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[TASTEMAKER]

# Blooming success

Meet McQueens's Kally Ellis, supplier to the stars and possibly the most psychic florist in London

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### IT COULD BE STRAIGHT OUT OF A DAPHNE DU MAURIER NOVEL

("Last night I dreamt I went to Manderley again.") when you hear how Kally Ellis set up her flower business in central London. Launched in the midst of the last recession, it became such a success that the *Vanity Fair* Oscars party and the Cannes Film Festival are among her regular clients. Not bad for a former investment banker who had no formal training in floristry.

"To this day I don't know what triggered it but one night I dreamt – literally – I was in a flower shop and I could just tell it was mine. And I was surrounded by these gorgeous flowers which were being put together in a totally different way to what was then the style in the early 1990s."

Such was her belief in the dream that Ellis left the City and started sniffing out potential flower shops. Serendipity (or friends of friends, to be precise) led her to the Clerkenwell flower shop originally opened by fashion designer Alexander McQueen's aunt, hence the name.

"Not only did we keep the name, but we also became suppliers to many fashion houses – and five star hotels such as The Berkeley, The Grove and The Connaught," adds Ellis. She will be kept busy during next month's London Fashion Week as fashionistas have loved her pioneering style which saw English floristry change from flouncy everything-in-one bouquets, to her simple take: an arrangement all in the same colour or type of bloom. "Roses and calla lilies are always popular, but we try to be as seasonal as possible."

We're also coveting her accessories. Her latest launch is a quartet of luxury travel candles (£45) – a whiff of McQueens on the go.

*McQueens, 70-72 Old Street, London EC1, +44 (0)20 7251 5505; [www.mcqueens.co.uk](http://www.mcqueens.co.uk)*



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