

THE AIR UP THERE

GARDENING HAS REACHED A NEW FRONTIER: THE CITY. AND WITH IT COMES A RANGE OF FRESH, NEW IDEAS TO TRANSFORM EVEN THE SMALLEST OF SPACES INTO A PINT-SIZED JUNGLE, WRITES **KARIEN SLABBERT**



Rooftop Landscapes



Indigenous

POTLUCK CLUB

Pot plants brimming with lush foliage are a savvy solution to greening indoor spaces. "They help purify the air and tests have shown that indoor greenery reduces stress," says Bierman. Popular options include yucca, philodendron, bromeliads, kentias and aglaonema.

As urban living intensifies, the city landscape expands both outwards and upwards. But this doesn't mean that you can't enjoy a touch of greenery on your doorstep. When space is at a premium, consider going vertical or bring the garden indoors.

Be creative. Tiny gardens and high-rise patios can be spruced up with portable vertical planters or pots filled with herbs and other edibles.

GROWING UP

Vertical gardens help green your home from the top down. According to Jaco Bierman, creative director of Ecoscape Developments, "Living walls are suitable for indoor and outdoor spaces and can be installed in sunny or shady positions."

"Outdoors, they can be used to create more gardening space or privacy. When used indoors, vertical gardens make a strong decorative statement," says Justin Sam of Rooftop Landscapes.

Good options for outdoor vertical gardens include succulents (rock roses, vygies, sedum species and cacti species) and decorative grasses (mondo, carex and acorus varieties).

Indoor green walls suit plants that tolerate low light. "These are typically exotic, tropical varieties that thrive with high humidity and warmth," says Sam.



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TIP: WATER IS A KEY INGREDIENT TO A SUCCESSFUL LIVING WALL, SO IT'S WORTHWHILE INTRODUCING AN INTEGRATED IRRIGATION SYSTEM.



Urbanara

CITY SUMMITS

Once a nondescript structural element, rooftops have become the new frontier for inner-city gardening. Green roofs are a sustainable and striking way to blur the lines between buildings and gardens. "Some are trafficable, while others are purely intended for visuals," says Sam.

According to Bierman, they help cool buildings, thereby reducing the need for aircon. Plus they reduce a building's carbon footprint and attract biodiversity.

Bierman says, "When designing a rooftop garden, make use of mass planting instead of using hundreds of individual plants." Where possible, try to incorporate plants that are endemic to your area.

Plants on green roofs are usually exposed to hot, dry and windy conditions, so opt for hardy, water-wise specimens. "Succulents and grasses work particularly well, as they thrive in sunlight and heat," says Sam. 🌱

With thanks to Ecoscape Developments and Rooftop Landscapes