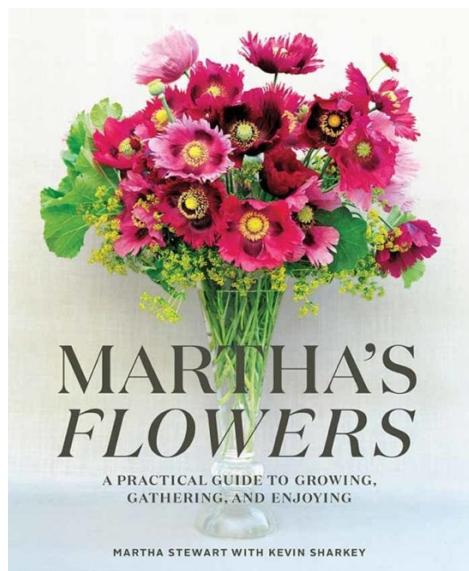




Martha Stewart's Keys to Success

By Judy Koutsky



Martha Stewart doesn't rest on her laurels. Her empire reaches 100 million consumers products can be found in more than 70 million households. She's won 19 Emmys for her work. In 2016 she executive produced and hosted the instantly popular *Martha and Snoop's Potluck Dinner Party* on VH1 starring Stewart and Snoop Dogg.

She's the author of 90—yes 90—books on topics including cooking, entertaining, garden crafting. Her latest book, *Martha's Flowers: A Practical Guide to Growing, Gathering, and Enjoying* with Kevin Sharkey, was released this year and is a reflection of her lifelong love of gardening.

Here's what the illustrious icon has to say about her long—and diverse—career, adopting new technology, hiring tips and why she loves change.

Many people master one thing and stick to it, but you are constantly growing an empire. Please tell us about your recent ventures and how you stay at the top of your game.

I've always been able to change my focus and approach, which is very important in business. I love change; change is good! For example, I was a beta tester for Facebook Live and worked with Facebook to develop the format of this social media and now it's a great way to reach and embrace all new technology with a curiosity and a deep-seated interest, and I try all new forms of media as they are developed.

In terms of Martha & Marley Spoon [the meal delivery service Stewart launched in 2016], I believe that meal kits are a serious food revolution. Meal kits are a tremendously clever way to eliminate waste as all of the ingredients come in pre-measured portions. With both Martha & Marley Spoon and Martha Stewart Wine Co., [which Stewart launched in 2017] I am offering my customers a level of convenience as their meal kit arrives at their doorstep. *Martha and Snoop's Potluck Dinner Party* is essentially a merging of cultures! I am expanding my audience and reach, and I might not have the opportunity to speak to normally. Expanding one's audience is essential in a quest for relevancy and growth.



The grand scale of dahlias allows you to arrange them in vessels that are larger and heavier than those you'd use with more delicate flowers. This tall, hefty Old French glazed earthenware crock holds an oversize gathering of big late-summer Prince Noir and Ferncliff Ebony blooms. It's just right for the 14-foot long kitchen table at Stewart's Lily Pond home in East Hampton, NY.

What were some of the key changes you made over the years and how did that help you grow your business?

First, hiring like-minded people who had a deep-seated interest in the subject of lifestyle and lifestyle products. Second, developing that was beautifully designed, carefully made and affordable for everyone. Third, using media as a developmental tool and follow merchandise.

What advice would you give to someone starting their own business?

Discuss the relevance and importance of your idea with people in business that you admire. Take that idea to the next level with a business plan. Listen to advice and heed it, but don't lose your passion for something that you think is a brilliant idea.

You are the queen of entertaining. What inspires you and how has this changed over the years?

Entertaining to me is treating friends and family in a friendly, beautiful and delicious way. Bringing diverse people together, ensuring good and comfortable time, creating an ambience that is extraordinary—all of these things are important to basic entertaining. It now is more relaxed than when I wrote my first book, *Entertaining*, in 1982.

What was the genesis of your new book, Martha's Flowers?

I've been working on this book for 40 years. I grew all the flowers in the book except for maybe one or two. I have the experience planting flowers and bringing beautiful blooms into the home and I thought it would be beneficial for my readers to learn. Kevin S on this book, has worked with me for more than 20 years; he loves to cut and arrange the flowers that I grow. We are the perfect and Kevin is the lyricist.

You have been arranging flowers from a young age. How would you characterize your approach?

I like a lot of flowers in an arrangement. A big trend is to create airier arrangements using fewer blooms because at a flower shop two, but when you grow them yourself you can have as many as you want to make a larger gathering of flowers. I've always arranged one kind of flower in an arrangement and that is how the book is organized—a chapter for many different flowers.



Stewart stakes some of the taller lilies, like Silk Road, which can reach eight feet, with bamboo to keep them upright.

MARTHA'S SUMMER ENTERTAINING TIPS

Pour a Great Drink

"Summer is the perfect time for delicious cocktails! For example, prosecco pairs extremely well with a purée of frozen lychees."

Prep Ahead of Time

"Save time by preparing batched cocktails before your guests arrive. Use freshly squeezed juices, never mixes."

Always Serve Dessert

"It can be as simple as a scoop of homemade ice cream or a slice of plum galette."

Be Practical

"For example, if you are hosting a barbecue, offer your guests large paper napkins instead of making them self-conscious about soiled napkins."

Illuminate Your Outside Space

"People often forget that it gets dark when the sun goes down and suddenly they are left without any light."

DIY Your Flower Arrangements

"Create beautiful centerpieces using foliage from your own yard. Flowering branches look so elegant spread across a table."

Prepare For Unexpected Guests

"I always keep extra chairs in my basement in case I need to easily accommodate more guests than I had originally expected."

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