

TREND NOTE
 Florals for spring—groundbreaking, right? But this season's take—seen at Alexander McQueen, Calvin Klein and Jason Wu—feels particularly fresh, thanks to abstract prints that call for mixing and matching with abandon. The vibe: subversive, not sweet.



PETAL PUSHERS

Florists in florals—we couldn't resist. In honour of Valentine's Day, six of the 6ix's coolest flower girls model the season's prettiest blooms

By Veronica Saroli | Photography by Cartlyle Routh

Ask a florist to describe her gig and you'll hear words like "amazing," "awesome" and "beautiful." "It's as dreamy as it looks," says Tania Dupon-Martinez of Tania Floral Design, with a wide grin. Push a little harder, though, and the #nofilter side of the job comes up: long hours, intense physical labour and inevitable cuts and bruises. Every rose, as they say, has its thorn.

That's not something that you'll often see depicted on Instagram, where florists have a romanticized It factor on par with Brooklyn pastry chefs. (All those gorgeous pics help.) "I'm not sure how it happened, but over the past five years floral design started becoming a cool thing," says Dayna Armstrong of Patchouli Design. "It's sparked a movement of young creative people wanting to get into the industry and do things differently."

These women are all about putting a fresh twist on the bouquet. "That Dutch Master thing is definitely coming back," says Amira Shabason of Coriander Girl. Throw in some architectural tropical plants and you're good. (Some of the flowers they mention are, frankly, impossible to spell on first attempt. Sweet Woodruff's Audra Csak knows the feeling: "Starting out, I'd be in meetings talking to people and googling things on my phone at the same time.") For Jordana Masi of White Oak Flower Co., making a bouquet is all about nuance. "You can have an arrangement that looks really sad and moody but still has so much beauty to it. I think that's really representative of how people are in general."

Gearing up for Valentine's Day often means prepping for emotionally charged orders, but Sara Jameson of Sweetpea's is unfazed—she's coordinated her fair share of secret-admirer blooms. "Recently, two local shop owners were sweet on each other," she says. "He was sending her flowers for weeks, and she finally figured out who it was. So she came to the shop and sent him flowers. Romance is coming back in style—but like old school romance." Call it an industry perk.

1. Jordana Masi, 25, owner, White Oak Flower Co., whiteoakflower.co

BANANA REPUBLIC TOP, \$110. **BANANA REPUBLIC.CA**. **STELLA MCCARTNEY** PANTS, \$2,470. **HOLT RENFREW**. **CALL IT SPRING** HEELS, \$45. **CALLITSPRING.COM**. **STELLA MCCARTNEY** HANDBAG, \$1,560. **HOLT RENFREW**

2. Tania Dupon-Martinez, 26, owner, Tania Floral Design, 1699 Attawandaron Rd., London, Ont.

MARNI COAT, \$3,310. **HOLT RENFREW**. **WINNERS** DRESS, \$30. **WINNERS**. **REEBOK** SNEAKERS, \$100. **THEBAY.COM**. **ALDO** BAG, \$55. **ALDO SHOES.COM**

3. Dayna Armstrong, 25, floral designer, Patchouli Design, 199 Queen St. E.

TED BAKER COAT, \$555. **PANTS**, \$255. **TEDBAKER.COM**. **WINNERS** HEELS, \$130. **WINNERS**. **BANANA REPUBLIC** CLUTCH, \$62. **BANANAREPUBLIC.CA**

4. Audra Csak, 27, studio manager and stylist, Sweet Woodruff, 422-N Dufferin St.

SMYTHE BLAZER, \$595. **HOLT RENFREW**. **ANN TAYLOR** TOP, \$90. **PANTS**, \$108. **ANNTAYLOR.COM**. **WINNERS** SHOES, \$130. **WINNERS**

5. Amira Shabason, 28, manager, Coriander Girl, 1604 Queen St. W.

WINNERS TOP, \$20. **WINNERS**. **TED BAKER** SKIRT, \$315. **TEDBAKER.COM**. **RON WHITE** HEELS, \$445. **RONWHITE.COM**. **TORY BURCH** BAG, \$730. **HOLT RENFREW**

6. Sara Jameson, 37, owner, Sweetpea's, 160 Roncesvalles Ave.

HUNTER JACKET, \$350. **HUNTERBOOTS.COM**. **WINNERS** TOP, \$25. **SKIRT**, \$25. **WINNERS**. **CALL IT SPRING** HEELS, \$60. **CALLITSPRING.COM**

STYLING: NATASHA BRUNO. **HAIR AND MAKEUP:** SHERI STROH FOR PLUTINO GROUP/ GREENBEAUTY.CA