

road show

BY KELSEY E. SMITH

2006

Check out these editors' picks of custom wheels from florists across the land.



National Floral Design - Ridge, N.Y.

If cars could talk, this 2001 PT Cruiser would have many experiences to share. Early in its 104,000-mile journey, it was used to deliver flowers to the World Trade Center in New York City for memorial services after Sept. 11. Noted on its New York license plate as "PT USA," the patriotic vehicle has a custom paint job inside and out and has had several upgrades to the engine and the interior, all for a cost of more than \$10,000. It is used daily along with two vans to supplement the shop's delivery needs. Co-owner **Steve Ruth** says the Cruiser has been more than a delivery vehicle—it has turned into a hobby and a well-known sight at car shows as well.



The Flower Room Toronto, Ontario Canada

Mike Soroka, who owns "neighborhood florist" The Flower Room with his wife, **Helen Kisicek-Soroka**, has driven motorcycles for more than 30 years, so it seemed natural to add this unconventional delivery vehicle to their business less than two years ago. The 2003 Ural Northern Cruiser can accommodate four or five hand-tied bouquets at a time and has been used

for more than 500 deliveries since the couple bought it. Despite having a shield on the sidecar, Mr. Soroka says he has to take precautions with floral arrangements to make sure they look their best upon arrival, including driving a bit slower than he would like. "It's worth it because of the exposure we get, though," he assures. "The reaction we get from the public is always good, and it brings a smile to everyone's face." Along with one other motorcycle, the shop also has a Volkswagen station wagon for larger deliveries.

The Flower Shop - Clarksburg, W. Va.

Marsha Viglianco and her son, **Allen**, say they have received numerous compliments from customers since buying this 2006 Honda Element last February. Its eye-catching bold yellow vinyl decals, which extend onto the windows, create great exposure for the shop as it makes its 10 to 20 deliveries each day. The shop uses a Ford Ranger pickup for delivery as well.



Greenery Productions, Inc. - Orlando, Fla.

Each side and the back of this 2006 Dodge Sprinter is different, making it colorfully eye-catching no matter how people look at it. The sides of the van boast the shop's specialties and services, including event floral design; interior landscaping; and even movies, commercials and TV. (The shop, which has served Central Florida for 18 years, is located at Universal Studios and has contributed trees, shrubs and flowers to hundreds of film and tape productions.) **Tommy Murphy**, sales and marketing manager, says the van's vinyl wrap cost \$4,500 and has been well received.



Hernando Flower Shop - Hernando, Miss.

"This vehicle makes fragrant stops," warns the back of this new Scion xB. Owner **Angie Howarth** says the shop has received great response from its customers since buying the vehicle a few months ago, with a noticeable increase in sales. The shop provided the image for the custom vinyl wrap, which cost \$1,850.



Pettie's Flowers - Salina, Kan.

These lime-green delivery vehicles capture attention no matter how people view them. "Pettie's Flowers" is written in reverse type on the bug shields, making it readable to people looking in their rear-view mirrors, and "Follow Me to Pettie's Flowers" makes an equally impacting statement on the back along with the shop's phone number. The vehicles are always clean, inside and out, according to owner **Debra Schmid**. "I feel a car wash is the most inexpensive advertising I can buy," she says.



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