GORGEOUS GERBERAS

“If you lined them up side by side in a long row, you would see practically every shade that exists,” said Ed Van Wingerden, owner of Ever-Bloom Inc. in Carpinteria, Calif., about the farm’s 275 gerbera varieties. (All that’s currently missing: blues, greens and black.) Gerberas’ vast color range makes them especially handy for weddings and graduations, occasions that call for very specific tones — a University of Florida student wants a bouquet with “Tennessee orange” flowers about as much as a bride who requested “blush” wants to see “bubblegum pink” on her big day.

Color selection is just one reason to love gerberas. Breeders have made strides in gerbera quality, including stem sturdiness, petal definition and vase life (some varieties can last as long as 20 days), said Christa Boerlage, general manager of Terra Nigra, Inc., part of DNA Green Group. Spiky spider and lush gerrondo varieties add even more interest to the mix. Two pages couldn’t contain all the latest gerberas on the market, so head to safnow.org/moreonline for even more varieties, as well as care and handling tips.

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Fresh Choices

‘ELARA’ (GERRONDO)
Green Valley Floral

‘MARMARA’
Dramm and Echter

‘COCKTAIL’
Ever Bloom

‘CAPABLE’
Green Valley Floral

‘LEXINGTON’
Ever Bloom

‘SHANIA’
Dramm and Echter

‘SOLEMIA’
Ever Bloom

‘POMPONI SETH’ (GERRONDO)
Hilverda de Boer

‘TITAAN’ (GERRONDO)
Green Valley Floral

‘OBERON’ (GERRONDO)
Green Valley Floral