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Slow Flowers
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By Debra Prinzing, PFCJ

FLORAL





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Fox Fodder Farm's new Brooklyn retail and workshop space connects New Yorkers with nature.



IMMERSION

Shop photos by **Nicole Franzen**

Taylor Patterson is a New York-based floral entrepreneur whose aesthetic is lush, elegant and seasonally inspired. Patterson developed **Fox Fodder Farm** over the past nine years, evolving it from a Brooklyn Flea stall where she sold plants in Mason jars into a studio and shop that serves weekly business accounts (restaurants, coffee shops and retailers), offers local floral deliveries and designs for weddings and special events.

After two years operating from a small kiosk in SOHO's Canal Street Market, Patterson, in February, relocated Fox Fodder Farm to an 1,800-square-foot design studio and storefront in Brooklyn's Williamsburg neighborhood. She co-designed the sunbathed space with landscape architect **Brook Klausing of Brook Landscape**. "We spoke the same language in terms of how I wanted it to feel and what materials we used – stone, reclaimed wood, concrete," Patterson says. "I want people to enter the environment we've created here and just relax."

The shop feels like an outdoor courtyard garden with an in-ground stone water feature. Cut flowers line the textured walls, and organic shelving displays products by artisans known to Fox Fodder Farm.

The daughter of two "plant geeks," Patterson borrowed Fox Fodder Farm's name from the small Delaware farm where she grew up. She fondly recalls her mother's side hustle selling eggs and her father's special "plant room," a mini conservatory with plank flooring, a water feature and plants too numerous to count. Having the word "farm" associated with her floral



Taylor Patterson
Photo © The Ingalls

design business allows Patterson to educate employees and clients alike about her local and seasonal flower sourcing practices.

Fox Fodder Farm's branding values transparency, which means that flowers may come from California, Japan or Holland until late spring, after which time Patterson sources mostly from farms in the tristate area, including those in Hudson Valley and on Long Island, as well as from wholesalers at New York City's Flower District who support her mission. "I want our sales to be based on this community of clients who value the unique flowers we procure," she explains. "That's how I am when I buy flowers from various suppliers and farms. If someone calls me and says, 'Hey, I have only 20 or 200 stems of these. Do you want them?', I'll usually say, 'Give them all to us!' I may not always know what I'm going to do with those flowers, but I want them."

Patterson also wants floral choices to remain affordable and accessible, so she's decided to take a smaller markup on flowers than the accessories and gift items she sells. "I want people to

not be afraid to buy flowers, so we're pricing flowers to draw people in," she explains. "Our specialty products will have higher price points. For example, I'm not really planning on selling a \$7 pot, but I offer \$200 pottery by a maker we know."

Patterson dreams that her new shop in Williamsburg will expose more urban dwellers to the allure of local and seasonal flowers and to nature itself. The interior space is versatile, similar to a restaurant's open-kitchen concept, inviting customers to see floral designers create foam-free arrangements or to select stems and a vase to make a centerpiece of their own. Using botanical beauty to influence sustainable choices and talk about ethical flower farming gives Fox Fodder Farm the distinction in a crowded marketplace of options. "I want to help people shift the way that they perceive flowers," Patterson says. ■

DETAILS

Fox Fodder Farm, foxfodderfarm.com, @foxfodderfarm



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