

GARDEN

BY ADAM ROBINSON



Adam launched Adam Robinson Design, his landscaping business, in Sydney in 2011. His philosophy includes the idea that gardens are therapeutic places of sanctuary and healing.

DNA: Why have people taken with such enthusiasm to gardening during the coronavirus crisis?

Adam Robinson: We aren't able to connect with our family and friends but there's nothing stopping us from connecting with nature. At the moment, we can't get out into our national parks or go down to our beautiful beaches and swim in the ocean so people are enjoying their own patches of dirt.

And growing their own food!

The food hoarding, which was crazy, really frightened people but the positive thing about it is that people are getting inspired to growing their own produce – and now they have time to do it and get the whole family involved. Kids are being home-schooled and parents are looking for ways to engage the kids in healthy activities – what could be healthier than a family gardening together? Many hardware stores and plant nurseries have been selling out of veggie seedlings as soon as they replenish stock.

Is there something about getting our hands dirty that's good for us?

I have a saying, which I love: "Dirty hands, clean mind." I've experienced this first-hand, too. Working in the garden, getting your hands in the dirt and looking after plants is good for the



soul. Connecting to your garden reduces your cortisol levels, relieves stress and anxiety, plus you reap the rewards of fresh, homegrown produce for your table and a garden with lush healthy foliage.

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Is now the time to start an ambitious garden reno or go with easier projects?

Yes! While we have time we don't normally have, it's allowing us the headspace to work out how we can improve our homes. Covid-19 is making us all feel a little vulnerable so our attention is turning to how we can cocoon at home and make our spaces as beautiful and comfortable as possible. Whether it's working with a designer to take on a larger project or something as simple as updating your pots and plants, it's only natural that there's been a stampede on paint and other DIY supplies as people try to make the most of their time in lockdown.

What tips do you have for quickly and cost-effectively brightening up a garden, courtyard or balcony?

A considered selection of pots and plants can give a balcony or courtyard a fresh, new life. There is such a huge range of pricing when it comes to pots, so it doesn't have to be a big investment to make your space beautiful - no matter how big or small your outdoor area is and no matter what the budget.



Why is it important for us to have access to gardens and out-door spaces at the moment?

Mother nature is healing and the power of plants makes us feel good. In these times it's important to keep positive and continue looking after our mental health and wellbeing. The therapeutic value of time spent in the garden and looking after plants has been well documented. Hopefully, by looking after our own gardens, we will develop a deeper respect for nature and want to be better stewards of the environment, too.

Should people be creating gardens now in anticipation of being able to invite friends over... eventually?

We'll be seeing our family and friends again soon, fingers crossed. I think we'll all deserve abundant flowering come spring and some of the plants I'm looking forward to seeing in bloom are the Ornamental Pears, Crab Apples, Indian Hawthorn and Pride Of Madeira

Is there a "fail safe" garden strategy or plant that even the least green-thumbed person can't stuff up?

Honey, if you've got a black thumb, succulents are the way to go. There are some beautiful species like Kalanchoe, Aloe and Crassula that aren't too arid looking and will provide abundant flowering.

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