

BUDDING IDEAS

Flower power

Beautifying your home with blooms is big business

SERENE LIM
serenelim@mediacorp.com.sg

SINGAPORE – There is a flower movement blossoming across Singapore. Open any Instagram or Facebook feed and gorgeous blooms pop up alongside pictures of luscious cakes and latte art with greater frequency. Florist shops are also reporting that more customers are buying flowers for their homes and parties as well as signing up for floral arrangement workshops.

When The Bloom Room started its subscription service, sending flowers to the doors of those living in the Joo Chiat neighbourhood last November, the then two-month-old shop found itself pleasantly surprised by the overwhelming response.

“A couple of regular customers became new mothers and asked if we could deliver flowers to their homes in the neighbourhood,” said co-founder and florist Jaclyn Lim. “We started working out a way to get flowers to them on a weekly basis, with free delivery on a Flying Pigeon bike fixed with a wooden crate. But we received so much interest from people that we started a Launchrock page (to collect names, address and contact details), so that we can launch the service in new areas that see substantial interest.”

Although The Bloom Room has since expanded its service beyond the Joo Chiat, Marine Parade and Siglap areas (it now covers Tampines, Pasir



Deliveries are done by bike from The Bloom Room (left); a private floral workshop from Shop Wonderland.



Ris and Sengkang), Lim revealed that the company still has a long waiting list on Launchrock.

Shop Wonderland, the retail arm of event planning company Wonderland For Detailed Planners (WFDP), started offering floral workshops at its first shop in Haji Lane two years ago at the behest of customers who were impressed with the arrangements done for their events.

“I’d say the growing interest in flowers — and all sorts of pretty things really — commenced with the rise of social media sites like Instagram and Pinterest,” explained Melissa Wang, owner of WFDP. “People can’t help wanting to learn how to create such things themselves.”

Social media and the burgeoning

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OWNER OF WFDP

craft culture in Singapore, which celebrates everything handmade, independent and collaborative, are indeed major contributing factors. Florists like Poppy Floral Studio are located in self-styled farmers’ market Pasar Bella, while Floral Magic ties up with bakery Maple & Market and multi label store Tyrwhitt General Company to hold workshops.

Instagram has helped floral stylist Ng Yilian get the word out for her one-woman floral business since it started about five months ago. She has worked with homegrown bespoke aromatherapy brand Mmerci Encore and fashion brands like Etro and Sandro. “A few friends on Instagram asked me if I could start a floral workshop. I got connected to the owner of The Beau-

ty Candy Apothecary, who has been planning to host intimate workshops in her space.”

Ng said the response to her monthly workshops has been great, despite her being new to the business and having no formal training.

Flowers for your home have certainly come a long way from the days when they were deemed as nothing more than centrepieces for the dining table that had to be thrown out once they started wilting. Lim runs The Bloom Room with her husband Kevin Poh and mother, Serene Lee, who, as a veteran in the business, has more than 20 years’ of experience. She said flowers are no longer seen as a luxury bought by husbands and boyfriends for special occasions; customers are also less reliant on florists for recommendations and more willing to pay for premium blooms these days, compared to the past.

Said Lim: “They know their flowers thanks to the Internet and actively call us to ask about the availability of premium flowers like anemones, peonies and David Austin roses.

“Now, more and more, we see women popping by to buy flowers for themselves and their homes and we love that.”

Perhaps the most telling sign of the floral boom is that customers are asking Wang to do up their homes after visiting her store, which also houses a cafe in its newer, bigger premises also on Haji Lane.

“We had some enquiries to style homes, to take care of the soft furnishings and botanicals, but so far, we’ve only done so for corporate events,” said Wang. While there are currently no immediate plans for such a service, Wang said she might look into it.

In the meantime, it looks like you’ll just have to buy those flowers on the way home today.