



Modern Bride  
chicago

FLORAL DESIGNS BY BOTANICALS

# BEYOND THE BLOOMS

## Unique ways to brighten up your bouquets & centerpieces

BY LISA MILBRAND

**F**LOWERS WILL ALWAYS BE FABULOUS, BUT today's freshest wedding arrangements also feature more unusual ingredients—like bamboo and beads, fruit and feathers. These atypical adornments, whether used with flowers or on their own, can help your bouquets and centerpieces really stand out. "One of the phrases we hear the most from our brides is, 'I want it to be different, unique and really express who we are as a couple,'" says Casey Cooper, owner of Botanicals, a floral design firm in Chicago. "Including nonfloral elements considerably broadens the options you have—it's like adding 25 new colors to the big box of Crayola Crayons."

Here's how to turn your favorite raw materials into show stopping arrangements.

**SET YOUR STYLE.** Be sure to share the details of your wedding elements with your floral designer, as they may help inspire arrangements.

For instance, fruits or vegetables work well for summer or autumn weddings—especially those with a garden element.

A wedding that's held in a posh hotel ballroom might

call for more fanciful arrangements—roses paired with feathers or sparkling crystals, for example. For a sleek, modern centerpiece, stalks of bamboo or stark curly willow branches will fit with the vibe.

**CHOOSE YOUR INGREDIENTS.** With so many decorating options out there, it can be tough to decide what to use. You'll want to keep the list of elements used in your bouquets and centerpieces short to give them a cohesive look. Try pairing one type of bloom with one other element for the strongest visual statement.

"Often the nonfloral elements highlight characteristics of the flowers that you might not notice otherwise," Cooper says. Lacy celery leaves, for example, will showcase the ruffled texture of roses or ranunculus—pairing the same blooms with woody elements, like moss and twigs, will make the flowers seem rustic and wild.

**TRY IT OUT**

Ask your designer to experiment with the elements you choose—you may even vary the look at each table. Be sure that your designer creates a sample arrangement before the wedding. 