



Embrace the Art of Flavor

From Plates to Posts: The Shift in Culinary Influence

by Chef Hannah Flora

In today's culinary world, having cooking talent alone is not enough to remain relevant. Social media continues to elevate and showcase chefs, restaurateurs, and food creators. We must all adapt to these changes, or we risk being left behind—a chef's worst nightmare. These platforms now not only shape trends, help people discover dishes, and establish culinary reputations, but they also provide a way to compete in the industry and stay at the forefront of the culinary scene.

There was a time when success in the culinary world was determined by critical acclaim in print or the prestigious Michelin star. Today, however, a viral 15-second video can catapult a dish and its chef into the global spotlight, often in just seconds after being posted. Platforms like TikTok, Instagram Reels, and YouTube Shorts have become essential for gaining visibility in the culinary industry. Aesthetic presentation is no longer limited to the dining table; it is now optimized for social media scrolling. To stay relevant, chefs must embrace the digital stage.

Here's how culinary professionals have adapted to the shift in media vs waiting for publications of their reviews to be publicly seen:

Understand the Current Platforms

Each platform has its own culture. TikTok thrives on trends and personality-driven content. With quick videos to harness the viewer's attention, Instagram remains strong for visual storytelling with unique "transitions" from one frame to another alongside creative soundtracks and catchy phrases. YouTube offers depth and larger content engagement with subscribers who are along with you for the ride of your journey and want more each day. Knowing where your audience lives and what they consume is key to success.

Prioritize Authenticity Over Perfection

Audiences are gravitating toward realness. I have found that behind-the-scenes moments, kitchen mishaps, ingredient sourcing, or even time-lapse prep videos connect more than overly polished, ad-like content. Tell your story and be authentic. People are buying into your why, not just your food. Viewers want to see you as a real human and not the AI-generated images emerging these days. They want the bloopers, flaws, and mistakes. It makes you more relatable to your followers.

Leverage Micro-Content

Gone are the days of extended captions and single photo posts. Today's audience wants quick, engaging, snackable content. Think 30-second recipes, quick tips, or day-in-the-life vlogs. These bite-sized formats are more likely to be shared, saved, and seen. Attention span is at its all-time low lately, from what I have seen, it's the hook that catches your audience's attention within the first five seconds of a reel or video that will keep the engagement and the following. Start strong, go into the quick explanation of how or why, then add a fun ending or a "part two" for continuous viewership. *Cont. over.*



Engage, Don't Just Post

Staying relevant isn't just about what you post; it's how you engage. Reply to comments, collaborate with local influencers, or even ask your followers to vote on tomorrow's special.

Social Media is Meant to be Social.

Getting input from your viewers is a great way to create long-term relationships. Everyone wants to be part of what you are doing. The "ask me anything" posts allow your viewers to find out more about you and ask the questions they want answers to but never get the chance to find out.

Keep Learning

Algorithms change, trends shift, and what worked last year might be obsolete today. Stay curious. Follow creators outside of your niche, take a short-form video class, or bring in a digitally savvy team member to up your game in the industry. Adaptability is your secret weapon. Stay relevant. Use trending audio, captions, and hashtags.

Food will always be a universal language. But in the digital age, how that language is spoken continues to evolve. The Chefs and culinary creators who remain open, authentic, and engaged are the ones who will not only survive but lead the next era of food culture. What we all must strive for is to make ourselves different and show our talents on the ever-changing public platform of social media, or be left behind.

The Future is Fast and Flavorful.

So, sharpen your knives and your camera skills. Relevance, like a good risotto demands constant stirring.

About the Author:

Chef Hannah Flora, CC is an award-winning, skilled, and technically trained Executive Chef, Leader, Culinary Consultant, and highly sought-after Celebrity Chef working in the private club & resort industry as well as fine dining venues. She brings a sense of Art and Design to all aspects of the culinary experience. Always eager to learn more, she continues to push the envelope with new and exciting flavor profiles.

"Culinary is an ever-changing ocean, and I want to make the first waves." - Chef Hannah Flora.

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Image right: Texture of the Tomato by Chef Hannah Flora
See recipe over.





Texture of The Tomato

Created by Chef Hannah Flora

Inspiration

My inspiration for the Texture of the Tomato stemmed from my love for the fruit, yet undesirable like for the flavor. I have never liked tomatoes as they should be, so I wanted to create a dish that breaks apart the tomato into different aspects, tastes, and textures. The sundried tomato for that warmth, the sponge cake with sesame for unique softness, and the tomato consommé for a chilled mouth feel all create a culinary explosion with every bite. I paired different components with tomatoes, such as almonds, sesame, basil, mint, and lime, to play on the various combinations of flavors that can be created while eating.

Yield: 2-3

Prep time: 1 hour

Total time: 2 hours

Ingredients

Tomato Consommé

- 4 large Beefsteak Tomatoes
- 2 cloves Garlic (smashed)
- 6 Basil Leaves (fresh)

Tomato Gelee

- 1 cup Tomato Consommé
- 2 Sundried Tomatoes
- Basil (to taste)
- Salt and Pepper (to taste)
- 2 sheets Gold Gelatin (bloom beforehand in ice water)

Espelette Brown Butter Crumbs

- 2 Tablespoons Whole Butter
- ¼ cup Panko Bread Crumbs
- 1 Tablespoon Espelette Pepper

Heirloom Tomatoes

- 1 ea Red Heirloom Tomato
- Herbed Basil Oil (to taste)
- Salt and Pepper (to taste)
- Lemon Juice (to taste)

Sundried Tomato Sesame Sponge

- 4 ea Egg Whites
- 3 Egg Yolks
- 80 grams Sugar
- 20 grams Wheat Flour

Almond Tuile

- 60 grams Egg Whites
- 50 grams Sugar
- 30 grams Flour
- 60 grams Almond Powder
- 10 grams Butter
- 2 grams Salt

Garnish (as needed)

- Almond Tuile
- Finger Lime Caviar
- Micro Basil
- Mint
- Micro Flowers
- Basil Oil

Preparation

Tomato Consommé

Gather the beefsteak tomatoes and cut them into quarters. Add the smashed garlic cloves, fresh basil leaves, and salt to taste to a stainless steel bowl over a double boiler wrapped in plastic. Steep over the heat for about 25 minutes until liquids release. Transfer and blend in a Vitamix until smooth. Pass the mixture through a China cap layered with cheesecloth and clarify.

Tomato Gelee

In a saucepot, add one cup of the tomato consommé; place over heat and steep in the sundried tomatoes, basil, salt, and pepper to taste. Once hot, strain out the tomatoes and add gelatin. Once combined, place into a flat-bottom dish and set in the refrigerator until ready to serve.

Espelette Brown Butter Crumbs

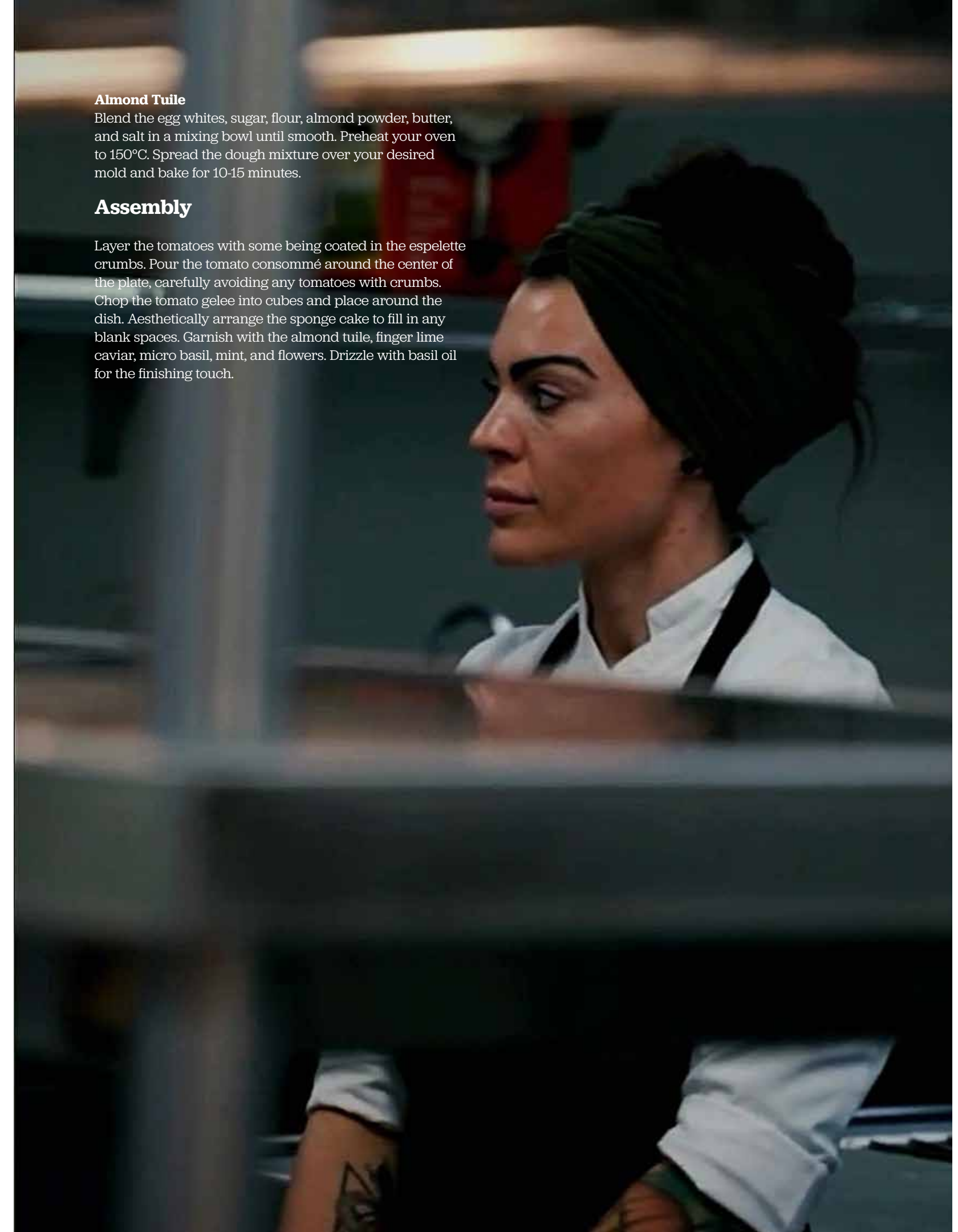
Brown the whole butter in a sauté pan. Chef Note: This gives it a warm, nutty flavor. Add in the Panko bread crumbs and the Espelette pepper. Reserve for plating.

Heirloom Tomatoes

Cut the heirloom tomatoes into different shapes. Add them to a stainless steel bowl and marinate them with herbed basil oil, salt, pepper, and lemon juice. Coat some of the tomato pieces in the espelette crumbs. Set aside for plating.

Sundried Tomato Sesame Sponge

In a mixing bowl, blend the egg whites, egg yolks, sugar, wheat flour, and sundried tomato paste until smooth. Transfer to an ISI canister and charge with cream chargers twice. Dispense into a paper cup and microwave 2-5 seconds. Pop the cup out and tear it into desired shapes.

A chef with dark hair tied back, wearing a white chef's coat with black straps, is shown in profile, looking towards the left. The background is a blurred kitchen environment with various equipment and lights.

Almond Tuile

Blend the egg whites, sugar, flour, almond powder, butter, and salt in a mixing bowl until smooth. Preheat your oven to 150°C. Spread the dough mixture over your desired mold and bake for 10-15 minutes.

Assembly

Layer the tomatoes with some being coated in the espelette crumbs. Pour the tomato consommé around the center of the plate, carefully avoiding any tomatoes with crumbs. Chop the tomato gelee into cubes and place around the dish. Aesthetically arrange the sponge cake to fill in any blank spaces. Garnish with the almond tuile, finger lime caviar, micro basil, mint, and flowers. Drizzle with basil oil for the finishing touch.