

Local bouquets du quartier project flourishes in Pointe-Claire Village

"The whole purpose is about empowering people to see that the simple act of flower arranging or tending to flowers can be rejuvenating and calming and is really about self-care." — Lutaflore's owner.

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Maryse Hudon operates Lutaflore, a flourishing flower farm/floral studio in Pointe-Claire Village. PHOTO BY ALLEN MCINNIS /Montreal Gazette

Article content

In a picturesque village, on a short street, filling a small property in Pointe-Claire, there is an urban flower farm called Lutaflore. Owned by trained horticulturist Maryse Hudon, her plot of land is the colourful headquarters for her bouquets du quartier project.

Along with the flowers that she grows and sells, and the workshop space that she has created, she has cultivated a business that is firmly planted in where she lives.

“I want to empower and inspire people to see what they can do with their own space,” explained Hudon. “Wherever you are, wherever your quartier is, there’s a possibility to do something really creative and fun.”



Maryse Hudon, a marketer who turned her love of flowers into Lutafloure, a flourishing flower farm in Pointe-Claire Village. PHOTO BY ALLEN MCINNIS /Montreal Gazette

In very early spring Hudon’s neighbours watch as her carefully curated selection of unusual tulips, hyacinths and hellebores begins to appear.

Once the year’s flowering season begins Hudon, along with cultivating the flowers, begins to harvest them as part of her community-supported agriculture program. Much like the vegetable CSAs many people are familiar with, she organizes flower subscriptions, providing weekly or monthly bouquets that change with the seasons.

“Sometimes it’s for people who have a favourite bloom, like peony people, or tulip people,” said Hudon, who is known for her love of unique and exceptional varieties. “And then I’ve got the dahlia people from August into October.”

Throughout the growing season Hudon also provides opportunities for people to learn how to enhance and connect to their own quarters. In her airy workshop space she has hosted many different groups, and last year because of the pandemic, groups were limited to people in their own “bubbles”.

“I even did a father-daughter bonding workshop which was a great success,” said Hudon.

Outfitted for COVID-19 safety measures for small groups, including an outdoor sink for washing hands, Hudon creates custom experiences that can include a tour of her gardens, gardening information and flower arranging sessions using blooms from her collection.

“We begin in my front yard, in my teaching garden, and there we talk about the do’s and don’ts of gardening. In the back area, in my flower production area, is where I may answer lots of their own questions about their own gardens,” Hudon said.

Last year she was able to develop an online Zoom gardening series for the West Island Cancer Wellness Centre where one of their organizers followed Hudon around her garden as she introduced the participants to the potential for increased wellness that being in one’s own garden can provide.

“The whole purpose is about empowering people to see that the simple act of flower arranging or tending to flowers can be rejuvenating and calming and is really about self-care. Whatever size garden they have, and even if it’s just pots ... they can still get that same enjoyment out of creating something for themselves and others,” said Hudon.

It’s this connection to gardening and the natural world, and how it teaches people about connecting with others, that inspires Hudon. A big believer in foraging, she complements many of her floral arrangements for her individual, corporate, and wedding clients with materials she gathers beyond her garden fence.

“Right now I am gathering wild carrot ... and adding whimsy to my bouquets,” said Hudon. “Foraging brings people’s attention to noticing what is already there.”

Lutaflora’s owner feels fortunate to live on a convivial street adjacent to Pointe-Claire Village and for the people she knows there.

“I am also privy to having neighbours who have blooms that I don’t have. One time I got some spirea for a project from a neighbour ... so I gave her a bouquet. I am a big believer in collaboration and abundance.”