

Do You Remember Bathroom Tissue flowers?

I absolutely love flowers! They're the icing on the cake in decorating any space, especially when you're entertaining. My love for botanicals goes way back many many years. As a little girl I was obsessed with making pastel ruffled flowers out of bathroom tissue. I may be aging myself but when I was a child TP was rarely ever white, it came in all different pastels, something difficult to find nowadays! Conversely the availability of fresh flowers is so much greater than it was years ago, that you really don't need bathroom tissue flowers anymore!

As an adult I pursued that passion and opened my own flower shop along with my sister in law Sharon, while it's been years since I've had the flower shop, I still enjoy fresh florals in my home and I prefer not to spend a small fortune on them as well. Here are some tips to purchasing, caring and arranging flowers.

-Try to support your local florist whenever possible, if you get to know your florist well they'll be happy to pass on discounts that they receive from their local wholesaler. Farmers Market are also a great source!

-If you do purchase from a local supermarket, try to buy florals that are locally grown. I have a few chain stores in my area that provide flowers from the Midwest. These flowers are typically fresher and last longer since they haven't been in transit as long as many of the international flowers have.

-When buying flowers the easiest way to determine how fresh they are is to do squeeze touch test; gently squeeze the head of the flower it should be firm and some flowers like roses should be very hard and tight. Petals should be flexible to the touch and not fall when touched. Flowers with small florets and buds, like Stock, Snapdragons, Orchids and others should have the majority of the blooms tight and closed. Don't be fooled by beautiful open large blooms, that just means they are past their prime and may only last a few days!

-As soon as you bring home your flowers, trim the ends at least ½ inch and spray the entire flower with clean cool tap water, if you have roses or other firm flowers you can immerse the entire flower under water for a few seconds. A shower does wonders for flowers! If you have floral food great, if not, pour a few tablespoons of a clear acidic soda (not diet) like 7-Up or Ginger Ale into your vase with cool water and it will work the same as floral food.

- Don't be conventional when arranging flowers, There are no rules, let your creativity flow! A few loose flowers tied together and placed at an angle in a clear vase can be as attractive as 2 dozen roses and will be a fraction of the cost. Or try large leafy flowers like Ornamental Kale that will take up quite a bit of space and are generally inexpensive as well, even one simple flower like a Daffodil can look awesome in a small vase!

-Always look around your yard and garden for inspiration too. This time of the year when my hydrangeas are starting to dry out, they look so perfect dropped in a large mason jar wrapped in some twine. Or in late winter or early spring try "forcing blooms"- Just trim some of the bare branches from flowering bushes and put in a vase with lots of water and soon you'll have beautiful blooming branches when there's still snow outside!

