

Flowers add Flourish to the Festivities

BY KAYLA BOTT

Stunning scenery and interest in supporting our local community draw people from everywhere to Asheville. When it comes to choosing wedding flowers, the intimacy of interacting with people and plants of our mountains cannot be matched. There are many talented florists, as well as a variety of flower farms, which have become popular destinations for WNC wedding parties.

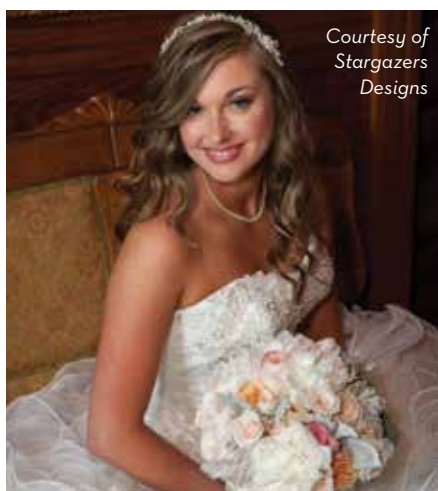
"The couples we work with are looking for local organically grown flowers that they can arrange themselves," says Vanessa Campbell of Full Sun Farm in Leicester. The farm offers harvested blooms that can be hand-chosen by the buyer. Choosing your own flowers isn't required, but at all the farms, it's an opportunity to explore hillsides of beautiful wildflowers. Campbell encourages couples to bring along families and friends to choose blossoms, adding an extra adventure to their wedding story.

"Greenery, texture and bursts of color are popular with my clients," says Niki Irving of Flourish Flower Farm in Candler, just 20 minutes from downtown Asheville. "Just because we use local, seasonal flowers doesn't mean that wedding florals have to look like they came straight out of the field," says Irving, who seeks to satisfy clients' artistic preferences. Her designs include "lots of cascading bridal bouquets, boutonnieres with interesting components like dried seed pods and berries and ceremony arches with an abundance of greenery and focal flowers." Designs are made with locally grown, fresh, fragrant florals.

Stargazers Designs of Asheville provides all the services of a full florist with a complete studio to accommodate each client's vision of a perfect wedding. "We recently did a woodland fairytale-themed



Courtesy of Farm Girl Flowers & Adornments



Courtesy of Stargazers Designs



Illustration by Stephanie Sipp

wedding where we intertwined LED fairy lights into the bridal party's bouquets," says Kristi Ball-Mayrand, owner. Stargazers believes that "every bride should sparkle on her special day." Ball-Mayrand says many couples are interested in rustic, bohemian weddings, incorporating florals with fresh herbs, cascading greenery and textural elements.

"I get a lot of herbalists, flower lovers and artistic types that are very hands on in what they want their flowers to look like," says Asheville's Lauri Newman-Waters of Farm Girl Flowers & Adornments. She immerses herself in her plants—seeding, harvesting and arranging them along with her team. The farm provides everything from landscaping to bouquets and never uses pesticides or GMOs.

Newman-Waters uses seasonal flowers and will even grow special flowers for occasions if given enough notice. "I also use herbs and an assortment of edible plants in arrangements for an authentic farm florist aesthetic," she says. Many couples add flower toppings to their wedding confectionaries.

"Our most popular arrangements are in the veins of vintage, romantic, natural, wild and organic," says Katie Greer of Lady Luck Flower Farm in Leicester. Her plants are organic and harvested from seeds and cuttings of native wildflowers. Since purchasing the land in 2011, Greer says, "we have spent a lot of energy nourishing the soil and feel that it shows in the quality of their blooms, in the life energy they possess." She understands why couples are so drawn to our mountains, "They want to celebrate their love in a place that feels close to the natural rhythms of life, where a slower pace is honored, where uniqueness and creativity is celebrated and encouraged."