

The background of the entire image is a vibrant blue with a repeating pattern of white line-art illustrations. These illustrations include various food items like tomatoes, mushrooms, and herbs, as well as kitchen tools like a rolling pin, a whisk, and a knife.

# THE

A large white circle with a thick black border is centered in the upper half of the image. Inside the circle, the number '1' is written in a large, bold, blue font. Below the '1', the word 'NUMBER' is written in a smaller, black, sans-serif font.

1  
NUMBER

# THING

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What 30 Top Food Bloggers Are Focusing On In The Coming Year

A circular logo with an orange background and a white border. The word 'FOOD' is at the top in white, 'Blogger' is in the middle in a white script font, and 'PRO' is at the bottom in white. A blue banner with white text is draped across the middle of the circle.

FOOD  
*Blogger*  
PRO

“It is not that we have too little time to do all the things we need to do,  
it is that we feel the need to do too many things in the time we have.”

GARY KELLER - *The One Thing*

## Focus.

It's important. And it's not easy.

One of the reasons it's not easy is because we do too many things at the same time.

So what are the most important things for bloggers to focus on in the year ahead?

We asked that question to over 30 top bloggers. We share their answers in the pages that follow.

I encourage you to read through this document a few times and take note of the themes you see in what people are saying. Write those down. Once you've written down the common themes, find the one that best fits your passions and personality.

Let that one thing be your focus for the next year.

*Bjork & Lindsay Ostrom*

[www.foodbloggerpro.com](http://www.foodbloggerpro.com)



## This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

## BETH MONCEL, Budget Bytes

"I think the one thing that food bloggers should focus on in the upcoming year is video, more specifically short form video like vine, snapchat, and Instagram shorts. I'm starting to see more of that format around and I'm getting more requests from brands for this type of material, so I think that's the next wave. Short, digestible pieces that will draw in viewers for the click to the static content/ blog post."



## MARIA LICHTY, Two Peas And Their Pod

"I think it is important to focus on quality content. If you give your readers/ followers a reason to visit your blog and social media channels, they will keep coming...and new people will come too! We can't control Facebook, Pinterest, Google, etc. but we can control the content we create. Create killer content and they will come."



## SALLY QUINN, *Sally's Baking Addiction*

"My answer might be a little different, but I feel the most important aspect to focus on this coming year is connection. How can we grow and maintain our readership if we are not personally connecting with our readers? I'm a blog reader myself and I can say that the only food blogs I enjoy reading are those with a little personality in them; where the blogger shows his/her real life and makes an effort to talk to me (the reader). I enjoy the content, establish a connection, forward the blog to my friends and bam! That blog has even more readers now. That is how blogs become successful. Connection. To do this, just be real! Be yourself. People are naturally very curious-minded and love reading what other people do/say in real life. Share a personal story, be a little vulnerable, talk about your kitchen successes and failures, show gratitude to your readers, share photos of your personal life on social media. Be a real person! Connect."



## SCOTT AND JADEN HAIR, [Steamy Kitchen](#)

“The #1 initiative for bloggers to focus on is OWNING the relationship with readers, not just renting from a social media channel. I’ve often compared social media companies with the movie, “Mean Girls.” Facebook, Pinterest, Twitter, Instagram, and others are mean girls - able to change the rules of the game at any time, without warning, and ask for payment from brands and businesses like ours. When Facebook changed the way brand “Pages” work, less than 6% of your followers (or people who liked your page) would see your posts. Essentially, Facebook became “pay to play.” The same thing happened with Pinterest! It’s getting harder and harder for your followers to find your message.

What should you do? Don’t rent from Mean Girls. Own the relationship with your customers by starting a regular email newsletter. Connect with an email provider like MailChimp, Mad Mimi or Emma. Read more blogging business strategies over at [Kitchen Table Mastery](#).”



## CHUNG-AH RHEE, *Damn Delicious*

"This was a very difficult question to answer, especially since so many components are crucial when it comes to food blogging, but I feel that Instagram is really one of the most important things to focus on in the upcoming year. It's not necessarily a traffic booster but Instagram has revolutionized into a social media outlet where you can do so many things - promotion of news posts as well as looks behind the scenes in your work life to show that there really is a human behind the blog - whether you're sharing pictures of the box of donuts you inhaled last night or your baby corgis!"



## GINA HOMOLKA, *Skinny Taste*

“Although I think it’s important to constantly grow in all areas, my #1 goal for the upcoming year is to focus more on building my email list. Google is constantly changing its algorithm, Facebook controls how many people you reach, but when you have a strong email following, you’re essentially protecting yourself from changes in search and social media algorithms.”



## ROBYN STONE, *Add A Pinch*

“For the upcoming year (and always!), I think it will be most helpful to focus on relationships with readers! There will always be a brand spanking new social media or other sparkly tool, but focusing on the relationship with readers really cuts through all of that to the core of why we blog - to be of service to our readers.”



## CAMILLE BECKSTRAND, *Six Sisters Stuff*

"The most important thing for food bloggers in the upcoming year is video. While blogging is great, video opens up a whole new world by allowing viewers to connect with you on a more personal level - seeing you in real life, which is something that they don't get by reading a blog post. Don't let video be overwhelming, just keep it simple (like under a minute or two) and use your phone to capture something that you want to share with your readers. We have found that companies and brands LOVE video and are more inclined to work with us if we offer video as a sponsor option. An awesome tool that might help you get started is Periscope."



## AVERIE SUNSHINE, Averie Cooks

"It's hard to pick just one thing but I think the top few things are to give your readers the recipes THEY want. Even if you feel like baking cookies every day, your readers may not. You have to appeal to their tastes, needs, and lifestyle. It goes without saying that making your photography as beautiful as possible is just as important as the recipe. And finally, Pin your heart out."



## DASSANA AMIT, Veg Recipes of India

"According to us the most important thing is to focus on giving quality content. be creative to new ideas and make the cooking experience easier for readers."



## KATIE HIGGINS, *Chocolate Covered Katie*

"I think the #1 most important thing for food bloggers to focus on in the upcoming year is definitely photography! While the top food bloggers may have different writing styles and vastly dissimilar eating habits from each other, the one thing almost every successful food blogger includes in his or her posts is great photos to draw readers in. With so much competition on today's internet, you have about .0001 second to catch a reader's attention. A beautiful picture can catch readers' attention AND make them want to share the post with others, starting a domino effect of traffic towards your blog."



## DAVID LEBOVITZ, David Lebovitz

"I encourage food bloggers to focus on "engagement." There is so much information, and recipes, out there that what will make you stand out is your voice and how you converse with readers on your blog, as well as on social media. Engaging readers is something I strongly think that's valuable for food bloggers to focus on. Social media has become much more important, and is a great place to engage with readers who will visit your blog. Concentrate your efforts on the social media outlets that are the most enjoyable for you and ones that will help you encourage readers to visit your blog, too."



## KALYN DENNY, *Kalyn's Kitchen*

"The best food bloggers are always focused on creating good content that's unique to their blog. Once that process has happened, what's the best way to get people to your blog to see the amazing food you're sharing? In my opinion nothing else even approaches the power that Pinterest has to generate traffic, so I think improving pins, pinning more strategically, and pinning more frequently is what bloggers should focus on for the upcoming year. Because pins have the potential to get re-pinned for an infinite period of time, effort put into Pinterest can translate into blog traffic for months or even years to come."



## KELLY SENYEI, *Just A Taste*

“Diversification across the board is critical, be it revenue streams, social media platforms or types of content. While it may seem obvious to spread revenue generating efforts across a wide sector (from ad revenue to sponsored posts and beyond), it’s often not as obvious in the social media and content creation spheres. The industry is changing so quickly, so it’s dangerous to be invested entirely in one revenue stream, one social platform or one content style. Don’t be afraid to expand outside your comfort zone to test out new or different posting types (hello, video!) or social media platforms (looking at you, Snapchat!).”



## TIFFANY AZURE, *Creme de la Crumb*

"It is so important to be diversifying revenue sources over the next year. Never treat one revenue source as the answer to all of your blog's income problems, regardless of how amazing that one source may be doing at any given time. My father (an old-school businessman with the best combover you've ever laid eyes on) always told me "don't put all of your eggs in one basket". As a blogger, relying solely on ad revenue, or only sponsored gigs, etc, is dangerous for your business - you've got to diversify!"



## STEPHANIE LE, *I Am A Food Blog*

"I want to turn my focus towards myself and really get back to the basics of blogging. It seems counterintuitive to turn away from SEO or focusing on increasing page views or social numbers, but ultimately I want to create content that inspires me. Cheesy (cheese is good!), but true: I'm going to focus on me."



## KRISTIN PORTER, [Iowa Girl Eats](#)

"The #1 most important thing for bloggers to focus on in the upcoming year is finding their niche. Ask yourself - who exactly am I hoping to serve with my blog? Health nuts? People with special diets? Budding bakers? Vegetarians? Identifying yourself as a general food blogger serving the general public is only going to get you so far in such a saturated market. Focus on serving "your people" and becoming a big fish in a small pond."



## KATHRYNE TAYLOR, [Cookie and Kate](#)

"Focus on growing your email subscribers! You have more control over email than you do over social media's shifting algorithms. Your email list can be your most valuable marketing tool when it comes to promoting new posts, launching new projects and so forth. If you go to the trouble of growing your list, don't forget to make sure your emails are functional and easy to read, too!"



## CHRISTY DENNEY, *The Girl Who Ate Everything*

"At the end of the day it still comes down to the one thing that proves to be the biggest way to get people to come to your blog...good photography. Of course you have to have good recipes to back it up, but a pretty picture goes a long way. And as much as I want to pretend it's not happening, videos are the new thing. They're terrifying to me but they are what people want. I definitely see them being a necessity to the growth of your blog rather than the bonus that they are now."



## MICHELLE LETTRICH, *Brown Eyed Baker*

"I think the #1 most important thing for bloggers to focus on during the upcoming year is DIVERSIFICATION! Both in terms of content and income sources - the blogging and ad landscape continues to change and I think the more reach a single brand has, the better the staying power and ability to survive any downturn in advertising, social media, etc."



## GABY DALKIN, *What's Gaby Cooking*

"I think the most important thing we can do for ourselves in the food blogging world is to make sure we're creating quality content that stands out. We consume SO much content these days (on so many different platforms), we really need to be focusing on what makes us special and capitalizing on that. No one else can be you or tell your story, so let your personality shine, and then run with it to create content that is unique to you and is helpful to your audience. "



## MOLLY YEH, *My Name Is Yeh*

"I want less content! Is that silly to say? I want higher quality, less quantity. I think it's important to only post stories, photos, and recipes that are unique and personal, and I want to learn something new. If you don't have anything to say, don't force it. Short posts are fine if they're straight to the point. And if your coconut whip tutorial is the same as everyone else's coconut whip tutorial, just... just don't post it."



## HEIDI SWANSON, 101 Cookbooks

“Point of View. Developing your own distinct voice, style, and point of view is one of the things that really helps illuminate everything else. It informs every decision you make, and it’s the one thing you should always check in with as you decide how you might move forward. Beyond writing, it’s the guiding light when you’re taking photos, editing video, choosing what recipe to develop, buying a camera, deciding which platter to pull, pinning, etc. Just asking yourself regularly - How is my site or this photo uniquely mine? Or this recipe? Or the structure or style of this video? - is helpful. This is a good practice whether you’re new to the content realm, or more seasoned, and simply setting intentions.”



## ASHLEY RODRIGUEZ, *Not Without Salt*

"I think the most important thing that we as bloggers should focus on in the upcoming year is why we got into this in the first place. For me it was always been about sharing food and creating a space around the table for connection. It's easy to let numbers, sponsorships, competition and comparison detract from the thing that pushed you to publish your first post. A blog written from a place of passion and joy is one that is worth reading. Connect to the passion and go from there. I think this is vital to a career that has longevity. If you are continually connecting yourself to the root of it all you will more likely avoid burn out and fatigue."



## JADAH SELLNER, *Simple Green Smoothies*

“Grow your email list! While it’s important to share valuable content with your audience on social media, the #1 goal should be to get your ideal customer to sign-up for your email list, so you can nurture the relationship with them. Focus on creating a freebie for your community that’s better than someone’s paid product. You want to help them get their desired results through your free offer. Then they’ll credit you for solving their problems and making them more awesome. Once you have a rockin’ freebie, it’s your job to get it in front of the right audience, and share it on the right medium (could be Facebook, Instagram, podcast, guest posts, public speaking events, etc.). A common mistake bloggers make, is “set it and forget it.” They create a free opt-in offer to build their email list and forget to share it with their growing community all year long. P.S. A little ninja trick -- instead of having affiliates promote your paid products, have them promote your free opt-in offer to help build your email list and give them credit on the back-end if someone they refer to your email list buys one of your products within a certain amount of time.”



## TIEGHAN GERARD, [Half Baked Harvest](#)

"I think this question is different for each and every blogger, but the one thing that is always true for everyone, no matter where they are in their blogging career is to focus on creating quality content. I am consistently asking myself, *"Is this something my readers will enjoy and find of value?"*. I have found that if you have really great content, the other things fall in place after that. Once you have that down, then I think it is time to focus on marketing, Pinterest and all that other stuff!"



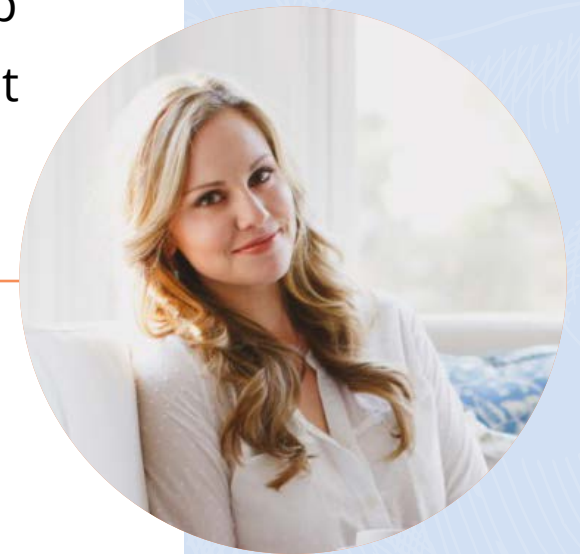
## MICHELLE TAM, *Nom Nom Paleo*

“With people consuming content in new and different ways, it’s important to employ different media to engage your audiences. We all know about the effectiveness of connecting with readers through Instagram and Twitter, but there are new platforms to consider. Live, free, interactive Periscope videos are a fantastic way for a food blogger to quickly broadcast cooking lessons and restaurant reviews to those who like to learn visually—with the added benefit of personalizing the blogger and deepening his/her connection with viewers. Similarly, a podcast can resonate with those who want to put a voice to a face. Think about the ways you yourself like to learn and consume information, and consider whether you can do the same for your audience.”



## DANIELLE WALKER, *Against All Grain*

“That’s a tough one, but I think that recipe development and interesting original content is the most important. When people ask me what the key was to my blog becoming a success, I tell them it was consistently putting out a couple of new recipes a week so my following (be it small at the time) didn’t forget about me. There are so many blogs out there these day and thousands of recipes to be found on the Internet for any given diet or cuisine, so you have to stand out and do something that you will be remembered for. I also think that when a reader clicks over to check their favorite blog and hasn’t seen any new content at the top of the page for a week at a time, they start to lose interest and stop checking back. And of course the added benefit is that frequent original content leads to more page views, and more ad revenue in your pocket!”



## JESSICA MERCHANT, *How Sweet It Is*

"I'd have to say the number one thing is diversifying. I realize that is kind of cheating because you asked to focus on one thing and this one thing essentially means to focus on a BUNCH of things. But I really believe that diversifying your content in general is the biggest thing for the next year. Whatever you're awesome at, keep it up. But add something new to your platform that may intimidate you. Diversify how you share content and perhaps, even the type of content you share!"



## ALISON BRIGHT, *Gimme Some Oven*

“Really, I feel like one of the best things that bloggers can do for their blogs this year is to take better care of themselves. We work in a new industry that’s exciting, fast-paced, always-changing, and full of enormous potential for growth. But it’s also an industry that is often fueled by quiet workaholism, even if that’s “just checking email” in your pj’s or being glued to your phone. I’ve been guilty of it far too often, and worry it’s becoming an industry norm and that the first big wave of blogger burn-outs may come soon. But here’s the deal -- we’re the ones in charge here! And this job does not have to be exhausting in order to be awesome! :) So instead of being bloggers who care most about their sites, let’s be bloggers who first and foremost take good care of ourselves, and instead of spending our days glued to our screens, let’s focus on living meaningful lives that we can feel proud about sharing about on those screens.”



## That's a wrap.

To the creators that contributed to this: Thank you. Your generosity and willingness to share is inspiring and doesn't go unnoticed.

To the creators that read this: Go forth and take action. Your #1 area of focus needs you. Hop to it!



*Bjork & Lindsay Ostrom*

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