

Bloemers Flowers and Plants

How well do you know your flowers and plants? Could you explain the difference between European and Canadian arrangements? If the answer is no, it might be time to go have a conversation with Monique Post, owner of the new flower shop Bloemers Flowers and Plants in downtown Owen Sound.



"The Dutch style is a more natural style, looser. I think we are a little wilder with our arrangements, but that's because we are a flower country," Monique says with pride. She moved to Canada with her Canuck husband in 2006. They met Online twenty years ago and after his first visit to Europe, they fell in love.

In Holland, Monique worked in long-term care but always had a love for flowers – after all, she is from a country that's called the largest flower market in the world. The Dutch are known to take flowers very seriously. And Post does – she went to school to become a licensed floral designer, as did her employee Robyn Thomas. When Post moved to Owen Sound, she took a job with Flower Expressions, but when it closed last year, she decided to open her own shop.

What excites her most about running her business is working with individuals to find the right arrangement for them. "We're independent. We do what we like," she says and laughs. "And of course we do what the customer likes!"

Because she's all about personal interactions and creative arrangements, she wasn't interested in being part of the wire services that exist Online. She wanted the freedom to do more modern arrangements and talk to customers directly. It's this freedom she enjoys most about being a business owner.



She has nothing to compare this year to since it's her first year in business, but she's prepared for anything. She expects a busy holiday season but is learning the cyclical nature of business "we have really good days and really bad days just like every other shop owner," she says.



But the worst days occurred this past Spring when she closed up shop for two months and did no business at all. She felt it was the right thing to do given the circumstances. "In the beginning, you don't know what to expect so we decided to close the business and we think that was a good decision."

During that time Monique and her employee Robyn made arrangements for front-line workers and places that remained open to show their appreciation. They took arrangements to the pharmacy next door in Carney's Lane to thank them for the work they've been doing. They also took flowers to the hospital and retirement homes to thank the front line workers.

While the time off wasn't a welcomed break, it at least gave her some time to metaphorically stop and smell the roses, something it did for all of us. One of the things she noticed about Canada after living in Holland for much of her life is the access to the wilderness here. "I love it," she says of Owen Sound and the surrounding area. "I love nature all around. There are few spots in Holland where you can't hear any traffic at all, and here there are quiet spots everywhere."

But she's hoping that business isn't quiet now that she's open again. Since opening her doors again on June 2, Bloemers has been in full swing open Monday to Saturday in Carney's Lane.

After declaring a lack of plants and flowers in my own home, I made a promise to head in for at least one plant to add some warmth to my decor. I'll put it in my office so I have some company as I work from home for the next few months. We both agree that it's good for the body and mind to keep plants in one's home. Maybe I'll get her to make me up a European style flower arrangement while I'm there as well. I like to live on the wilder side when it comes to flowers!



Written by Jesse Wilkinson