

## Outdoors

# The local movement opens up for flowers

**D**ebra Prinzing has a message for Mother's Day: Go slow.

The mother of the "Slow Flower" movement, Prinzing is making a personal crusade to encourage people to think about floral purchases the same way they may approach what they eat: Buy locally grown flowers or grow them yourself.

"It's in people's consciousness," Prinzing said. "Whatever their motivation, people are making a choice, local vs. import. Retailers see it as a way to sell flowers, too."

Sacramento, the farm-to-fork capital, is an ideal place for locally grown flowers.

"In Sacramento, it's possible to find local flowers 12 months a year," said Prinzing, author of six gardening books.

Her latest: "Slow Flowers: Four Seasons of Locally Grown Bouquets from the Garden, Meadow and Farm" (St. Lynn's Press, 144 pages, \$16.95).

For the book, Prinzing made 52 bouquets, one a week, with all locally sourced materials she found near her Seattle home or in her own garden.

"My goal is to inspire others to create personal bouquets with what's at hand," she said, "if only they begin to see what's around them with new eyes."

In the past year, Prinzing has seen interest in locally sourced flowers explode.

"Everybody's talking about field-to-vase or flower-to-table - even Martha Stewart," she said.

Like locally farmed food, local flowers are fresher, she said, because they didn't travel thousands of miles to get to their point of purchase. (Thus, they have a much smaller carbon footprint.) And because they're fresher, they last longer in the vase.

Most flowers sold this Mother's Day weekend traveled from South America. By buying locally grown seasonal flowers at farmers markets or roadside stands, a bouquet does more than represent remembrance. It's earth-friendly, too.

In "Slow Flowers," Prinzing assembled several bouquets with spring flowers that would be perfect for Mother's Day. A green arrangement features green roses with dusty miller and verbasum. A bright-purple bouquet builds around lilacs, bache-

**Seeds**  
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lor buttons and alliums.

"Peonies are in season," she noted. "They've been associated with Mother's Day for a very long time. They're a great value, too. They last a full week in the vase."

Some other suggestions: anemones, ranunculus, sweet peas, callas, early mums and lilies.

For the mom who cooks, try an herb bouquet of basil, sage, parsley, cilantro and some edible flowers such as calendula.

"Wrap it in craft paper with a bow and it's a perfect gift," she said.

Or look for bouquet ingredients in your own garden.

"If you're on a budget, it's totally possible to make a beautiful bouquet with your own hands out of your own garden," she said. "It's something really cheery for a child to make; a little adult assistance may be required."

"All these pretty, early-season perennials and some annuals are now in bloom. There are lots of roses. Add some greenery - some nandina or fern are nice - and a bow. It will be treasured."

### Peony time

Speaking of peonies, Dragonfly Peony Farm in the Sierra foothills is about to open to the public for its annual bloom season, according to owner Julia Moore. One of very few peony farms in the state, Dragonfly will host open houses from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Fridays through Sundays, starting this week.

If the weather stays temperate and the peonies keep blooming, more open houses will be held each weekend through June 9. Call ahead to make sure: (209) 293-1242. (The steep garden paths get slippery, so no open house on rainy days.)

Featuring hundreds of peonies, Dragonfly is at 5590 Charles St., Wilseyville, about 70 miles south of Sacramento. Find the farm online (including directions, photos of varieties available for sale and tips on peony care) at [www.dragonflypeonyfarm.com](http://www.dragonflypeonyfarm.com).

Call *The Bee's* Debbie Arrington, (916) 321-1075. Follow her on Twitter @debarrington.



Debra Prinzing top and above left; Mary Grace Long, above

Top, lilacs, bachelor buttons, columbine, burnet and alliums make up this purple bouquet by Debra Prinzing. Left, green roses, Star of Bethlehem, verbasum, dusty miller and lamb's ears make up another of Prinzing's creations. Above, the flower artist-author.