

Keeping flowers simple a growing arrangement

By Janice Tiger-Kramer,
special writer

WHEN IT comes to selecting wedding flowers, this year's bride likes simplicity and classic elegance. Brides are finding that bigger bouquets and arrangements aren't always better. — less can be more.

For some brides, that even means replacing the plastic bride and groom on the wedding cake with fresh flowers. "Today, brides like things natural and fresh," says Harold Bell, owner of Affordable Flowers, Birmingham. He adds that 98 percent of the brides he sees choose flowers to top off their wedding cake.

For receptions, brides opt for historic sites like the Allen House in Birmingham or Cranbrook House in Bloomfield Hills over social halls. And the best way to adorn these historic places is by adding a Victorian look to colorful flower arrangements, says Bell. "The just-picked look with a long flower stem is popular," he said. "We wrap them in netting to give an illusion of veiling. Later, the bouquets can be put in a vase to use at the reception."

BELL ALSO says more mothers of the bride prefer bouquets over a prom-like corsage that usually leaves a hole

in the dress.

Affordable Flowers also will recycle the bride's bouquet, turning it into fragrant potpourri after the wedding. They'll even make potpourri out of other flowers the bride receives from her husband throughout the marriage. Bell recommends mixing the whole bunch together for a keepsake.

Since more and more bridesmaids are wearing jewel tones, Bell has a chance to use some richly colored lilies like stargazer (deep ruby to pink) and alstroemeria in bouquets.

"Since nature has enough color to offer, we only use naturally colored flowers," said Bell, adding that 40 percent of the brides in his shop use a color theme for the wedding.

At Bloomin' Things in Troy, brides like fragrant, colorful bouquets that stay fresh all day and enhance the wedding photos.

"White is still a traditional and popular color, but there are many new ways to use white flowers," says Margaret McIntire, owner.

MATON ESPECIALLY likes the Kissing Ball, a tight arrangement of roses tied with a Victorian ribbon that cascades over the bride's hands. The round bouquet, with only the heads of



Today's bride likes the natural garden look for personal flowers and table arrangements. Here, tulips, snapdragons, alstroemeria, daisies, monte casino, bridal rose and ivy make up those loose, airy arrangements by Dorcay Florist, Southfield and Birmingham.

BILL HANSEN

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