

Local Beauties

By Marishka Bachman

You taste the delicious farm-to-table food at a local restaurant and have the satisfaction of knowing where it comes from. Energy resources are not wasted to get it to you, it is not treated with chemicals to preserve it, and you are supporting the local economy. This same satisfaction is now yours with flowers.

In a conventional flower shop, you see the same wide variety of flowers year round. It is easy to forget these beauties do not live in our back yards. Most are flown in from across oceans, and when these flowers show up in arrangements their origin is a mystery. How far did they come? How fresh are they? Did the workers who grew and harvested them receive ethical treatment?

In contrast, **Local Color Flowers** in Baltimore, MD is one of the growing number of socially conscious floral designer businesses in the United States. Owner and founder,



Photo by Kate Fine Art

Ellen Frost, was inspired to start her business by Amy Stewart's book, *Flower Confidential*, which takes a hard look at the flower industry and the steps it takes to make sure consumers can buy any flower at any time of the year.

Using the farm-to-table model, Ellen's business blends the artistry of flowers and Green business practices. Local Color Flowers buys only from local family farms and gardens. They compost all their natural refuse, whether from an event or their own workshop; they use vintage glassware whenever possible; and they have stopped using floral foam.

Buying flowers fresh and local, Ellen and her team stay in constant contact with the nearly 30 farms and gardens who are their partners. This means weekly visits to keep track of what is currently growing and ready to use.

Because Local Color Flowers tunes into what is growing now locally, you can expect a unique response to your floral order. Rather than a bouquet that is a carbon copy of a generic arrangement in a photo, you can put your faith in Ellen and her artisans. They will plan your bouquet according to your preferred colors, by learning what you like aesthetically. While partnering with the abundance of Mother Nature, they will find the best of the freshest. It is pretty easy to put your faith in their design intuition when you see the work they have done. Their arrangements tend to have that seemingly effortless beauty that actually comes from the careful balance of color, form and textures. Here there is no substituting



Photo by Ellen Frost



Photo by READYLUCK



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For more information on Local Color Flowers check out their web page locoflo.com, and follow them on Instagram.

style for ethics; Local Color Flowers gives you both.

In addition to providing floral arrangements for weddings and events, Local Color Flowers also provides individual arrangements for local delivery, and bulk cut flowers if you want to try your hand at making your own arrangements. They even have a CSA that you can sign up for. If you are a CSA member, twice a month, June-October, you can pick up your very own bouquet of flowers from their Waverly studio. They also have classes throughout the year to spark your own floral arranging creativity.. Flowers always bring sunshine into someone's day and space, so imagine how much better they will feel, knowing that every decision that went into their creation was environmentally and socially ethical.



CSA Arrangements

Photo by Ellen Frost