

## Bridal Bouquet Trends

Written by By Susie Timm

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Attention, brides: The boldest accessory of your wedding ensemble? Your bouquet. Seize the opportunity to make it an expression of your personality!



Tight domed red rose arrangements are no longer the only option. Encore Creative, Phoenix's leading specialty decor and design company, recommends a creative bouquet composed of local succulents, glittering broaches, computer keys, or anything with sentimental significance to you and your fiancée.

Paper flowers make for a modern, eco-friendly alternative to a traditional bouquet. These aren't the tissue-paper chrysanthemums you remember from junior high. Today, skilled artists craft roses, orchids, gardenias, stephanotis, calla lilies, hydrangeas and more from newsprint, damask-printed tissue paper, old atlases, doilies and other colorful papers for a look that is shockingly realistic or sleekly contemporary, like sculptural origami. If you're not ready to commit to an all-paper bouquet, add a touch of whimsy by tucking small, handmade paper pinwheels among the flowers.

Feathered bridal bouquets can be retro, lush, or even goth. Wild ostrich feathers dramatically offset a round bouquet of garden roses or peonies and a bouquet of peacock feathers dotted with pearls stands out beautifully against a light-colored wedding gown. Jessica Barry, Encore Creative's wedding expert, says, "Deep purple Black Schwarzwald calla lilies pair especially well with feathered accents."

If you're looking to increase the bling in your bouquet, some jewels are designed specifically for that purpose. Like small broaches, they come in shapes such as flip-flops, dragonflies, turtles, ladybugs, pineapples, bows, and hearts. For a subtle sparkle, set crystals into the centers of tiny stephanotis flowers. For bolder impact, have your floral designer adorn the hearts of gerbera daisies with pave clustered crystals. Or, for even more dazzle, request a bouquet made entirely from a spray of Swarovski crystals. Crystal-studded bouquet holders are another glamorous way to secure floral stems.

Trend-setting retro brides are embracing flowers made of silk petals, vintage lace, pearls, and antique beads. They're also going for all-button bridal bouquets—an opportunity to raid Grandma's button jar. Stack buttons to create sculptural flowers or pair them with felt petals for a look that's sweet or funky, depending on your personality.



Planning an outdoor wedding? For a beach ceremony, some hot glue and the bounty of the ocean combine to create a bouquet of small seashells, sea urchins, starfish, and pearls. For garden nuptials, envision a bouquet of silk and feather (artificial) butterflies, which realistically float and flutter when secured on thin wires—with this bouquet, your flower girl can walk down the aisle looking like she's holding a handful of butterflies!

If lavender or mint evoke warm memories, add those or others aromatic herbs to your bouquet – you'll smile every time you catch a whiff of their fragrance. When one recent bride realized her ceremony site wasn't pet-friendly, she honored her dog Juniper by tucking juniper berries into her bouquet.

Don't miss the chance to incorporate additional personal touches into the bouquet's handle, as well. Wrap the flower stems in fabric from your mom's wedding dress or your own christening gown. Tie on a personalized silver charm made locally by Cherry Creek Designs and available through Etsy. Order it hand-stamped with your initials and wedding date then enjoy it as a Christmas tree ornament in the years to come. Or attach a locket containing the photo of a loved one.

Many of these unique bouquets can last forever, so seize the opportunity to keep this memorable wedding accessory a part of your life and your home's decor long after the wedding ceremony is over... and your marriage begins.

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