WHY SHOP HERE

Jerrica Park said its philosophy appeals to its young customers. “We eat, sleep, and breathe green! It’s an extension of personal beliefs first, community outreach second, and a great marketing tactic third,” the 23-year-old said. “We aren’t just a Gen Y shop, but I know that our green efforts make the difference with that age group.”

Members of Gen Y came of age doing their homework in Starbucks and hanging out on comfy seats at Barnes & Noble. They want their retail experience to feel natural, and in Larchmont N.Y., so Ainslie Simmonds is inviting them to step up to The Flower Bar. The former Wall Street marketing manager opened the shop last November after a major renovation designed to make it look like a sleek, airy Soho restaurant. “With younger customers, you definitely have to make them want to be in your space,” she said. “The stuffiness has to go.”

There’s no trace of stuffy at Main Street Floral in Anoka, Minn., where the under-30 employees work in lime and hot pink design rooms, blog about designs that make their customers say “OMG,” describe the “Malibu Barbie” hues of arrangements, and generally just have a good time with “mom,” a.k.a. shop manager Dawn O’Bannon. “You just can’t afford to be boring with this generation, there’s too much competition,” O’Bannon said.

These shops have connected with Gen Y in ways that capitalize on the findings and recommendations of SAF’s Generations of Flowers study. They get Y — and want you to know the promises they make to keep them.

We’ll Never Bore You

Florists must fight to keep this over-stimulated generation’s attention with envelope-pushing acts.

“Flowers are sold everywhere, they can get them everywhere and they are savvy enough to know that,” said Mandy Majerik, AIFD, PFCI. The 29-year-old owner of HotHouse Design Studio in Birmingham, Ala., is a third-generation florist, and has seen the industry lose ground and fail to make the case for why anyone should buy flowers from a florist instead of from Costco.

SAF’s Generations of Flowers research shows that only one-third of Gen Y indicated they are very knowledgeable about the best places to buy flowers, significantly lower than other generations. (About 43 percent and 45 percent of Gen Xers and Boomers, respectively, say they’re keen to the best sources for flowers.)

“Personalization is key, and you have to make sure Gen Y knows you can customize,” said Majerik, who deviates from the simple and the familiar with as much gusto as fellow Gen Y-ers. “The big thing is they want to look different.”

Petal & Leaf Whatever you do, don’t be smarmy or talk down to Gen Y, said Cat Thomson, who practices that at her funky shop in Jamaica Plain, Mass.

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