

FRENCH BLOOMS

floral arrangements inspired by paris and beyond

SANDRA SIGMAN
of Les Fleurs



FOREWORD BY SHARON SANTONI

RIZZOLI
NEW YORK



LE LILAS

the lilac

Spring

SEASON



CONTAINER

Side Table

LOCATION

One of my dreams is to own a French country home with a massive garden where I can grow all my favorite flowers, including rich purple lilacs. I love how their sweet fragrance fills the air, especially when you bring them inside and put them in a vase. For this arrangement, I chose a plain, ivory-colored ceramic milk pitcher to showcase the intricate flower clusters. A tip when working with lilacs—since their woody stems quickly form bacteria in water, let them soak for 20 minutes or so in a bucket of water mixed with a few drops of bleach. Then, when you're ready to arrange them, use shears to make cuts up the stems for water absorption. Finally, change the arrangement's water daily.

ingredients

1 ivory-colored ceramic
milk pitcher

One 3-inch flower frog

Floral putty

7 purple lilac branches, each
with multiple flower clusters

method

1. Prepare your pitcher by fastening the flower frog to the bottom with floral putty. Fill the container with room temperature water and add flower food.
2. Place 1 lilac branch on the left side of the pitcher near the handle so that it cascades over the edge. Place another branch on the pitcher's right side near the spout to drape right. Place 3 lilac branches in the back section of the pitcher, leaning toward the right. Cut the remaining 2 lilac branches shorter than the back ones and tuck them into the center front. Adjust the branches as necessary to create a pleasing composition.



LA VIE EST BELLE

life is beautiful

Spring

SEASON



CONTAINER

Table

LOCATION

Once the weather becomes warm enough, I love to host friends for a meal in my garden. It's a great excuse to pull out my mismatched vintage pieces (received as hand-me-downs and found in France) and set a table with layers of different patterns and colors. This rose arrangement brings back fond childhood memories of snipping a rosebud or two (maybe three!) from my maternal grandmother's cutting garden.

ingredients

One 8-inch-wide low
cement bowl or urn

One 3-inch flower frog

Floral putty

One 12-inch piece
coated chicken wire

Floral tape

7 stems of short foraged
or purchased greenery
(I used lamb's ear, sage
leaves, and sprigs of herbs)

3 stems grape ivy, snipped
from an ivy plant

5 pale peach garden roses

5 pale pink garden roses

5 ivory-taupe garden roses

5 small pale pink bud roses
or majolica spray roses

3 white Japanese anemones

3 crabapple branches

method

1. Prepare your container by fastening the flower frog to the bottom with floral putty. Shape the coated chicken wire into an oval. Insert the chicken wire into the container over the flower frog. Secure the wire with floral tape. Fill the container with room temperature water and add flower food.
2. Insert your greenery and ivy through the chicken wire into the frog evenly around the container. This will create the structure for your arrangement.
3. Begin adding in the roses, layering them amid the greenery and clustering the paler shades together to give you that just-picked-from-the-garden look. If your table is on the longer side, extend several of the roses from either side of the container. A good rule of thumb is to give every bloom its own space and don't be afraid to move your flowers around until you are satisfied with the final version.
4. Tuck the anemones and crabapple branches around the bottom area.





PLUMES FLORALES

Flower quills

Summer

SEASON



CONTAINER

Sideboard

LOCATION

One of my favorite pastimes is to visit vintage shops and flea markets to discover interesting objects to fill with pretty blooms. I often look for different styles and sizes of clear glass ink bottles and small cordial glasses and have amassed a treasured collection. Here, I've clustered several of these holders together with a glass cloche to create an easy yet artful arrangement. You also can scatter these holders around your home to fill those spots that could use a little floral boost.

ingredients

12 clear glass vintage ink bottles and cordial glasses in varying sizes

One 4-inch-wide glass cloche with a bottom saucer or other cloche and saucer

9 dahlias in different colors and sizes

2 deep purple lisianthus

3 white or light pink foxgloves or snapdragons

1 to 2 handfuls foraged moss for your cloche (be sure to keep moss moist by spritzing with water)

7 stems foraged or purchased greenery, such as fern, weigela leaves, and fresh mint

1 purple coneflower (*Echinacea purpurea*)

5 sprigs lavender

method

1. Arrange the ink bottles, cordial glasses, and cloche on your sideboard to create a pleasing composition. Make sure no same-size holders are standing next to one another to give your arrangement room to breathe.
2. Fill a small watering can with room temperature water and add flower food. Fill each glass holder with the water.
3. Place dahlia blooms in nine different holders, putting the larger dahlia blooms in the larger holders.
4. Place both lisianthus blooms where you feel they'll contrast nicely with your dahlias. Add foxgloves to three of your taller holders.
5. Arrange your tufts of misted moss on the saucer of the cloche. Tuck 2 stems of greenery into the moss, trimming as necessary so they'll fit under the glass dome. Nestle the stem of the coneflower into the moss. The moist moss will act as a water source for the coneflower and greenery. Place the cloche over the moss, greenery, and bloom.
6. Finally, add the sprigs of lavender, cut into different lengths, to whatever holders need a boost, along with the remaining greenery. Stand back and rearrange your stems and greenery as necessary to create a textured, exciting vignette.



CÉLÉBRATION DE ROSES

rose celebration

Early Summer

SEASON



CONTAINER

Table

LOCATION

Most of the garden roses that I use for my wedding work arrive from Grace Rose Farm in California. Their roses are exquisitely fresh and come in a variety of styles and colors. The farm takes great care when packing the flowers and ships all over the United States. On those rare occasions when I have some leftover wedding roses, I'll arrange them in a large stoneware crock, as you can see in this arrangement I composed during strawberry season. The ruby-red fruit beautifully complements the soft colors of the roses, which I highlight by not adding any foliage to the arrangement. Simplicity at its best. If you don't have a stoneware crock, feel free to use any similar-size container.

ingredients

One 15-inch piece
coated chicken wire

One 10-inch-wide vintage
stoneware crock

Floral tape

7 light gold 'Butterscotch'
garden roses

12 mauve 'Koko Loko'
garden roses

12 taupe 'Stephen
Rulo' garden roses

12 pale apricot 'Moonlight
in Paris' garden roses

7 light pink 'Jubilee
Celebration' garden roses

method

1. Shape your coated chicken wire into a ball and insert it into your container. Secure the wire with floral tape. Fill the container with room temperature water and add flower food.
2. Trim 5 of your light gold roses to the height of the container and place in the wire evenly around the container. Keep the other 2 roses a bit longer and position them so that they drape over the side of the container.
3. Trim the mauve roses in varying stem lengths to create movement in your design and avoid a ball-shaped arrangement. The goal here is to have that just-picked-from-the-garden look. Since the roses have the same rounded shape and size, it's important to vary stem length. For a display with multi-shaped blooms in various sizes you wouldn't need to do this.
4. Next, add your taupe and pale apricot roses, trimming the stems in varying lengths so that a few dangle over the container's edge for interest. Since the colors of these roses complement each other, cluster several of each color together in different places to lead the eye in and around the bouquet.
5. Finally, add the light pink roses, interspersing them between the other roses, filling in the areas that have gaps to create an abundant whole.



BELLES PETITES TULIPES

beautiful petite tulips

Spring

SEASON



CONTAINER

Side Table

LOCATION

Here is a mini version of the same sort of arrangement.
Because it's so tiny, you don't need any supports.

ingredients

One 4-inch-wide thin vase

3 pale pink tulips

3 white and pink tulips

3 white peony tulips

2 pink frilly-edged
'Bell Song' tulips

2 stems pale yellow hyacinth

method

1. Fill your vase with room temperature water and add flower food.
2. Gather 1 of each variety of flower in your hand. Keep adding all the flowers until you have a balanced bouquet. Hold it next to your container and cut the stems so that the flowers will just mound over the top of your container. Drop the bouquet into the vase and adjust any stems as necessary until you have a nice rounded shape.