

PAIRS WELL WITH A RED (ROSE)

> For Valentine’s Day, ruby roses reign supreme — and often stand alone, with minimal filler. But given record high inflation, the ubiquitous dozen could cost a lot more than it did in February 2022 — quite possibly the last time some of your customers bought flowers. One way to ease the sticker shock: Tap into your artistry by offering unexpected styles and intriguing accents. Here, a few members of the Society of American Florists’ Professional Floral Communicators-International (PFCI) offer some of their favorite ways to elevate basic red rose arrangements.

Have broken stems? Don’t fret — cut them shorter still for a pavé design, says Walter Fedyshyn, AIFD, PFCI, a freelance designer, consultant, and instructor in Chicago. For these low arrangements, he reaches for white **hypericum berries** for color contrast and **brunia berries** for texture. For long stem designs, he likes to add **blue echinops**, red Leucadendron, or pink-striped flax leaves. His favorite pairing, however, is **pink protea**. “It’s an exotic look that really makes a statement,” he says.

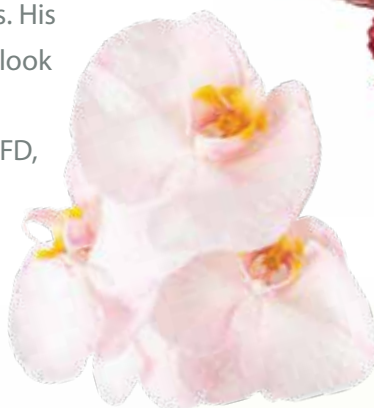
Salem, Florida-based designer Jacob McCall, AAF, AIFD, FSMD, PFCI, director of product development at South Florals, chooses **orchids**, **heliconia**, and **ginger** “when a customer wants to deliver the wow factor.” Red roses also pair beautifully with lush **hydrangeas** and **tulips**. “These combinations allow florists to do what we do best — create and design!” he says.



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PALE PINK PHALAENOPSIS ORCHID
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'CROWN OF DYNASTY' TULIP
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HELICONIA
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'SILVER' BRUNIA BERRIES
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'VANILLA' HYPERICUM BERRIES
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For simple sophistication, Deborah De La Flor, AIFD, PFCI, owner of De La Flor Florist & Gardens in Cooper City, Florida, uses **seeded eucalyptus** and **monstera leaves**. "They're effortless additions and customers love them," she says.

While the Valentine's Day hullabaloo is in the rear-view mirror for event florist Vince Butera, AAF, AIFD, PFCI, the founder of Butera the Florist in Sedgwick, Maine, he shared tactics from his retail days. "Using creativity and style, you can make even a basic rose vase design stand apart from mass merchandisers," he says. Accentuate the roses with shades and texture, which you can achieve with a variety of foliage and accent flowers. "I generally used three or more types of foliages," such as **silver dollar** or **gunni eucalyptus**, **salal**, **myrtle**, **leatherleaf**, **nagi**, or **tree fern**. "Choose any combo that fits the budget," he says. He strongly urges florists to think beyond baby's breath and consider products such as **limonium**, **diosma**, or **waxflower**. For a final tip, Butera recommends **curly willow** or **lily grass** for line movement. "It helps add drama but still has that classic appeal," he says. 🌿

Katie Vincent is the senior contributing editor of *Floral Management*.



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