

Forbes

The Lowell: How Restaurateur Charles Masson Carefully Curates The Flowers At Majorelle

Rana Good, Oct 31, 2019



The Lowell - Garden at Majorelle - Credit Nico Schinco

By the time most of us wake up on Monday morning, Charles Masson, restaurateur of [Majorelle](#) at the [Lowell Hotel](#) has already been working for a few hours. Every week he starts arranging the flowers at the hotel's restaurant Majorelle at around 5:30 am, having shopped for them at the flower market in Manhattan on Saturday. In the wee hours of morning he's at The Lowell making flower arrangements ranging from large center pieces to dainty bouquets for the tables. "For me this work is an extension of all things I love in life," says Masson. "I love cooking, I love serving, I love to paint, sculpt and I love flowers — I couldn't imagine life without flowers."

New York City's flower market used to span multiple blocks and avenues but as the city's real estate market grows, the shops are disappearing in favor of apartments. "Developers in New York approach mom-and-pop shops for a few million dollars and suddenly they're gone," says Masson. "There used to be four to five blocks of just flowers but now it's just 28th Street that has eight stores." His favorite store, Dutch Flower Line, is luckily still there which he loves for their professionalism and ability to send him something special if he needs it.

Masson comes from a lineage of restaurateurs — his father opened La Grenouille in 1962 and Masson ran the culinary institution until he was approached to open Majorelle at The Lowell, replacing the former steakhouse restaurant in the hotel. The menu at Majorelle is seasonal, as are the flowers. "It was the idea to have the same fresh flowers and garden like I had at La Grenouille," says Masson. "It would never cross my mind to have a restaurant without fresh flowers.

Every week, you can see the bouquets at Majorelle and their evolution in how they're arranged dependent on the weather or changes in food. In May, the restaurant serves morel mushrooms and white asparagus, and you'll see peonies and lilac during that spring time of year. Right now in October, Majorelle has bittersweet, camelia, and magnolia floral arrangements and the menu has a lot of root vegetables like celery, parsnip and pumpkin.

Outside of Majorelle which serves lunch and dinner, afternoon tea is also a delicious way to spend a few hours at The Lowell.....

If you're a fan of flowers, beautiful bouquets abound at The Lowell and no week is like the previous, beckoning hotel and restaurant guests to return frequently."

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