MODERN DISPLAYS OF AFFECTION

> Convinced a dozen red roses are the only flowers customers will consider for Valentine’s Day? Think again. The ladies of Butler, Pa., at least, are craving something a bit more colorful and contemporary. When Kathy Dudley, owner of The Bloomery, recently conducted some personal market research, asking local ladies what they hoped to receive for Valentine’s Day, the old standard seldom came up. “Overwhelmingly, the answer was that the women wanted to receive something different,” she said. “The words they used included ‘vibrant,’ ‘modern,’ ‘lush’ and ‘fragrant’.”

With that information in mind, she shared two designs she plans to market to Butler men this year. She thinks florists will love ‘em too, given the flowers featured have little to no foliage (no stripping!) and the designs use mass insertions. “Minimal labor lends itself so well to Valentine’s Day (or any holiday) when time is of the essence,” she said. These designs could be adapted for other occasions or seasons, simply by changing out the color or flower type as needed, she said. “The principal of groupings and insertions en masse still applies.”

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Katie Hendrick

FEMININE FLUSH Dudley’s design of gerberas, tulips, Sweet William and hyacinth plays up Pantone’s color of the year (see related stories, p. 20 and 32). It also hits all of her customers’ aforementioned keywords. Design time: less than five minutes. Wholesale costs: $20 to $25. Retail price: $80 to $100.

REGAL APPEARANCE Flowers in amethyst and peridot lend a royal feel to this romantic arrangement of hydrangeas, anenomes, carnations, button mums, statice and stock. Perfectly sized for a loved one’s desk at the office or bedside nightstand, it retails for $125 to $150. Design time: less than five minutes. Wholesale costs: $25 to $30.