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PICK THE PERFECT PETALS

(Hint: Just make sure they're not peach-colored)

CUTTING EDGE FLORAL DESIGNERS WERE polled about how hipster brides will be styling their weddings this year. Here's what's hot now:

POPULAR PALETTES

Demure, traditional pastels are old hat. Brides want bold color, often in daring contrasts or deep, rich hues.

Burgundy, designers agree, is a sophisticated choice for formal weddings, along with "medieval" shades of red and purple. Cranberry or garnet-colored baby calla lilies are a perennial favorite with brides, as are dark and velvety roses like Black Magic. An interest in orange has emerged with the adventurous set, either in hot, spicy or terra-cotta tones or brilliant like the Ballerina tulip.

"Peach is out," declares Rebecca Cole of Cole Creates, an innovative floral studio in New York City. "It's too syrupy sweet, but pink has made a comeback with the hip, cool crowd."

FLORAL FASHIONISTAS

While the allure of classic peonies, hydrangea and roses is constant, new favorites are cropping up. There's a

widespread interest in dahlias—lush, circular petal structure—to express individuality and a cutting-edge state of mind.

"I might combine them with something a little more linear," says the head designer at Botanicals, Inc. in Wicker Park, who recommends showcasing cream-colored dahlias with light blue delphinium.

Other trendsetters: calla lilies and orchids, the sexy choice. Sweet peas or dainty, lime green flowers such as lady's mantle offset tulips beautifully.

BOUQUET BUZZ

The tight symmetry of the neat-and-perfect "Biedermeier" look is loosening up, giving way to floppier bouquet styles with movement and drape.

Another popular bouquet style, what Botanicals calls the "elongated clutch," is also hot. It can be done beautifully with calla lilies, amaryllis, French tulips, anything with a very long stem to begin with. You keep the stems long and elegant. ♣