

**Daily Norwalk 12-20-2016 online**

## **When It Comes to Flowers Norwalk Woman Has The Silk Touch**



Meredith Guinness

NORWALK, Conn. — There are worse things you can have than a cellar full of flowers. And that's just what Danna DiElsi had when she opened The Silk Touch, a silk floral business she started in the early 1990s in Norwalk.

She'd spend half her day temping and the other half creating wistful and dramatic floral designs from the relative comfort of her basement until a small retail space opened on Main Street.

**"It got me out of the house," DiElsi said with a laugh.**

Now more than 20 years in, DiElsi has moved her growing business to a storefront downstairs from her original shop, where she lets her imagination soar, creating everything from bridal bouquets to holiday centerpieces to corporate and residential rentals for much larger spaces.

"In the beginning it was more of a fun thing," she said. "But now the flowers are so realistic and beautiful. The only thing missing is the smell."

Most of DiElsi's stems are handcrafted and imported from overseas. Many that boast handpainting and curling or tiny crystals evoking dew can take time to create.

"It can take up to an hour to make one rose," she said, adding some companies have botanists on staff to make sure the flowers look realistic.

Trained in design at the former Traphagen School of Fashion, DiElsi has always sewn and designed. She got her start in flowers at Buds Beautiful, which was also in Norwalk. Some of her recent handiwork can be seen on the current cover of Inc. Magazine, which features the holiday decor in the Lockwood-Mathews Mansion Museum in Norwalk. DiElsi has decorated the museum for years.

She also helps plan seasonal events, such as a spring bridal boutique that brought food, decoration and clothing vendors to her tidy storefront. This month, she partnered with the Norwalk Public Library to collect warm coats, hats and gloves for a local homeless shelter. While some may balk at silk flowers over fresh, DiElsi said they have their benefits. One bride and her 10 attendants were relieved to have silk bouquets when the temperature shot up to 98 degrees on her September wedding day.

"She was so, so happy she went with silk," DiElsi said. "And for your home, you buy a dozen and you're done. It's an investment."

The Silk Touch, 5 Main St., Norwalk, is open from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Mondays through Saturdays and by appointment Sundays. For more information, visit [thesilktouch.com](http://thesilktouch.com)

