

THE *Art* OF



FOOD PHOTOGRAPHY

August 2025

FLOW

01

STYLES



02

BACKGROUNDS

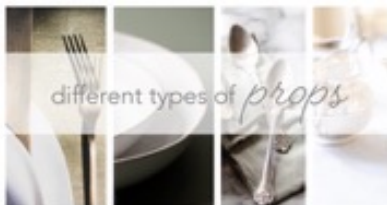


COMPOSITION



03

PROPS



04

05

STORY TELLING



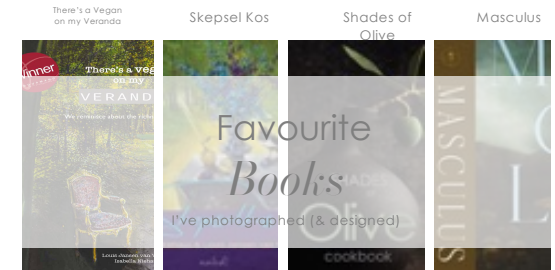
TROUBLE SHOOTING



06

07

MY FAVOURITE BOOKS & CLIENTS



INSPIRATION

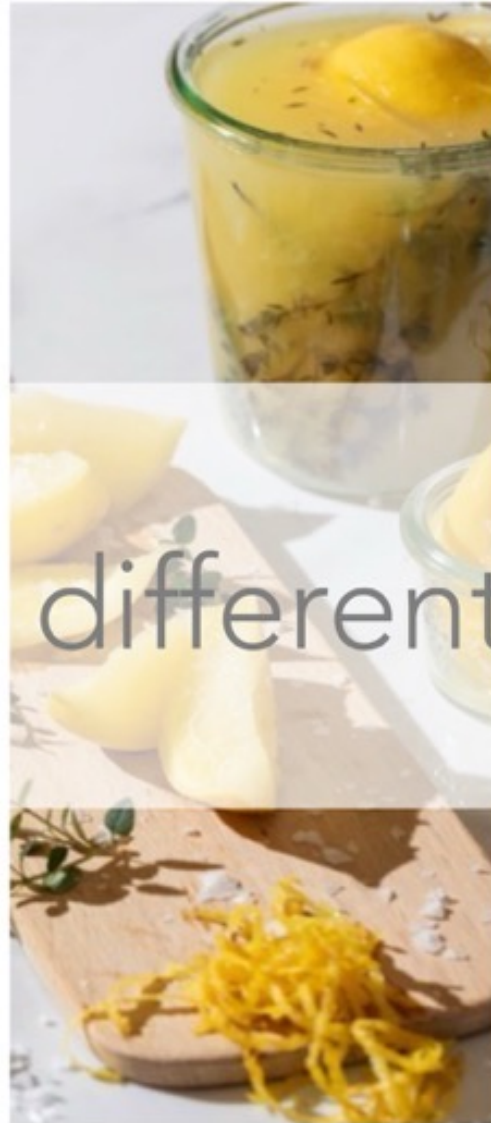


08

Light & Airy



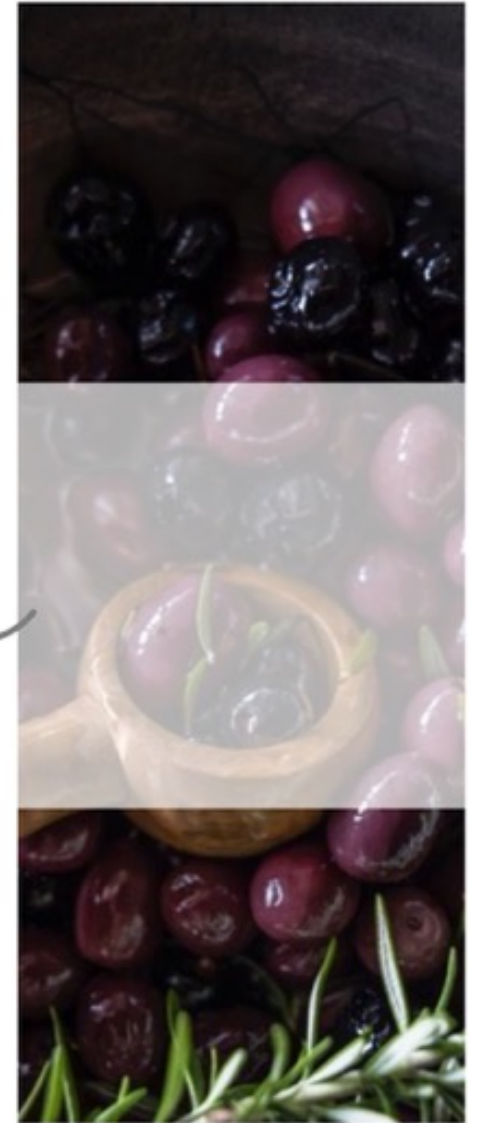
Dramatic Bright



Bright & Moody



Dark & Moody



4 different *styles*

Light & Airy



- Shallow depth of field – f2.8
- Soft light to avoid harsh shadows
- Glass or light coloured props work well
- Light backgrounds
- Food needs to have colour

Light & Airy





Dramatic & Bright

- beautiful dance between light and shadows
- hard studio light positioned to the left
- no modification on the light
- shadows add drama to the image
- shot at 45 degrees on a marble tile bought at CTM

Dramatic & Bright







Bright & Moody

Dark & Moody



Dark & Moody



Old Baking
Trays



Stairs



Floors



Bokeh



4 different *backgrounds*



Old Baking Trays

The background in this image is made up of 2 old baking trays perfectly blended together:

- 1 standing at the back

- 1 lying flat supporting the biscuits

They add texture and visual interest to food images.

I never go to a shoot without a few old backing trays – I have dozens ;-)





- shot on a stair case
- natural light coming in from a large window at the top of the stair case
- shot at 45 degrees using the vertical face of the stairs as a back drop
- lots of harmony and visual tension in both these images
- can you point them out ?

- Same head of garlic
- Same stairs
- Same light
- Different angle
- Different styling
- Warm colour peaking through



Cement Floor



This image was taken on a cement floor in the kitchen of a coffee shop near the back door

I put the plate and props straight down on the floor and stood over the scene with my camera in hand and took the shot

The cement floor really adds a beautiful texture and subtle interest to the image

I loved this so much, I took a whole series of images on this cement floor

Cement Floor



Bokeh created by a garden through a small window



- Captured in a very small room with only a little window that I used as back lighting
- Shallow depths of field
- Greenery in the garden provided beautiful bokeh which forms the background in this image



Bokeh created by light filtering through trees

Bokeh in a kitchen



beautiful bokeh
when shooting at
90 degrees
whilst plating in a
kitchen

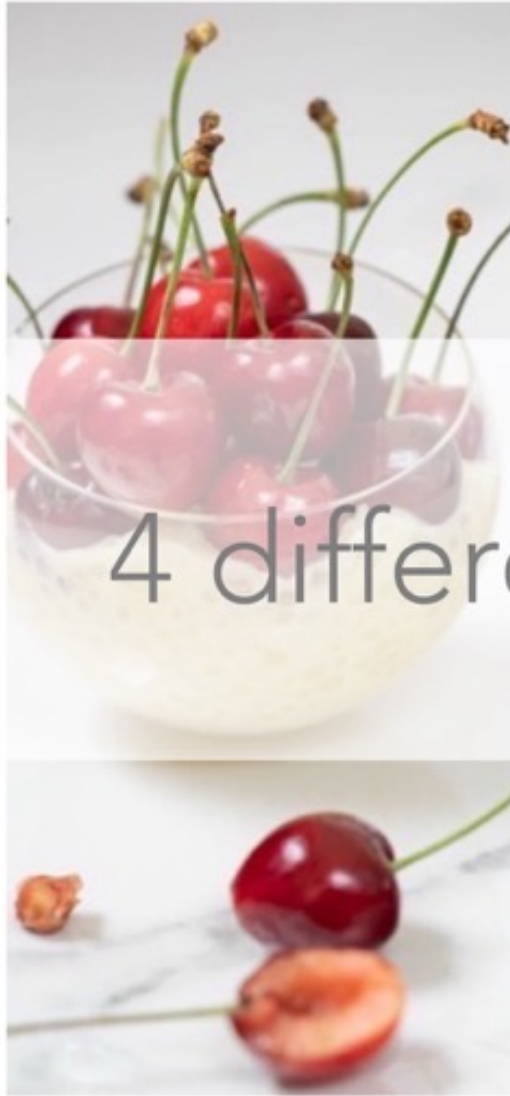
Hands



Hands



Golden Spiral



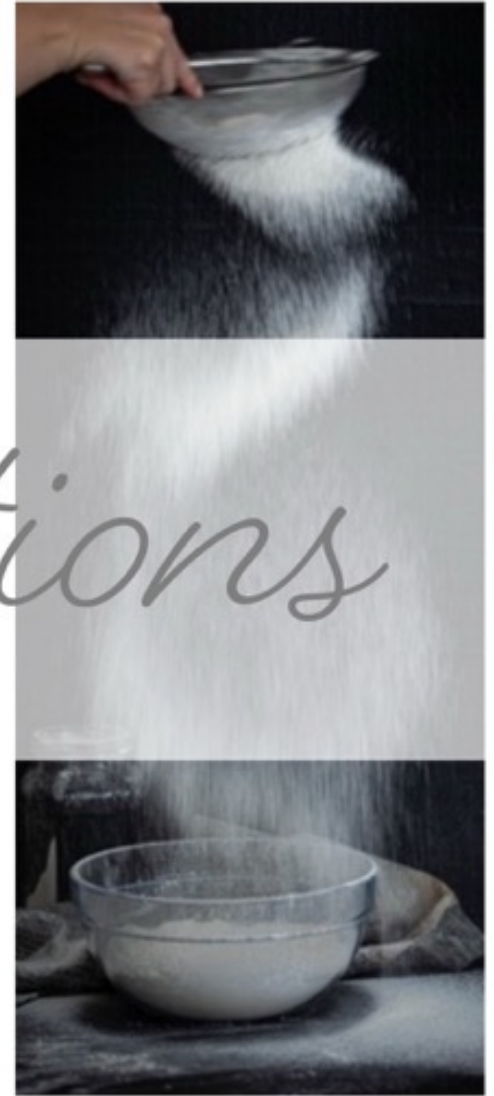
Rule of 3rds



Shapes & Patterns



S Curve



4 different *compositions*



Composition is based on the golden spiral = harmony

Many round shapes all creating harmony cherries / glass / cherry pips / sago beads visible

Vertical lines created by the cherry stalks and spoon creates visual interest





- 2 strongly recognizable shapes at play here, all in a diagonal line
- the cheese cake, raspberries and bowl are all round
- the strawberries and slice of cake are triangular
- the colour of the fruits stand out nicely on the bland cheese cake
- the little flowers strewn about add visual interest
- the slice of cake disrupts the harmony adding to the visual interest

Interplay of shapes between
your food and your props

- the round shape of the two layered plates are repeated in the shape of the two mushrooms on the left
- the crust of the ciabatta is also a similar shape
- the longer mushrooms and sage leaves are straighter in shape to create the visual interest
- I've placed a piece of linen cloth on a vertical axis to break the circles
- the colours in the food and props are all harmonious, broken by the pop of green and purple from the sage leaf and kalamata olive





- shapes need to be recognizable
- beautiful vertical S Curve is created by the flowing icing sugar stands out against the black background
- the circular shape of the sieve at the top mimics the circular shape of the bowl at the bottom.
- the 3rd circle of the jar in the back ground is at a different height

Textured Linen



Matt Crockery



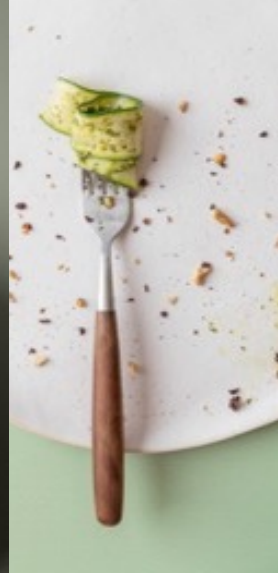
Interesting
Cutlery



Antique items

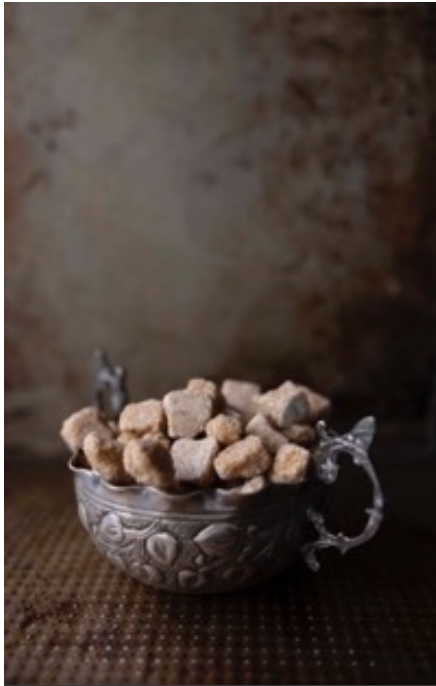


different types of *props*



- Non shiny crockery
- Textured linens
- Interesting cutlery
- Pieces of wood
- Smaller is better





- look for old interesting props
- the more rust and scratches, the more interesting
- different spoons always add interest
- old baking trays



A close-up photograph of a chef's hand holding a white plate. The chef is wearing a white uniform and a gold watch. The plate contains a bowl of red soup with a dollop of white cream and a garnish of red caviar. The text "elements of storytelling" is overlaid on the image in a mix of sans-serif and script fonts.

elements of *storytelling*

A moment of quiet, nourishing solitude

A warm and inviting cup of turmeric latte is positioned on a beautiful old kitchen table with the chair turned out as an invitation to sit.

It is a solitary chair and only one cup indicating that this could be a moment of quiet time by yourself.

There is light coming in from the kitchen door (or it could be a window) casting a beautiful long shadow from the cup and saucer telling the viewer that this is either early morning or late afternoon, a good time to sit and contemplate a whole cup of goodness.

There is a counter behind the chair with a kettle and some tea boxes standing next to it, indicating that this is in a kitchen.

The kitchen mat peeps out on the left hand side of the table with an interesting pattern.

The warm tones of the table, turmeric latte, cup and saucer, chair, curtain and counter are all harmonious.

A very simple image telling a lovely story.





The story of good wholesome home-grown vegetable pie

- wholesome vegetable pie
- old wicker basket
- cloth peeking out the bottom left hand corner
- intentionally placed close to the window with the vegetable garden in the back ground making part of the scene



A human being serving a vibrant plate of beetroot soup with interesting red twine spiritual bands along side his shiny watch.

Which image do
you think tells
more of a story?



Same vibrant plate of beetroot soup
photographed on a cement floor

Sea Salter tells a story of a refreshing bottle of white wine you can enjoy at the seaside

The glass of champagne being poured with a beautiful sea setting at the back. The little drops of champagne are so real cause that is what often happens when pouring champagne. The bubbles are plentiful, vibrant and fresh.



The story of a lekker Fish Braai







trouble - shooting

On location in France shooting for "There's a Vegan on my Verandah"



- beautiful marble table next to a huge window was one of my favourite places to capture images in France
- I found some well used old baking trays with lots of texture and visual interest
- I created my own little studio on the marble table next to the large window with a variety of baking trays



- Potatoes in red wine
- This sequence shows that you don't always get it right the first time
- We tried and tried until we found the perfect background and that made all the difference

- Eventually, we placed the plate on the baking tray with a pattern of little bumps and dots.
- We added two gold spoons, to add a warm tone and one with a texture on it.
- One of the baby potatoes of similar shape were laid carefully in the spoon.
- The spoons add the visual tension that make this image more interesting
- This is the image we went with for the book



Problems with a *Cake*











If all else fails, a

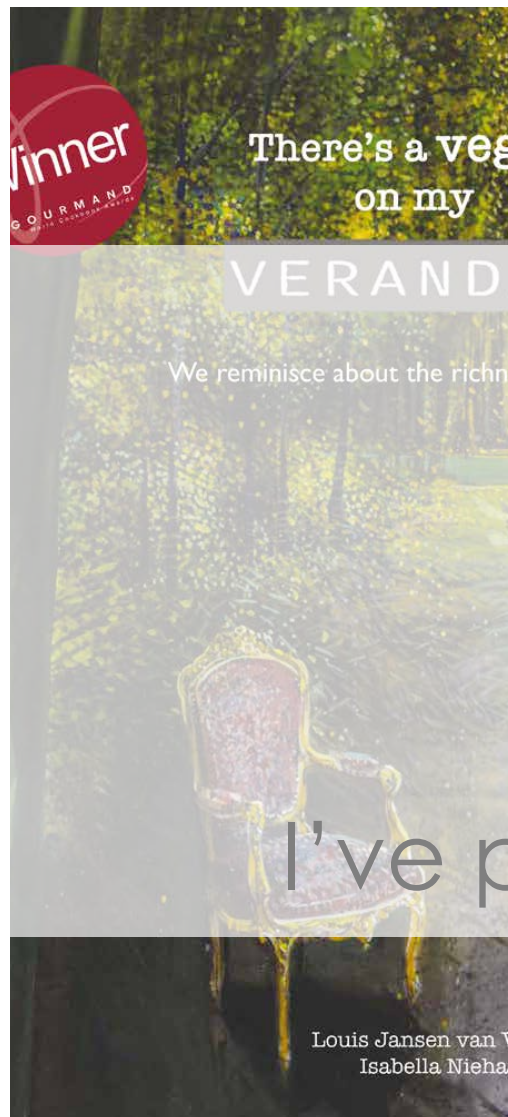
macro

approach never
disappoints





There's a Vegan
on my Veranda



Skepsel Kos



Shades of Olive

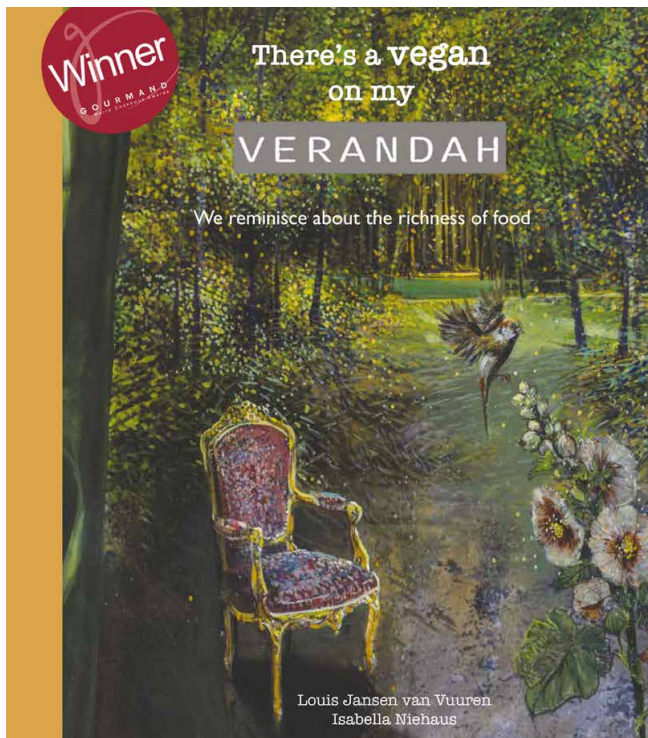


Masculus



Favourite
Books

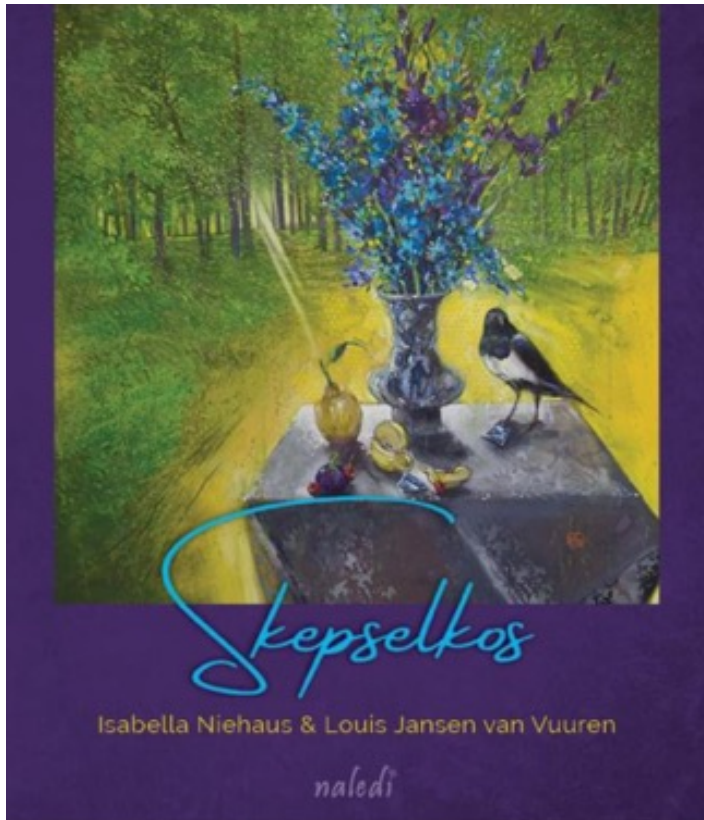
I've photographed (& designed)



In the summer of 2022, There's a Vegan on my Verandah was photographed on location in Lépaud, France at Louis Jansen van Vuuren's beautiful Chateau.

This beautiful cookbook went on to win the prestigious International Gourmand Awards for its category.





Another lifestyle cookbook by Louis Jansen van Vuuren and Isabella Niehaus released in 2024. I was privileged to be part of a team of photographers who came together to capture the images. Here are some of my favourites.





During lock down in 2020, I spent my time creating a cookbook focused on Olives and Olive Oil. I named the book *'Shades of Olive'*, which captures the beautiful hues spanning the lifetime of an Olive tree. My love for olives, cooking and food photography all came together when I self published my first cookbook.



La Perla



Didi from
Masterchef



Pie in the Sky



Savanha Hot
Chillies



A few of my favourite
Clients
I've photographed for

La Perla



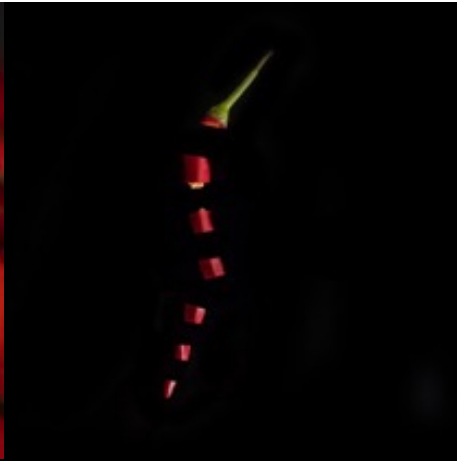


Didi



Pie in the Sky





Savannah Chilli Sauce



A collage of food and drink images featuring blood oranges, a cake, and a cocktail, with a central text overlay. The collage is composed of several rectangular images. In the top left, a hand pours a dark liquid from a glass bottle onto a slice of cake. In the top right, a whole cake is shown on a green plate. In the bottom left, a single slice of blood orange is shown. In the bottom center, a slice of cake is on a green plate next to a glass of blood orange juice. In the bottom right, a glass of blood orange cocktail is shown. The central text is overlaid on a semi-transparent grey rectangle.

inspiration

to get you started

INSPIRATION

*Find a Friend and
Make or Buy a
Cake*



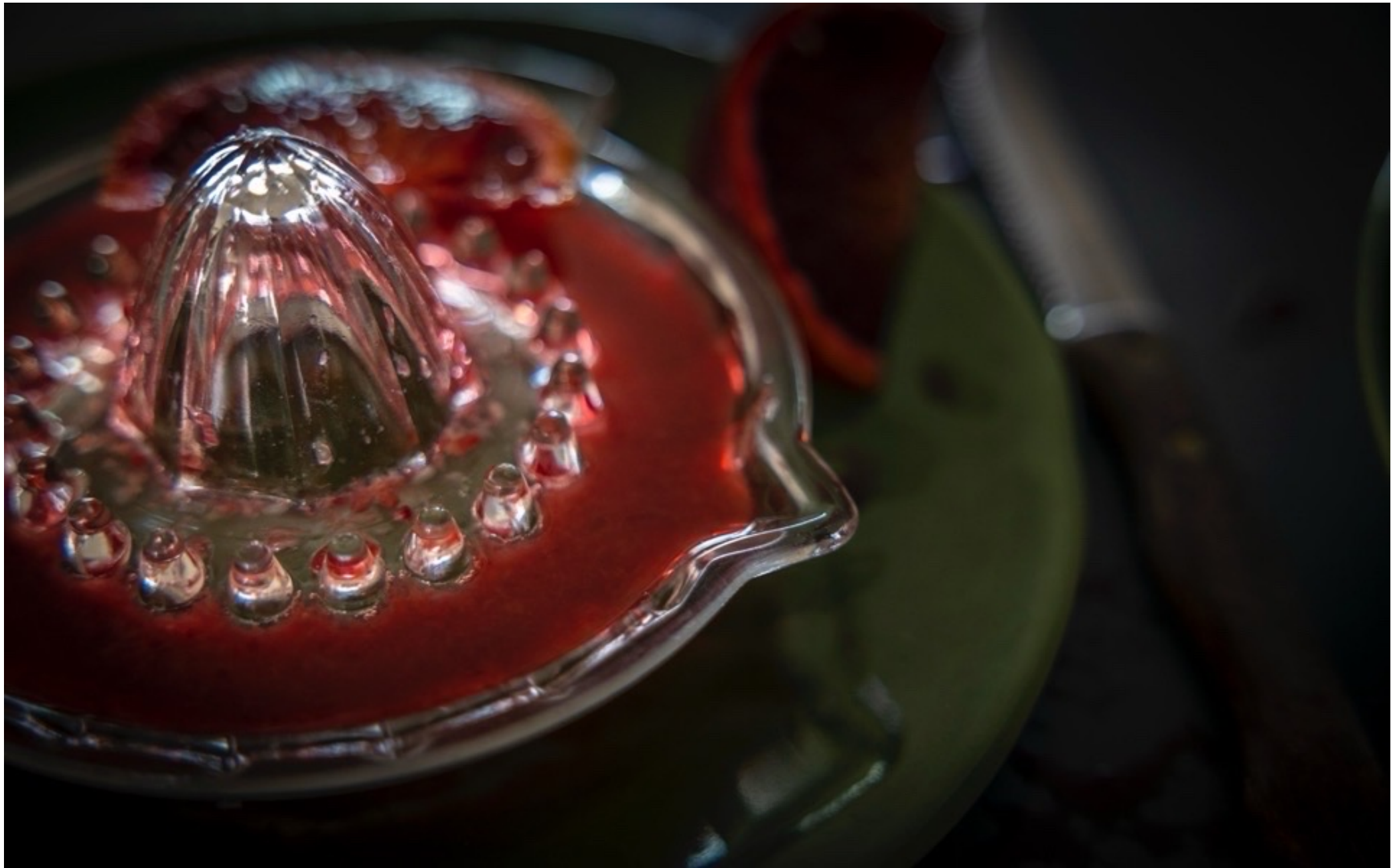














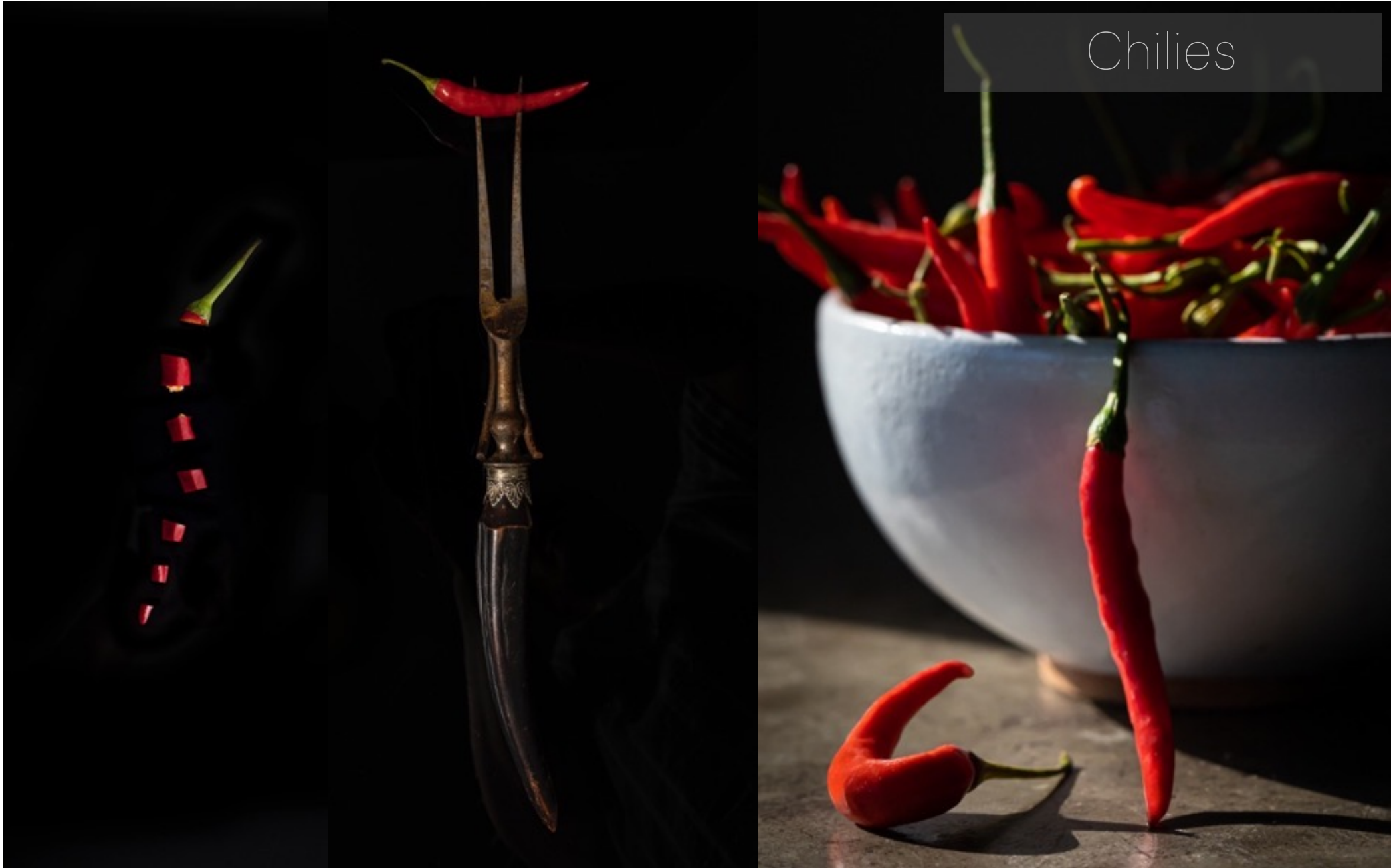


INSPIRATION

Your kitchen

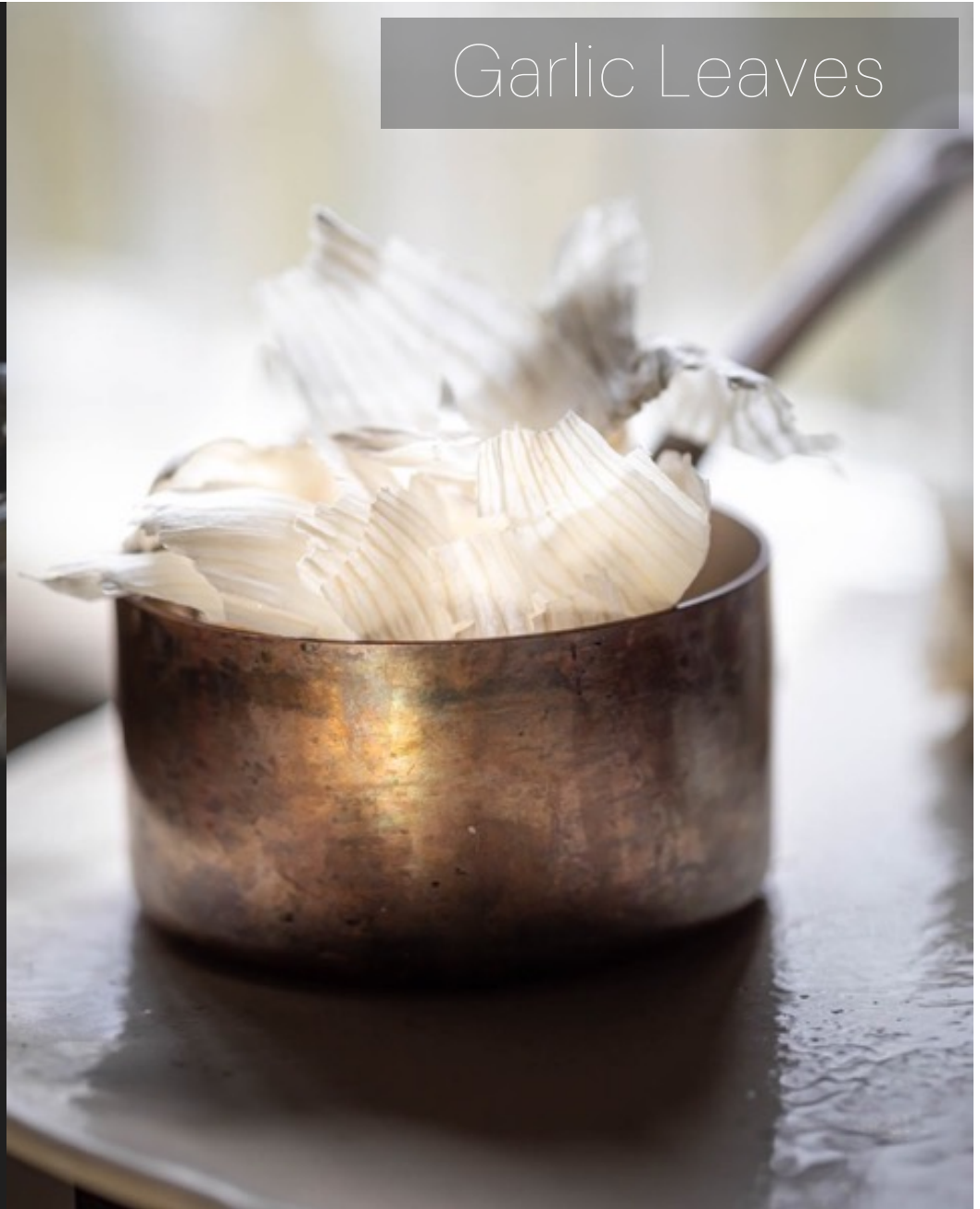
A close-up photograph of several dried star anise pods. The pods are a deep brown color with a slightly glossy texture. They are arranged in a dark, possibly black, bowl or container. The lighting is dramatic, highlighting the intricate, star-like shape of the pods and their individual ridges. The background is dark and out of focus, emphasizing the pods in the foreground.

In pursuit of the
'perfect'
Star Anise



Chilies

Garlic Leaves



Peas





Sliced Apple

Wilted Bok Choi



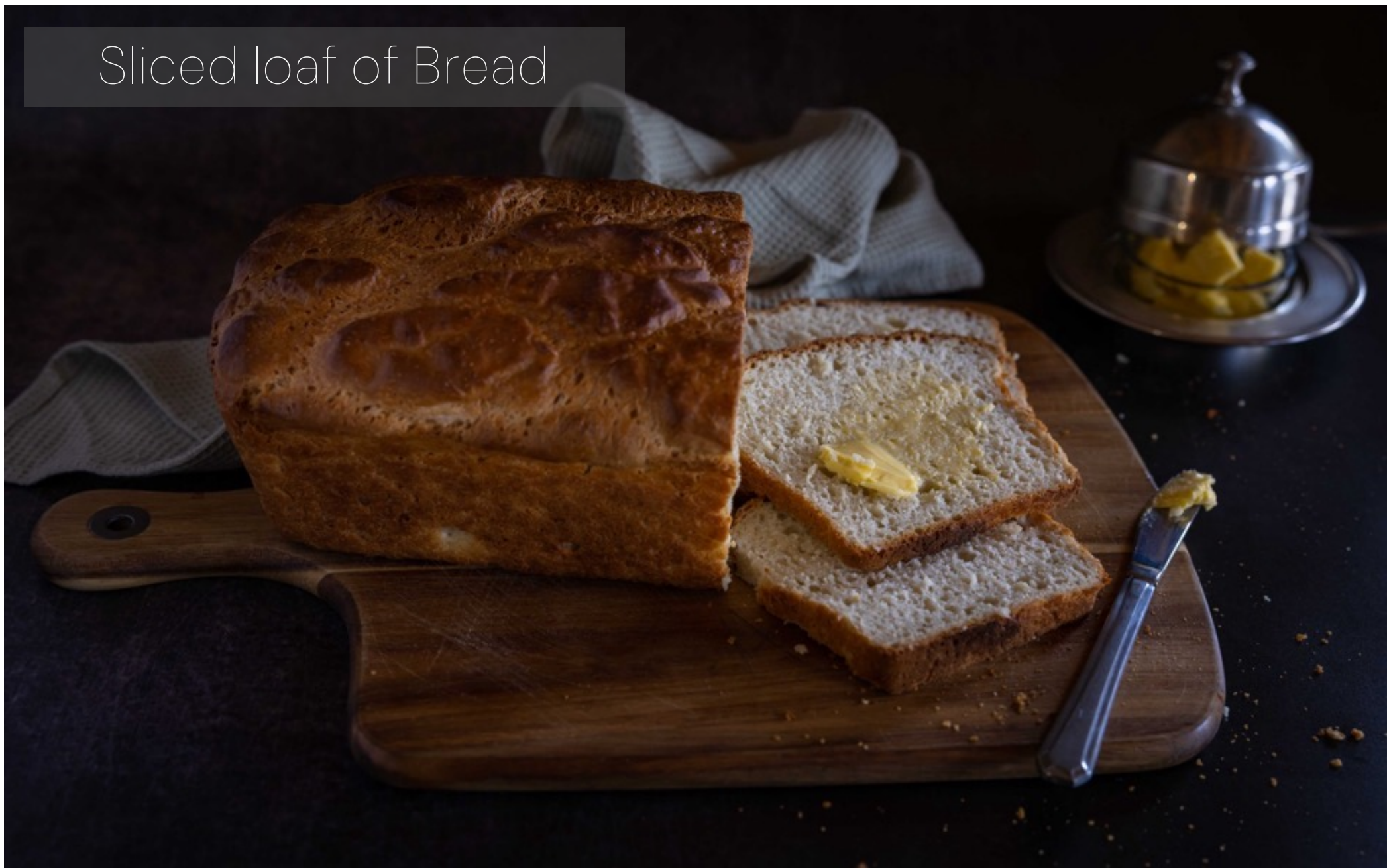
Oven Grill



Whole Loaf of Bread



Sliced loaf of Bread



Button Mushrooms



Enoki
Mushrooms



Pink Oyster Mushrooms



Oyster Mushrooms



Dancing Oyster Ladies





'The Earth is my Eden.'

Create images
that **YOU** love



THANK YOU

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