

# SAY IT WITH flowers

*Forget the vibrant cocktails and drinking games and bring together friends for a hen party filled with flora and fauna, writes Natalie Millar-Partridge*

LEARNING a new skill on the way to the altar is on the rise, as hen's forgo the traditional rowdy hen nights and choose something more sedate. From spa days to sitting at a potter's wheel there has never been more on offer for your pre-nuptial party. And one of the newest is KIN workshops, founded by Grace May and Rosie Harbottle. KIN came about after a hot summer, spent creating floral mandalas and elaborate wedding blooms in Morocco. The floral inspired, creative workshops have been born out of a mutual love of nature, colour and all things botanical. The duo, who were influenced by their time spent working in Marrakech, had a dream of bringing like-minded people together to create, learn, gather and grow, enriching their creative souls and nurturing their passion for learning.

Grace and Rosie have flourished independently in the wedding industry, as a florist and illustrator, respectively. Whilst working in Morocco, the duo found their ideas coming together, inspiring them to search for a way they could collaborate and share their skills. The pair's many weeks spent sipping mint tea, within the tropical planted rooftops of Marrakech, led them to arrive at 'KIN'.

"The workshops are a collaboration of all our favourite things; good people, nature, sharing ideas and learning something new. We love the

idea of skills being taught, passed on, shared and swapped. We always want to be growing within ourselves creatively and personally and to be able to share these ideas is a real joy," says Grace of their new venture.

The ethos behind the workshops is largely to encourage people to live a more botanical life. "We offer a chance for individuals to try something new, with elements of the workshop being tailored to their wedding, incorporating florals and creative materials, botanicals and painting. The workshops also offer a chance to share ideas in a beautiful space, with an informal atmosphere. The concept is great, as it also allows us to meet like-minded people and build a botanical community," says Rosie.

KIN, creative workshops are held across the UK and are always based at a botanical themed venue, with a growing focus on glass houses, as well as hosting extended retreats abroad, with the latest two-day event, finding the ladies back in familiar territory in Marrakech.

"Whether the venue is in the UK or overseas, we want it to be a space that will inspire. The venue plays a large part in setting the tone, offering a visual backdrop for the day ahead, so we place emphasis on seeking places that have a sense of calm and beauty. We like to think the space offers a little self-indulgence and time out to nurture, whilst experiencing a creative



**Above:** The KIN workshops combine floristry with illustration helping students learn new skills and discover hidden talents

**Far left:** Rosie Harbottle supplies the illustration part of the workshops where students learn to paint flora and fauna which could feature in their wedding decorations

**Left:** Florist Grace May encourages floral play as students learn to create a bouquet or crown





day, enjoying delicious food in a beautiful setting. A pure botanical experience that is geared towards the venue,” says Grace.

The workshops are based around a botanical theme and split into two phases – floral play, creating a floral crown or bouquet, followed by brush lettering or painting. “This combination works really well as the botanical part feeds into the painting session, creating an authentic way of working together.”

For hen parties, the signature workshop is comprised of learning how to create a floral crown, with Grace demonstrating techniques throughout, followed by a session in the art of brush lettering, guided by Rosie. The workshops can be tailored to meet individual requirements, relating to a specific wedding theme, incorporating the brides chosen flowers, designed to inspire creativity for the special day. The painting phase of the workshop can also be tailored to feature brush lettering and botanical inspired designs for place settings, table plans, wedding favours and backdrops – this element can also be tailored to include ceramics - painting plates to incorporate names and additional decorative displays for table settings.

***‘The day will also offer a chance for the bride to experiment with colours for her wedding flowers, learn new skills for the table decoration, place settings, favours and wedding stationary, keeping a consistent theme throughout.’***



All materials are included and there are plenty of treats along the way including specialty teas and artisan made cakes on arrival, followed by fizz, a seasonal three-course lunch and tailored goodie bags to take home, along with the floral creations made throughout the day.

The workshops are perfect for hens as they are unique, offering something new to the market, combining floral play with painting. A group activity where there is plenty of girl bonding, floral crowns, place settings and painting. Everyone can get involved in the big day on a more personal level, offering a special memory to take forward to the wedding day.

Hen parties will not only take away a truly botanical experience, KIN will also provide an immersive day with great photo opportunities, special moments shared, learning new skills with close friends, enjoying fizz, florals and fabulous memories!

“The day will also offer a chance for the bride to experiment with colours for her wedding flowers, learn new skills for the table decoration, place settings, favours and wedding stationary, keeping a consistent theme throughout,” says Rosie. ▶



Workshops feature botanical painting

“The workshops are all about sisterhood and bringing women together to explore their creative side. Learning a new skill, enriching creative souls and nurturing a passion to create something beautiful. They appeal to hens as they offer a great chance for ladies to immerse themselves in something new and fun, with a plentiful flow of fizz and lots of laughs throughout,” adds Grace.

Grace and Rosie can be hired for the signature workshop together or separately. Customised venues can also be requested, with the addition of having the workshop at your own home or at the bride’s favourite café or bar. The formula for a creative workshop is increasingly popular, tapping into an age where learning new skills and taking time out from the everyday have become the new ‘must do’.

### WHY ARE WOMEN DRAWN TO FLOWERS?

#### Grace

Florals represent important, significant occasions, often connected to emotions.

Flowers tell a story and can be linked to memories, a season or occasion.

Flowers evoke an emotional response.

Flowers say what words can't.

Vibrant blooms offer a beautiful, visual sight.

#### Rosie

Flowers are a miracle of nature, each flower a gift, all the more precious as they have such a short life span.

Flowers have romantic connotations attached.

Flowers have been romanticised throughout history.

“Individuals will not only take away new skills but also a sense of wellbeing and a space of calm. The workshops offer a chance to step out of the everyday and indulge in pure escapism, enjoying elements such as beauty, harmony and creativity. There’s also a real element of bettering ourselves and discovering new skillsets, engaging the creative side of the brain,” says Rosie.

With a focus on self-motivation, nurturing wellbeing, both mentally and physically. KIN embraces the modern day mantra ‘to take time out’, celebrating the ever-increasing pull towards ‘me time’. “Our workshops embody these elements of taking time for yourself and in particular, taking care of your emotional wellbeing. Women are now leading the way and this is proven in the visual age of blogging and Instagram, where they’re focused on propelling themselves forward to achieve, stepping out of their comfort zones, learning new skills and applying them in order to create a healthier and more balanced lifestyle,” adds Grace.

The duo have lots of exciting workshops planned in beautiful botanical spots, especially glass houses across the UK, with long-term aspirations to hold retreats in collaboration with various curators of intimate events worldwide.

So if you and your fellow hens are after a taste of a creative life and want to indulge in floral playtime, inspire your wedding blooms and setting, exploring colour and form that isn’t strict in tradition, look no further than KIN. “Join us and enjoy a pure celebration of flowers!” says Rosie. ♦

[kinworkshops.com](http://kinworkshops.com)



The workshops are a great way for brides to explore their floral style for the wedding