



ORANGE GROVE SOCIAL / GRANT VIOLA

The Hotel Client Playbook

Find the right hotels. Pitch a real idea.
Agree the work. Plan a shoot they'll want again.

I wanted
to travel.
So I made
an offer.



My first travel gig was a yoga retreat in Greece. I told the owner: cover my flights and hotel, and I'll photograph the retreat without a creative fee.

I didn't have a travel or yoga portfolio. She knew I was learning, and the exchange worked for both of us: she kept her costs down, and I got to travel while building work I could show.

While I was there, I kept posting and photographing the cafés, restaurants and businesses we visited. A local hotel found me through that work and invited me to stay.

Two hours. A suite by the Aegean.

The hotel had an infinity pool overlooking the Aegean Sea and the mountains. I offered a two-hour shoot with 30 photos and two videos. In return, I got a night in a suite, plus food and drink credits.

2 HOURS / 30 PHOTOS / 2 VIDEOS

A defined exchange that helped build my hotel portfolio.

That experience opened my eyes to what my skills could make possible. Since Greece, I've shot for five Michelin restaurants, Marriott and Moxy properties, an Airbnb in Rome, and hospitality businesses across the U.S. and Europe.

Now I lead with paid projects, and my work has grown to include \$10,000 packages. I might still consider an exceptional hosted stay, but it has to be worth the work.

Use an early collaboration to build proof. Then let that proof help you sell the next project.

Read it. Then use it.

This PDF gives you the process. The companion files give you somewhere to do the work.

The playbook

The visual guide you're reading now.

Copy-and-Paste-Templates.txt

The full AI prompts, outreach scripts and discovery questions.

Hotel-Prospect-Tracker.csv

Import into Google Sheets or Excel to track contacts and follow-ups.

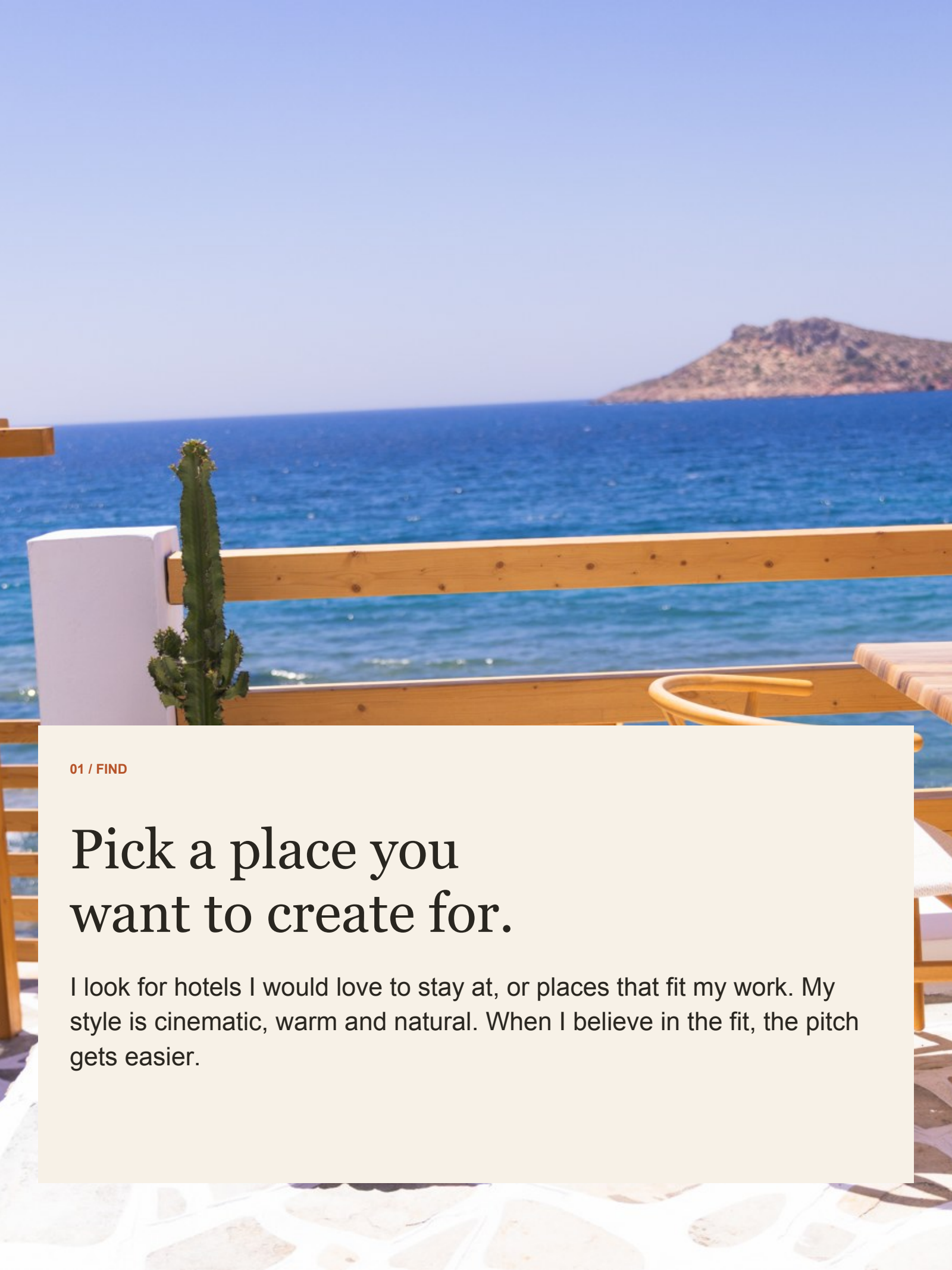
Production-Templates.txt

Intake, shot planning, kitchen requests and call sheets.

Extended-Field-Notes.md + START-HERE.txt

Deeper notes and instructions. Open these in a text editor.

GET ALL SIX FILES IN ONE ZIP >



01 / FIND

Pick a place you want to create for.

I look for hotels I would love to stay at, or places that fit my work. My style is cinematic, warm and natural. When I believe in the fit, the pitch gets easier.

Have a reason for every hotel.

Start where you are going

Use Google Maps to find hotels locally or in an area you plan to visit. Check their website and Instagram.

Look for a match

Save two details that fit your style. Read reviews: what do guests love, and what needs a clearer explanation through content?

Find the person buying content

Look for marketing staff, the owner or the hotel's social agency. A polished feed is a reason to ask about work, not a reason to rule yourself out.

No portfolio yet?

Ask a local manager for a small, agreed shoot. A room for a few hours can be enough to make useful work and build a dedicated hotel portfolio page.



02 / PITCH

Show them you know the property.

The personal part is the idea. Name a detail, explain the scene you would make around it, and show why your work fits. Do that in an email, a DM or LinkedIn message.

What I sent to Lime Tree Hotel.

EXCERPT / SENT SEPTEMBER 10, 2026

I'm a professional photographer and content creator, and together we create couples travel content focused on thoughtful, beautiful stays and the experience around them. We'd love to see if you'd be open to collaborating on a stay in exchange for professional photo and video content.

We'd be happy to go above and beyond capturing the rooms, garden, The Buttery, neighborhood setting and overall Belgravia experience in a way that feels natural and editorial. We can also feature the stay through our couples travel content.

The garden, The Buttery and Belgravia give the hotel something specific to respond to. I'm connecting their property to the kind of work Mary and I make.

For The Twenty Two, my pitch focused on its residential character, interiors, food and the Mayfair experience. Different property, different idea.

A useful follow-up. Then a clear next step.

In a DM, I introduce what I do, connect a property detail to a scene, link my portfolio and ask who handles content. Keep it as long as the idea needs. Cut the generic compliments.

“One scene I would prioritize is [specific idea], because [reason tied to the hotel]. Is this relevant to your plans, or is someone else the right contact?”

For a hotel I really want to work with, I'll consider five to eight personalized touches in total, spaced out across channels. Keep them together in your tracker so you know what you've already said.

Stop after a clear no or an opt-out. If they say “later,” follow their timing. A clear answer gives you your time back.



03 / AGREE

Get on a call. Hear them out.

Once they're interested, I want to understand what they need before I pitch a package. The best offer comes from that conversation.

Let them do most of the talking.

“Let’s use 20 minutes to understand what you need, see whether I can help and decide on a next step. If it’s not a fit, we can say so. Does that work?”

Ask what they love about their current content, what’s missing and what they want to promote. Do they need photos, video, models or creator-led content? What has worked before?

Then ask about budget, timing, usage and who approves the work. You’re interviewing them, too. Notice whether the working relationship feels like a fit.

Send a thank-you and recap after the call. I prefer another call to walk through the proposal and show relevant work. Use your call notes to build it; the full AI prompt is in the companion file.

One clear package. Room to adjust.

After discovery, I come back with specific deliverables and a price. Creative projects get confusing fast when everything is open-ended. Give the client something concrete to react to.

FROM A REAL RESTAURANT QUOTE

I quoted photography and video in one shoot for a Michelin restaurant. After seeing the price, they decided photography mattered more. I increased the photo deliverables and reduced the video deliverables.

Start with their priorities, then adjust the mix. Write down the revised quantities and price so everyone knows what the package now includes.

My starting point when you need one: estimate the full job at \$100 an hour, then account for crew, expenses and usage. Know your target fee and your private minimum before you negotiate.

What \$10,000 includes.

THREE CONSECUTIVE ON-SITE DAYS

40–100 edited photographs

Hi-res JPGs across the property, lifestyle, food and beverage, spa, pool and in-room scenes.

8 vertical videos + 1 widescreen banner

Eight short-form 9:16 edits. One 16:9 banner; length agreed in pre-production, with 15–30 seconds suggested.

The finishing work

Colour grading, music licensed for organic social within the term, and standard sound design. Crew, equipment and editing are covered by the fee.

The delivery schedule

First cut within 30 days of wrap; final within 45. Three revision rounds per category: the photo set, videos as a set, and banner.

\$2,000 upfront / \$8,000 before delivery

Deposit on signing; balance on completion of the shoot. The deposit is described as non-refundable in this agreement.

The rest of the agreement.

Crew + creator clips

Me, Mary and at least two contracted models. Each model supplies at least three UGC clips in each of four areas: room, spa, pool and restaurant. That is 24 clips minimum from two models, for my editorial use.

Rooms + on-site benefits

Three rooms for 3–4 nights around the shoot; \$200/day F&B on the suite and \$100/day on the other two rooms; six spa packages. Confirm the room block in writing 14 days out. If benefits cannot be supplied, renegotiate for cash credit.

Usage for 14 months

From final delivery: non-exclusive organic social and the client's primary website. No transfer or sublicensing. I keep copyright and raw files; this is not work-for-hire. I retain perpetual worldwide portfolio rights, including BTS.

What is excluded

Paid or boosted media, out-of-home, print beyond internal use, broadcast, other properties, sublicensing and material modification.

Feedback + late payment

Client feedback within seven business days; deemed approved at 14 days. This agreement specifies a 5% late fee after seven days.

What can they do with your content?

Organic social

Unpaid posts on the named hotel accounts.

Website and print

The website, brochures, signage and other agreed placements.

Paid promotion

Ads, boosted posts and ads run through a creator's account.

Who, where and how long

Name the users, channels, territory, start date and expiry. Agree renewals before the term ends.

For a hosted-only stay, I start with organic social. Website, print and paid ads are a separate conversation—and a chance to charge for broader use.

Get the agreement. Get the deposit.

Agree the deposit, balance due date and when the client receives final files. For the \$10,000 project shown here, we agreed 20% upfront and the balance after the shoot, before delivery.

The work

Deliverables, formats, shoot hours, revisions and delivery dates.

The rights

Where the content can be used, by whom and for how long.

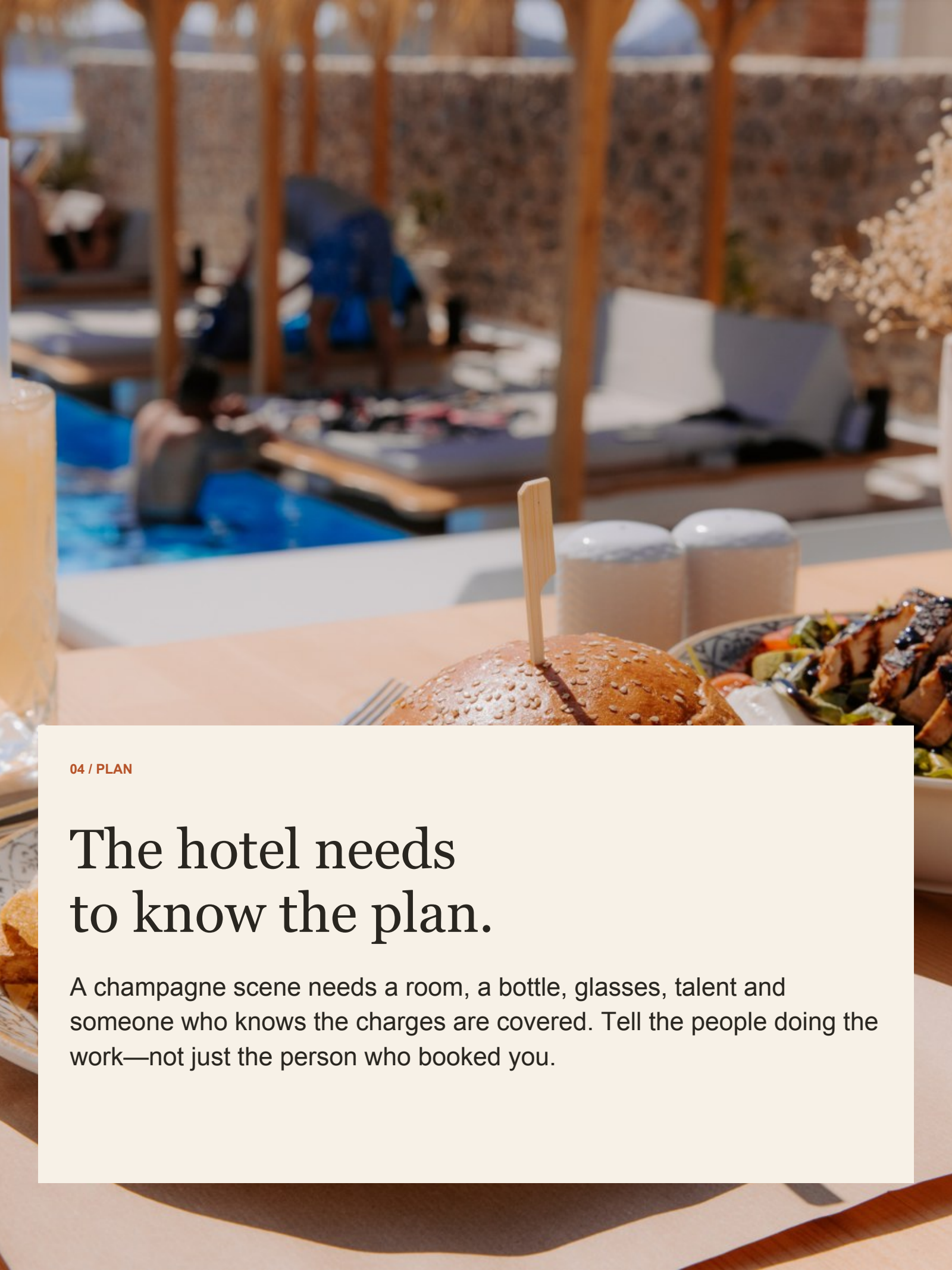
The logistics

Travel costs, rooms, meals, spa credits, talent and access.

The changes

Cancellation, rescheduling, weather and committed expenses.

Before booking travel or paying talent, confirm the signed agreement, required payment and essential access. Have a lawyer review your reusable contract and cancellation terms.



04 / PLAN

The hotel needs to know the plan.

A champagne scene needs a room, a bottle, glasses, talent and someone who knows the charges are covered. Tell the people doing the work—not just the person who booked you.

What our upcoming shoot plan looks like.

ADAPTED FROM OUR CLIENT DECK / PROPERTY ANONYMIZED

Day A / Chef and kitchen

Interview the chef. Film a dish from build to plate. Capture hands, fire, steel and steam. Finish with the room at blue hour. Chef first gives us time to fix a dish that does not photograph well.

Day B / The guest experience

Wardrobe check, then arrival, seating, first drink, service and dining. Move to hotel scenes: room, balcony, pool and lounge. Each model gets a clear clip list.

Day C / Details and pickups

Cocktail builds, pours, ice, citrus, menus and surfaces. Shoot horizontal banner footage. Use the remaining time for anything missed on the first two days.

This is a planned shoot, not a completed case study. The source deck uses three days; confirm your own light windows and access with the hotel.

Make the stay work for the whole team.



For one upcoming shoot, I requested three rooms: one for our lead team, one for the videographer and one for the influencer group of two to three friends.

I also requested spa credits for the influencers, the videographer and me. When a hotel can offer rooms and experiences more easily than cash, those benefits can help make the collaboration work.

Agree what each person gets and what they'll do. Modeling, creating clips and posting to an audience are three different jobs. Get releases and usage permission sorted before the shoot.

Give them a handoff they can actually use.

Organize the files by format and use. Tell the client what's included, how to send feedback and what usage you agreed.



Use one approver and one place for consolidated revisions. File names and video timestamps make changes much easier.

Then sit down and debrief. What did they use? What else do they need? That conversation can become a seasonal refresh, another shoot or ongoing social management.

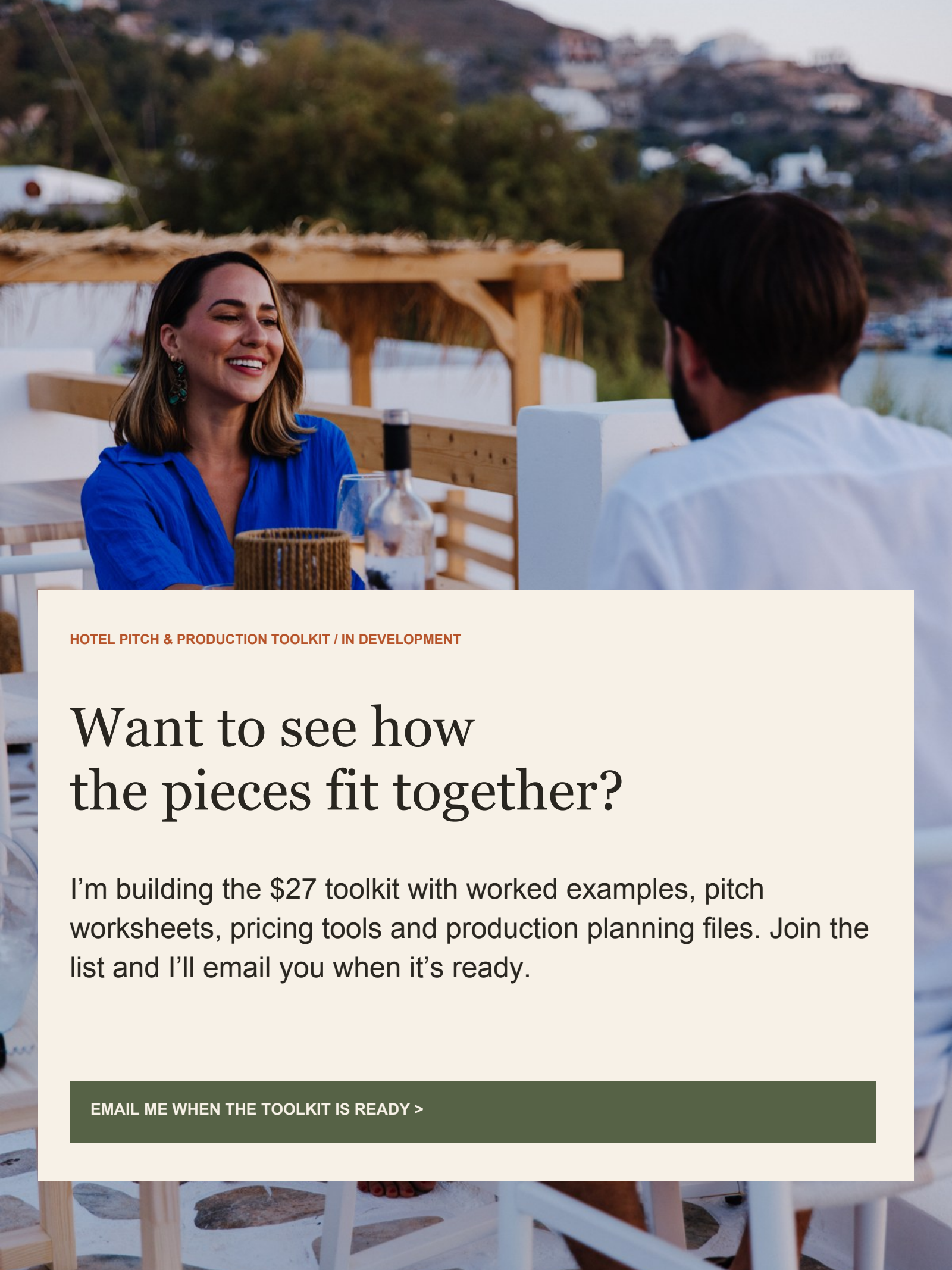
Bring your point of view. Let AI organize it.

Open Copy-and-Paste-Templates.txt. Start with the interview prompt, then build your offer and research hotel contacts in the same conversation.

EXAMPLE WORKING BRIEF / BASED ON MY STYLE

STYLE	Cinematic, warm, natural light
FIT	Boutique hotels with character
RESEARCH	A property detail + a scene to make
NEXT STEP	Find the right marketing contact

The file also includes prompts for your post-discovery proposal, personalized outreach and run of show. Read the output, add your judgment and make it sound like you.



HOTEL PITCH & PRODUCTION TOOLKIT / IN DEVELOPMENT

Want to see how the pieces fit together?

I'm building the \$27 toolkit with worked examples, pitch worksheets, pricing tools and production planning files. Join the list and I'll email you when it's ready.

[EMAIL ME WHEN THE TOOLKIT IS READY >](#)

Make it yours.

This guide shares my experience and the way I approach hotel work. Fees, results and timelines depend on the project. It is educational guidance, not legal or tax advice. Have a qualified professional review your contracts, business setup and insurance for where you work.

Use the practical checks as part of doing the job: get permission to film or record calls, verify contacts before outreach, agree usage and costs in writing, and stop when someone declines. Don't copy my style. Build an offer around yours.

FURTHER READING

Photography and copyright >

Business setup >

Hosted collaborations and endorsements >

Photography by Orange Grove Social. The upcoming shoot plan is adapted from our planning deck, with client details removed. The Lime Tree passage is an excerpt from a sent email.