The Ultimate
Food & Beverage
Photography Guide

Photographer Skyler Burt

TETHER TOOLS

Introduction

Food photography is on the rise. Food photography isn't new, but we need it now more than ever before. With the rise of social media and food delivery apps, the need for quality imagery isn't going away anytime soon. People need to see what they're going to get, right? And with so many food and lifestyle bloggers out there, it seems like we look at as many online images of food as we do cats.

Using tethering gear, professional and amateur food photographers can shoot with their cameras connected to a computer for instant uploading. With the right **cables**, **software, power**, and *creativity*, tethering gives photographers almost unlimited flexibility to quickly and beautifully get that perfect food shot.

Photographer Joanie Simon

What Food Photography Is and Why It Isn't Considered Product Photography

While there seems to be a lot of overlap between product and food photography, they are somewhat different worlds.

Photographer Joanie Simon

The most important difference for photographers is that food photography is more editorial than commercial product photography. Commercial images exist to convince people to take action—to buy, eat, or do something. It's more calculated. When it comes to food, editorial shots are the way to go—as they make the viewer feel something.

Why Tethering and Food Photography Go Hand in Hand

When you think of creating amazing food photography images, it really comes down to composition, planning, and lighting. Being able to use a tethered setup means you can test the scene to ensure everything is ready before you bring the food into the picture.

Tethering can help shorten your shoot time so your images are captured when the food looks its best. Plus, once you have your tethered setup ready to go, it makes taking different shots from different angles much easier than you might think.

Behind the Scenes with Yessica Duque

How Tethering Benefits
Food Photography

We've identified the top benefits that tethering works into a photo shoot setup and workflow if you are a food photographer.

1 FREEDOM

Photographers can create images for brands all over the world in the comfort of their own studio. They're able to work more directly with chefs, restaurants, publications, marketing agencies, and food brands.

2 QUALITY

Because an LCD screen on the back of a camera is so small, shooting tethered inside a restaurant allows the photographer to know they have tack-sharp focus on their image.

3 WORKFLOW

Tethering lets you save files directly to your catalog, properly named and organized. You can also make your selects on the fly and ensure you know what image to edit. Tethering speeds up your shoot to delivery time.

4 VERSATILITY

Live view gives the photographer power. With overlay mode, bracketing, and presets built into tethering software, you can nail your composition and see it in its final form, whether that is a magazine layout or social post.

Expert Advice from FoodPhotographer and VideographerSkyler Burt

Skyler Burt is an award winning photographer and director based out of Los Angeles who you may know from his YouTube Channel We Eat Together, or his Instagram account that is filled with gorgeous food and beverage shots. He has traveled the globe for over 12 years shooting, directing and editing projects for world class clients.

Some of his clients include Shakey's, PizzaHut, Samsung, Belcampo, Tippsy, Altos, Espanita, Sunset Magazine, Southern Living, Forbes Traveler, Lonely Planet, Shangri La Resorts, The Chedi Muscat, Ritz Carlton, Marriott, Pelican Hill Resort, and UCLA.

> "I compose to the camera on a tripod, moving each prop or piece of food hundreds of times per shot, to get it just perfect. Seeing your composition in real time makes photography not only possible, but fun. And I don't need to run up and down a ladder a bunch of times when my camera is above the table!"

Photographer Skyler Burt

Pro Tip: "Start with an empty table and build your story or idea from there. The story will tell you where to place the camera, where the light stand should come from, what props you use within the frame. If it doesn't help your story, remove it. Also back light everything! It's kind of cheating, but food always looks good when you back light it,"- *Skyler Burt*

Skyler Burt's Recommended Gear

Photography Camera: Canon 5Ds

Video Cameras: BMPCC 6KPro, Fujifilm XT-3

Camera Lenses: Canon 50mm f1.2 L, Canon 100mm f2.8L, Canon 24mm f1.4L

Photography Lighting: Elinchrom ELC Pro HD 500

Commercial Video Lighting: Aputure LS 600D **YouTube Video Lighting:** Godox S1Z50R, Godox SL60W

Light Modifiers: Large Softbox, Hard Reflector with Grid, Snoot, White and Black Foam Core for flagging

Tether Cable: TetherPro USB Cables

Port Protection: TetherBlock, TetherGuard Tethering Support Kit

Power: ONsite Relay Camera Power System with ONsite USB Battery Pack

Mirroring: Samsung Tab s8 for mirroring PC screen on set

Tethering Software: CaptureOne

Expert Advice from Food Photographer & Educator Joanie Simon

Joanie Simon is an expert food photographer who you may know from her photography courses on The Bite Shot, her YouTube tutorials, or her Instagram account that is filled with gorgeous food shots. She also literally wrote the book on food photography (*Picture Perfect Food: Master the Art of Food Photography with 52 Bite-Sized Tutorials*) and is kind of a big deal when it comes to shooting food.

"Way back when before blogging was super cool, I lived in New York for a while and was eating out at a lot of cool restaurants and wanted to share the food with my family back home in Arizona.

I had my little point-and-shoot camera and was running around to restaurants in New York and just creating content online—and I think that my millennial self just loves to put information out on the Internet."

Photographer Joanie Simon

Photographer Joanie Simon

Photographer: Joanie Simon

> **Pro Tip:** What Joanie Simon has to say about the ONsite Relay C Camera Power System: "ONsite Relay with constant power is my favorite thing; If you take it away, I get upset. We're shooting for a lot of long hours and I don't want to deal with batteries. I'm plugged in and ready to rock all day long."
>
> *-Joanie Simon*

When she advises others about shooting food, she notes how important tethering is when talking about what equipment she uses.

"Tethering is an embedded part of my workflow, so to take tethering away, I would feel out of sorts. It makes my life a lot easier because nothing drives me crazier than rework or having to reshoot something. That's the worst! Tethering is how I prevent that [reshooting] from happening and save time in the long run," says Joanie Simon.

When Enticing Food Photography Is a Must

Food photography is everywhere. On social media, amateurs turn into expert food photographers. They spend so much time shooting their evening's dinner that the food gets cold.

The types of projects that need food photography can range from something relatively short-term and simple that even an amateur can do to something with complex long-term branding that requires the eye of an experienced pro.

Projects that require food photography include:

RECIPE & FOOD BLOGGING

It's crucial to inspire readers into making a recipe, whether your blog has 30 followers or 30,000.

MAGAZINE COVERS

Ever walked by a magazine and just stopped to look at the perfectly decorated cake on the cover or that mouthwatering leg brisket, perfect for the holidays? Those are food images that shoppers can't resist picking up.

ALL DIGITAL FOOD BRANDING

It's a crowded digital world, especially when it comes to food. Content creators are always looking for new ways to make their food images stand out.

RESTAURANTS

Customers vet everything online these days, from dentists to car dealerships. Restaurants are no different, and they can really up their game with a killer website. But those signature dishes need to look perfect to entice customers to make a reservation.

COOKBOOKS

What's the first thing you look at when you pick up a cookbook? The end-result photos. Inspiring home chefs without looking over-complicated is a skill.

Photographer Yessica Duque

MARKETING MATERIALS

Whether working for a brand or restaurant capturing the food and the brands identity is a tall order. This includes menus, store displays, advertising, and packaging.

Expert Advice from Food Photographer and Educator Yessica Duque

Yessica Duque is a Food stylist photographer from Venezuela based in the Netherlands since 2008. After a long career as a graphic designer, she transitioned into photography in 2016 as a food stylist and photographer before making it her full-time career in 2018. Her work entails imagery for commercial photography for important brands, social media, and public relations for restaurants and chefs in Europe. Learn more from Yessica on her Instagram, YouTube, and Website.

> "For me, photography and especially food photography is so much more than just capturing images of delicious dishes. It's like traveling through food, connecting with people from different cultures and discovering new worlds of flavors and culinary traditions. It's an art form that allows me to explore and experiment, while at the same time sharing my experiences with others through my photographs."

Photographer Yessica Duque

Photographer Yessica Duque

Behind the Scenes with Yessica Duque

Yessica Duque's Recommended Gear

Photography Camera: Canon R6

Lens: Sigma 50mm 1.4 ART

Lighting: Godox SL60IID, Cucoloris Board, Elinchrom ONE, Rotalux Octa and Strip Softboxes, Spekular KYU-6 Light Wrap and Light Blaster Optical Snoot.

Tether Cable: TetherPro USB-C to USB-C Cables

Port Protection: TetherGuard Tethering Support Kit

Work Station: Pro Tethering Kit, UST Stand Combo with Tether Tools Rock-Solid Tripod Roller

Tethering Software: Adobe Lightroom

Pro Tip: "One pro tip I would give to up-and-coming food and commercial photographers is to never stop experimenting and honing your craft. Keep learning new techniques, trying out different lighting setups, and pushing your boundaries to develop your own unique style. And don't be afraid to take on personal projects or collaborations to continue expanding your portfolio and skill set. Remember, photography is a constantly evolving art form, and those who stay curious and dedicated are the ones who will stand out in the industry," -*Yessica Duque*

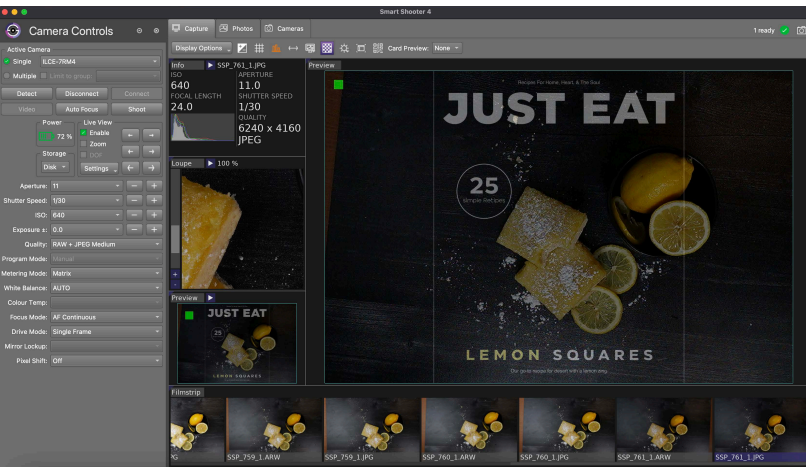# How to Become the Food Photographer You Dream About

Now that you know more about what food photography is, how it differs from other photography, and how tethering can help you get to the top of your game, put some of this advice and information to good use.

See how tethering can help you get that perfect shot for your food blog, or how you can amaze a client by letting them provide live feedback as you shoot. When it comes to food photography, tethering isn't just nice to have anymore—it has become a must.

Photographer Skyler Burt

Photographer Yessica Duque

Flat Lay

Flat lay, or overhead shots, aren't going anywhere anytime soon; not as long as Instagram and other social networks exist. To get the perfect shot, an overhead mount with a tethered monitor is clutch. This is what your friends on Facebook are doing to get those amazing shots of the recipe their family loved.

Overlay Mode with Smart Shooter

Overlay Mode in **Smart Shooter** allows photographers to use any photo previously taken as a guide. The photo then shows up as on overlay at reduced opacity in live view. This allows you to position your subject in real time, align your shots, and prevent any composition errors you might otherwise have without the guide. The process is extremely simple.

First, open up Smart Shooter and compose your shot as you normally would using a tripod. Once your desired shot is taken and displayed within the preview window, navigate to "Live View" and select enable.

Next, go to "Live View Opacity" by clicking the checkerboard icon. Once Live View Opacity is open, click and drag the slider from the right to left to scale from 1.0 (100%) to about 0.5 (50%). You should now see a ghost of the first image. Once you align your shot, you will need to move the opacity back to 1.0 (100%). Take Smart Shooter 4 out of "Live View" by deselecting enable under live view.

Success! You now have two photos taken from the same angle that will align perfectly for a composite image in post.

Tether Tools All In-One Portable Studio

The Kit Includes:

* Tether Table Aero
* Rock Solid Tripod Roller
* Rock Solid 2-Head Cross Bar Side Arm
* Rock Solid 4-Head Tripod Cross Bar
* Dual Wing Sandbag
* TetherGuard Port Protection
* Strapmoore
* TetherPro 15' (4.6m) Cable
* Aero Hooks
* Secure Strap

Optional Power:

*ONsite USB 150W Battery Pack
*ONsite USB 65W Universal Wall Charger
*ONsite Relay C Camera Power System
*Camera Coupler

Lighting Tips for Food & Beverage Photography

The standard look for food and beverage photography is to keep things natural – after all, you don't want to be putting unnatural-looking things in your mouth! But sometimes, you want to take your food photography in a different direction and make it pop visually.

This is where Spekular's KYU-6 light wraps can have an impressive effect on your food photos by bringing great flashes of light and streaks of strong color to your scenes. Being small, light, and flexible, they are a must-have for every food photographer's kit bag.

Photographer Yessica Duque

Another great way to elevate your food and beverage lighting is by adding Spekular's Light Blaster Optical Snoot.

The Light Blaster uses your own lenses and strobes or speedlights to project patterns across your scene. All that's required is to select a gobo and slot in to the optical snoot, which connects your light source to your lens. When you fire your flash, the lens blasts your chosen shape onto your background. The closer to or farther from your background you position your Light Blaster, the larger or smaller your chosen pattern will appear.

Elinchrom strobes, such as the Elinchrom ONE, provide constant color temperature precision in a small package, ultimately saving you precious time in post-production. With Elinchrom's large choice of light shapers and accessories, there's a lot of flexibility to accommodate to the space you have available.

Photographer Yessica Duque

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How PhotoShelter Benefits Food Photography

We've identified the top benefits that PhotoShelter provides to improve your food photography workflow.

1 — Centralized Assets

Keep all of your photos in one place. Whether it's RAW, JPEG, or TIF files, upload them instantly with FTP, use your browser, or import them via a program like Lightroom or Photo Mechanic. A full archive backed up in the cloud is a gamechanger. Plus, with drag and drop file management, it's easy to search and sort photos, add metadata, and more.

2 — Accessibility

Instantly access your entire archive from any device, from anywhere in the world, at any time. All you need is a little bit of wi-fi or your phone, and you have full access to all of your files. Need to fulfill a last-minute image request? Easy. Need to make a sale from the sky? Done.
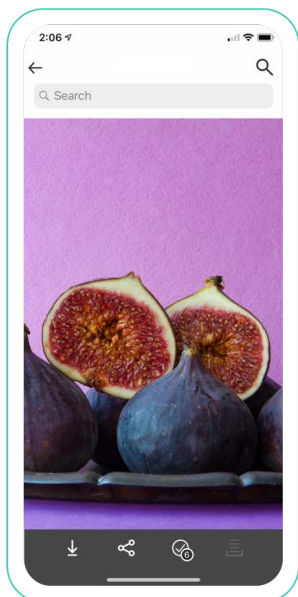
3 — Built-in Sales Tools

Sell prints, products, or rights managed or royalty free licenses all from within your account. You have full control over what's for sale, how much you charge, and get paid instantly.

4 — Effortless Sharing

Send high res photos without the need for third-party services or complicated steps. Share photos with clients with one click, post on social media, or create private proofing galleries for them to make selects and give feedback on your work.

Want to see how the team at **Fresh Direct** uses **PhotoShelter** in their food photography workflow? **Check it out.**

Get the Gear

Configure a tethered workflow with the gear that's right for your food photography business.

TRANSFER	PROTECT	COLLABORATE	POWER	DIRECT
TetherPro USB Cables	StrapMoore	Tether Table Aero & Rock Solid Tripod Roller	ONsite Relay C Camera Power System	Smart Shooter

TETHERPRO USB CABLES

PRO TETHERING KIT

ROCK SOLID TRIPOD ROLLER

◻ <u>TetherPro USB Cables</u> - Connect your camera directly to your computer for fast and reliable transfers.

◻ <u>Pro Tethering Kit</u> - Take your photography and professional image to the next level by enhancing productivity, improving efficiency, and increasing safety in your workstation.

◻ <u>Rock Solid Tripod Roller</u> - This tripod roller provides food photographers with a stable, portable tethering platform, perfect for daily studio use and the ideal out-of-studio workspace.

ONSITE RELAY C CAMERA POWER SYSTEM

TETHERGUARD TETHERING SUPPORT

☐ **ONsite Relay C Camera Power System -** Continually power your camera without interruption. This system provides power while being connected to an external power source.

☐ **TetherGuard Cable Management** -Protect and relieve the stress from your ports and cable with the Tether Tools TetherGuard™ Tethering Kits.

Smart Shooter Free Trial:

It's Better When You Tether – Together.

Get the tethering speed, reliability and added SONY compatibility of Smart Shooter 4 seamlessly integrated with Adobe Lightroom Classic®.

LEARN MORE

SMART SHOOTER LrC

Already want a tethering setup so you can get started?

Call 888-854-6565 or email

customersupport@tethertools.com

Get Your Gear Now

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Skyler Burt

Website: https://skylerburtphotography.com/

YouTube: We Eat Together

Instagram: @we.eat.together_

Yessica Duque

Website: https://yessicaduque.com/

YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/@yessicaduque

Instagram: @yessica_duque_photography

Joanie Simon

Website: https://joaniesimon.com/

YouTube: The Bite Shot

Instagram: @thebiteshot

Featured Partners

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