



DESIGNERS CORNER

# How to Decorate a Home with Fresh Flowers

Add color and life to just about any room

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## Designer's Corner



Mansion Global tackles an interior design topic with an elite group of designers from around the world who work on luxury properties. This week we look how to liven up your rooms with fresh flowers .

Fresh flowers inspire an immediate lift, and add interest to any and all rooms. "They help to bring softness and texture to a space that can otherwise be filled with hard surfaces," said Phillip Thomas, founder and principal of Phillip Thomas Inc. in New York City. "Flower arrangements can also be a wonderful way to draw attention to features of an interior; a tall arrangement, for example, can direct the eye to appreciate the ceiling heights of a space," Mr. Thomas said.

Fresh flowers can "take a room from bleak to chic," said London-based florist Larry Walshe, "adding that final finishing flourish and bring your entire scheme to life."

For advice on creating rooms that bloom, follow these tips from the pros.

### **Focus on Style and Substance**

"I let the interior dictate the arrangement. For more traditional interiors, I go for fuller, denser arrangements. For more midcentury and contemporary interiors, I tend to like my arrangements looser and less dense with a sculptural quality to them.

"Don't match your floral arrangements to your interiors, but complement them instead. If your home is a palette of soft pinks, for example, choose a stronger shade of pink that attracts attention. Adding a punch of color to a serene interior or a softness to a vibrant space can keep the eye interested.

"Make sure the vases you use are watertight. I cannot tell you how many calls I have received from clients telling me that their vase leaked onto their furniture. It is also key to choose flowers that do not have pollen. If they do, remove the pollen before it falls from the flower. Pollen can have a damaging impact on soft furnishings such as fabrics and carpets.

"Store your flower arrangements in your refrigerator when you are away from your home for an extended period of time. It can really extend the life of an arrangement. When longevity is key, I try to use flowers that look equally beautiful when dried."



Varying vessels make for a lively presentation of blooms and greenery in this home designed by Phillip Thomas.

Eric Piasecki

— Phillip Thomas, founder and principal of Phillip Thomas Inc. in New York City

### Consider the Effect

"Stick to what is in season. Decorating with seasonal flowers evokes the moment you spend in a room.

"Start with a simple harmony. Build your palette first with the color(s) dominating your décor.

Then elaborate the palette by gradually introducing a derivative hue that may then incorporate accents of contrast.

"The vessel is part of your bouquet. Don't limit yourself to only vases. I have used empty paint cans, tomato sauce tins wrapped in moss, raffia, fabric, twigs, burlap, paper—the possibilities are endless. If you have a beautiful light source, then I prefer crystal-clear vessels; the water and branches are as beautiful as the flowers above."



Tall, voluminous arrangements of blooms and branches can help divide a large room into sections, as they do here at Majorelle restaurant in New York City.

Majorelle

— Charles Masson, owner of [Majorelle](#) restaurant at The Lowell Hotel in New York and author of *The Flowers of La Grenouille*

## **Get Creative**

"The best places to position flowers within your home are the areas in which you will spend most of your time and where they can be enjoyed fully. We suggest placing a large and impressive design on your entrance table to add impact as guests arrive. Low and luxurious designs can then be placed along the dining table, throughout the living areas and on bedside tables as a considered touch. To ensure your flowers last as long as possible, place them in a cool environment out of direct sunlight.

"If you are looking for your flowers to last for a week, there are certain varieties that will perform better than others. Hydrangea, gladioli, eremurus, moluccella and calla lilies are some of our personal favorites.

"Using a single flower variety in each vase works to create an effortlessly chic look. If you enjoy lots of different flowers, cluster multiple vases, each supporting a single flower variety, to create a luxurious look which is on trend."

**— London-based florist Larry Walshe**

## **Placement Makes Perfect**

"Indigenous varieties are easy and can be cut from your garden. Expecting plants to live forever is what leads people to buy artificial flowers. Orchids, for example, last a very long time and can be cycled in and out.

"Consider your space. There are many pots that hang on the wall—and plants like tillandsia or staghorn fern can be hung or put in a cranny. You can arrange seasonal vases, multiples or a single elegant silver service with traditional roses. I like to use loving cups and trophies from time to time.

"Always consider color. Flowers draw the eye, but greens can be very impactful, too. Chartreuse is one of my favorite color accents. I often use a color that is not in the room; it's just as powerful as putting lilacs in a purple and lavender room."



A single frond in a pot adds life and interest to this space designed by Robyn Branch.

Pam Tilley

— Robyn Branch of Robyn Branch Design in Fernandina Beach, Florida

