

# A feast for the eyes



Tuck into these winning images from this year's **Pink Lady Food Photographer of the Year**, along with some tips for success

The Pink Lady Food Photographer of the Year competition has become one of the biggest and most prestigious photography competitions in the UK since its inception five years ago, and the results of the 2017 competition have just been announced. This year's

competition was the biggest ever, attracting more than 8,000 entries from all over the world. As with previous years, AP is proud to be the official media partner, and both Editor Nigel Atherton and Deputy Editor Geoff Harris were honoured to be part of the distinguished judging panels. If you think food

photography is just about carefully lit and perfectly styled food portraits, you are in for a surprise, as the genre is now very diverse and inclusive. Read on to learn all about this year's still-photography winners, along with some exclusive tips from the winners of three very different categories.



For full details of all the 2017 category winners and highly commended/commended entries, see [www.pinkladyfoodphotographeroftheyear.com](http://www.pinkladyfoodphotographeroftheyear.com)



Overall winner **Food for God**  
**Shoeb Faruquee**  
Bangladesh  
Nikon D800, 14-24mm lens, 1/30sec at f/2.8, ISO 800

The overall winner of Pink Lady Food Photographer of the Year 2017 is this perfectly timed and beautifully framed image, which captures the important role food has always played in sacred ceremony. 'This image shows a Brahman cook preparing religious food for devotees of the Baba Lokenath sect – he believes

he is preparing food for God,' Shoeb explains. 'I took the image at Rajapur Lokenath Dham Chittagong, a prayer and worship centre in Bangladesh. The ceremony starts in the evening and continues for two hours. The devotees fast for 24hrs during this worship and break their fast after the prayer. The light comes from ghee lights, burned in the name of Baba Lokenath, and I tried to capture the spiritual concentration of the devotees at prayer. I needed a relatively high ISO and a wide aperture to make the most of the ambient light.' Shoeb also won the Food for Celebration category, sponsored by Tattinger Champagne.



Marks & Spencer Food Portraiture winner: 'Salad Plate' by Darren Hickson (UK)  
Mamiya 645, 80mm lens, 1/50sec at f/1.4, ISO 50

## Shooting fantastic 'food porn'



THINK food photography is fussy and complicated? Darren Hickson, winner of the Marks & Spencer Food Portraiture award begs to differ. He won his category with a

home-taken image, featuring nothing more elaborate than a nicely styled bowl of salad, a paint-stained old table and window light. 'This was one of a group of images for some promotional stuff my company was doing for the 'Food Porn' awards, a celebration of great-looking food,' Darren explains. 'I recently bought a new house and noticed there was beautiful afternoon light in one particular room, so I decided to bring my gear home that day instead of shooting in the studio. The stylist came along too. This was one of the last shots of the day, taken about half three to four as the sun was going down, and we decided to experiment with the table as it complemented the colours of the salad. I used a Mamiya 645 DF medium format camera, a 50Mb Leaf back and an 80mm lens. North-facing windows are great for food as the light is quite soft, but also revealing, so I like to make the most of it when I can. I do use flash too, but I try to make do with just one light (there is just one sun, remember), and avoid the ambient lighting in restaurants. A good food stylist is worth their weight in gold, too. While it may seem extra expense, a skilled stylist can make a huge difference.'



**Cream of the Crop  
Smoked Mackerel  
Wesley Dombrecht**  
Belgium  
Nikon D7000, 1/200sec at f/5.6, ISO 100, no flash

As well as the elegant composition with the subject off-centre, the colours and tones of the background are very sympathetic. A timely reminder that you don't need complicated or expensive dishes to succeed.

**Food Sn-apping (in aid of Action Against Hunger)  
Waiting for Stew  
Laura Cook**  
UK  
iPhone, 2448 x 2448 JPEG image

It's not about the gear, as this evocative image, taken with an iPhone, shows. The food looks appetising but the bare, calloused feet speak volumes about the tough lives of those about to eat it.



**Food in the Field:  
'Swiss Chard Forest', Sally Ann Stone (UK)**  
Canon EOS 7D, 24-105mm lens, 1/160 sec, f/8, ISO 320



**The Philip Harben Award for Food in Action:  
'The Grandmother',  
Francesca Brambilla and Serena Serrani (Italy)**  
Canon EOS 5D, 24-70mm lens, 1/100 sec, f/3.5, ISO 800

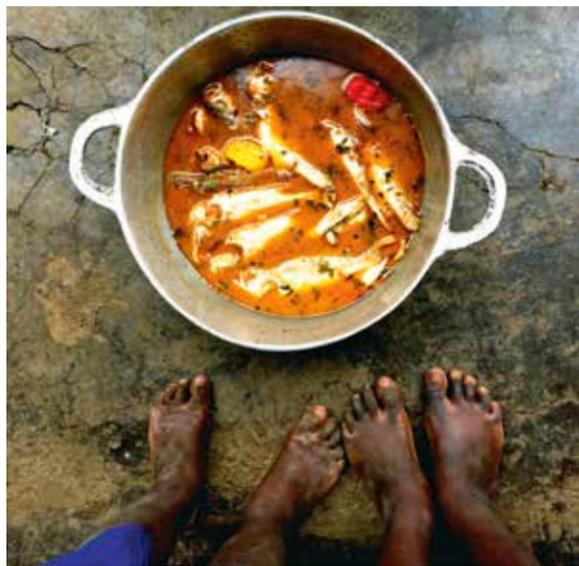


**Pink Lady Apple a Day:  
'Keeps the Doctor Away', Richard Perry (UK)**  
Canon EOS 6D, 17-40mm lens, 1/500 sec, f/5, ISO 640



**Production Paradise Food off the Press  
Vegetables  
Jonathan Gregson**  
UK  
Hasselblad HD40-50, HC80 lens, 2.5sec at f/16, ISO 100

Colour makes a big difference to food photography but it should never be garish, oversaturated or artificial-looking. Jonathan's image is immediately eye-catching and tastefully processed, as well as being superbly composed.



**Partridges Food for Sale  
Villefranche Market  
Azalea Dalton**  
UK  
Fujifilm FinePix S5000, 1/390sec at f/4, ISO 160

There is a close relationship between food and travel photography, and food is a great subject if you are struggling for inspiration – it says a lot about the culture. By deciding to capture this food market from a church tower, Azalea has found a fresh angle on a commonly shot subject. The colour and graphic shapes leap out, too.

**Politics of Food  
Hunters and Kill  
Tom Parker**  
UK  
Canon EOS 5D Mark III, 24-70mm lens, 1/200sec at f/4, ISO 500

Whatever you feel about hunting, there is no doubt that this is a confidently taken image which reflects the personalities of those involved. It reveals classic portrait technique, with an evocative but non-distracting background and rich, but not artificial-looking colours. This image sparks debate and asks questions of the viewer.



**Startisans Food in the Street:  
'Crouch End', Robin Stewart (UK)**  
Panasonic DMC-LX100, 1/50sec at f/5.6, ISO 400



**Errazuriz Wine Photographer of the Year  
Overall Winner 2017:  
The Rosé Wine Tank,  
Patrick Desgraupes (France)**  
EXIF data not available



**Food Bloggers (supported by Aspire):  
'Caramel!', Hein van Tonder (South Africa)**  
Nikon D750, 105mm lens, 1/160 sec at f/4.5, ISO 500

## Sticky situations



SALADS are one thing, but how do you get effective shots of hot food, or volatile and even potentially dangerous liquids? Hein van Tonder, winner of the Food Bloggers category, explains how he captured his winning shot of caramel. 'I took this image for my blog entirely in natural light, using a Nikon D750 SLR and 105mm macro lens (1/60, f/4.5, ISO 500). The caramel had to be hot so that it was the right consistency, and I think the conversation with my assistant went something like this: "It's burning my fingers!..." "I don't care, just pour!" I knew I wanted the caramel to "pop", so I kept the styling very clean and the colours dark and muted. I didn't expect the caramel to make such a perfect pool and I love the ripples and the highlights. Remember, when it comes to all photography, not just food photography, it's light first and composition second. It's only through constantly working at your photography that you get to learn how to read light and how to manipulate it. And once you have that covered, then go ahead and break the rules. Don't get caught up in thinking that you need to use a lot of expensive camera gear and lighting, either. You can be an amazing food photographer just using a 50mm lens. You don't need to spend the earth.'



**World Food Programme Food for Life: 'Collecting Egg Rations, Sahrawi Refugee Camp', Emma Brown (UK) Canon EOS 5D Mark III, 24-105mm lens, 1/500sec at f/4, ISO 320**

## People and food



AS THE winners of this year's Pink Lady Food Photographer of the Year competition reveal, there is much more to successful food photography than just

close-ups of mouth-watering, perfectly styled dishes. One of the best food portraits in the 2017 competition was taken by Emma Brown. 'I took the image of the two women with eggs whilst on assignment with Olive Branch Arts in the Sahrawi refugee camps near Tindouf in south-west Algeria. I had asked our translator, Zorgan, if I could photograph the distribution and collection of rations in the camps, which is mainly managed by the women. So we went to the Sahrawi Red Crescent distribution centre to find a huge crowd of women organising and receiving eggs. The Sahrawi community is a matriarchal one where women are held in high esteem (in marked contrast to Western preconceptions of Arab Muslim society)... Zorgan suggested I'd be best off without him so I headed into the crowd on my own and, using my rudimentary Hassania camera said hello and asked if I could take photographs. I spent the next hour photographing women of all ages coming and going. The two young women in this photograph were just about to leave when I asked to make a picture with them. I used a Canon 5D Mark III with a 24-105mm L series lens (1/500, f/4, ISO 320). For this kind of food portrait, I'd recommend shooting with a very shallow depth of field to isolate the subjects from the background – this is particularly useful in a busy place. Carefully check your viewfinder before taking the shot to make sure there's nothing in there that you don't want. I don't like to crop my photographs too much; something distracting in the background would make me reject a picture in the edit.'



### Food for the Family Breaktime

**Leonardo Salomão Brazil**  
Canon EOS 6D, 17-40mm lens, 1/500sec at f/5, ISO 640

Another good example of how food-related subjects can yield memorable travel and documentary images. The image is very evocative and full of energy, while the family are skilfully placed in the frame. By choosing a relatively fast shutter speed and higher ISO, Leonardo has also kept his subjects sharp. A great example of the genre.

### InterContinental London Park Lane Food at the Table

### Mac & Cheese Jean Cazals uk

Canon EOS 5D Mark II, TS-E90 lens, 1/12sec at f/7.1, ISO 200

Jean is a very experienced food photographer and while he chose to shoot in an expensive hotel restaurant, you don't need to be a Michelin-starred chef to cook tasty-looking macaroni cheese. The dish is beautifully lit by natural light and the use of a tilt and shift lens ensures straight edges and correct perspectives.



**Marks & Spencer Food Adventures: 'Oua, Look at This One!', Kyriacos Arkatites (Cyprus)**  
Canon EOS 20D, 18-50mm lens, 1/160sec at f/6.3, ISO 800



**Bring Home the Harvest: 'Pheasants at Sunset', Matthew Thomas (UK)**  
Sony A7R Mark II, 24-70mm lens, 1/320sec at f/5.6, ISO 250