**ALTERNATE WAYS TO SAY “AMORE”**

> With all due respect to long-stemmed roses, they don’t own Valentine’s Day. Myriad flowers express romance, sophistication and lavishness — without the premium price tag or extra labor requirements. But to draw customers away from the ubiquitous “dozen red roses” order, “you have to make them feel the alternate arrangement will seem just as luxurious,” said Tom Sebenius, creative director of Starbright Floral Design in New York City. This expectation presents the perfect opportunity to market your upscale flowers, such as callas, orchids and anthurium, that look striking even in very simple designs (read: no need to allocate extra hours for cleaning and conditioning stems and greening vases).

For recipes, see www.safnow.org/moreonline

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PHOTOS BY KRISTINA BUMPHREY

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**A LITTLE ROMANCE**

Sebenius recommends this centerpiece for a customer who wants “something unique” for Valentine’s Day, but whose tastes lean toward the traditional. This design, using cymbidium orchids, green trachelium, lemon leaf and green ti leaf, takes about 10 minutes to arrange. (Half of that, if you prep the vase in advance, he said.) Wholesale cost: $30. As shown, in a six by six-inch glass cylinder, this could retail for $100. You could easily raise that price using a larger container, he said.

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**PASSIONATE PERSUASION**

For customers seeking a unique and “sexy” feel, Sebenius reaches for eggplant callas. He spent five minutes creating this arrangement that includes a cymbidium orchid and black river rocks. Cost: $30 for wholesale product and materials. A customer favorite at Starbright, this design retails for $100.