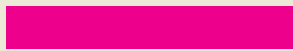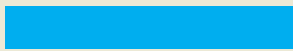# Guide to Print Production
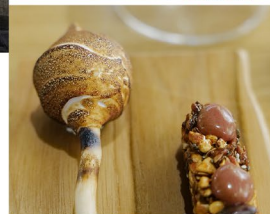

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Photographs by Tirso Gamboa

Tirso's Pick

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Vocabulary

Pre-flighting: is the process of checking your files before sending to a printer. The term comes from Pilots having a pre-flight procedure before take off.

Trim: your page size.

Bleed: space that extends past your trim size, allowing you to print edge to edge.

Safety: an imaginary margin on your page to keep any elements from being cut off. This mostly applies to text because if it gets cut off, it can become unreadable.

Margins: the space from the edge of your trim, which typically is the container for your content

Gutter: the imaginary margin on the inside edge of your page, when you're working with spreads. The gutter margin helps you avoid anything falling into the binding of a book or magazine.

Color space: range of colors that are specific to working on print or digital projects.

RGB: the color space for digital, which stands for Red, Green, and Blue. You can also use hex values for digital, which is more common.

CMYK: the color space for print, which stands for Cyan, Magenta, Yellow, and Black.

Resolution: the quality of your image. This is defined in DPI or dots per inch. The high-res requirement for print is 300DPI.

Pre-Flight Checklist

1. Check your trim size.

2. Also check that you've set a bleed size in your document settings

3. For elements that are on the edge of your trim size, do they extend to the bleed size?

4. Do you have safety specs from your printer? If your margins are large enough, you should be ok!

5. Are all of your text color(s) in CMYK?

6. Is the effective PPI for your images above 300? If not, you'll have to scale down the size until you reach 300, or try to come close. I highly suggest not going below 250 DPI.

7. Are your images in CMYK? If not, you'll have to switch their color mode in Photoshop.

   Open the image in Photoshop. At the top, go to Image > Mode, then select CMYK.

8. If everything above is done, you can export your project. This should be a PDF X–1a, with crops and bleed marks.

9. Send your project to the printer!

10. Pray there are no errors. Your printer will let you know.

11. Go through this checklist until it become second nature to you!

Thank you!

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