Paladar

Photo direction

Seven rules, two families and the shot list for the first night. From the Paladar brand book 1.0, section 03.



PHOTOGRAPHY

The photo is the night.

Shot by a guest, not a photographer. At night, with the flash on, up close and halfway through something.

Real people in real homes, with whatever light there is. Faces, hands, half-eaten plates. Nobody poses.

ONE TEST FOR ALL SEVEN RULES

Could a guest have taken it?

SEVEN RULES

Seven rules, one test.

01	**Flash on, lights low.**	Direct flash, at night. Never daylight, never studio light.	LOOK FOR the hard shadow on the wall
02	**Mid-bite, mid-word.**	People in the middle of something. They look at the camera only to play.	LOOK FOR nobody is posing
03	**Hands first.**	If there is no face, there are hands. Never food on its own.	LOOK FOR hands reaching for the same plate
04	**The table, used.**	Half-eaten plates, stains, glasses that don't match. Never a table set before dinner.	LOOK FOR the sauce on the empty plate
05	**From a chair.**	Shot from where a guest sits: close, vertical, cut by the edges.	LOOK FOR the glass in the way
06	**A home, not a venue.**	A kitchen someone lives in. No logos, no menus, no uniforms.	LOOK FOR the knives on the wall
07	**One loud colour.**	Film grain, warm whites and one strong colour. No filters, no black and white.	LOOK FOR the colour you remember

TWO FAMILIES

The table, and the kitchen.

THE TABLE	The guests. Eating, pouring, talking over each other.
THE KITCHEN	The host, in their own kitchen, with their own mess.



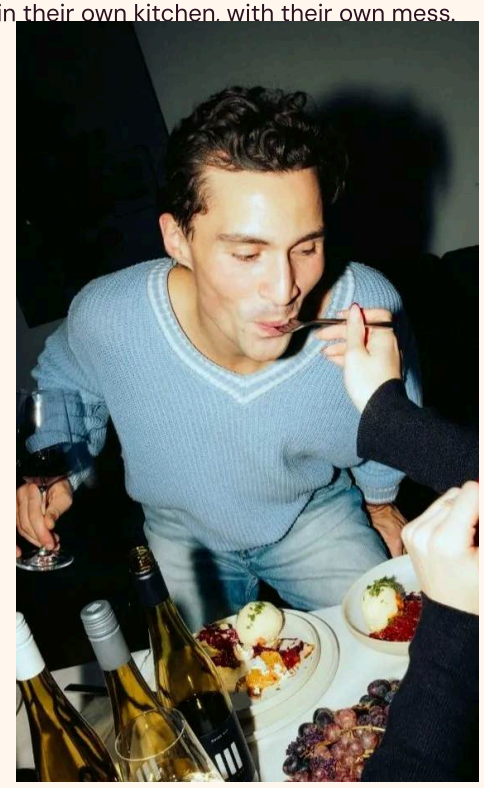
02 · MID-BITE, MID-WORD.



03 · HANDS FIRST.



06 · A HOME, NOT A VENUE.



01 · FLASH ON, LIGHTS LOW.

Photos from Paladar tables in Madrid. They are the reference for every new shoot; mood boards from elsewhere are not.

CROPS AND THE BRAND

Next to the photo. Never on it.

Nothing sits on a photo: no rings, no gradient, no text. The photo and the brand sit side by side, joined by a straight edge.

TABLE HEADER	4:5 · 390 × 488
TABLES CARD	4:5 · 350 × 438
YOUR SEAT THUMBNAIL	4:5 · 64 × 80 · radius 12
FACES	1:1 in a circle · 112, 88, 64, 56, 44, 28, 24 px
EXCEPTIONS	In the app, only controls and the host's face touch a photo: the date pill, carousel dots, the back button. On posters, the white logo top left.
CROPPING	Crop from the edges, never from the middle. If hands are in the frame, they stay in the frame.

WHAT WE DON'T DO

~~Never text on a photo~~ ~~Never a gradient over a photo~~ ~~Never a ring on a photo~~ ~~Never stock~~ ~~Never black and white~~



THE FIRST NIGHT

One dinner, twelve photos.

A compact camera with flash. No tripod, no extra lights, and nobody asked to do anything twice.

BEFORE

01 The host cooking, seen from the door.

02 Hands plating, no face.

03 The host tasting from the spoon.

ARRIVAL

04 The door opens. First guest, still in a coat.

05 The first glass poured. Three hands.

DINNER

06 One dish, many hands.

07 A guest mid-bite, eyes closed.

08 Two guests laughing, not at the camera.

09 Someone pulling a face at the camera.

10 The table from above, halfway through.

AFTER

11 The tablecloth: wine rings, crumbs, one glass.

12 The sink, full.

FOR PHOTOGRAPHERS AND HOSTS

Before you shoot.

CAMERA	A compact or a phone with the flash on. No tripod, no extra lights, no reflectors.
FORMAT	Vertical 4:5 first, then 1:1. Leave room at the edges: the app crops from the edges.
PEOPLE	Real guests and the real host. Ask permission before the first photo and again before anything is published.
EDIT	Warm whites, film grain, no filters, no black and white. Do not remove stains, crumbs or mess.
DELIVERY	JPEG, longest side 3000 px, named paladar_photo_[city]_[host]_[nn].jpg.

NOT PALADAR

Too produced
Studio light, a frozen splash.

A styled table
Everything placed, nothing eaten.

A venue
Steel counters, uniforms, twenty identical plates.

Nowhere
A black background could be any city.