

I'm sorry I've been MIA for the past 12 days or so. I'm becoming this kind of popular gal in town which is causing me to be rippin' and runnin' like a fool chasing the jerk that stole Louboutins off my foot!

My sis was in town for a whole week during the 4th, which allows me to shut down and focus on her, only. Then, I was in Tampa last week taping two more segments for Daytime TV. I'll have those two vids up in the next couple of weeks. To get an idea of the segments, feel free to watch the current vid under **Flanboyant TV**. I make a high yum factor lemon almond flan in that one. Had a great time, despite the monsoon rain. So, between two highly exciting events, I've had no time to write.

But, I'm here to redeem my absence, because I'm really not that popular.

I haven't had time to cook so I went to the archives. These aren't just any ol' archives of either failed food shots or recipes I really have been wanting to share, and just haven't. Rather, the archives of professionally shot pictures for my cookbook! I've not talked much about the progress of it, quite frankly because I'm so behind schedule and still negotiating a deal.

So this post is in part a tease on one of the entries. But, also a brief discussion on the bitches of photography! I hand all sorts of accolades to you pro photogs. You bear patience, skill, precision and an eye; something I don't care to own at this point. I can't even keep up with my Fujifilm battery charger, let alone take a drool worthy shot. I give special shout out to [Michael Ruhlman's](#) wife, Ben over at [What's Cooking](#) and Bea over at [La Tartine Gourmande](#), for their effort and screen-biting shots.

Styling is another thing. That's more up my alley. I'm a girls girl and like primping and beautifying things. Aesthetic appeal is key. It's like the shoe effect. If my shoes aren't right, who the hell cares my outfit came right out of Gucci's boutique? You understand, right. The subject dish could be the best thing ever, but if the styling, set up and ultimate picture isn't right, who the hell cares the food is good? Trust me, I know about this all too well. I even hate to admit that on this very blog, there have been some questionable shots; especially in the very early posts. [This](#) is an example of really good dish, picture gone way wrong! And [this](#) is a picture of styling gone right!

So with the help of my fashionable friend Dave, my book shots look really pretty. In fact, he makes anything I do, really pretty. Enter now this Cuban coffee shot. Basic. Almost nothing, right. Just a teacup of black espresso. But, the elements, including, lighting, depth, angle, etc.. make this espresso picture look more than just liquified roasted beans! I will take credit for set design, however. Taken in my parents backyard, we were able to use that sketched bench for placement, and then all the little details; like the very, very old and rustic looking espresso maker. I think that thing is as old as I am.

Makes the best damn coffee, though!

After 3 hours and 2 batches of espresso, here are 2 different pictures (tho there are maybe 100 total). Yes, this is a tea cup, but I wanted to demonstrate the various ways one could have it. And, this is double, so a traditional coffee mug isn't appropriate. And a demitasse wouldn't have been big enough.

Plus, the antique red saucer and cup are so pretty.

Do you see the differences? For one, keeping foam in it was hard as hell, as it quickly dissipates. Luckily, I had one of those mini, electric cocktail hand whisks, which by the way works wonders! Instant foam! Food porn comes to mind. The other issue was background stuff. Do I keep it simple with just half the old and tattered espresso maker and subliminal vintage picture of my mom as a teenager, the one responsible for my addictive indulgences; or do I show the entire espresso maker with the greenery? I personally like the one on the left, but notice how the plate of raw beans is over exposed! While the picture on the right doesn't have good foam!

What do you think?

Or, I could just crop the above-right picture to get the perfect effect, as shown in the 1st picture of this post (and now below).

I did the black and white for the hell of it. I kind of like it because it takes away distractions and gives it character.

But what I want to know is, does these pictures entice you to buy and make a cup of Cuban espresso!?! Did we do it justice?! I want to know your thoughts and ideas!

Of note: we typically drink our espresso, straight up black, with LOTS of sugar. A crack addicts amount. On the rare occasion I'll sip it like that, but I must have mine with steamed **leche**. **Mami** thinks I'm gross for it, but nothing like a hot cup of **café con leche** first thing in the morning. For the book, I wanted to use the purist approach. Some things deserve to be represented in bona fide Cuban tradition. Cuban mornings aren't Cuban mornings without a minimum of 3 shots.

Just shots.

Here, take a sip! Enjoy a basic *un poco de* **Café Cubano**! A pretty one thanks to Dave of RH Photography!

Kindly Reminder: July 17th is the last day to leave a comment on the [previous post](#), which will help in my campaign to end hunger! All you have to do is leave a comment! Simple, right! Click on banner below to get more details on what I'm doing. Thanx. *Café con leche* on me!

All you have to do is **LEAVE A COMMENT!** Really! One comment. The more comments, the more food I will donate! This is an easy way for you to help me help fight hunger. Please take a few minutes to read more about my efforts and how the campaign works, by clicking on the banner above (*eligible comments close on until July 17th*).

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