

PETAL Pusher

Urban Petals owner Sarah von Pollaro, who launches a new flower subscription service this month, shares how to make your home garden-party ready.

By Jennifer Barger // Photography by Greg Powers

Lush moss and violet floral centerpieces that mimic miniature gardens at a National Building Museum gala; orchids suspended above dinner tables at a Hirshhorn Museum bash; massive mum balls dressing up the tent at The Kennedy Center's Mark Twain Awards dinner. The flower arrangements designer **Sarah von Pollaro** creates for big-ticket events around town come across like bits of floral alchemy, as if an enchanted glade from *A Midsummer Night's Dream* magically appeared in a ballroom.

"It's a dream job, getting paid to think of cool decor for fabulous parties," says von Pollaro, whose DC-based company, **Urban Petals**, also donates all the arrangements from her events to local charities after the revelers go home. "It's empowering to pull up at a hospital or a homeless shelter with a bunch of flowers for the residents," she says.

Von Pollaro also believes in blending a mod garden aesthetic into her home design. "You can use furniture and accessories to create a room in your backyard," she says. "And pieces that seem made for your garden—a rattan sofa, a glazed pot—can make the inside of your house feel rustic and warm." She extolls the indoor-outdoor split personalities of teak, iron and even concrete. "I don't think of things as being just one purpose," she says. "You can even move things in and out of your home."

Flowers and plants, of course, play a starring role in von Pollaro's home and at her own parties. "I love to have succulents, ferns and orchids inside my house," she says. "It's like a happy greenhouse." And when she entertains, she often thinks outside the vase. "I'll put a bunch of peonies in a Champagne bucket or cut ferns from the garden and put them in vases," she says.

This month, von Pollaro launches a new floral subscription service, **SVP Flowers**, where, for \$50 every two weeks, clients get a ready-to-arrange bundle of seasonal blooms and greenery. "I love the idea of other people learning to arrange flowers at home," she says. Just in time for spring, here's how to get her fresh and lively style. urbanpetals.com



PASTORAL PERFECT
Floral designer Sarah von Pollaro, who creates masterpiece settings for clients like The Kennedy Center and the Hirshhorn, offers her take on summer decor from her studio.



ALFRESCO EVENINGS
 "I like pieces that blur the line between indoors and outdoors," says von Pollaro. "This set also combines warmth and modernism." *Adelaide table, \$559; Adelaide chairs, \$339 each, Bo Concept, Georgetown, boconcept.com*



RECYCLED GLASS
 "Pieces that have a story bring texture to outdoor spaces, and this reclaimed teak table definitely has a lot to say—it was once part of a house in Indonesia!" says von Pollaro. \$3,956, *Baker Furniture, Georgetown, bakerfurniture.com*

BLAZING STYLE
 "Surround this fire-pit table with chairs for drinks, and then serve s'mores after dinner. It'd be surprising and fun," says von Pollaro. \$4,995, *Restoration Hardware, Georgetown and Tysons Corner Center, restorationhardware.com*



POTTER'S DEAL
 "On its own or filled with plants or flowers, this Case Study marble bowl with walnut base perfectly anchors an indoor or outdoor room," says von Pollaro. \$249, *Room & Board, 14th Street, roomandboard.com*



TURNING JAPANESE
 "This Kyoto rattan chair reminds me of a beach vacation," says von Pollaro. "It could make a patio, garden or even a sunroom feel relaxed." \$2,879, *Janus et Cie, Georgetown, janusetcie.com*