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FALL FLORAL TRENDS

“**F**ALL IS SUMMER'S LAST HURRAH, A TIME OF transition, when roses turn into rosehips, t-shirts turn into sweaters, and summer twilights turn into brisk dark evenings,” says floral design expert Casey Cooper. See what she has to say about fall floral trends.

Casey Cooper, owner of Botanicals Inc. a special event floral design company based in Chicago can certainly wax poetic about fall. But she's not all talk when it comes to floral design. She calls fall her absolute favorite season for design and explains why. “I just cannot get enough of the textural materials available this time of year, plus the colors are phenomenal!” For Cooper, texture is the key to successful autumnal design and here is how she does it:

GRASSES: A seemingly endless array of seasonal grasses are available in the fall. They range from delicate and wispy to tall and stately. Cooper loves to incorporate them into everything from bouquets and boutonnieres, to large, focal arrangements. “Imagine how striking a place card table arrangement created exclusively with seasonal grasses would look!” says Cooper.

BERRIES: Berries are another of Cooper's favorites. She uses them at every available opportunity. Her list of first loves is long. Glossy red and green viburnum berry, deep blue privet berry, rusty rose hips, rustic bittersweet vine, orange cotoneaster, flaming pyrocantha, pale pink or orange pepper berry, and burnt sienna hypericum berry. “Imagine the power of a centerpiece filled solely with a combination of seasonal berries in shades of orange!” says Cooper.

LEAVES AND BRANCHES: Cooper goes for the gorgeous vine maple branches and liquid amber branch-

es that are filled with small colorful fall leaves. Also, red huckleberry and eggplant smoke bush are available this time of year. She also uses red dogwood branches whenever possible. “They come on crop mid-fall and can be beautiful mixed in with an array of flowers,” she says. But the branches can go it alone, too. “We've been known to fill geometric glass vases with just dogwood branch, for a sleek, contemporary look.”

JUMBLED JOY: “In the fall, flowers are colorful and come in all kinds of different shapes and textures. I love to jumble them together,” says Cooper. She suggests rich velvety roses, wavy and unusual coxcomb, viburnum berry, and green wheat.

CHARTREUSE IS CHARMING: “I think chartreuse is an essential color for the fall. If you look around in nature, chartreuse is everywhere in the fall, from the changing leaves and the wilting tomato vines to the goldenrod just going off crop,” says Cooper. She suggests chartreuse orchid sprays and blooms to add contemporary flair to classic fall combinations.

POMP AND CIRCUMSTANCE: Poms are a novelty type of pompom and are interesting as they offer a variety of flower heads and add a wildflower look to an arrangement. Holland has cultivated an amazing variety of the blooms: Large garnet King poms, vivid Viking poms, romantic salmon daisy poms, micro poms, and chartreuse Kermit poms. “I love using them en masse or within a mixed arrangement,” says Cooper.

Casey Cooper's work has been featured in InStyle Magazine, Wedding Style Magazine, and Bride's. She was spotlighted in Elle Décor as a young talent. Visit her on the Web at Botanicals, Inc. (www.botanicalschicago.com)