

General Advice in Buying Flowers on Valentine's Day

By Dr. Stephen Rittner

1. The first thing to remember is that Valentine's Day is a great opportunity to express love to anyone you want to. It can be your lover, significant other, Mother, Sister, best friend, or even your pet poodle. The point is that you can express your affection to anyone you want to on that holiday, and it will be appreciated. So don't feel that it is only a holiday for your lover or significant other.

2. Why are the prices of flowers sometimes higher on Valentine's Day? For some people Valentine's Day is the primary time of the year when floral products are purchased....And then they get upset when they learn that the cost of some flowers are a bit higher at that time.

Please realize that the floral market operates on the law of supply and demand. If some flower prices are a bit higher, it simply reflects the fact that not only you, but also everyone else is anxious to buy product, and the market is reacting accordingly. When your florist buys his/her flowers from growing and wholesale operations, s/he finds that his/her prices are also higher than at other slower times throughout the year.

This constant price fluctuation is challenging for florists. Floral designers find that the price we pay for our flowers is not only influenced by flower holidays & consumer demand, but is also affected by earthquakes, snowstorms and all kinds of things that sometimes occur half way across the globe!! In other words, your florist is not taking advantage. S/he is also paying higher prices for quality merchandise.

3. Share your concerns with your florist, nicely. Don't let higher market costs alarm you, or upset you. Let your florist know what price range you feel comfortable in, and s/he will try to find something nice to help you and still stay within your budget. Most florists are hard working, very decent people who want to help their customers meet their needs. They will have a variety of options in a wide range of prices. **But you have to communicate clearly your needs and desires to them.**

4. Keep in mind that some flowers are available in different grades & quality. If you shop around online and even from local vendors and come across prices that seem too good to be true, it could very well reflect that **quality difference.**

5. Don't wait until the last minute on the 14th to make your floral purchases. Your loved ones won't get angry if you give them flowers a day or so in advance, and you can make it easier on both yourself and your florist if you buy a little before the holiday. Less crowds. Less muss and fuss!

6. Don't be upset if your florist isn't able to offer deliveries on Valentine's Day, or guarantee a specific date or time of delivery. While some may be able to accommodate you, others will not, simply because of the high volume of business at that time. This should not be a major concern to you. After all, there's a lot of pleasure in personally giving your loved ones their flowers!!

7. Don't send flowers only on Valentine's Day. I know that you are reading this to get ideas for Valentine's Day but how about sending your loved one flowers at other times throughout the year, not just on a holiday when it's expected. Sometimes flowers and floral products just to say "I love you", at non holiday times when they are not expected can be even more effective!!! You may also benefit from the market prices of flowers being lower at other non holiday times of the year. (You should, of course, still send your loved one flowers on Valentine's Day as well.)

8. Develop a relationship with a local florist. Yes, that's right, a local florist. Your florist is not there just to sell product. (Though they are happy to do so.) They are there to help advise you, a member of their community, and to help you meet your needs effectively through their products and services. They can do it better if they actually know you!

Your local florist is your neighbor. You are spending locally and in so doing, giving back to your community. **Buying local is good karma. Enough said.**

9. Consider your loved one's tastes. While most flowers will be appreciated, the more personalized your floral gift the better. Is her apartment very traditional, or very contemporary? What are her favorite colors? Does she have a special collection or hobby? Your florist can stylize floral art to suit any taste. S/he can incorporate various things with flowers to personalize the designing for your loved one. Any attempt to get something special for your loved one should be remembered and appreciated.

10. And Hey Ladies....Remember that HE likes flowers too. Giving flowers shouldn't be a one way street on Valentine's Day!! Consider getting **him** a design that incorporates a hobby (eg. a new hard drive decorated with flowers would be nice.... Or possibly a new lens for a camera adorned with flowers.....My wife--please take note!). A design with bright colors or exotic flowers is sure to make a splash!! The point is, that guys like flowers too.

11. Above all, don't get too intense about all this. We have actually seen folks getting into fist fights in flower shops, even fighting over items to take home to their sweethearts. Relax....Chill.....**Remember, the whole idea behind this is to express your love and still have a bit of fun!**