

# Roses symbolize qualities such as passion, prosperity

The popular Valentine's Day flower represents more than romantic love in a range of cultures

By Rachel Lee  
Freelance Reporter

For many, red roses on Valentine's Day are a representation of love, but the flower has a variety of meanings depending on where and how it is used.

According to Andrew T. Cummings' book "All about Symbols," a single rose is seen as a symbol of perfection, earthly passions and sensuality of the flesh. It can also symbolize time and eternity, and life and death. The rose also "symbolizes love, life, creation, fertility, beauty and virginity," Cummings wrote.

Roses have significant meanings for some cultures, and in the Chinese custom, the rose symbolizes fragrance and prosperity. In ancient Egyptian culture, roses were dedicated to Isis and symbolized pure love free of lusts of the flesh. In the Greco-Roman tradition, the rose symbolizes love, gaiety, beauty and passion. The Romans would grow roses in their funeral gardens as a symbol of renewed resurrection and eternal spring. In the cabala, the center of the rose is the sun and the petals are infinity, the harmonious variety of nature.

The colors of the roses also bear meanings, according to <http://www.everyrose.com>. Interpreting the meaning of different colored flowers can also be called "the language of flowers," which probably originated from Persia in the 15th century. In the 19th century, this "floral code" became more elaborate so that complex messages could be sent in bouquets between people.

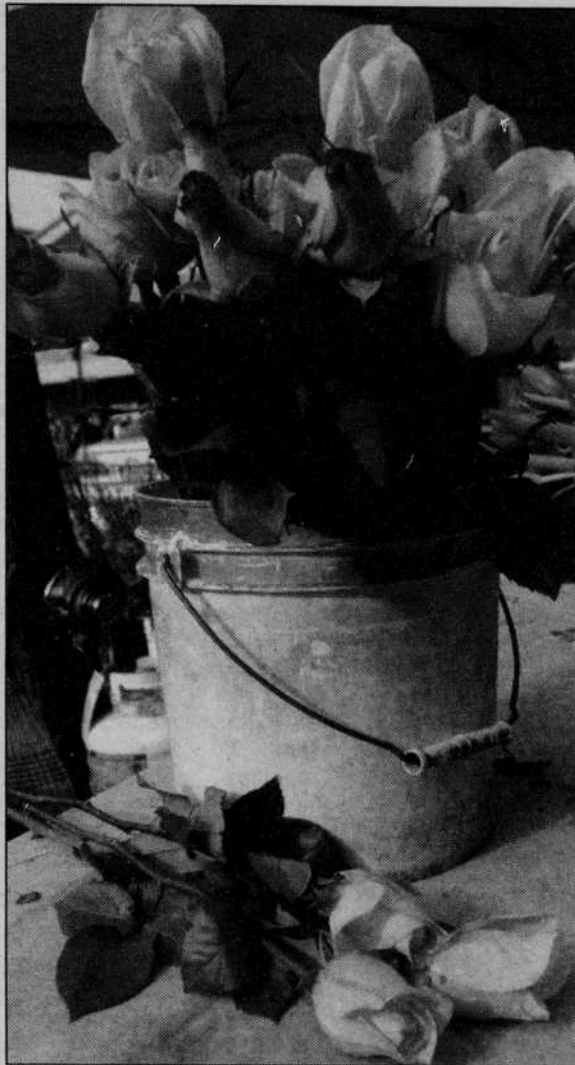
The positioning of the roses also means different things. Roses that are bent to the right means "I" and roses that are bent to the left mean "you." A ribbon that is knotted on the left would mean a message from the giver, but if it were knotted on the right, it would mean a message from the recipient, according to <http://www.everyrose.com>. If roses are accepted with the right hand, it would mean agreement or affirmation, but if it were accepted with the left hand, it would mean disagreement. Roses worn over the heart mean love, but roses worn in the hair mean caution.

The rarest roses are black. There are several types of black roses called "Black Baccara," "Black Beauty" or "Black Magic." They are referred to as the "Holy Grail" for most florists because they only bloom in that color once a year. These roses, which are scorched by the sun and have eventually evolved into a new kind of rose, are actually not full black in color but a deep red.

"Roses are the most beautiful in June, where they are referred to as garden roses, and they are very fragrant," Rhythm and Blooms florist Michelle McLaughlin said.

She noted that pink roses are the nicest-smelling roses to get. "For this year, most roses are overpriced because they are imported from California and Ecuador, and roses have become very cliché because it is overdone by the media," she said. "They have lost their meaning."

McLaughlin suggested purchasing other flowers instead of roses.



Danielle Hickey Photo Editor

A variety of roses are available at Rhythm and Blooms' booth on the corner of East 13th Avenue and Kincaid Street.

"Gardenias would be good flowers to get for your loved one because it is unique and it smells good too," she said.

"I like champagne-colored roses because it is a very nice looking color," freshman Charlotte Gallagher said. "It gives the complex flower a tinge of simplicity."

Several University students said they prefer yellow roses because they said it is a happier color, and red roses have been overdone for Valentine's Day.

"I like pink roses because although red roses are very beautiful and bold, pink gives out a gentler and softer vibe," junior Nikki Yi said.

Rachel Lee is a freelance reporter for the Emerald.

## ROSE COLOR MEANINGS

- Red: True love, respect, courage, romantic love and a job well done.
- Yellow: Joy, freedom, friendship and jealousy.
- Pink: Perfection, happiness, gentleness, sweetness and "please believe me."
- Light pink: Grace and joy.
- Dark pink: Thankfulness.
- White: Reverence, purity, innocence, secrecy and

- "I am worthy of you."
- Lavender: Enchantment.
- Orange: Fascination and enthusiasm.
- Coral (champagne): Desire.
- Red and white: Unity.
- Black: Farewell and death.
- Deep burgundy: Beauty.

SOURCE: <http://www.everyrose.com>



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