



4 Easy Floral Arrangements for Summer Parties

Create these easy summer floral arrangements for your next soiree.

Summer is all about fun and ease— and that includes the décor for your next party. And what simpler way to decorate than with materials straight from nature? We're talking bright, pretty, seasonal flowers.

Following in the footsteps of the farm-to-table movement, Great Performances — a catering and events company that sources its produce from its farm in upstate New York — is all about using local flowers to create beautiful arrangements, something they've dubbed "farm-to-vase."

Potted herbs

Add wholesome charm and avoid the "now what do I do with these?" centerpiece dilemma by displaying potted herbs. Bonus: Guests will be glad to take them home as party favors.

"It's this idea of recycling the décor—having something that lives on that you can use to cook with," says Tierney, who suggests potting clusters of rosemary, basil, thyme, and oregano.

These can also be styled to fit any event, no matter what your vision is.

"You can do them in recycled cans like we've done, you can do them in terracotta pots, or you can repot them in all sorts of funky vessels that you find in an antique store or flea market. You can really take this concept and apply it to different styles, whether that's rustic, more contemporary, or modern," Tierney points out.

"Just as eating farm-to-table has been sort of a macro-trend over the past decade, we're finally seeing that transfer over to flowers, too," says Josh Tierney, the entertaining and décor expert at Great Performances.

Not only is using local flowers more sustainable and community minded, he says, but it's also cheaper than buying flowers imported from Europe or South America.

Tierney shows us four simple ways to incorporate farmer's market blooms into our next summer soiree.



These artfully potted herbs are eye-catching and eco-friendly. *Photo: Great Performances*

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One way to fool guests into thinking they're dining at a five-star restaurant? Ditch the parsley and use edible flowers as garnish to liven up any dish, or use it to dress up a summer beverage.

"You can grow edible summer flowers in your garden, or those without the yard space or green thumb can purchase edible flowers at places like the Manhattan Fruit Exchange in Chelsea Market," Tierney says.



Spruce up your plates with fresh flowers, or use them to decorate a beverage as shown above, for a delightful and edible surprise.

Photo: Great Performances

Teacups make adorable vases

Whether you've had grandma's heirloom china kept up in a cupboard for years, or you've amassed your own mismatched collection from flea market hunts, just clip some roses or peonies to add instant elegance to your summer soiree.

Worried that it might look like your three-year old nephew just slipped some flowers into a party-goer's teacup? The trick is to make these arrangements look purposeful explains Tierney.

Here's how: Take some clear scotch tape and make a grid across the teacup. Then use that grid to place the stems into the cup filled with water. "That gives you a bit of control when you're composing the arrangements," he says.



Teacup flowers work well as a centerpiece for a food platter, as shown above, or as Tierney suggests, going down the center of a long table at a wedding, brunch or the fitting tea party *Photo: Great Performances*



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If a typical floral centerpiece seems a bit dated to you, scatter bud vases around a table instead.

“You get what looks like all these single flowers just growing out of the table,” Tierney says.

This idea is perfect for family style meals, a recent trend in entertaining, because it frees up room that would otherwise be occupied by a traditional centerpiece.

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