CAMERA NOT INCLUDED

The Photography Zine by Ewen Bell



Edition #7
June 2026

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AUTUMN
Regional flavours in Australia

THE COVER

Autumn colours on a plate, Daylesford Australia.

I love food photography for many reasons. Firstly, we get to eat what we shoot, which is extra delicious when you're rocking up to a fancy restaurant in Melbourne somewhere. Secondly, you get to work a scene without worrying about your subject getting tired, or if they suddenly look cranky instead of happy, or maybe they keep moving about and you can't compose a scene properly.

Even a humble pomegranate becomes a world of colour and inspiration with the help of a 50mm lens and some nice light. Food photography is a great way to hone your skills for light and composition, because you can try the same scene over and over again until you feel you got it right.

Anyone can step into food photography and start enjoying the craft, and start learning new skill for photography in general. So this edition, we're going hard on the delicious, and enjoying some quality time with my wife Shellie as she cooks, styles and mentors.



THIS EDITION

Unreal

Story Time

Light Servings

In Confidence

Fun Sized

Mentors

June 2026

At first glance you might think this edition is all about food photography. On the surface that is true. But beneath the baked buns and chocolate cake rests a deep reflection on how we learn. How we find our way forward.

This edition is about trying, and failing, and then trying again.

Artistic talent is often seen as mysterious and unfathomable, as though it were the result of a random lightening strike. In reality talent is largely the product of time + effort. I have seen this over and over again in my life.

I see it again when pulling these pages together. The first cut is rough and awkward, a clumsy attempt to feel a path through the dark. But I keep coming back to it, and with each revision I find more clarity and form. A structure emerges, as if it were hiding beneath the surface all the while.

I just have to stick at it long enough. Perhaps I could say that talent is what happens when you don't give up too early. A mix of opportunity and stubbornness in my case.

A quick word of thanks to the sponsors who make this publication possible.

I need to say thankyou for ongoing support from my sponsors. They help to make my life on the road a little easier, and help to keep my photography viable.

I don't want to fill the pages with too many adverts, so please allow me this little reminder that the folks at Peak Design and Angelbird have been generous in their support for my work.

As a former ambassador for Lumix you will also notice a lot of their cameras and lenses appearing in these pages. I still have a soft spot for the Lumix S9 and the L-mount lenses.








DAYLESFORD
Victoria / Australia

UNREAL

Daylesford, about 90mins north-west of Melbourne, Australia.

Daylesford is a place where I feel connected to reality. This is where I get to see kangaroos at dusk, listen to cockatoos at dawn, chase piggies as they run about paddocks in the sunshine, smell the eucalyptus oil from gum leaves, and see a few old friends who live their entire lives in deep connection to the earth.

It's 90mins drive from downtown Melbourne, but it's lightyears away from my normal life. Had the arc of my life gone differently perhaps a small farm in the bush might be my home.

[Images captured on the Lumix S9 + TT Artisan 40mm F2]







Every so often Shellie and I get a chance to visit Daylesford, and share it with like minded people. We get to step back into a place that is familiar, and yet distant. We get to pretend that we belong here, and press ourselves into the landscape.

We buy some local veggies at a market, visit a friend's chocolate shop in Trentham, look for echidnas along the walking trails, and watch the last light disappear behind the gum trees. The screech of correllas flying overhead is something I will never get tired of. The locals tell me otherwise.

We feel lucky just to know that places like this exist, let alone visit every year.


Organic
Hand Dug
Dutch
$5












AFs
AUTO WB
L-JPG L-DNG
35 MM
LEICA STD
ISO A100
F 2.0
1/100

Food photography is a superb way to really learn the fundamentals of photography. Depth of field, exposures, composition and of course "light". Because light is the main ingredient you need when shooting food.

This is no great surprise, as light is ALWAYS the main ingredient for any form of photography.

We tend to focus our thoughts on subjects, when in fact the fundamental ingredient for beautiful photos is beautiful light. This is true when walking around a farmers market, or styling a chocolate cake in the studio. Cameras don't see calories, they only see light.










FOOD
PHOTO
GRAPHY
11am Intro Talk
1pm Lunch
1pm Processing
3pm Styling
4pm Prints
7pm Dinner
#GhelleFoodLove
@ronchelshelle




KANELBULLE
Daylesford Workshop



STORY TIME

Making Norwegian styled Kanelbulle in Australia

Recipes are great things to photograph and curate into a story. You're not just composing a photo, but capturing a series of photos that come together as pieces of a bigger story. There's an easily identifiable beginning and end, and plenty of moments to explore in between.

On this shoot we enjoyed a few hours of photography while Shellie makes magic in the kitchen. She was making a version of kanelbulle, one of our favourite treats when we spend time in Sweden or Norway. These are cinnamon knots, but with a little blob of custard cooked into the middle.

Not only do we get the capture the story of how they are made, but we get to eat them while still warm, fresh from the oven, with a cold glass of milk!

[Images captured on the Lumix S9 + TT Artisan 40mm F2]







Our first holiday together was to Sweden in the middle of winter. We were on way to the far north, to the Arctic, to enjoy lots of snow and auroras. Before catching a plane to Luleå we spent a few days in Stockholm, and we visited as many bakeries as we could find to sample their kanelbulle.

It was indulgent and wonderful.

Every time I get a chance to enjoy these treats, I am reminded of that time in Sweden and how lucky I am to be sharing these moments with my favourite person in the world... Shellie.














JONAI FARMS
Daylesford Workshop



LIGHT SERVINGS

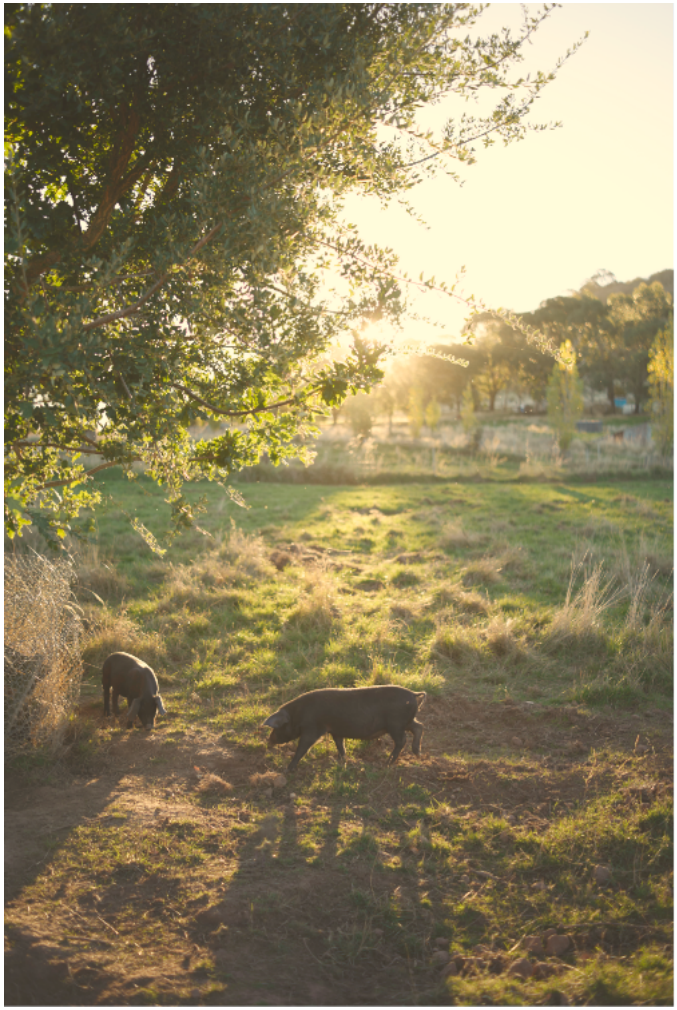
Daylesford, about 90mins north-west of Melbourne, Australia.

In the late afternoon we chase some winter light, as the piglets chase our camera lens.

They are curious creatures, and at our friends farm the piggies are always happy to see humans. They love tearing into the grass and digging out the roots. They love grunting at each other and play fighting. And they love making new friends.

As a photographic subject they are tricky. They don't stop moving, so you have to be decisive about hitting the shutter. You have to trust the AF on your camera. For an extra challenge I want to shoot the fading light behind the piggies, and hope that my autofocus doesn't get washed out by sun flare.

[Images captured on the Lumix S9 + TT Artisan 40mm F2]





Every year we visit the farmers market in Daylesford, and it is always a treat for the camera and the soul. There's lots of nourishing veggies, delicious donuts, toasty chestnuts and other local delights. There's a mood here that only comes from gathering up people who really love living off the land, and eating the fruits of their labour.

It's also a magnificent place to photograph produce in the morning light. Anyone who knows me will understand just how much I love winter light, and how much I love bread!

Bring the two together and you have magic.




DAIRY FLAT FARM


ESTNUTS
OR SALE







Henry is the chestnut guy.

He's has a small stall that roasts up chestnuts on location, plus you get a nice chat with every serve. He finds it amusing that each year I turn up with my camera, and a new group of companions. He's never shy about the photos, and he's rather photogenic anyway.

It's people like Henry who make this market a little bit special. He's genuine. He's just being himself. He's not "building a brand" or looking to expand. Henry sells chestnuts at the market. That's all.






AGE CART
SAVOURY
SWEET


LA CREPERIE

THIS PAGE IS SPONSORED

Thankyou Angelbird

Angelbird make a bunch of high performance memory cards, and some excellent tether cables. My journey with this brand began in 2020 when we started making recipe videos at home. Shellie did the recipe development and styling, and I did the video and editing. We quickly realised that “sustained data rate” was way more important than any maximum speed a card might claim to offer.

Those max speeds you see on the labels tend to drop off after a minute of shunting data onto the laptop.

Back then I scored a killer deal on some 256gb Micro-SD cards by Angelbird, and I've been buying their stuff ever since. My minimum spec for SD cards now is V60, which means 60MBytes/sec (480mbps). This gives me enough grunt for shooting 6K 10bit video, or for high speed continuous burst when shooting birds or festivals.

The best part is they are super fast to download at the end of the day. I can clear my cards and start a backup of the day, and be ready for dinner ten minutes later. I'm super happy to have them as a sponsor of this publication, and for their support in sponsoring my documentary project in Nepal.


AV PRO SE
CFexpress B
512GB
3700MB/s
INPUT 1
INPUT 2

DAYLESFORD WORKSHOP

Shellie and Ewen sharing 4 days of delicious photography.

It would be silly of me not to include a mention for our annual food photography workshop. We usually hold this in early May each year, when the air is getting cool and the leaves are changing colours. We rent a farmhouse about 90mins out of Melbourne, and Shellie prepares days and days worth of yummy things to eat and shoot.

This workshop is open to professionals who want to advance their skills, to cafe owners who want to shoot in-house, bloggers and influencers who want to level-up, or amateurs who just want to enjoy learning about light in an especially delicious setting.

Ewen does most of the teaching and talking, and we fill the days with learning and hands-on practice. In the evenings we gear down to share dinner at the farmhouse, and reflect on what we've achieved. It's a lovely experience, and we have room for a maximum of 6 participants each year. Book early!

ewenbell.com/food



daylesford love 2026

recipe collection

EWEN'S WORKSHOPS

Intimate photographic experiences with Ewen Bell

Every year I run a handful of workshops and photo tours in various parts of the world. I have been doing this for twenty years now, and every year I try to find ways to make each experience more rewarding. It's never the same workshop twice.

I run my tours in places I know very very well. I don't outsource my expertise. I care about these places and believe they offer something special to my companions. We learn about the cultures and landscapes, as much as we do photography.

Visit the website for more details.

ewenbell.com/tours

ANCIENT ANNAPURNAS

PHOTOGRAPHY TOUR
EWEN BELL

One of the most adventurous photography tours we've ever planned in the Himalayas. Follow the jeep trail deep into the Annapurnas to the ancient village of Manang, photograph some of the highest peaks in the world, and finish with a helicopter landing at Lake Tilicho.

Highlights include stunning waterfalls, glacial rivers plus herds of goats and yaks.

November 2024
13 days from US$11,880



BHUTAN

PHOTOGRAPHY TOUR
EWEN BELL

Dancing Monks and winter light in the kingdom where happiness meets wisdom.

Softly softly in the land of the Thunder Dragon. A journey from festivals to farmers with intimate moments and fabulous photography. Come and find out why we regard Bhutan as such a treasured experience, and why the people of Bhutan are the happiest on earth.

2025 November 13 - 27
15 days from US$10,888







IN CONFIDENCE

Student becomes the teacher

This year we had a special guest for the food photography workshop, and her name is Jo. She first came into our lives a decade ago when she signed up to come join a workshop, and at the end of the four day event she quit her studies and dove full-time into a freelance career of photography and baking.

Shellie and Jo have been friends ever since.

Several times during our event this year Jo shared her reflections on when she was learning photography. And I learned something really important from her in those moments. She kept coming back to "confidence".

I tend to think of these intensive workshops as a chance to gather skills. Shellie and I share anything and everything. It's not just about cameras, but how to run a business, or dealing with difficult clients, or mitigating the risks of living without a guaranteed income.

Having skills is great, but we need more than skills. We need to believe in ourselves too. We need confidence that we can really do this.



Jo was a huge asset on this workshop.

She offered her time to help Shellie with all the hard graft that happens behind the scenes. Jo helped deliver on Shellie's catering and styling, including baking a batch of cupcakes for us to photograph. Great news for me and Shellie, and a sweet little bonus for our participants.

Thankyou Jo!



What I had not fully appreciated until Jo shared her thoughts is these workshops not only create a chance to gain skills, but to gain confidence. Four days of trying something new until you succeed. How often do we get that chance in life?

I take for granted that we create a space that is calm, gentle and patient.

That's just the default setting I want to work in. I need these things myself, so it seems obvious that we would create a workshop space with the same qualities. I just didn't realise how profound that can be for people who are currently employed, and maybe not always receiving an ideal level of support from their workplace.

We do live in a world that is hurried, full of short-cuts, full of budget-cuts, and often competitive in a way that tears people down instead of building people up. Stepping away from the chaos of the real world and stepping into a Shellie inspired workshop is an absolutely immersive experience. It's a safe haven and it's a chance to prove to yourself that you are capable of creating wonderful things.

Jo was once a student in our workshop, but this year she became a teacher too.


SPA RESORTS
GO BY TRAIN


SMALL IS GOOD
TT Artisan 35mm F1.8 AF II for APS-C


1/3STEP
AUTO
P
S
A
M

FUN SIZED

35mm F1.8 for APS-C cameras

50mm at F2 is my magic sauce for food photography and other still life, but when capturing on a cropped-frame sensor you need a wider lens to land on the same mark.

On cameras such as the Fuji X series, which have an APS-C sized sensor, 35mm is the equivalent of 50mm. Same goes for many entry level cameras like the Canon R50, or the Nikon Z50. On our recent workshop we had one lady shooting on the Nikon Zfc, and we before the workshop kicked off we recommended she buy the TT Artisan 35mm F1.8 AF II.

The combination was stellar.

I continue to be impressed by these new small AF lenses from TT Artisan. I bought the 40mm F2 full-frame lens for my Lumix gear last year and that lens has not left my side ever since. And they have a new 50mm F1.8 Neo which is perfect for full-frame cameras on a budget.

The 35mm F1.8 model is not suitable for full-frame, however, but on the smaller APS-C camera bodies it makes for an ideal food photography lens that delivers very sharp images and generous bokeh.


AF 35/1.8 ED
Nikon
Z fc

The 35mm F1.8 lens got put through a real world test, shooting for four days in a wide range of light and up against a bunch of full frame alternatives decked out with the best 50mm primes money can buy.

One fella had some lovely Leica gear that are worth more than my car. Several of our group were shooting with the Sigma 50mm F1.2, an exquisite prime lens that I reviewed in detail two years ago and loved it so much I bought one for my Sony.

At the end of each day we run through the images everyone captured, and print off some big A3 prints. Seeing your photos actually printed in ink is very special. There's nothing quite like it.

And it turns out that a tiny little Nikon with a cheap 35mm from TT Artisan comes up a treat, even when printed side by side with the full-frame Leica, Lumix and Sony. It turns out you don't have to spend top dollar to enjoy your photography.

This is an easy lens for me to recommend to anyone with a smaller sensor who wants to try out some fine bokeh for food or stills photography.



I like the simple and effective design of this 35mm F1.8. It's far more compact than the typical full-frame 35mm f1.8, and pairs really well with a smaller camera bodies.

A Nikon Zfc has a very small form factor. It's a compact little unit. It would be a shame to whack a chunky big lens on that little camera and spoil the aesthetics. A design like this TT Artisan 35mm F1.8 is a great match for style, as well as image quality.

They are available for Fuji X-mount and Sony E-mount.


Nikon
Zfc
TTARTISAN



THE FARMHOUSE

Annual Workshop in The Country



MENTORS

Creating an Experience

The food photography workshops are very special to myself and Shellie. We've been doing this for as long as we've been together. It's a team effort. There's no way I could run this workshop with anyone but Shellie. When we come together, the "whole" is greater than the sum of the parts.

Creating an experience is a bit like composing a photo. You get to choose what elements matter in the frame, and what are best left for another time.

We are trying to craft a journey, trying to guide our companions along a path. There are countless possibilities, some more rewarding than others. With enough experience it's possible to build a complete picture that satisfies both our companions and ourselves. It's a win-win.





We often think of photography as a process of "revealing". To share what we see. To illuminate and demonstrate.

But what we don't see in the photo is often just as material as what we do. Holding a little back for the audience to fill-in. Sometimes we can let the observer be a part of deciphering the image, and let their minds fill in the bits that are missing in the picture.

By revealing just enough we create a tension in the frame. We share something of ourselves but not everything. We leave room for possibilities that are personal to the audience.


enjoy the simple things in life






MACRO
AF
SUMMILUX

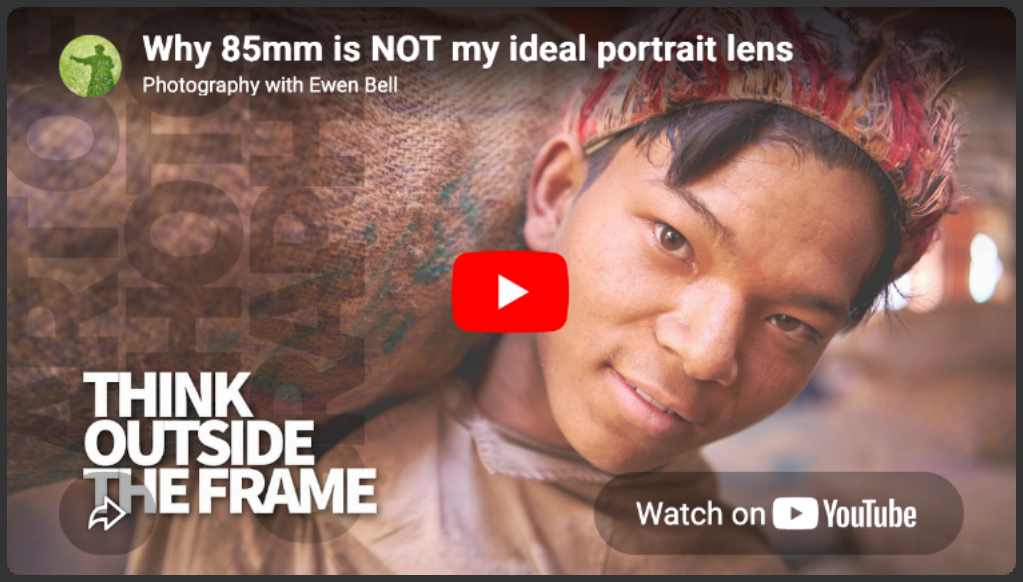


#EWENTUBE

I share a bunch of photos and ideas on my YouTube channel. You can also watch them on the Fediverse via PeerTube for those who prefer ad-free viewing

ewenbell.com/ewentube


Editing RAW Photos made Simple
Photography with Ewen Bell
COLOR
Watch on YouTube


Why 85mm is NOT my ideal portrait lens
Photography with Ewen Bell
THINK
OUTSIDE
THE FRAME
Watch on YouTube

WHO MADE THIS?

Meet The Author

My name is Ewen Bell and I'm a photographer based in Melbourne, Australia. I've been very lucky in life to had the opportunity to make a career from photography.

For over two decades I've been travelling and shooting, which is why I have this photo of me in Bhutan when I was MUCH younger and better looking than I am now :) You can tell it's an old photo because I'm holding a DSLR camera.

Photography has changed my world, so I want to help others find their voice with the camera as well. I love sharing my photos, but also love sharing my knowledge about taking photos. That's why I'm making a zine, in addition to my blog and my YouTube channel.

ewenbell.com



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