A Day In The Life of an editor

During a group edit years ago I remember looking at a travel image that was beautifully lit and composed. All of a sudden one editor said, “Looks like someone must have yelled ‘Fire!’ Where are the people?”

Yes, the city location seemed vacant, but to get the shot the photographer had gotten up long before anyone had even awakened to drink coffee. This image still sells today. Shortly after the group edit we suggested that, next time, the photographer created a version of the shot with a model released couple or group of travelers to add some “reality” to the canvas.

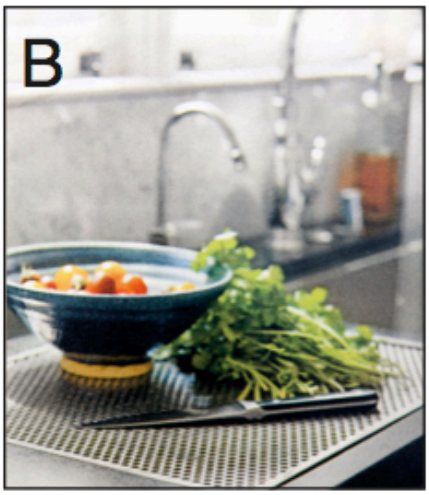
At Spaces Images you know we are not asking you to produce images with people. Thank goodness! Instead of people, many photo buyers like the option to have environments with human elements.

We keep in mind that those beautiful spaces – interiors or exteriors – even landscapes should be photographed free of people, but lets integrate versions of subtle props that communicate human existence. We have some tear sheets on the next few pages to help as examples.

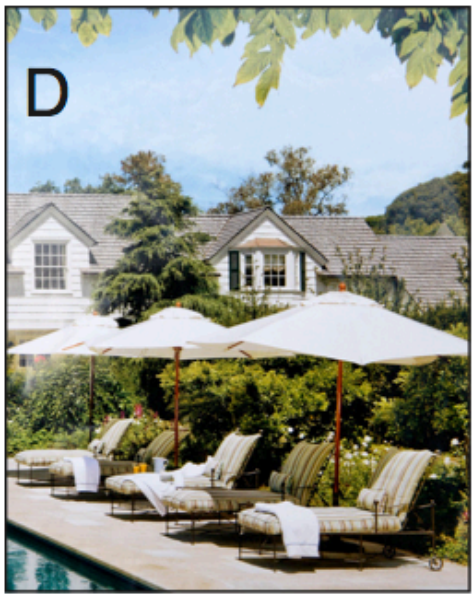
We’ll begin by showing how you can use the upcoming season and things you’re already doing to get the shot!

A: Fall Spaces! Autumn is a favorite time of year for many, and *now* is the time to think about what is available to you.

B: Photo buyers are always looking for fresh images to illustrate holidays. This is a good time to put together photo shoot ideas and plans. Think about possibilities of photographing your family dining table before everyone goes into an eating frenzy. A classic holiday table looks much like it did many years ago; your images could have a long shelf life if executed well. You may have good props in storage or available to you elsewhere. Be thrifty, after the holidays merchandise is wildly discounted to clear out inventory.



(A) This image has been enhanced by adding a hand towel, lettuce (cheap prop) and salad bowl. Minus these elements, the kitchen looks too stark to some photo buyers. Images that are clean of props AND those that add the human element are being driven by buyers expectations. (B) Buyers want to see shots from multiple perspectives. This image is similar to shot A, but it selectively focuses on the healthy foods in the foreground, not the sink. We encourage you to shoot BOTH. (C) Variation is what buyers want. Look for a picture within a picture while associating what goes on in the environment when people are present. Pull back and shoot the environment. It creates such a different shot. (D) This photo is extra inviting to audiences as the lounge chairs have swim towels (not all symmetric) and a nice setting of sunny beverages and glasses. Am I invited? Yes. (E) This shot is of an environment that looks organized, but isn't overly staged or propped. It still looks lived in. (F) Adding colorful vegetables brings visual interest, and again adds that human element.



(A) and (B): Organization is a constant concept in editorial and advertising, and you must constantly look for ways to illustrate it. (A) serves as an example of organization and a space within a space, but of course be sensitive to product logos. While looking at this image another idea came up... why not do a before and after: clean drawer, messy drawer? 2 shots in 1! (B) This photo shows how a color concept can be executed in a graphic sense, yet it still says "closet". Try shooting this same image messy, with lots of color, empty, his vs. her closet. You get the picture!

C: The plate of orange fruit by the sink ties together the warm tones of the stools and the area rug, giving this image that lived-in look.