



talk shop

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TALK SHOP: READ MCKENDREE // READ MCKENDREE PHOTOGRAPHY



ABOUT READ

If you've found yourself down an interior design rabbit hole on Instagram lately, you most likely know who [Read McKendree](#) is (or you've seen his gorgeous work). The New England-based photographer started his career the day he got out of college and has never looked back. He specializes in photography for interiors, architecture, and hospitality and works with notable interior designers, hotels, and resorts to capture the essence of what a home and hotel are all about. His work is constantly featured in House Beautiful, Architectural Digest, WSL, and so many more publications. We were so happy to chat with this talented (and very busy!) photographer about his start, inspirations, and tips on how to get a great shot.

Describe your style in three words or less:

Perceptive, Dynamic, Organic.

What have been the three biggest influences on your aesthetic in your life:

Joel Meyerowitz's photos of Wallfleet and Truro in the '70s were a huge influence on me. He took the time to really gaze at the New England landscapes and built environments - signs that I was quite familiar with. The images felt so significant and they taught me to look closer at the mundane moments all around me.

New England's architecture, landscapes, and coastlines.

My camera has taught me to see in 2D. I love seeing the world as a series of pictures and not needing a camera in hand to capture those moments.

How did you start your company, and/or what is your favorite thing about what you do:

I started my photography business the day I got out of college. I picked up a lot of local clients at the start, enough for rent and beer money, assisted for some incredible photographers in NYC, and then really focused my energy on interiors, architecture, and hospitality. It's been a fun ride so far.

I'm so fortunate to be able to work in such beautiful places, all relatively close to home. Whether it's Nantucket, The Hamptons, or Maine, I get to see and experience some of the best parts, and homes, of the Northeast.



Interior by Ashley Whitaker

Do you have a mentor in your career, and if so, how have they helped to shape your trajectory:

I assisted some really influential photographers over the years, including Tina Barney and Bruce Weber. They taught me so much about seeing a photograph well before the shutter clicks.

What does your home say about you:

That we have a toddler who doesn't care about my OCD tendencies! My wife and I love to spend time outdoors and we have lots of different deck areas and gardens. We just put in a cedar-clad hot tub which allows us to spend even more time outside in the cold months.

Where do you find inspiration:

Almost all of my inspiration comes from light and scent. New England is a special place - these two elements are always in flux.

Who are your style icons:

I just bought a pair of Hoka's so I'm not sure I'm qualified to speak on this :) That being said, I've always admired how Ralph Lauren was able to create various lifestyles. I photograph so many different types of homes and I could never pick just ONE style to live in. Ralph has the same wandering mind and really leaned into it.

What are your key ingredients for entertaining:

Candles, plenty to drink, and good music.



Interior by Colleen Bashaw

Do you collect anything:

The minimalist in me prevents me from accumulating too much, but I do have a strong collection of photography and design books. My wife and I both surf and bike, so our garage is filled with boards ranging from 4' to 11' and bikes for any kind of surface imaginable.

Favorite Instagram accounts to follow for inspiration:

@nich has beautiful quotes from artists, writers, and musicians throughout history. It's a nice pause to the endless scroll.

@benito is a skateboarding account that posts some of the best and most innovative stuff happening. I grew up skateboarding and although I don't do it nearly as much as I used to, I am blown away by the progression. It's a very creative and inclusive sport.

@rytheloveofthohouse posts beautiful old homes that are in need of some TLC. The house we're currently in was built in 1970 but I have always dreamed of living in one from 1970!

What photography "rule" do you always follow, and which is made to be broken:

The #1 rule is to make sure your lines are straight! This is so embedded in me that I even have troubleshooting a picture of my daughter without thinking about diverging lines in the frame.

I think you can break a lot of rules though, especially with focus and depth of field. Some of my favorite interiors photographers, who tend to be European (Francois Hazard especially), play with softness in really beautiful ways.



Interior by Meredith Ellis



Interior by McGrath R

What are you working on right now:

I have a few ideas for books and would love to connect with people who could help those projects come to life. I'm also trying to spend more time shooting personal work, lots of abstract ocean imagery, which I sell fine art prints of at readmckendreeprints.com

Wardrobe staples:

Comfortable shoes (see style icon question).

Favorite fabric/wallpaper (if any):

I would love to live in a home that has 100-year-old wainscoting, warped, and pockmarked from being painted a dozen different colors over the years.

Best advice you ever received for shooting interiors:

Years ago I read "Wabi Sabi for Artists, Designers, Poets, and Philosophers". The ideas on shadow and embracing imperfections were really impactful and assured me that every space has its own mood and quality of light and forcing it to be otherwise can be detrimental to the imagery.

Best career advice you ever received:

My Dad always told me to pay attention to what people were coming to me for. After college, I wanted to shoot lifestyle and action sports (mostly surfing). For some reason, I kept getting opportunities to shoot interiors and architecture even though I didn't have the body of work to represent that. Finally, while shooting for the book Surf Shack by Indoeik, I realized that capturing spaces and the personalities of those spaces was where I belonged and I shifted my energy entirely towards it.



Types of home purchases you invest in and save on:

Mountain bikes, surfboards, a really beautiful Italian mid-century floor lamp, and the hot tub :)

We're learning to buy less but better. We've found that over time, that saves money and hassle.

Your greatest extravagance:

I don't go too crazy in this category but I do really appreciate watches. I'm always researching and adding to my wishlist. There's a sense of wonder in combining utility and beauty into such a tiny space.

Favorite places to shop for home:

RE Antiques in Rhode Island. They acquire entire estates and so their collection is constantly changing. Shopping for the home can be hard. Buying furniture, fixtures, tile, or paint gives me SO much more respect for what my clients do.

Most prized possession and why:

My mountain bike, a carbon frame Specialized StumpJumper. Riding bikes is a big part of my life and keeps my body moving and my mind clear.

Your life motto:

"...the very motion of our lives is towards happiness." -Dala Lama-

Whether it's skateboarding, surfing, or biking, momentum has always brought me pure joy and happiness. I've applied that notion to my work, constantly striving for forward movement.

Take Ten: My Favorite...

Food: The burger at Four Charles Prime Rib or one of my wife's "whatever we have in the fridge" bowls.

Drink: Almost anything but vodka. I especially love an ice cold Gose on a hot summer day.

Film: The Shining

Hotel: Any hotel that has good coffee, any time of day.

City: Lisbon

Bedding: Linen, year round.

Tea or Coffee (and how do you take it): Coffee with a little bit of cream.

Playlist: Recently, anything by Big Thief.

Weekend Activity: Bike, surf, explore. My wife and I get antsy by about 9am so we're usually out and about.

Design Book: "Family Houses by the Sea" from 1993. I own three copies.

follow along! @FENMORELANE

