

THE CREATIVE BRAINS BEHIND MELBOURNE'S COOLEST NEW FLORIST LOVES TO CRUISE THE SUBURBS ON HER STEP-THROUGH.

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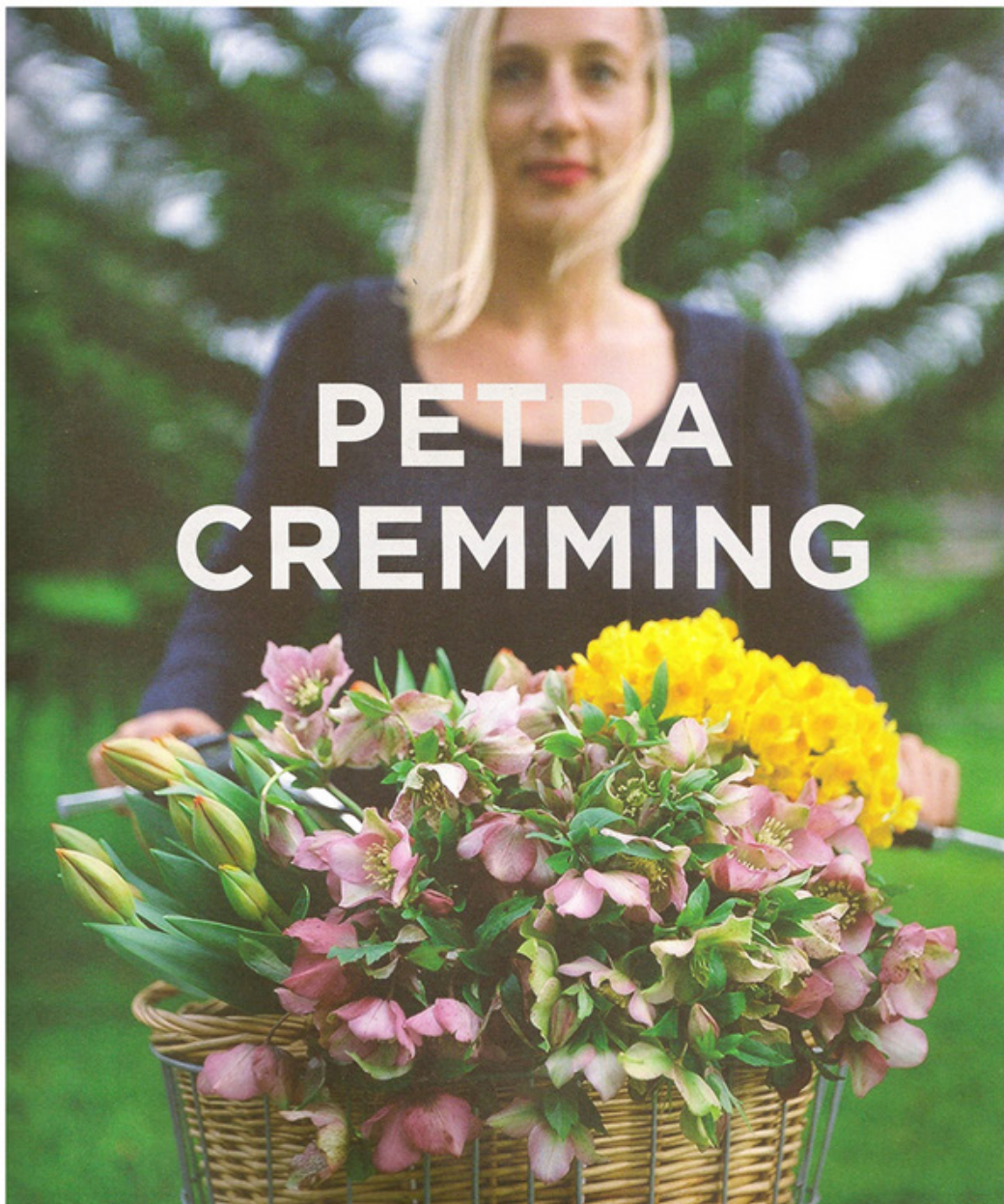
Petra Cremming is a garden perv. Riding around Melbourne - from her home suburb of Brunswick right over to the other side of the Yarra - gives her the perfect vantage point to peer over fences and check out the flowers, veggies, succulents and grapevines that populate the inner city's front yards. It's a professional interest as much as a personal passion - Petra has been a florist for well over a decade. For the past two years she has run her own business, Pomp and Splendour, from her backyard studio, creating whimsical arrangements for weddings, events and local businesses, as well as collaborating with creative Melburnians on photo shoots, pop up shops and other projects. Growing up in Kentyln, south-west of Sydney, Petra was always on a bike. "We lived on a really big property with a straight dirt walkway that led from

the back of the house to the carpark of a church, which was brilliant for all the neighbourhood kids," she says.

"That walkway was the first place I learned to ride a bike with no training wheels, and I remember how exciting it was. And then my Dad made us a bike path in the bush, with jumps and ditches, so we had this really cool path to ride."

Before moving to Melbourne five years ago Petra was living in Byron Bay, where the hills and local drivers conspired to keep her off the bike. But as soon as she saw the infrastructure in Melbourne she was back on two wheels.

"I couldn't ride a lot in Byron because it's very hilly, the drivers are absolute mad people and the roads have no shoulder. They're country folk; they know the road like the back of their hand. I became one



of those drivers myself, so I knew not to ride on the roads. But the first thing I did when I got to Melbourne was get a bike, when I saw that there were bike lanes everywhere."

That first one came from Kmart. "It was fantastic for what it was. But then eventually I left it outside, and it took no time to rust." Her second bike, a hybrid, was stolen. Now she rides "a very girly bike" – a pale blue XDS step-through with a basket on the front, known as the Ice Maiden.

While Petra has done the odd flower delivery by bike, most of her riding is social with her partner. "We use our bikes to get around a lot, especially when we're going out and we want to have the freedom to leave whenever we want,

take our time to get there," she says. "Whenever we're going to someone's house for dinner I've always got a bunch of flowers and a bottle of wine in the front."

Like many bike enthusiasts Petra has a keen interest in sustainable living, which comes through in her work. "The floristry industry is not very sustainable," she says. "There's a lot of pesticides used and a lot of imported flowers. I try to minimise my purchase of imported flowers, and encourage clients to opt for something that's seasonal, that's local."

A lot of the flowers she uses in her arrangements are grown in her own backyard, sometimes from cuttings taken off market flowers. "If I think I can strike it I'll stick it in the ground and see what

happens. I've had some good results!" Her favourite Melbourne ride is slightly clandestine. "I know it says you can't cycle in the Botanic Gardens, but we do," she says, wide-eyed and giggling. "Especially in summer, we often organise a picnic and cycle through – it's the most awesome. We go really slow, we watch out for people and if someone says, 'You can't ride,' we're like, 'Oh, really?' Innocent as a daisy."

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pompandsplendour.com.au

