

Let Your Wedding Flowers Speak the Language of Love

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**By Claire Bowes**

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Congratulations! You have found the man of your dreams and are getting married. What a wonderful time in your life - full of promise, hope, and happiness. Can you think of a better way to express these emotions than through flowers? A wedding would just not be the same without wedding flowers.

The Tradition of Wedding Flowers

Carrying flowers by the bride is not something new; it actually has its roots in ancient times. Strong smelling herbs and spices were used to keep away evil spirits during the wedding celebration. Later, during the Roman era, flowers were used to symbolize fertility. Eventually, flowers were given different meanings and used as a way of sending "love notes" in the form of bouquets. Soon, the tradition of the meaning of each flower trickled down and was adopted for the bride's bouquet.

By tradition, the groom wears a flower that appears in the bridal bouquet in his buttonhole. This custom originates from the Medieval tradition of a knight wearing his lady's colors as a declaration of love.

So it seems that a wedding without flowers is like, well, it's like a garden without flowers!

So Many Choices

Have you ever considered how many different kinds of flowers there are? Hundreds of beautiful blooms are available to create the romantic elegance your wedding deserves. You may even feel like author Phoebe Cary, who said, "I know not which I love the most, Nor which the comeliest shows, The timid, bashful violet Or the royal-hearted rose: The pansy in purple dress, The pink with cheek of red, Or the faint, fair heliotrope, who hangs, Like a bashful maid her head." So, how do you choose?

One way is to consider the different meanings of the flowers and create a bouquet that is not only beautiful to the eye, but also meaningful to the heart. Another way is to consider the time of year. Many

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flowers are more common during one season than another, so finding off-season flowers may be difficult!

Based on tradition, here are some of the more popular wedding bouquet flowers and what they mean, along with when they are in season: Red Rose - Love, All Year White Rose – Unity, All Year Yellow Rose – Joy, All Year Orange Rose – Passion, All Year Pink Rose – Secret Love, or Grace & Sweetness, All Year Alstroemeria – Devotion, All Year Baby's Breath – Innocence, All Year Calla Lily – Magnificent Beauty, March through September Carnation – Devoted Love, All Year Daisy – Innocence & Romance, All Year Ivy – Fidelity, Marriage, All Year Lily Of The Valley – Happiness, March through September Myrtle – Joy , All Year Orchid – Love & Beauty, All Year Stephanotis – Marital Happiness, All Year Tulips – Love & Passion, January through April Zinnia – Affection, All Year

The best way to get the right flowers is to choose the right florist and one of the best ways to find a

good florist is by word of mouth. If the florist's service and work comes highly recommended, chances are they will do a good job for you. Select a florist that listens to you and really grasps the look and feel you want. Be open to the florist's ideas and suggestions. In the long run, it will be the value of their experience, talent, and expertise that you have purchased.

Don't Forget the Flowers for the....

In addition to flowers for the wedding party and family members, you will need flowers for the church, arrangements for the reception tables, head table, and guest book table. You may even want flowers for the cake and a small bouquet for the ladies' room. To make sure you don't forget any of your floral needs, here is a list of possibilities: Flowers for the Bridal Party Bride's Bouquet Maid/Matron of Honor Mother of the Bride Mother of the Groom Bridesmaids Flower Girl Grandmothers Groom Best Man Father of the Bride Father of the Groom Ushers Ring Bearer Grandfathers

Flowers for the Wedding Ceremony Altar Arrangements Aisle Markers Candelabras Aisle Runner

Canopy or Archway Kneeling Bench

Flowers for the Reception Bridal Table Cake Table Guest Table Buffet Table Bandstand Gift Table Guest Book Table Bouquet to Throw

Fresh flowers underline the importance and elegance of your wedding day. They enhance any setting and can literally transform an average looking room into a beautiful scene. If you've planned well, your flowers will be exactly what you want, and you'll be free to focus on what your day is all about.

Claire Bowes is a successful freelance writer and owner of

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and

## **Using Silk Flowers – Should I?**

**By Ginger Ruoff**

### **Using Silk Flowers – Should I? by Ginger Ruoff**

Many of the silk flowers available for bridal bouquets today look so real only the bride knows for sure whether they are. Using silk flowers in the bridal bouquet may not be for every bride, but many are taking a second look at the advantages.

One of the best reasons for choosing silk flowers for the wedding bouquet is that the beauty of the flowers will remain the same for many tomorrows as it looks today. Too often with a fresh cut bouquet, saving it means drying the bouquet. If you are not adept at drying flowers, they may even end up with mold spots. Even if they are dried appropriately, the colors will be faded. You can get a fresh cut bouquet freeze dried to perpetuate the true colors, but it must be done by a professional and can be expensive. Silk flowers will not wilt, mold, or fade on your wedding day or over the years that pass.

If you choose to have a silk flower wedding, you can plan and order your bouquets far in advance of the wedding. Most brides are very busy in the month before the wedding. Having to coordinate with a florist to have fresh cut flowers delivered to the wedding venue is just one more pressure point on the countdown. Also, if the fresh cut flowers do not look like you envisioned, when you get them it is often too late to change anything. When you order your silk flower bouquets as far in advance as six months before the wedding, you have plenty of time to ask for changes or to order extra pieces if other honored guests appear on your list.

Finally, in terms of the wedding budget, a silk flower wedding can be more economical than fresh cut flowers. The flowers you like are always "in season." Prices are not bumped by seasonal changes. Also, because you will be able to order at a time that you wish to, you can pay for the flower expense months ahead of other expenses that will necessarily come right before the wedding.

Whatever choices you make about your wedding flowers – silk flower or fresh cut – a good wedding flower designer will help you create beauty in your wedding bouquet.

Ginger designs custom–styled bridal bouquets and wedding packages for brides. Visit her website <http://www.bridalsilkbouquets.homestead.com> for ideas.

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