

Gladys has been working as a florist for 15 years. She has at times tried other jobs, but loves this one so much that she keeps coming back to it, rating it 10/10.

She says she especially enjoys the creative aspect of her work, as she deftly selects flowers from buckets around the shop to create a bouquet for a walk-in customer. Whilst feeling appreciated, she says, “We’re our own worst critics; we think our arrangements are never good enough, so it’s especially rewarding when customers say, ‘OMG, I love your work! It’s amazing!’ ”

Gladys understands that there’s more to being a florist than arranging flowers; customer service and being able to connect with people in their joys and sorrows is very important to her. Even on sad occasions like funerals, she finds it fulfilling to share such moments with flowers, saying, “You care; there’s a lot of compassion.”

But being a florist is not always a bed of roses! Gladys’s boss gets up at 4am to go to the flower markets, which takes its toll. Carrying bucket loads of water and flowers is a backbreaker, florists’ hands get worn from stripping flowers and thorns and being in water so much, and RSI and neck problems can emerge over time. Nevertheless, Gladys can’t imagine anything else she’d prefer to do, adding, “It’s my heart; it’s my future absolutely.” She looks forward to being able to teach and pass on her knowledge to others, including her niece!

By Chris Haldane
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