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### Tending Her GARDEN

Inspired by her love of nature, a floral designer creates arrangements in an age-old barn that connects the past to the present.

written by SARAH EGGE • photographed by JOHN BRESLER • produced by KARYL LOEBBECK BREYER

**T**he design perfume of peony blossoms transports Meghan Hirschfeld to her earliest days. "When they bloom, you can't get them fast enough," she says. "I remember I didn't go to school without bringing bouquets to my teachers." As a floral designer, Meghan is lucky to have the vintage barn—which likely date to the 1800s—just steps from her studio in a renovated barn in Wilton, Connecticut. In fact, she's mesmerized by history at every turn. The barn and gardens are on the property where Meghan and her two sisters grew up and where her parents still live. When she finishes creating arrangements for a client's wedding, she'll walk out to the fields in the rich, earthy soil and her sisters look on. Some regional soil situated in her studio, the tub is just one of the many memory-evoking items she works with.

Marking these needs of memorabilia is important to Meghan, and it's why she constructs from the back of the barn with her husband and his young sons in Brooklyn Heights, New York. She knows it won't be the Connecticut home she



Light streams in and flows to the table where she works on special arrangements. A low stone work with a hand pump is for filling vases.



Above: A blue glass jar holds a subtle arrangement of white flowers and green branches leaves.

**FLOWER POWER**  
Meghan Hirschfeld offers pro tips for DIY bouquets.

**IMITATE NATURE**  
"If you're trying to make something look like it's from the garden, think about how the sun hits it. To make different colors pop, use different shades of the same color and space around the center. It looks so much better," she says.

**MAKE THE CUT**  
"People make the mistake of buying flowers and thinking they can't cut the stems. But when you take them to create an arrangement, it's important to cut them at an angle and space around the center. It looks so much better," she says.

**VARY TEXTURE**  
"You don't want all fluffy flowers," Meghan says. She'll mix in different textures and sizes, as well as leaves that feel rich, waxy, or ferny.



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Meghan's attachment to the garden is rooted deeply in her soul. "There's no such thing as a rose from a wedding to a garden," she says. "I love the way 'wedding' is always given to you. It builds you. It can completely define you, but a garden also gives you a sense of wonder. There's something so inherently rich in the process you have from working soil in the backyard."



Above left: A stone path leads into perennial gardens that bloom with hydrangeas, coneflowers, and lavender. Above right: Meghan's work surface is table-made, a minor backhatch allows her to see entire arrangements. A low stone work with a hand pump is for filling vases.



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