

Better photos, more bookings.

We studied 3,103 whole-home Airbnb listings to measure what listing photos are actually worth. The answer: a lot, at every price point, not just for luxury homes.

+23%

more revenue for homes with professional-quality photos vs similar homes with amateur photos

+31%

more revenue for the top quarter of listings by photo quality vs the bottom quarter

57%

of the whole-home Airbnbs we studied still use amateur-quality photos

It pays at every price point Revenue lift from amateur to professional-quality photos, by home revenue

Under \$20K	+19%	\$2,800 / yr on a \$15K home
\$20K to \$35K	+29%	\$8,700 / yr on a \$30K home
\$35K to \$50K	+19%	\$8,600 / yr on a \$45K home
\$50K and up*	+28%	\$16,800 / yr on a \$60K home

What moves revenue

- ✓ **Styling and staging**
The #1 driver: decluttered, beds dressed, lights on.
- ✓ **Lighting and image quality**
Bright, sharp, straight lines, windows not blown out.
- ✓ **The cover photo**
Your search thumbnail. It has to read instantly.
- ✓ **Enough photos**
Top listings show about 35 photos vs 25 at the bottom.

What doesn't

- ✗ **Twilight and dusk shots**
No measurable revenue lift.
- ✗ **Drone and aerial shots**
No measurable revenue lift.
- ✗ **Text, logos and collage graphics**
No lift, and they clutter the thumbnail.
- ✗ **Reshuffling photo order alone**
Barely moves revenue without better photos.

The Surge Photo Method

1. **Research first.** We study the top-performing listings near you to build your custom shot list.
2. **Camera-ready prep.** A prep checklist so beds, surfaces and lights are ready before we shoot.
3. **Professional lighting and lens standards.** Bright, balanced, straight, shot at the right height.
4. **A cover built for search.** The single most compelling space, readable as a thumbnail.
5. **A shot list that answers guest questions.** Every bedroom and bed, each bath, workspace, parking, stairs.
6. **30+ photos in the order guests decide.** Living, kitchen, dining, bedrooms, then the rest.

Book a Surge Airbnb photography session. Packages by home size: \$1,049 (studio to 2 bedrooms), \$1,349 (3 to 4 bedrooms), \$1,749 (5+ bedrooms or pool). Humberto Marquez, Founder · humberto@gowithsurge.com · (888) 616-8149 · gowithsurge.com

Research and analysis by Humberto Marquez, Founder of Surge (gowithsurge.com/author/humberto-marquez). Method: 3,103 entire-home Airbnb listings active 180+ days with 3+ reviews (Surge market data, trailing 12 months, October 2026). Each listing's first 5 photos were scored for styling, lighting and image quality, cover photo and order without knowledge of revenue. Revenue was compared across similar homes, controlling for submarket, bedrooms, baths, guest count, amenities, rating, review count, days available, host portfolio size and interior design quality. Results show an association, not a guarantee; well-run listings tend to invest in photos, so individual results vary. Revenue is measured revenue; nightly rate was flat between groups, booked nights explain part of the gap and the rest is not attributed to a single factor. Example dollar figures apply each tier's measured lift to a round revenue figure. *Smaller sample (102 homes); wider uncertainty.