



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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# **Valentine's Advice from Canada Blooms' Leading Floral Experts**

**TORONTO, Ont.** — Valentine's Day is quickly approaching, and with it comes the pressure of giving your special someone the perfect gift, wrapped within a perfect experience that says how much they mean to you.

But it's not an easy endeavour. Putting some thought and creativity into the day can create memories that will last a lifetime. Look like you approached the day at the last minute, and, well, your relationship may become a memory. With a little advice from the experts who will be at Canada Blooms — the country's largest floral and garden festival — you can make your Valentine's one for the ages.

Says **Mark Cullen**, one of Canada's top gardeners and floral experts ...

*"Valentines is a peculiar gift-giving occasion. Unlike Mother's Day, most men are unwilling to take a chance on anything other than long-stem red roses on February 14. Red does signify love and passion, but mix in some fiery orange blooms to signify desire or pink for happiness and admiration. Be creative with the arrangement, and really go for the 'WOW!' factor. Mixing in your sweetheart's favourite colour puts a nice personal touch on a classic gift. But Valentine's isn't just about lovers. Mom will like anything colourful, and kids love flowers — especially if they are potted and will last, like hyacinths."*

**Denis Flanagan**, a horticulture expert with Landscape Ontario and former TV host, recommends:

*"Red roses may be the No. 1 seller, but guys should be more thoughtful and find out their partner's favourite flower. Take the time to pre-order a special arrangement from a florist, keeping in mind that demand starts to rise at this time of year and may require a few days to prepare. A beautiful bouquet of Bougainvillea or an amazing arrangement of Amaryllis — the Amaryllis Belladonna is one of the hottest trends out there, and the meaning of the name is Splendid Beauty — that says it all!"*

Go beyond flowers, offers **Niki Jabbour**, a vegetable gardener, garden writer and part of the website [www.savvygardening.com](http://www.savvygardening.com):

*"Forego the roses and capture your lover's heart with a gift of love-is-in-the-air seeds. A quick glance at any seed catalogue will reveal many love-inspired varieties such as 'Sweetie' or 'Sweet Hearts' tomato, 'Green Arrow' peas (inspired by Cupid), 'Lovelock'*

*lettuce, ‘Valentine’ mesclun greens or even ‘Sugar Buns’ corn (sorry, couldn’t resist!). Wrap the seeds in a heart-shaped box, and voila! a thoughtful gift any food gardener will appreciate. Another option is to give a bouquet that will not only capture the heart, but also help keep it healthy! How about a ribbon-wrapped bunch of kale, rainbow Swiss chard or leafy collard greens? Consider tucking a gift certificate to a favourite seed catalogue or garden centre in the middle of the bouquet, further ensuring that your heart-healthy gift will be treasured.”*

Garden consultant, writer, photographer and speaker **Theresa Forte** offers a new twist on the traditional bouquet of roses:

*“I’d love to see people support their local growers on Valentine’s Day. Instead of bunch of roses, order a rosebush. Old fashioned, fragrant and lush, they are a gift that will give for years to come. The choices are decadent, and there are so many roses with romantic names. Along the lines of local growers, how about cooking dinner for your sweetheart using locally grown fresh herbs, with a glass of local Ontario wine ... it beats a dozen imported roses any day!”*

Catch each of these experts and more at Canada Blooms, March 13<sup>th</sup> to 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2015, at the Direct Energy Centre at Exhibition Place in Toronto, co-located with the National Home Show. For more information or for tickets, please visit [canadablooms.com](http://canadablooms.com). Follow Canada Blooms on Twitter [@CanadaBlooms](https://twitter.com/CanadaBlooms) and Like it on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/CanadaBlooms).

### **About Canada Blooms**

Canada Blooms is an annual world-class festival that connects people to the joys and benefits of nature through experiences with gardens and flowers by promoting, educating, inspiring and celebrating all aspects of horticulture. A not-for-profit organization that gives back to the community throughout the year by funding community garden projects around Ontario, Canada Blooms is also dedicated to providing the community with horticulture expertise, education and resources on an ongoing basis.

Now in its 19<sup>th</sup> year, Canada Blooms was founded by Landscape Ontario and The Garden Club of Toronto. Each year it is supported by a committed group of partners, sponsors and volunteers. Canada Blooms has been named One of Ontario’s Top 100 Events by Festivals and Events Ontario and One of North America’s Top 100 Events by the American Bus Association.

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