

Size isn't Everything

Styling a small, inner-city garden with Adam Robinson

Whether it's a glorified balcony, rooftop space or substantial (by the city's standards!) outdoor area, gardens not only dramatically improve building aesthetics, they also benefit human wellbeing and play an important environmental role.

The bottom line is that our heat-absorbing cities would be much better off with cooling and cleansing gardens integrated into them wherever possible.

So what better way to create habitats for birds and bees in the city, improve air quality with plants that filter and cool on every roof and curb climate change, than an inner-city garden?

Here are five things you need to consider when designing yours:

- 1 Make use of every inch of space. Let's face it, if your pad has a garden, you're already one-up on most inner-city dwellers. If you've got space to play with, you're winning the inner-city life-lottery. Using the 'zoning' technique to create different zones within your space that can be used for different occasions will maximise the use of your garden. Think: relaxing, entertaining and dining.
- 2 If your outdoor space is limited, create the illusion of more by using natural-coloured tiles that will provide an organic textural base to anchor the space.
- 3 Add shade! You live in Sydney; you need shade, simple. If you don't account for shade you simply won't end up using the space. Adding a shade structure



that spins 360 degrees will allow you constant coverage.

- 4 If there's no soil in your garden (and in many there isn't), a container garden is the way forward. Cramming in as many plants as possible into a collection of eclectic pots will create a relaxed, urban feel that doesn't compromise on the 'greenery' element of traditional gardens.
- 5 Vary the plant foliage colour and texture to keep things interesting as you move through the space.

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