



Based in Little Compton, R.I., a short drive from Newport – one of the country’s most popular destination wedding locales, **Mary Kate Kinnane’s** wedding and event floral business is called **The Local Bouquet**. Her website’s “about” message is impossible to overlook:

A MISSION TO SUPPORT THE AMERICAN
FLOWER FARMER

“At The Local Bouquet, we have taken the two things we love – weddings and fresh, seasonal flowers – and combined them to bring you the most beautiful designs for your special day. We are committed to creating gorgeous floral décor that compliments the chosen time of year for your wedding using *100 percent local and American-grown* flowers only.”

Mary Kate rebranded her business in January 2016 with the tagline, “American-grown Weddings.” The shift has allowed her to market to couples and venues along the region’s coastline including places like Nantucket, Martha’s Vineyard and Newport.

“Our area is a huge destination location with a lot of people coming back to their summer homes, or because they went to college in Rhode Island or summered here as a kid. And so I think they’re just embracing that natural, outdoorsy feeling that New England gives. We hardly ever do ballroom weddings or swanky, city weddings. Our couples are getting married by the water or on a farm or vineyard. They see our aesthetic and they relate to it,” the designer explains.

Mary Kate says she’s completely transparent in her mission. “I want to tell the consumer and my brides exactly what we are. We’re a wedding and event company and we only use American-grown flowers.”

The Local Bouquet’s aesthetic is clearly influenced by seasonality and the availability of locally grown flowers and foliage. Mary Kate works closely with area flower farms, collaborating with them on color palettes, botanical variet-

ies and helping to promote their businesses alongside her own. She features them regularly in a “Meet the Farmer” series on her blog, and teaches design workshops focused on the farms’ most popular seasonal flowers, such as peonies or dahlias.

“When I meet with my brides, I always tell them that I’m sourcing 95 percent locally from these farms. It’s only when they have a special order item – like a specific rose or something that may be out of season here but is growing in California or some of the other states – that I’ll order from the bigger wholesalers.” She turns to **DV Flora**, a large wholesaler, when specifying American-grown cuts not available in her region.

The wedding featured here illustrates Mary Kate’s seasonal and local aesthetic. Held at Fort Adams, an historic military fort overlooking Newport’s harbor, the reception was located in front of a stately yellow Colonial house with a wraparound porch.

“It was in June, when the peonies are at their height here, so the bouquets had greens and whites, which looked beautiful against dusty blue dresses. We used a buttery yellow palette for the reception, which the bride wanted to be really lush and dripping with greenery. One large greenery chandelier and two large swags hung from the ceiling of the tent, and there was a garland on the head table, abundant flowers and foliage draped from the tent entrance and a mix of high and low arrangements on the tables.” Four local farms supplied the majority of the flowers (**Electric Moon Peony Farm**, **Weatherlow Florals**, **Little State Flower Co.** and **The Dahlia Shed**), augmented with American-grown flowers purchased through DV Flora, greenery from **Salter’s Evergreen Supply**, and the garland from **1-800-Cut-Greens**.

Mary Kate is convinced her rebranding has paid off with the caliber of weddings she’s booked, despite the competitive