

## TULIPS TOO TANTALIZING TO PASS UP

> If your most recent walk down the candy and cookie aisle at a grocery store had you saying, "what more can they do with an Oreo cookie?" (Peanut Butter and Golden Chocolate are two of the latest incarnations), you may find yourself having the same reaction when it comes to the latest tulip varieties. Consumer interest in tulips remains strong, according to Liza Roeser Atwood at Farm Exports, and breeders are responding with a bevy of beautiful tulips in parrot, frill, double bloom and new variations on classics. One development that may elicit both applause and head-scratching alike from onlookers (as is the case with the Peanut Butter Oreo cookie) is the introduction of the dyed tulip, known as "Happy Tulips," said Roeser Atwood. Less vivid than their rose counterparts, dyed tulips are "more akin to swirled tie-dye," she said.

Along with more varieties from breeders comes a more intense focus on developing strong bulbs with a good post-harvest life. "Some newer varieties that appear for a year or two may go out of production in the third or fourth year if they don't prove to be solid performers," she said.

Roeser Atwood offers up her top-11 list of popular newer tulips that promise a strong 10-day vase life (See Care and Handling, p. 48, for best care and handling practices with tulips).

Double bloom tulips such as these boast a strong vase life and are often used as substitutes for peonies and ranunculus when those are unavailable or not in the budget, said Roeser Atwood.

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**'ESPERANTO'**  
The novelty bi-color variety has the added bonus of variegated foliage, often coveted by those seeking the extreme garden look, said Roeser Atwood. Casey Cooper, a floral designer and founder of Botanicals, in Chicago, said "Esperanto" "will stand alone as a single, stunning stem featured in a contemporary bud vase. The flower has tremendous presence and a gathering of them would be extravagant. I can also picture this variety cut low and massed with peach amaryllis, bells of Ireland tips and tufts of 'Green Trick' dianthus."



**'APRICOT'**  
Parrot tulips continue to be popular with brides, who love the variegation. They have a shorter vase life than other types of tulips, but that doesn't stop brides for clamoring for them.



**'OVERIG'**  
Event Designer Casey Murdough, of The Elegant Petal in St. Charles, Ill., said of "Overig": "This color works wonderfully with emerald — Pantone's color of the year for 2013. As a designer, I also love the ruffled and undulating texture of the parrots."



**'GRAND PERFECTION'**  
Industry historians may think of 'Rembrandt,' a famous 18th century tulip, when they see this, with its large, ivory head and burgundy to maroon coloring, said Roeser Atwood. Joy Thigpen, a floral designer and photo stylist said, "I love the red markings because they look like brush strokes. These tulips would be perfect in a contemporary take on the Dutch masters; letting their loose lyrical movements pop against a dark background."



**'CURLY SUE'**  
This purple lavender feather tulip is easy to work with and "brings some texture to your ordinary," said Isabelle Kline, of IsabelleKline.com. "Mixed with some mini callas, it can give a sleek and sexy look to any bouquet or arrangement."



**'FOXTROT'**  
With its light pink brushstrokes, "Foxtrot" is versatile and elegant, said Wayne Gurnick, an event planner and designer with Moments by Wayne, in Los Angeles. "Designers will love it because its color variations are a perfect complement to spring color tones," Gurnick said. "Consumers will be drawn to its soft and feminine coloring. A cluster of Foxtrot tulips looks great in an arrangement of hyacinth, ranunculus and peonies, not to mention David Austin garden roses. Spring and summer brides are sure to love clear glass vases overflowing with "Foxtrot."



**'SUPER PARROT'**  
This mint green novelty tulip is 2013's "perfect flower," according to Jesus Rodriguez, creative director and owner of Raining Roses, in Orlando, Fla. "Its soft coloring is calming, while the variegated green and ivory make it the ideal selection for any bride that wants a unique touch in her décor," Rodriguez said. "It's especially appealing to designers because of its ruffled texture, which makes it extremely versatile to work with. Paired with white freesia, it can be vintage and understated, or paired with lady slipper orchids, it can feel more modern and bold."



**'HONEYMOON'**  
The new white fringed tulip will look fabulous in a bridal bouquet, said Linda Jensen, head designer at Flowers Forever, in Carlsbad, Calif. "It will add the feminine, romantic, light hearted touch," she said. "It would look great mixed with roses, ranunculus, hydrangea and similar full flowers. Perfect to add a touch of feathers and crystals for a truly blingy, frivolous and feminine look. I think this could be a real winner in any wedding bouquet and carry the look through the ceremony and reception."

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