

Fresh Choices

Trend-Setting Tips for Buying Fresh Cut Flowers and Greens

Big Is Beautiful

BIG BLOOMS ARE IN. THAT'S THE ADVICE OF FASHION reporters and trend watchers this season, as models with bright, bold floral patterns draped across bodies have become a common scene on runways across the world.

Fashion magazines from *In Style* to *Marie Claire* are showcasing the newest floral patterns in their glossies and on their Web sites, while fashion columnists, such as David Coleman of *The New York Times*, tell their readers it's time for their closets to hit full bloom. Top designers such as Miuccia Prada, Martin Margiela and Junva Watanabe "went overboard for respectively, plaids, stripes and florals" this spring, Coleman reports.

Celebrities are showing off the power of flowers, too, such as Drew Barrymore, who was recently featured on *In Style's* Web site wearing a black dress from Gucci with a big, bold marigold on its front.

As wedding season rolls around, florists can get in on this fashion craze by offering the real thing, in the way of big, bold, REAL

roses. We've scoped out several varieties in our recent travels, at the HPP Show in Miami and WF&FSA's Floral EXPO in Tampa, and through visits with growers and wholesalers — in an array of colors that even first daughter and new bride Jenna Bush — who's bridesmaids each donned a different color dress — would lobby for any day.

Pretty in Pink

Bloom size catches the eyes of the judges at SAF's Outstanding Varieties Competition every year, and turning heads at 2007's competition was **'Topaz' (1)**, presented by The Elite Flower in Miami. Similar in head size to the popular 'Coffee Break' at about 6 cm on average, this dark pink flower and red ribbon winner has been on the market almost a year now and has a 13- to 14-day vase life.

'Pink Intuition' (2) is a "striking marbled pink on pink" bloom that is 6.5 cm, says Jody Whitkus of Golden Flowers. This slow-opening flower also features a 30 to 35 petal count, a seven-day vase life and a 40- to 70-cm stem length.

Picture a big bubble, made with a fresh piece of Bazooka, and you've got a good image of Eufhoria's **'Revival' (3)**, which features a 6.6- to 7.6-cm bloom and will far outlast any bubble, with its 10- to 14-day vase life.

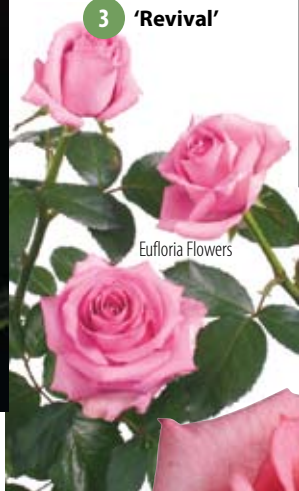
If you love the light pink 'Engagement,' a soft pink rose, you can count on the same shape and opening with its medium- to dark-pink cousin, **'Dark Engagement' (4)**, says Randy Schenauer of The Elite Flower. The rose stands out with its 6- to 7-cm head and 13- to 15-day vase life.

The Elite Flower

'Topaz' 1



3 'Revival'



Eufhoria Flowers

'Pink Intuition' 2



Golden Flowers



4 'Dark Engagement'

Lanny Provo

Rio Roses

6 'Anastasia'



'Mt. Everest' 5



Fresca Farms

Wow-worthy Whites

And if your bride is going with traditional white flowers for her wedding, Ali Cruz of Fresca Farms in Miami, says to look no further than **'Mt. Everest' (5)**. Its 6.6-cm bloom and 60-cm stem make it great for arrangements.

'Anastasia' (6) is another large white to consider, says Marc Blatchey of Rio Roses in Miami. This flower's bloom opens up fully at just shy of 7.6 cm, has long stems and features a 10- to 12-day vase life.

Chad Nelson of Euforia, in Nipomo, Calif., also points to **'Talea' (7)**, which has a slower opening bloom that's worth the wait: close to 7.6 cm at its fullest point. "It's an antique sandstone color with a little bit of blush pink on the reverse side," he adds.

Citrus Blooms

To appease the brides wanting bold, citrus colors which are all the rage this summer, Euforia Flowers offers **'Alhambra' (8)**, with about a 6.6-cm bloom, and 10- to 14-day vase life. "It's a firebrick orange with a little bit of yellow at the basing," says Nelson.

'Impulse' brings to mind the classic knock-knock joke: "Orange you glad you bought that electric orange **'Impulse' (9)**. The Elite Flower got a red ribbon for this neon rose at SAF's 2007 Outstanding Varieties competition. "It's a great orange, more of an electric orange that pops," and its 6- to 7-cm bloom has a high petal count and an almost two-week vase life to boot, says Schenauer. 🌹

— Kori Kamradt

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Lanny Provo



Euforia Flowers



Euforia Flowers

From Russia with 'Wow'

Ditch your old perceptions about roses needing to be in tight bud upon arrival at your shop, says Bill Schodowski of Transflora in Miami. The notion that roses with open blooms are "old" is so last decade. In fact, research shows that a rose that's not cut in a tight bud will open better, be larger and last longer.

This delayed cut is known by some as the "Russian Cut," says Schodowski, based on the Russian tradition of giving a single, large-headed, long-stemmed rose as a sign of appreciation, in contrast to the more common gift of a dozen roses here in the United States. To achieve these larger-headed long-stemmed roses, explains Schodowski, the flowers are left on the plant longer, feeding more nutrients to the rose.

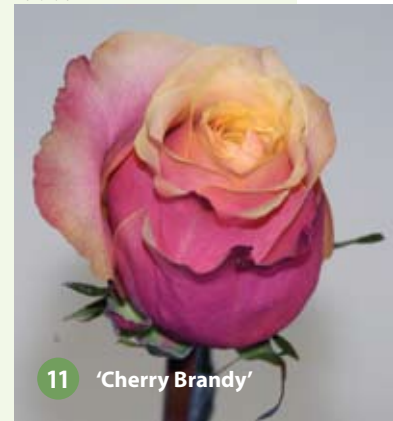
"One of the other things about it being on plant longer, the color seems more brilliant. That's what we want a flower to do — we want it to be brilliant, we want it to be glamorous, we want it to be large," Schodowski says, adding it also increases vase life.

Transflora rolled out several new Russian Cut, or as it is calling them, Designer Cut, roses right after Mother's Day, each ranging in the 7.6 to 8.9 cm range in bloom size, with a 10- to 14-day vase life. Some of its newest offerings include: **'Esperance' (10)**, a white rose with "delicate" pink edges and outer petals with green shades; **'Cherry Brandy' (11)**, an orange, red, burgundy and yellow rose that never loses its multicolored characteristics; and **'Engagement' (12)**, a pink rose with some peach tendency that opens in a spiral but keeps the stamens hidden. 🌹 —K.K.

Transflora



Transflora



Transflora

