

by John Parkinson

GETTING HER Special Day RIGHT

Frank Feysa, AIFD, CFD, uses his designing experience and listening skills to fulfill brides' floral aspirations



As design director for Smithers-Oasis and principal of Garden Gate Florist, Frank Feysa, AIFD, CFD, has vast experience helping brides make their special day all the more unique. When Frank meets with prospective brides during their initial floral consultation, he first and foremost listens. "I let them tell me about their wedding," says Frank. "I let the bride talk to me initially about her feelings, wishes, and let her give me an overview of what she thinks things could be. Right off the bat, that answers a lot of questions for me." He also asks open-ended questions to fill in any uncertainties.

One of the important points that Frank says that might be under utilized by some designers are the upsell opportunities. "If we are able to take knowledge that we have from our experience and make suggestions and comments that the bride might not necessarily be thinking of in the consultation—that could lead to additional sales and a more dramatic wedding," states Frank.

For the consultation, Frank will occasionally meet brides at their reception sites. He does this to get a sense of the setting from the bride's point of view. He also mentions the importance of lighting at the reception facility, especially for fall weddings.

The right lighting can create a great ambiance and help enhance the visual impact of the flowers, asserts Frank.

He also says a lot of brides-to-be come to the consultation armed with photos and ideas from bridal magazines. Frank says brides are still looking for "bling" but due to the economy it has been toned down a bit. He says they are often looking for simplicity and elegance. "They still want the opulence, but they don't want over-the-top opulence."

Designer:
Frank Feysa,
AIFD, CFD

Experience:
Over 30 years

Exposure:
Past President of the
North Central AIFD
region

2008 Fresh Flower
Procurement chair-
man for the AIFD
National Symposium

Multiple public proj-
ects like "Frankly
Floral Art" at the
Frank Lloyd Wright
Dana Thomas House
in Springfield Ill.



- * FRESH Orange, Yellow and Red Standard Roses, Orange and Red Mokara Orchids, Chocolate Cosmos, Rose Hips, Italian Ruscus, Parvifolia Eucalyptus, Loose Stems
- * HARD GOODS Smithers Large Straight Handle Wedding Belle Holder, UGlu, Sheer Ribbon, Lomey Corsage Pins

When thinking about fall-season weddings, Frank says designers are expanding their options from the traditional oranges and reds and dried materials themes of the past to include more color boldness and texture. "We have gotten away from thinking about fall in strictly harvesty, earth tone manner and are bringing in more textures and unique materials like artichokes, green flowers, and saturated colors." Examples of new color schemes are pairing neutral colors like navy with fuchsia, or taking orange and pairing it with yellow to punch up the look.

And with the addition of some newer hard good products, designers are able to add more freshness and flair. For example, some of the wires from Smithers-Oasis allow Frank to create more dynamic lines and give the sense of movement in his arrangements. Wicking water bouquet holders, such as the Oasis Super Wet Wedding Bouquet Holder which "continuously deliver water to flowers" are another great innovation, according to Frank. This allows designers to put together arrangements days earlier, without the concern of wilting.

For those who are starting out or are looking to build up their wedding business, Frank suggests a couple of strategies. First, he subtly markets to the bridesmaids. When the flowers are delivered, he makes sure his presentation is spot on. "I think the flowers must look beautiful," asserts Frank.

He includes touches like personalized wedding party labels along with his business information on the boxes, and makes sure little things like beautiful tissue paper enhance the flowers' appearance. "The bridesmaids notice this, and they are in that primary age group when they are more than likely going to get married," states Frank. "And they are

* **FRESH** Red, Orange and Yellow Standard Roses, Yellow Asiatic lilies, Kermit Poms, Orange and Red Mokara Orchids, Rose Hips, Plumosa, Parvifolia Eucalyptus, Italian Ruscus, Salal and Granny Smith Apples.

* **HARD GOODS** 11" Lomey dish, Oasis Bullion Wire, Oasis UGLu adhesive, Oasis Aluminum Wire, Votive candles, Tall glassware.



forming this lasting impression of the flower shop that created the arrangements."

To catch the eyes of new potential clients, he also suggests florists volunteer their design skills and provide arrangements for public events like open houses, fundraising events, and bridal shows. This is a good in-

vestment for florists as it is a way for them to step out of the box from a design point of view, and it is good for marketing as well, because large groups of people will see their work. To see some of the Oasis wedding products mentioned here, go to www.oasisfloral.com. 