



Easy tips to make your competition entry stand out

Before your guests take their first bite, you want their tastebuds to be tingling in anticipation of the meal in front of them. While the aroma will do much of the work in person, a little extra garnish can make your recipe photos stand out to voters.

Are you thinking of entering our [50 Best Home Cooks competition](#)? While your friends and family can vote for your recipe to help your chances of winning, securing public support can be the difference that helps you win. With these tips your recipe photo will stand out from the crowd and attract more votes – especially when paired with [Sneh Roy's food photography advice](#).

Here are 6 ways to transform your favourite recipes to help improve your chances of winning a spot in our top 50:

Sophisticated saucing

When we're creating recipes for ourselves to enjoy we tend to make more sauce than is needed and then smother our plate so that nothing goes to waste. If you're wanting to impress your guests and give your meals a touch of sophistication, then sometimes the sauce makes all the difference.

The key? Don't pour straight from your container, rather use a spoon to add smaller amounts on top of your foods or arrange it artfully on the side like your favourite restaurants. If it tastes too good to waste, you can keep a small jug of it on the table so your guests can add more if they want it.

Play with your plates

Do you use the same big white dinner plates for everything? It might be time to shake up your serving repertoire. Whether you're making a feast across multiple courses (with smaller portions per person) or a buffest style dinner, smaller plates can help your meals to look more impressive without being overwhelming.

But don't stop there. Try plates of a contrasting colour to really help your food stand out. Sometimes a charcoal plate against a rustic pasta is enough to make your guests eyes pop out in awe.

Mix textures

Meat and three veg has been a staple of the Australian diet for decades, but these days we like to think of that as more of a base. Don't be afraid to add some crunch and colour with toasted nuts, grains and even dried fruits. Not only will it add some interest as you eat, but it helps the plate to look more styled.

Use fresh herbs

Perhaps the biggest thing that differentiates our home cooking from restaurants is their use of fresh herbs. It can be as simple as a sprig of parsley as a garnish to help your dish look complete, or a mixture of full and chopped fresh herbs in your salad to add flavour and a pop of colour.

Embrace negative space

Don't think that you need to fill your entire plate to make your meal look appetising to your guests. In fact make like some of the biggest restaurants in the world and embrace negative space on your plates. If you're serving a salmon fillet, sit it to one side and use your complimentary ingredients sparingly. You'll be surprised by how much extra food we're eating by feeling as though we need to eat everything.

Rethink the edible

Step outside of your comfort zone when it comes to your garnishes and ingredients. Edible flowers can add beautiful colours to cakes and salads which will elevate your recipes to look like something incredible – even if you just threw it together in a few minutes. You can even get edible gold leaf that can be added sparingly to desserts for some extra shimmer.