

A S P I R E
DESIGN AND HOME

*bold
color +
design*

in bloom

botanical imprints

**16 DESIGNER
FAVES** OUTDOOR
FURNITURE

**& INSIDE:
ON THE MARKET
MANHATTAN NY
HUDSON VALLEY NY
NEW ZEALAND**

ASPIRE DESIGN & HOME asked designers to share their most beloved spring floral sentiments.

JENNIFER QUAIL

Spring Flings.

Bonnie Steves
BJS | Interior Design | New York | bjs-assoc.com

I grew up on a ranch in Southwestern Colorado, so I have always loved loose, wild arrangements of anemones with a lot of greenery, fruits and branches. I love using anemones because they have long stems that are sturdy and look wonderful grouped together or singularly in a vase. They also have a whimsical feel and wonderful movement like the wind. Maybe that is why they have often been referred to as a windflower.

The delicate and graceful blooms come in more than 120 species, so there is an abundance of types and colors that allows you to tell a rich color story through the mixture of one type of flower. The fact that they close at night, combined with the colorful, cup-shaped petals and contrasting centers, gives them a mystical quality.

Flower arranging is an art, and more often than not, your arrangements aren't going to be made by the hands of an artisan. Because I am not a florist but have a passion for arranging flowers, I will incorporate flowers into a room by using a variety of containers. Think outside of the vase – whether it's a mug, bowl, pitcher, container or ginger jar – to give the arrangement some added interest. Flowers bring a room to life, whether in the entry, on the mantel or dining table, or as a single statement on a nightstand. They truly give any room a touch of playfulness and elegance!

Matthew Patrick Smyth
Matthew Patrick Smyth
Interior Design | New York | matthewsmyth.com

I eagerly indulge myself in any and all variations of flowers and branches during April and May. After a bleak winter, I feel we owe it to ourselves! I alternate each week with whatever is in full bloom; parrot tulips, dogwood, lilac and peonies are placed throughout my office, apartment and weekend house. This year will be my first spring in my new house in Northwest Connecticut. I'm not exactly sure what I will find popping up, except for one flower: This fall, close friends gave me a box of several hundred "Winston Churchill" Narcissus bulbs from White Flower Farm as a housewarming gift. I had every good intention of planting them myself but thought it best to leave it to the experts. The only direction I gave the gardener was "Surprise Me!" So, this spring, I expect to be experimenting with white daffodils throughout the house – inside and out! This time next year I should be a seasoned pro in the art of decorating with "Winston Churchill" white Narcissus.

Erica Broberg Smith
RA AIA Erica Broberg Smith
Architect | East Hampton, NY | ericabrobergarchitect.com

As an architect, I prefer plants with very simple, large "architectural" leaves for interiors. The green is essential energy-wise in a house, but we add plants very strategically so they don't look like clutter. Cut flowers are an easy addition to any room and are easily changeable per season or mood. Giant-leafed plants, such as elephant ears or bamboo, can look wonderful in any space.

I studied at the Versailles National School of Landscape Architecture in France, and I really treat outdoor spaces as extensions of the interiors. I love highly pruned boxwood borders used to create outdoor rooms or espaliered fruit trees climbing up a shingled wall. Ornamental grasses add a softer, ethereal look and can be a design tool for blending one space into another, and the combination of a formal French style parterre garden with vistas from looser, more relaxed English style gardens are true perfection!

Mark Cutler
Mark Cutler Design | West Hollywood, CA | markcutlerdesign.com

Nothing brings a room alive like fresh, fragrant florals, and my favorite is always a bit of a controversial choice. It is the lowly, much maligned carnation. What I love about this flower is that it's not much of a soloist, but one hell of a team player. Clusters of carnations to me form the most interesting and luxurious balls of freshness, and that's before we even start in on the variety of color that they allow.

The great thing is you can find them usually at a great price point so I will buy 8 or 10 bundles, and have them throughout the house. Added with a little greenery they get very traditional, or alone in flat displays very modern – to me, it's the ultimate versatile bud. They can work great in an entrance hall or to decorate tables in any room, a delight for all the senses.