

Shopping with a Side of Flowers: From New York to L.A., Flower Shops Are Popping Up in Chic Boutiques

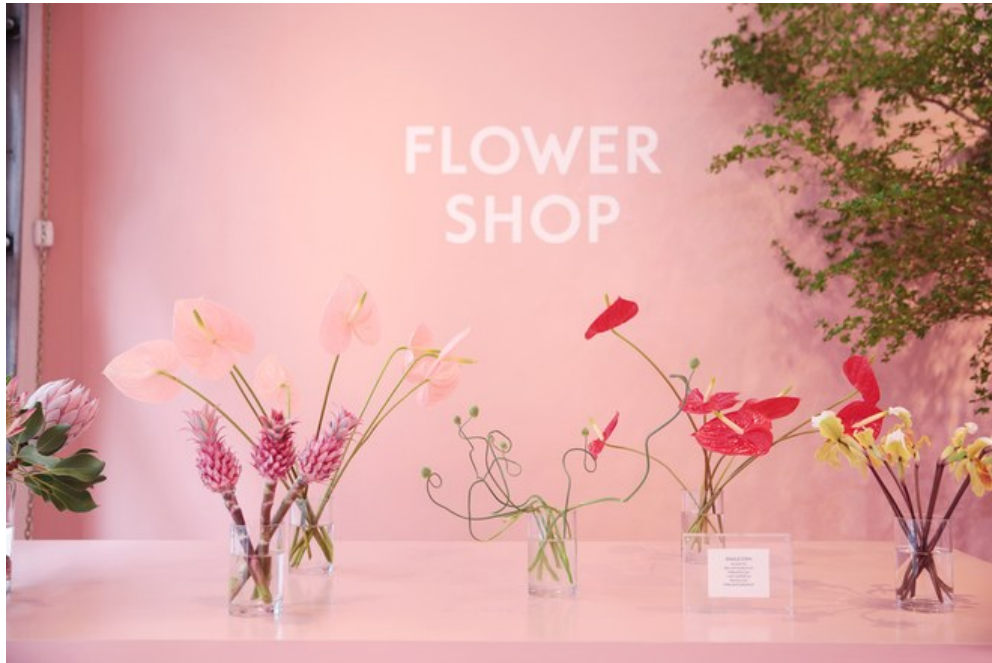
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by CATHERINE DASH



Mansur Gavriel in Los Angeles

Photo: Courtesy of Mansur Gavriel

The next time you go shopping for a handbag (or a sofa), there's a chance that you might come home with a flower arrangement as well. Thanks to a design zeitgeist that's currently flooded with florals (during this month's NYC fashion week alone, designers Jason Wu, [Ulla Johnson](#), and [Tory Burch](#) all had major floral installations at their shows), retail shops suddenly seem to have a new bff: the flower shop-in-shop concept.



Mansur Gavriel in New York

Photo: Courtesy of Mansur Gavriel

“[Flowers are] being presented in a different context than they used to because we’re living in such a visual world now. Anyone can kind of style a photo to their liking and just put it out in this really public sphere. Now there’s a little more individual personality coming through, and that has allowed for designing with flowers to be seen in a different way—and allowed for more of this type of collaborative creative processing happening,” explains floral designer Brittany Asch, founder of Brrch. Asch, the collaborator behind accessories-and-fashion label Mansur Gavriel’s singular, floral-heavy identity, partnered with the brand to create a flower shop inside its Wooster Street flagship in 2016, which she continues to curate. And this week, Mansur Gavriel took their concept to the West Coast, opening a 2,500-square-foot store (complete with a homewares market and a café) on Melrose Place in L.A. where you can peruse poppies and proteas alongside their products.

Floral designer Emily Thompson just opened up shop inside the new Roman and Williams Guild New York—a European-inspired café-marketplace-interiors store that Robin Standefer and Stephen Alesch originally imagined as a shop for their furniture, and she has a different take on the industry’s profound love of flowers. “I think there is a fantasy about getting to be surrounded by [flowers], and I think that’s what’s happening at Guild—it’s meant to happen there. You may or may not choose to buy anything from the flower shop, but you still get to have it for the time you spend drinking your tea and being on the premises. And I think that is enriching,” Thompson says.



Emily Thompson Flowers at Roman and Williams Guild, New York
Photo: Courtesy of Roman and Williams

Despite the fact that Guild was conceived as a furniture store, Standefer and Alesch, both masters of creating fantasy spaces, decided to put the flower shop right up front. “You get in, and there’s just this riot of color and flowers, and it’s almost an installation, but there’s also something really basic about it—it makes you smile. It’s so beautiful for that to be the first moment,” says Standefer, who wanted the shop to feel like a home. Thompson’s flowers extend well past her jewel-box-sized shop into the rest of Guild, where her sculptural designs are thoughtfully placed throughout—serving as both décor and inspiration for visitors.

Just a few blocks away, another Soho spot has carved out a dedicated space for flowers that, like Roman and Williams Guild, is intended to create an all-encompassing experience. When online consignment retailer The RealReal opened its first brick-and-mortar outpost late last year, they sought out floral designer and Fox Fodder Farm founder Taylor Patterson. “We love the more architectural take Taylor has on flowers. Her educational approach to her displays also fits perfectly with our mission of building an engaging community within our store,” says Rati Levesque, chief merchant at The RealReal. That engagement extends to the Internet, too, Patterson notes: “People come in and buy a stem here or there, but mostly, it’s an Instagram photo op—they’ll take a photo and that’s their moment.” A Japanese ranunculus is hard to resist.



Flowers at The Real Real

Photo: BFA / Courtesy of The Real Real

Over in Nolita, French fashion label Sézane has teamed up with Flower Girl NYC on a series of monthly in-store workshops that are focused on using seasonal blooms. Upcoming classes include lessons in arranging spring flowers, making flower crowns, and building terrariums.

Does all this flower talk have you thinking about bringing some into your own home? We've got you covered with tips from three of NYC's most sought-after florists:

1. "[Mansur Gavriel] also sells beautiful Murano glass vases. I would highly recommend buying a vase and a single stem. You don't really have to do anything—all the work is done for you at that point." -Brittany Asch, Brrch
2. "Branches are long lasting, they have a huge impact on your space, and they're typically locally grown (there are so many good things about that). For longevity, give them a fresh cut, make sure they have fresh water, and keep them out of the sun." -Emily Thompson, Emily Thompson Flowers
3. "Keep it simple, keep it seasonal. You don't need to have a ton of blooms to make an impact. Going somewhere and selecting a few stems that are really beautiful will give you as much of a feeling as a big bouquet." -Taylor Patterson, Fox Fodder Farm