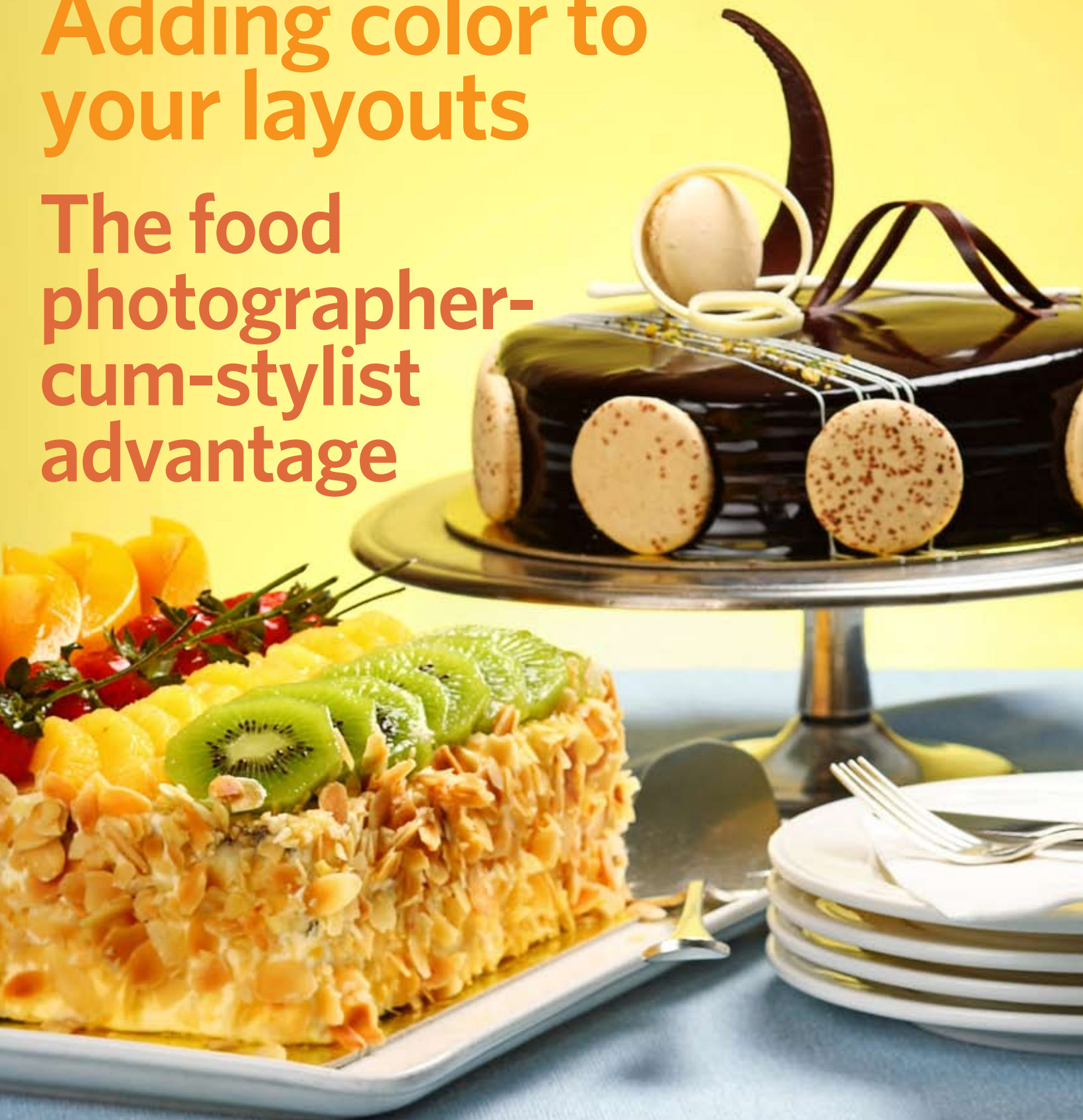


Food Shots

Magazine portfolio of Rico Jose

Adding color to
your layouts

The food
photographer-
cum-stylist
advantage



Tel: 02-6646087/ foodphotographymanila.com



*Lemons dunked in a fish tank.
Pretty cool eh?*

Hello

Thank you for taking the time to look at this portfolio. I hope that you will find this worth your time. Thank you for even reading this gibberish that's supposed to be a welcome note of sorts. Hey as long as we're going with the magazine feel then we need to have some text right on this page.

Basically, I simply compiled here some of my food and product shots over the past few months so you can get an idea of what I can do, and hopefully you'd want to hire me for your next photo requirements.

As a background, I've been doing professional food photography for over 3 years now servicing the requirements of hotels and a few restaurants here and there. I got into photography as a natural extension of my work as a graphic designer (yup, I made this magazine myself) and ever since have decided to focus on food and product photography as my area of specialty.

All the images you see here, save for the X'mas spread, did not benefit from the help of a professional food stylist. As in most hotels I've worked with, the chef usually prepares the food, brings it to our make-shift studio and then leaves it to the photographer to tweak the arrangements and add background props, either found at the hotel or in my stash, along with the linens and surfaces that I bring on every food shoot. Expect me to bring tons of stuff from table cloth, to napkins, to chopping boards, acrylic and painted surfaces, and even a small product shot table for those seamless food on white shots or backlit drink shots. Because not everybody can afford a stylist on the set hiring me would be the next best thing.

You can also check out my other images at www.foodphotographymanila.com and productphotographymanila.com.

Looking forward to seeing you soon.

Erica Jose
Rico Jose

For questions or inquiries feel free to contact me anytime at (02) 6686067, 0906-2043716 or e-mail me at corexjose@yahoo.com.
Do check out my sites: foodphotographymanila.com and productphotographymanila.com



Styled this myself. The background was a veneer faux wood surface I bring to my shoots. Took me less than 10 minutes to set-up this shot.

Color Me Good

The problem with shooting in a hotel setting is that often you are required to shoot in a meeting room and you are forced to think to your wit's end on how you could make things exciting with just the available materials they have in their banquet storeroom. Shooting on food-stained white linens can get old pretty soon, as the resident artist will tell you. Until he can persuade Marketing to hire a professional stylist, the food photographer becomes the prop stylist. More than just his camera and lights, the savvy food photographer brings his own arsenal of linens, placemats and surfaces to the shoot. The other kind of photographer just shoots close-ups.

In lieu of a stylist, the photographer should know which color goes well with the food



4 Food Shots



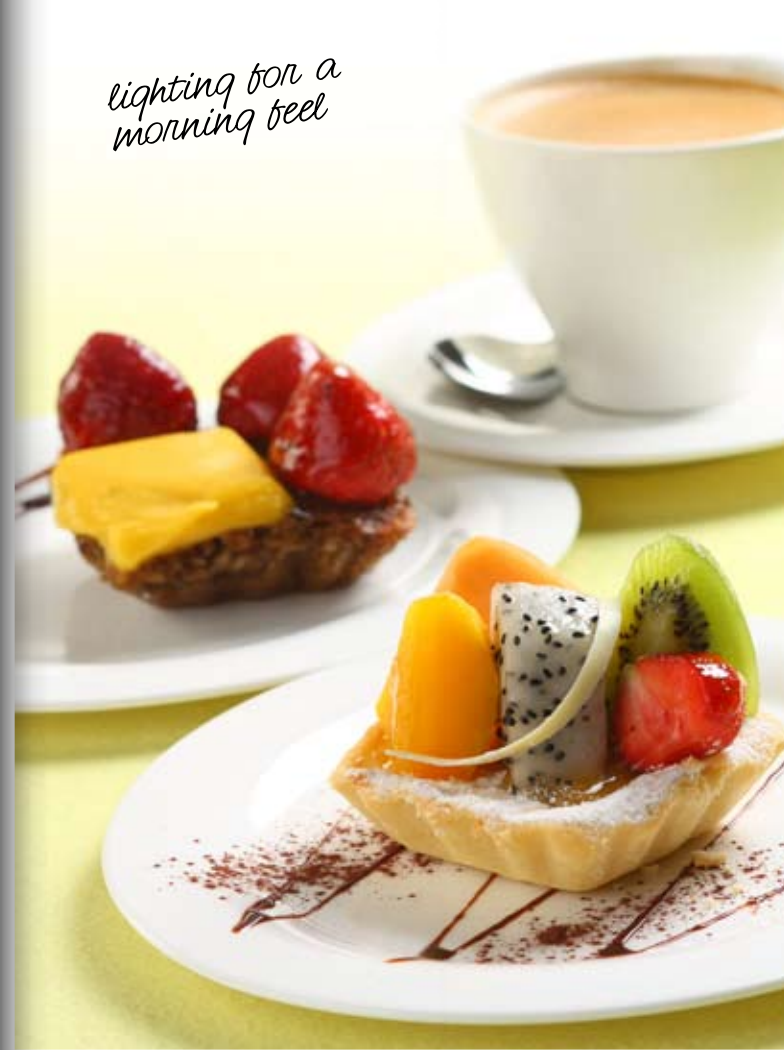
Imagine this page layout if all the plates were shot on white.



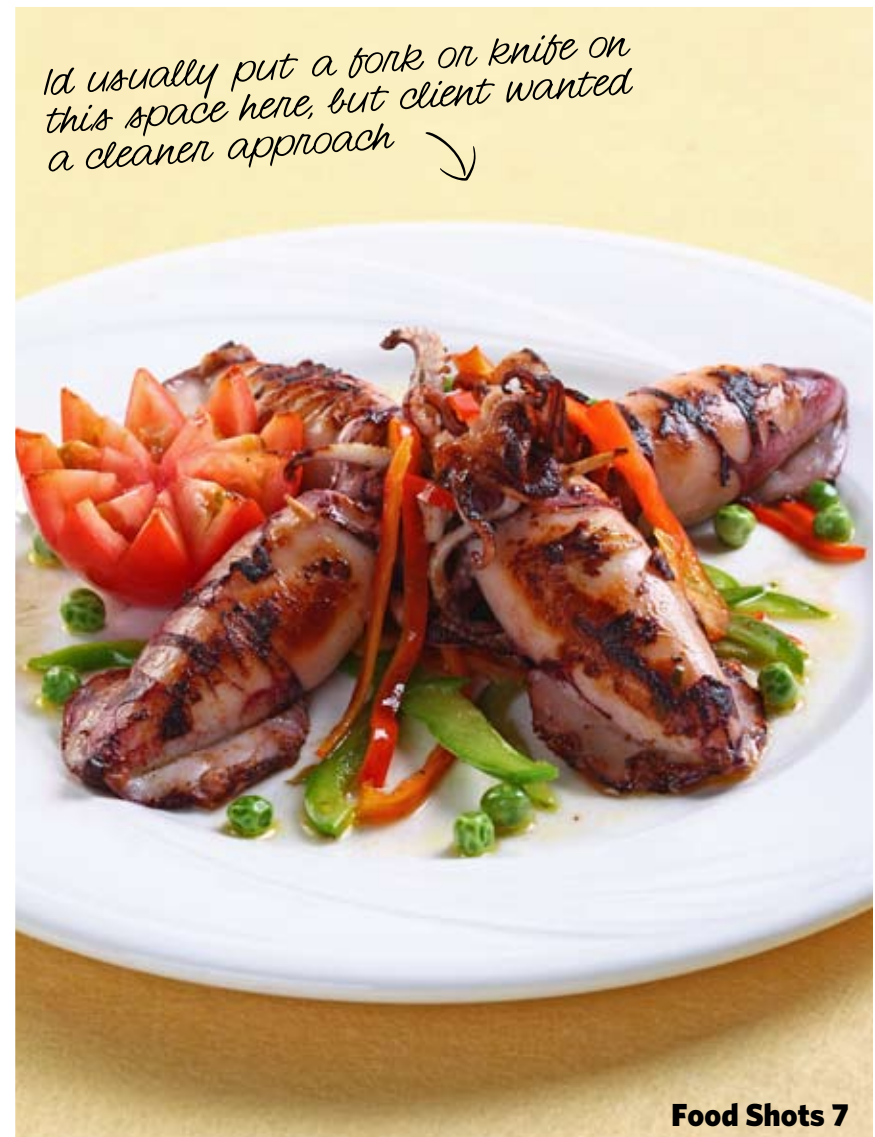
Food Shots 5



lighting for a morning feel



The wooden chopping block, the underlining linen and the pastel felt cloth background are the photographer's own.



I'd usually put a fork or knife on this space here, but client wanted a cleaner approach



While most photographers feel most comfortable shooting with a large light source such as umbrellas and softboxes, I just love the color and texture you get from using the unmodified strobe as the main light. And its becoming the vogue thing in food photography too. Just check out the latest food magazines and cookbooks.



Coffeebreak

This project was for Coffebreak, an up and coming coffee place from Iloilo that's making inroads in coffee-lovin' Manila.



the mandatory coffee beans on the cupped hands shot

Background and glow created in Photoshop



Just add text and voila, you have a poster!



Summer Coolers



Sometimes you come to a shoot with nary an idea of what you will be shooting that day. This set of images is from such a day. Good thing I have my luggage full of painted surfaces, linen and placemats of different colors and materials to give variety to these drinks situations used for a summer promo brochure. I used a hard mainlight from behind to create interesting shadows that evoke that hot summer feel.



plastic wheat grass



On hindsight I could have added straws on these drinks.



Oil on the hot coals creates fire and made this wonderful shot.

Grill Time

This was my first time to shoot food on a real hot grill. Balancing strobe lights with the natural fire and hot embers was the tricky part. You'll burn your face but the final image is your sweet reward.

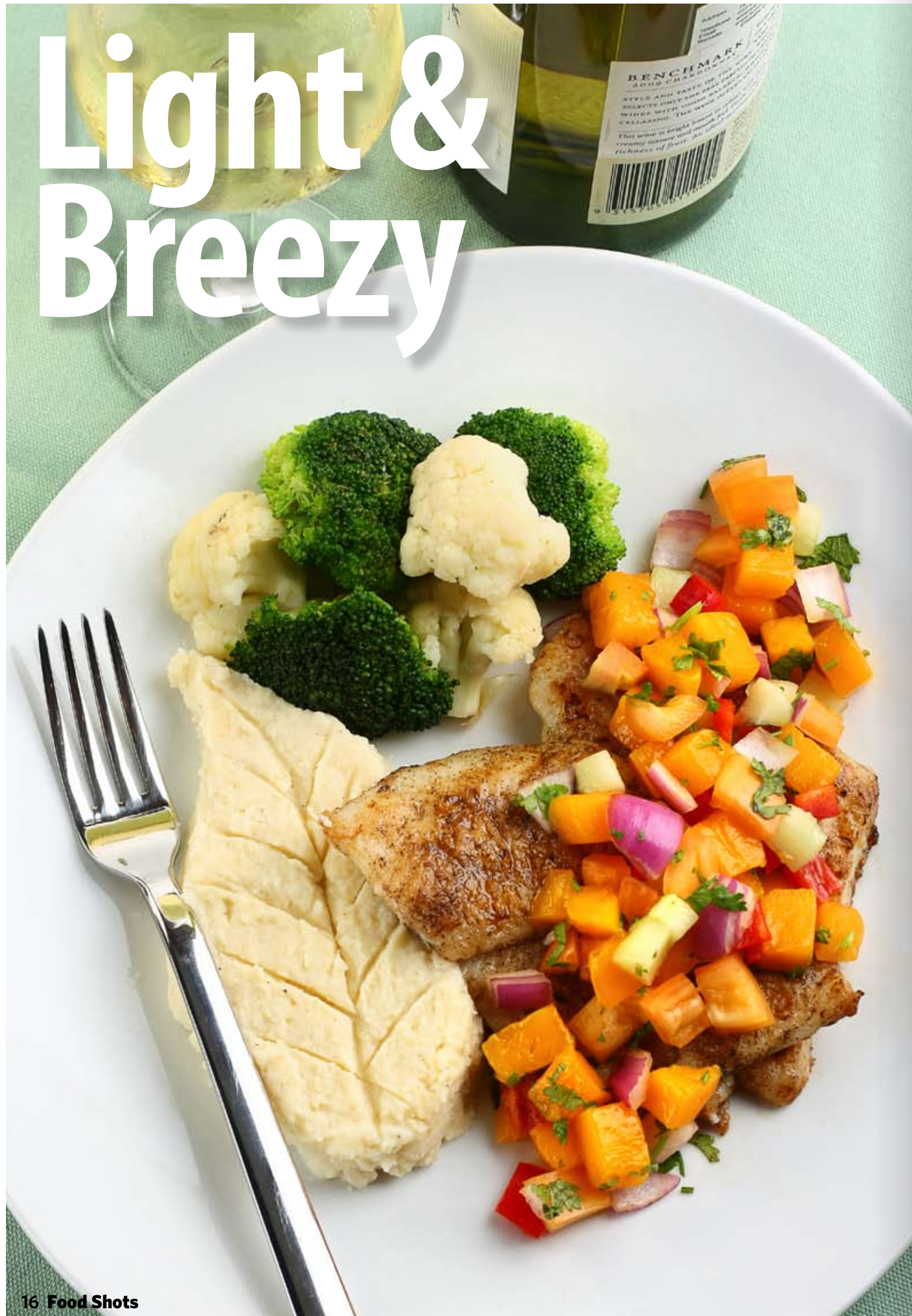


Shot on location inside the hotel board room. good thing I brought my black velvet cloth.



it's the same slab of beef, sliced this time
↓

Light & Breezy



The project description asked for bright and cheery images of their dishes to be used in their room service menu. Most of the dishes were shot on a white linen with pastel colored napkins as accent, and then later on colored linens or felt cloth as options.

The resulting menu layout can be seen on the following spread. I'm a fan minimalist styling and just letting the dish stand out minus the often distracting prop elements.



Menu Layouts

I was first a graphic designer before I became a photographer. I think that my being a designer/photographer brings a definite advantage in the way that I frame my subjects as I see how they would best be used in various layouts and print applications. Working on this menu project was a real treat for me as i got to do both things I love: shooting and designing with my favorite subject: food.



Sopa de Mariscos, P\$50.00

Calamari Salad, P\$50.00

appetizers & soups

Gambas Al Ajillo
Shrimp in Garlic Sauce P\$30

Famous Bistro's Buffalo Chicken Wings
Breaded chicken wings, deep fried and then tossed in our zesty buffalo sauce P\$20



Vegan Wrap
Portobello mushrooms, red bell pepper, cucumber, zucchini, garlic mashed potato, tomatoes and basil rolled in soft flour tortillas P\$20

Cajun Chicken & Mango Tortilla Wraps
Soft flour tortilla filled with grilled Cajun chicken, mango and cheddar cheese garnished with lettuce and scallions, served with salsa and sour cream on the side P\$20

Fruit Cocktail Amaretto
Fruit cocktail with almond-flavored liqueur P\$20

Singaporean Noodles (Beef/Pork/Chicken)
Asian flat noodles, carrots and cabbage and sliced egg P\$20

Broccoli & Cheese
Rich and creamy fresh broccoli puree & crumbled feta cheese P\$20

Sopa de Mariscos
A savory seafood stew P\$50

salads

Classic Caesar Salad
Romaine spears, traditional dressing, fresh parmesan and warm garlic croutons P\$20

Orchard Garden Salad
Delicate field greens with sun-dried prunes, peaches, cheddar cheese and cashew nuts in Zinfandel Vinaigrette P\$20

Calamari Salad
Mixed greens, cucumber, sliced cherry tomatoes, crispy calamari & onion rings in rich citrus-vinaigrette dressing P\$20

Grilled Mahi Mahi Salad
Tropical summer salad. Romaine, papaya, melon, cucumber, cilantro in sugar cane-chili vinaigrette P\$20



Grilled Mahi Mahi Salad



Orchard Garden Salad



Chicken in a Basket



Grilled Cream Dory

signature specialties

Fillet Mignon
Grilled tenderloin steak in bacon wraps topped with red wine gravy sauce, served with buttered vegetables and fried rice or mashed potato P\$20

Chicken Parmigiana
Breaded chicken fillet finished with Italian tomato-herbed sauce and topped-off with mozzarella cheese served with herbed pasta P\$20

Chicken in a Basket (half/quarter)
Deep Fried Chicken served with French fries or onion rings. Gravy on the side P\$20



Melanzane al Forno

Fancy Chicken
Pan-seared fillet of Chicken, lightly seasoned and drizzled with Orange and Asparagus sauce and served with Herbed Pasta or mashed Potato P\$20

Manhattan Catch
Breaded fish fillet, grilled shrimps and sautéed clams in white wine finished with marinara sauce. Served with rice and garnished with buttered vegetables P\$20

Grilled Cream Dory
Enhanced with lemon pepper seasoning atop a chunky mango relish P\$20

Melanzane al Forno (Vegetarian Entrée)
Sliced eggplant, mozzarella cheese and tomatoes baked with fresh basil, roasted garlic, parmesan and bread crumb assortments P\$20



Vegan Sandwich



Chicken in a Basket

asian dishes

Korean Beef Stew
Stewed marinated beef served over rice bowl sprinkled with sesame seeds. Kimchi on the side.

Adobo (Chicken/Pork)
A classic Filipino stew in soy-vinegar sauce seasoned with local herbs & spices. Served with pickled papaya and steamed rice or garlic rice

Chicken/Fish in Tomato-Curry
Grilled then simmered with coconut milk and tasty curry-tomato sauce served with rice and steamed vegetables

Curry (Chicken/Vegetables)
A common Punjabi cuisine dish popular in Asia. Simmered meat and vegetables in coconut milk seasoned with Ghee powder.

Shrimp Tempura
Delicately marinated tiger prawns in a special batter mix. Deep fried and served with pohan rice



Hongkong Style Pan fried Noodles
A tangy sauce with mixed seafood and vegetables over pan fried custom noodles

Shanghai Chicken
A tasty braised chicken in shanghai sauce

Curry (Chicken/Vegetables)

desserts

Crème Brûlée
Special creamy flan. An indulgence P\$20

Mango Jubilee
Refreshing vanilla ice cream topped with flambéed mango P\$20

Banana Split
Vanilla, strawberry and chocolate ice cream with bananas topped with cashew nuts & whipped cream P\$20

Turrón del Cielo/ala mode
Banana fritters with flavorful and heavenly fill



Banana Split



always available accompaniments

Steamed Vegetables
Omelette (Egg-white omelette, French omelette)
French fries
Onion Rings
Cashew Nuts
Muffins
Fresh Fruit Platter

beverages

Soda in can (Coca-cola products)
Fruit Juice & Iced tea
Fresh Fruit shakes (available fruits in season)
Milk shakes
Smoothies (available fruits in season)
Brewed Coffee, Decaf, assorted Teas,
Iced Coffee
Local beers in bottle/in can



Coffee Set

These images were shot for a hotel's new coffee offerings. There is not much in the way of presentation and food styling. Mostly shot them on a white background deliberately made gray as they would be mostly cut out of their background for dropping into a composite layout such as the one on this page. Would have been nice if I could drink coffee. My ulcer won't have it.



Pasta!

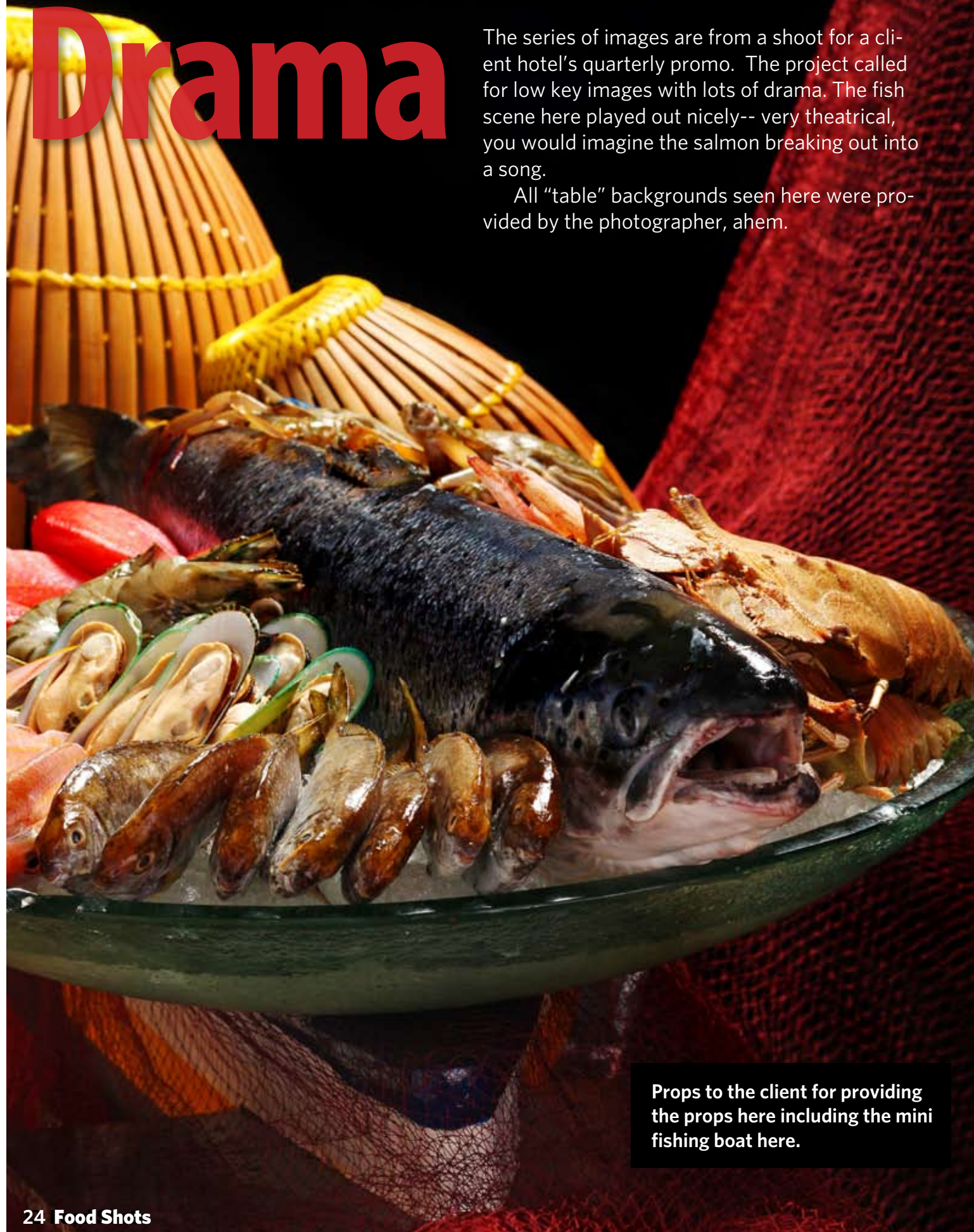
As with most of my other shots in this portfolio, this shoot was done on the fly with no planning whatsoever. They just kept making the pasta and I just kept grabbing any props we could use as background just to make things interesting. Good thing i brought along my luggage full of placemats, napkins, linens to add color and variety to the impromptu layouts. It worked pretty well I would say.



Kitchen Scene Drama

The series of images are from a shoot for a client hotel's quarterly promo. The project called for low key images with lots of drama. The fish scene here played out nicely-- very theatrical, you would imagine the salmon breaking out into a song.

All "table" backgrounds seen here were provided by the photographer, ahem.



Props to the client for providing the props here including the mini fishing boat here.



For their "street food" promo. They didn't have time to make them so these were actually bought from the streets.







Just the Food



Sometimes the client just wants a clean, bright and no props layout, and i'm game for that too. You just focus on the lighting and getting the focus right to bring out the colors and textures of the dish. No frills. Just the food.



Steakout!



Took these images for a soon to open cheesesteak sandwich restaurant. They were all sloppily prepared which was just how the client wants them. Just good old comfort food that's not pretending to be anything more than what it is - a sandwich. A great tasting and satisfying meal that is eaten with your hands and making a mess is par for the course.



Less is more.

Just food and not much else. Enough said.



Exploded view of the
burger put together
in Photoshop.



Yet another burger place!

It's the lechon manok business syndrome reincarnated in the lowly burger. Everyone's claiming their steak in the evolving burger market, my friends included, which was how I landed this shoot for their restaurant in Tagaytay.

As in most of my budget-constrained shoots, my friends couldn't afford to hire a food stylist, so it was just us three or four guys playing around with meat, veggies and buns.

It was anything goes with this shoot, having no pegs or idea how the images will be used in the menu so we had fun trying different lighting and angles and even made an exploded view of the burger ingredients.



Japanese Express

The following images are from an editorial shoot for the Manila Bulletin featuring a new Japanese cafe called Yumamira Cafe along Connecticut in Greenhills.

As we were short on time i decided to shoot the food items using available light right outside the restaurant. Good thing the sun was out and the building's balcony has a skylight smoked roofing which made the light softer not unlike a studio softbox. Just one color balance adjustment and we're off shooting in rapid succession. The best part of the shoot was i got to eat all of the food right after... and they're delicious.



Christmas Mish-Mash

This set of images were made for a clients Christmas newsletter promoting various hotel activities and offerings. Most of the shots here are very generic, stuff you'd expect to find in stock photo agencies. I particularly enjoyed this session as for once, I was able to work with a food stylist and a prop stylist who brought all these fancy christmas adornments. So all i had to do was move things around for the camera and concentrate on lighting them. The stylsits appreciated the fact that I was transmitting images wirelessly to my ipad so they get instant review of the shot on a much bigger screen. If only i could calibrate the ipad's colors to specs, then the system would be perfect. Still, its better than the small, overly bright lcd of the 5d, and it makes quite an impression with the client.





Sunny Day

These are images shot for a hotel's outdoor pool menu. As such, I've tried to add a sunny feel to these layouts. First, I used painted planks of wood layed side by side to simulate an outdoor table perhaps. Painted these myself, a day before the shoot. To give it a sun bathed look, I used a strobe with standard reflector, practically a hard light, as the main light which casted long defined shadows which are tempered by fill lights from softboxes. Love the shadows and texture than can only be achieved from using a hard light. Thanks, Michael Ray! Extra points for using leafy vegetables as a gobo to add a dappled look to some shots.



A shawarma picnic.
Deliberately used
blue accents to jive
with the pool themed
layout of menu that I
also designed.





The shadows deliberately added to give the scene like a sunny afternoon feel.



Wood panels (palo china) salvaged from crates, whitewashed.



Just lemons sliced and added to the glass makes a big difference.

