

Q#1 hi Robin, welcome to the Slow Flowers Podcast. I know you can't speak about the entire state of Colorado because it's so vast, but I'm excited to share a snapshot of Blue Door Farm. Can you tell us where you're located and a little about your flowers?

Hello Debra, and thank you so much for encouraging so many farmer florists in the United States and overseas. I appreciate your time today!

Blue Door Farm is located in Grand Junction, the largest city in western Colorado -- 30 miles from the Utah border.

We are a small farm with 5 acres of pasture, a very small flower field and high tunnel, and a Vacation Rental for 1 to 6 guests right on the farm.

We are surrounded by peach and apple orchards, and it is a gorgeous 10 mile drive to the town of Palisade.

My specialty is freestyle design — that is, growing and gathering a mixture of flowers and branches in unusual colors, shapes and textures. I love to mix fresh and dry flowers in unexpected ways.

I make my flower arrangements in the kitchen, and Mark delivers them to our customers. You can order arrangements year-round through the website or by email.

Q#2 What are your primary "crops" that you grow (here's where you can also explain that you mainly grow for your own designs rather than wholesale to other florists)

I grow a limited variety of flowers in small quantities. I specifically want unusual colors, shapes and fragrances for my own design studio at home, not wholesale.

My favorite plants include fragrant herbs such as Thai, lemon and lime basil, scented geraniums, eucalyptus, lavender, rosemary, and carnations. We also plant dahlias, celiosa, zinnias, dusty miller, strawflowers, statice, and sunflowers.

Q#3 Describe your property and location - what is the scale and what challenges do you face growing flowers in SW Colorado?

Blue Door Farm is located right between the Utah desert and the Colorado mountains at 4,600 feet elevation — and our summers are very hot and dry.

Mark and I plant about 1,200 square feet in one high tunnel and one outdoor field with drip irrigation and landscape fabric, and weed everything by hand.

I gather branches, greenery and seedpods on our property, and from neighbors with permission. I always have clippers and buckets in the car so I can bring home twisty branches, dry grasses and seedpods, green tomatoes, rabbitbrush, anything unusual that will last a long time and add texture and interest to my arrangements.

Mark and I have lived here for 26 years so a lot of the local farmers are our friends.

I buy all kinds of wonderful flowers and vegetables from these farmers to use in my arrangements. We also have two commercial greenhouses within 3 miles of our farm so I can buy plants, flowers and succulents from them as well.

Q#3 What is the primary customer market? Who gets married in Grand Junction or is your market more with local brides?

Our customers find Blue Door Farm by word of mouth or on Instagram or on Google.

Many of our customers are from out of town, including Denver, Texas, New York, even overseas. They really like our emphasis on using local flowers, and they definitely want freestyle designs that are unique and different.

Many of my brides are also from out of town, so we communicate by email.

Q#4 You've diversified considerably to develop Blue Door Farm. Tell us about your other projects -- the guest house and workshops?

Mark and I have three projects at the farm in addition to floral design:

1. a Guest House or Vacation Rental for 1 to 6 guests to stay right here on the farm,
2. flower arranging and painting workshops this spring and summer,
3. and an updated website with vintage vases & botanical paintings for sale -- this will be coming soon.

1. The Blue Door Farm Vacation Rental is available year-round and it is beautiful! The house is bright and sunny, surrounded by fruit trees and pasture, and has 2 bedrooms and gorgeous views. We received 5 star reviews from all our guests in 2018, and it is listed on Air BnB and [VRBO.com](https://www.vrbo.com).

2. I will be offering two kinds of workshops in 2019 —

-- flower arranging for 2 hours with your friends in the high tunnel or in the Guest House, and

-- a two-day painting workshop with professional artist Dianna Fritzler. This workshop is called Bodacious Blooms.

Last October, Dianna and her students created fresh flower arrangements right here in the high tunnel, and then we painted these arrangements for two days. The whole weekend was really awesome!

Dianna will be offering the Bodacious Blooms workshop again — watch the Blue Door Farm website and Instagram, and Dianna's website for the dates.

3. Also, watch the Blue Door Farm website for vintage vases, unusual containers, and original paintings for sale -- this update will be coming soon!

Q#5 Before we close, I'd love to hear a little about your journey to flowers. What drew you to growing and designing?

I have always loved botany, being outside, and growing things.

I was born profoundly deaf, and not being able to hear means my other senses are much sharper. I notice unusual colors, shapes and textures everywhere I go, and I

really want my family and customers to enjoy these details too. Basically, I like to

think outside the box. Because I do not hear the world around me, it is

very special and important to remember that flowers and flower arrangements share

love in every language without words.

Thanks so much - we'll make sure the Podcast community knows how to find and follow you -- and we'll share some photos of you, your flowers, the guest house and Blue Door Farm.

Thank you!

Debra

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