

by Fred Russell

# A Tisket, a Tasket, a DOGGIE IN THE BASKET

*A design “going to the dogs” can be a good thing*

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Phil DeVito has been a featured designer on the 1-800-Flowers.com floral design team for almost 10 years. He learned the floral business from the ground up starting as a delivery driver for a Long Island florist over two decades ago and eventually owned his own shop. Phil brought his creative talents to the 1-800-Flowers.com Floral Design Center in Bethpage, NY. Since then, he has designed for Donald Trump, Magician David Copperfield, and on multiple television show sets such as *The Sopranos*.

**Designer:**  
Phil DeVito

**Experience:**  
Nearly 10 years  
with 1-800-  
Flowers.com

**Exposure/Awards:**  
Designed for TV shows  
and multiple celebrity  
clients like Donald  
Trump and David  
Copperfield

Phil recently participated in a Bloom-Net Design Council and says much of his inspiration for this design came from the council meeting. “I wanted to do something that was unique, so I was trying to think outside the box,” says Phil. “I also wanted to come up with a concept that would be easy to make and reproduce.” Working with the other designers at the quarterly design council, which is intended to inspire and cultivate new ideas for holiday and everyday products certainly helped in the creation of this theme.

Phil says he received a very positive reaction to the arrangement. Most people thought the puppy was cute and they would definitely purchase for the right occasion. “Puppies always make people smile and that’s what we try to do here—make people smile,” says Phil.

The arrangement is very versatile as well. Phil also thought about doing a bunny for an Easter arrangement and maybe a reindeer for Christmas. “Once you start thinking about it, the opportunities are endless and you can really expand on the theme. I just try to envision the final product and start to build it until it matches the vision in my head,” says Phil.



You can use the arrangement for pet lovers and children; everyone really reacts positively. “They want to reach into the basket like they can pick up the puppy and play with it,” laughs Phil.

As the Y generation and younger kids are upcoming untapped demographic markets, fun arrangements such as these can spark some interest and appreciation in flowers. For example, these arrangements could be used for kids’ birthday parties—adding a unique touch to such festive occasions.

By using the wildflowers in the basket and carnations for the puppy it keeps the cost fairly inexpensive, but people would be willing to pay more because it is somewhat of a specialty item. You could also add in more expensive flowers to increase the value. “I used a darker shaded basket to bring out the color of the flowers and the white carnations pop a bit more. It also makes it a little more earthy, which is nice,” adds Phil. 

## Arrangement Necessities

- \* **FRESH** Green kermit button, hot pink morimoto aster, yellow vikings, purple statice, purple monty casica, pink wax flower, hypericum berries, lemon leaf, white carnations
- \* **HARD GOODS** 8" brown handled basket, 1/4 block Oasis foam, Oasis Floral Tape, small bow, black button nose and animal eyes (available at most craft stores).
- \* **SUGGESTED RETAIL PRICE** \$54.99



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a-DOG-able™  
in a Basket



**1** \* Cut all stems down to about 6" and tape three carnations together with Oasis Floral Tape, with one carnation slightly higher than the other two, to form a face.



**2** \* Add two more carnations on the upper sides for the ears and fill in with two to three more between the ears to complete the puppy's head.



**3** \* Make the paws simply by placing three of the carnations in a line and taping together.



**4** \* Place ½ block of floral foam in basket with liner and layer the salal greens on bottom of basket surrounding foam and place the carnation stems of puppy's head into the floral foam.



**5** \* Add the puppy paws into foam and surround with flowers.