# A FEAST FOR THE LENS

*Serving up the World's Best Food Photographs*

**A striking image captured in a Soviet-era sanatorium in Tajikistan claimed top honours at the 2026 World Food Photography Awards earlier this year, while South Africa also had reason to celebrate with a standout result on the global stage.**

British photographer Jo Kearney was named the Overall Winner and received the £5,000 prize for A Woman Eats in the Canteen of the Soviet-era Sanatorium. The photograph, which also won the Fortnum & Mason Food at the Table category, depicts a solitary woman enjoying a simple breakfast in the historic Khoja Obi Garm sanatorium, where guests still follow traditional wellness treatments and are served wholesome Tajik meals.

Judges praised the image for its emotional depth and quiet dignity. Caroline Kenyon, Founder of the World Food Photography Awards, described it as a photograph that tells a deeply human story through subtle details, from the woman's expression to the carefully balanced composition.

South Africa was represented with distinction by photographer Louhani Els, who was Highly Commended in the Cake Award category for Food Altar - Sardines and my Dad. Inspired by Tori Derricotte's poem My Dad and Sardines, the evocative image uses a damaged cake alongside sardines, crackers and onions to explore grief, remembrance and reconciliation between a daughter and her late father.

The awards attracted nearly 9,000 entries from more than 50 countries, with winners across 27 categories announced at London's Mall Galleries by acclaimed Italian chef Gennaro Contaldo. The judging panel included celebrated food photographer David Loftus, South African Michelin-starred chef Jan Hendrik van der Westhuizen, Jamie Oliver, Fortnum & Mason CEO Tom Athron and Rein Skullerud of the World Food Programme.

Entries for the 2027 competition open in September 2026, continuing to celebrate photography's ability to tell powerful stories through food. *For more info, visit www.worldfoodphotographyawards.com.*



*A Woman Eats in the Canteen of the Soviet-era Sanatorium*
Jo Kearney/World Food Photography Awards sponsored by Tenderstem®






*Food Altar - Sardines and my Dad*
Louhani Els/World Food Photography Awards
sponsored by Tenderstem®



*Chhath Puja Offerings*
Indigo Larmour/World Food Photography Awards
sponsored by Tenderstem®





*In the Eye of the Kvevri*
Luke Carver/World Food Photography Awards
sponsored by Tenderstem®





*Raw Pairing No.1*
Styling: Sarah Ghijselinck | Photo: Sandra
Declercq/World Food Photography Awards
sponsored by Tenderstem®



*Stacked Morning*
Styling: Sarah Ghijselinck | Photo: Sandra Declercq/
World Food Photography Awards
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*The Final Touch*
Michela Balboni and Federico Borella/
World Food Photography Awards
sponsored by Tenderstem®

