

Garden Design for Small Spaces

Apartment, condo and other city dwellers are finding that growing food in small community gardens is a rewarding and economical way to provide healthy, nutritious food. Designs can be set to enjoy for one season or last for years. Lady Bird Johnson promoted roadway vistas of wildflowers across America.

What if high-nutrition edibles were added to more landscapes in towns and cities, such as goji berries (*Lycium barbarum*), Northern Highbush blueberry (*Vaccinium corymbosum*), or moringa trees (*Moringa pterygosperma*). The possibilities of enhancing your home environment and your community with plants are endless. A new movement of “guerrilla gardeners” is now “seed bombing” bare and unattractive public landscapes.

Container gardens for your home’s roof or deck are an option for urban exterior spaces. Soil is not as much a challenge as would be expected, as container plants require relatively little of it, but attention needs to be paid to water issues, such as its harvesting or waterproofing the space. The amount of weight they add to a deck, roof patio or balcony is a concern, and consult an engineer, if possible, to be certain that the space is structurally sound for your garden ideas.

Windows and Views

Be inspired by the beauty of your landscape through your windows. Design sustainable micro-sanctuaries to view the garden at different times of the day, especially during meals, at sunrise, sunset or at night.

A well-designed window garden offers privacy, protection from the heat, an avenue for good chi (energy) to enter the home, and plea-



Melinda Joy's daughter and partner, Kim Colwell, designed this urban garden for the Shambhalla Institute

sure from fragrant plants. Feng shui, interior design and shamanic technologies can be applied to personalize your window garden to influence your life and establish specific goals.

Planning Tips for Small Spaces

- 1.** Choose the high-nutrition edibles you want to grow in containers, or in any small space.
- 2.** Choose the container or small area in which you want to install the garden bed.
- 3.** Plan the pathway lines of the garden bed moving into, around and out of the space.

4.

Explore options to hide unpleasant views or create privacy by using a trellis, screen, fence, hedge or tree.

5.

Consider views you like and plan how to frame the view on either side. Determine what plants to grow below the view, and which have short or slow growing habits. Look at views at different times during the day and night.

6.

Choose plants for attracting birds, butterflies, bees and hummingbirds.

7.

Consider the existing amount of shade, sun, or wind and choose to install plants that match the environment. As an example, if the area is dry, install drought-tolerant plants.

8.

Use as many varieties of plants or species as possible, observing height, texture and leaf size.

9.

Observe the view at night to synchronize your lighting with the lights in the view.

10.

Include other ideas for your dream container garden and the ambience or style you want to enjoy.