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3 TIPS

TIP 1 Let love blossom

This Valentine's Day, don't get gouged at the florist. Four ways to avoid looking like a bloomin' idiot:

- **GET SHORTIES** Short stems are often cheaper than long, and you can't count on someone having a vase large enough to hold long-stemmed flowers gracefully anyway.
- **WRAP IT UP** Most people already have a shelf filled with vases—why buy them another one? “Wrap flowers in newspaper,” says *Flower Power* author Rebecca Cole. “It's inexpensive and it has that ‘walking through Paris’ feel.”
- **ACT LOCALLY** When you use an online service like FTD.com, you usually pay a broker fee on top of the flower order. If you're having flowers delivered to another city, find a local florist there (hello, Google) and call directly.
- **LOCK IN A PRICE** Start shopping for Valentine's flowers as soon as possible. Prices rise as the day approaches, but some websites, such as KaBloom.com, let you lock in a price if you confirm your order early. —KATE ASHFORD

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