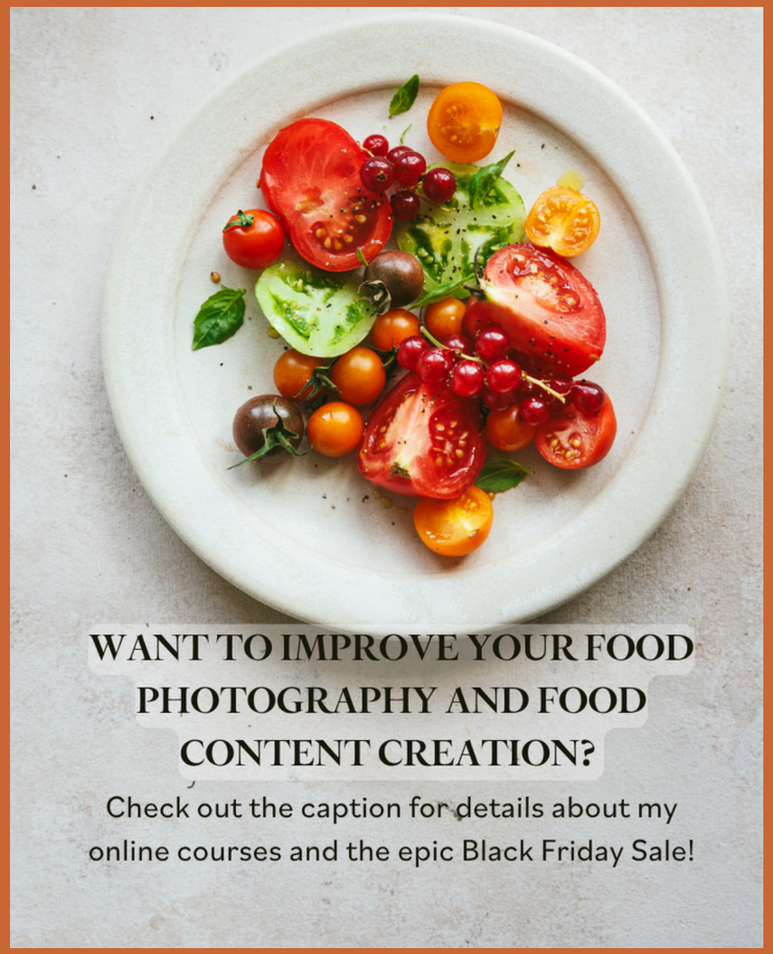






CAROUSEL SPECIFIC EXAMPLE





POST STATS

VIEWS: 100K

Non-follower visits: 68%

Saves: 632

Click through on explore page: 37%

Carousel growth hack!

POST STATS

Views: 1.3 million

Saves: 6.2K

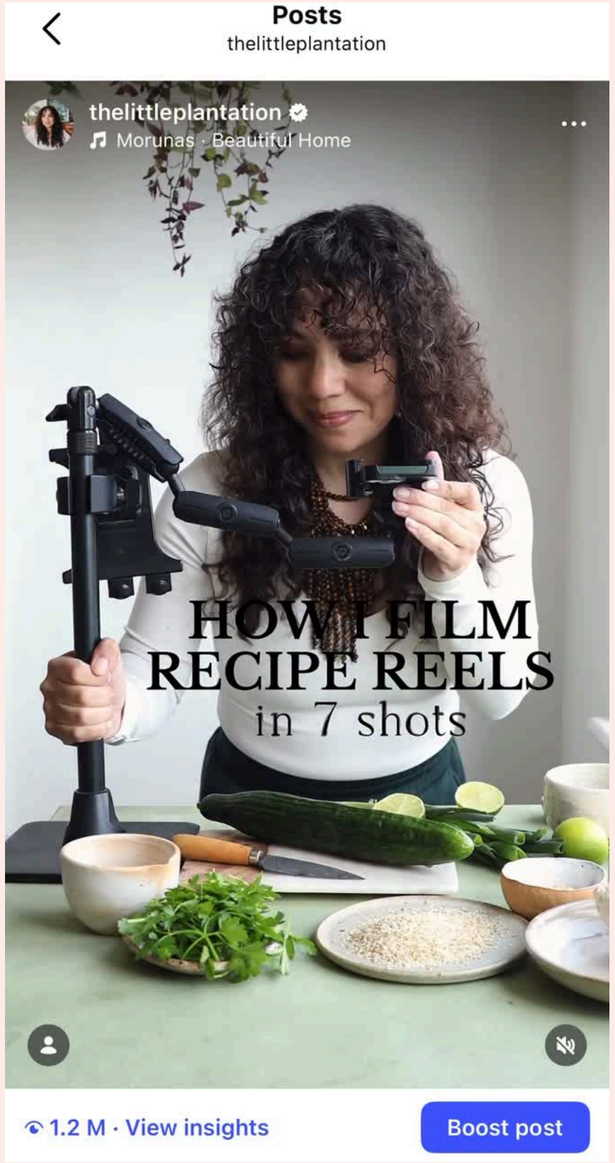
Follows: 2K

Profile visits: 4K

Link click: 650

Comments: 500

Non-follower views: 77%



Carousel growth hack!

POST STATS - REPURPOSE A VIRAL REEL

Views: 97K

Saves: 4.7K - what does this indicate?

Follows: 500

Profile visits: 2K

Link click: 310

Likes: 2.8K

Non-follower views: 57%



Growth hacks continue!

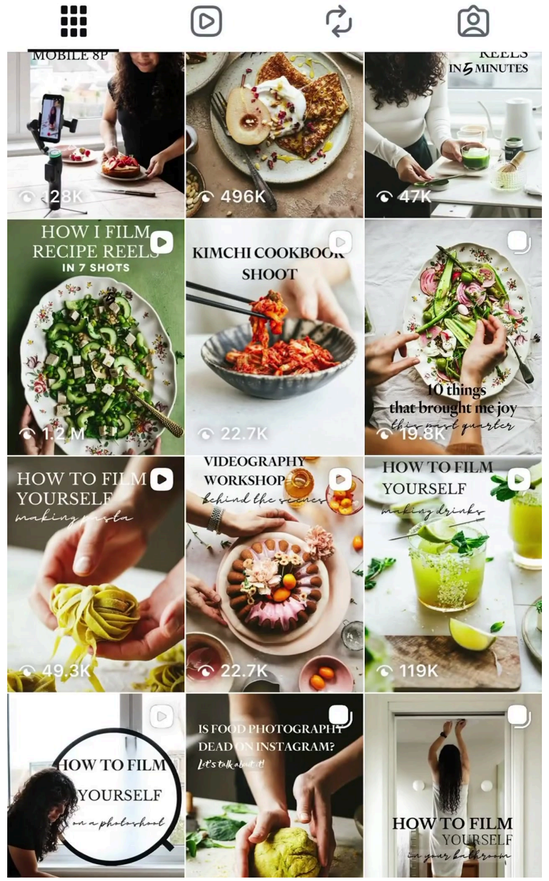
Likes: 1.2K versus 16K

Views: 50K versus 1.2million

Can we guess why reel 1 results in a completely different outcome than reel 2?

Once you understand this, not only can you create a blueprint for viral reels, you can also apply this principle to your carousel strategy.





Same hook, different results

Growth hack continues?

Here’s an example of how we can take that format and replicate it as a Reel.

You can insert different clips into the template so that it’s even the same length!

For example your hook might be the cheese pull - create a cheese toastie series with that same opening shot! People do not get bored of the same opening shot!

Thomas Straker did this with his ‘all things butter’ series.



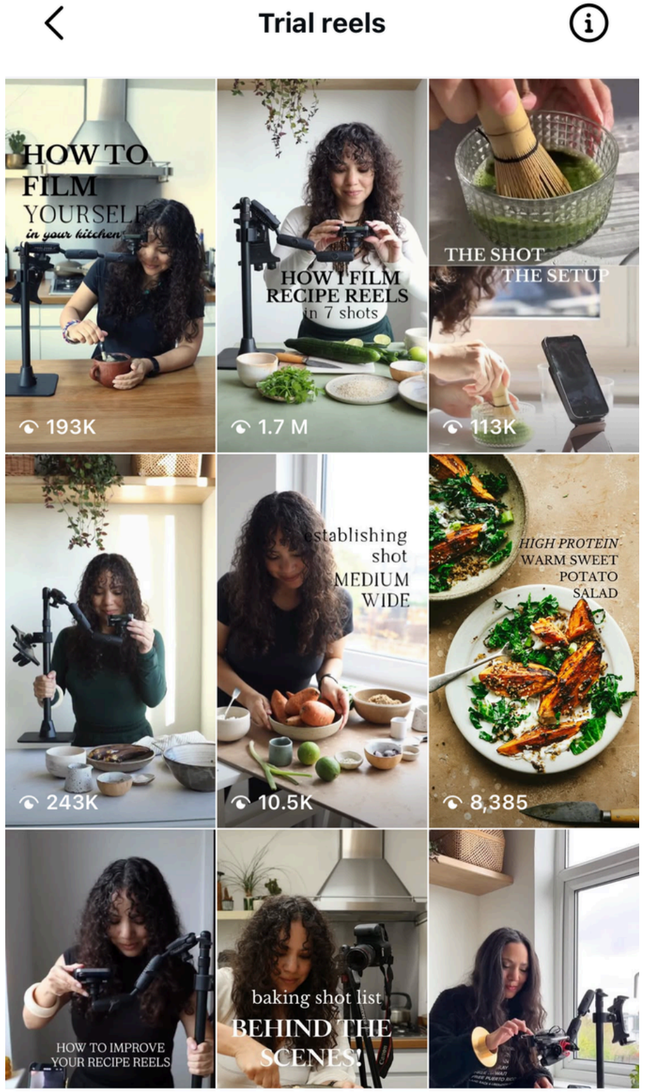
Growth hack continues? Trial Reels

1. Try out different hooks
2. Either post the one that performed best OR
3. Let the trial reels run in parallel and post the best performing reel on your grid (adjust speed, etc.)
4. Great to test out brand collab ideas

FINALLY, WHAT'S THE END GOAL?

1. Growth
2. Brand deals
3. Course sales
4. Ebook sales

There has to be a noticeable conversion if not virality is just a vanity metric!



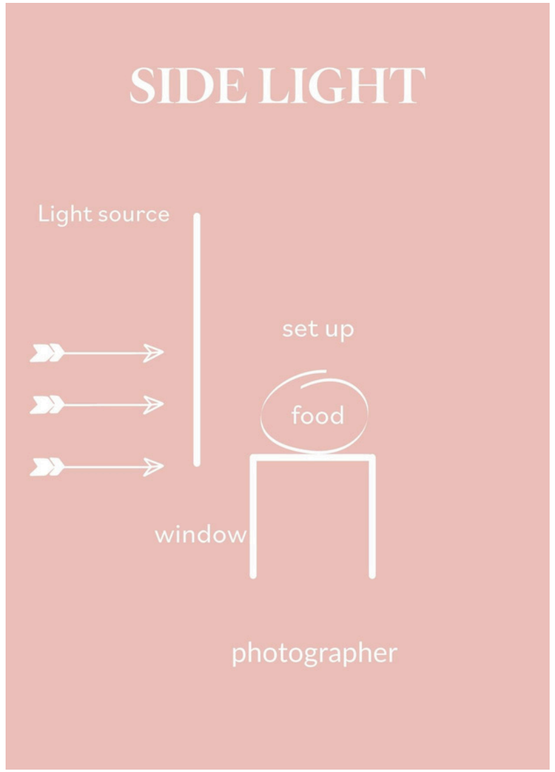
Nice to know - making your food shine

Light source in relation to the food!

SIDE LIGHT

Great options are side light.
Light hits your shoulder.



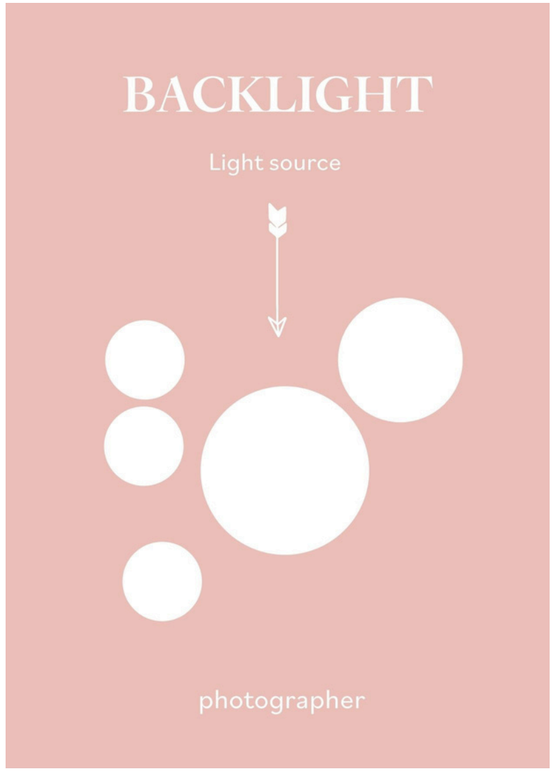




Light source in relation to the food!

BACK LIGHT







Light & shadow





LIGHT AND SHADOW

- How light our images should be or how deep our shadows should be is really a matter of personal taste.
- Your light and shadow choices will affect your 'signature look'.
- Personally, I love deeper shadows.
- You can use reflectors to soften shadows.
- Shadows can be changed in the editing process.

Food styling fundamentals

- Textures - When you create a dish for sharing online it's important to think about all the different textures you can bring into the dish. It gives the eye lots to feast on and makes for a more interesting and delicious looking frame. (think toasted bread, maple syrup, date bark, emphasis ASMR)



Food styling fundamentals

- Abundance – Abundance means joy for the eyes (and the tummy). There's nothing more inviting and visually attractive than a table of plenty, that looks like a feast suitable for kings and queens. (think: health food or family food space)



Food styling fundamentals

- Layers – These are great when you are filming from the side. Think different layers in a cake, or in a parfait like the one shown. The more layers, the merrier.



Food styling fundamentals

- A beautiful mess – Ideally, nothing should look forced or unnatural. It's much more inviting and approachable when it looks effortless and casual. We achieve this in part by using the trick of the 'beautiful mess'.



Food styling fundamentals

- Colours – Bringing the right colours into your image and thinking through the colours you choose are key when it comes to food styling.



Framing in videography

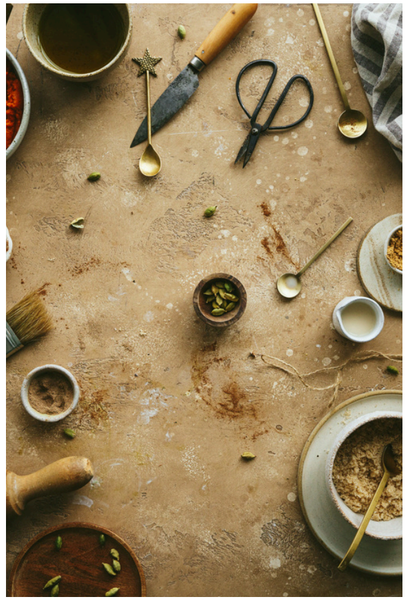


Framing ideas

- which angle will allow your food to look its best
- use angle changes to keep people interested and ensure they continue to watch
- angle changes can help your story telling
- use two cameras to capture one action from two angles simultaneously
- NOTE! range - standing out - getting hired - being authentic



side angle



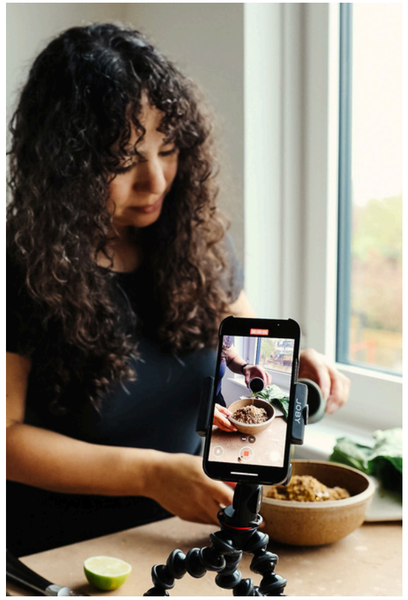
top down



macro



wide angle



bts



back lite

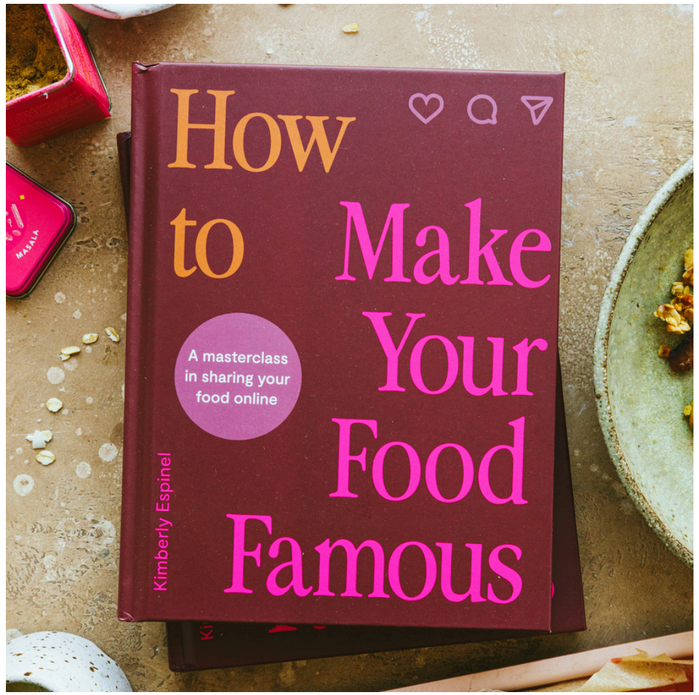


QUESTIONS?



Let's stay connected!

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It is a great way to get inspired! You can find it on Amazon and Book Depository



TUNE INTO MY PODCAST!

It's for food photographers who want to earn an income doing what they love!

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