

# NO-SOIL AND SMALL-SPACE GARDENS



If your space for a garden is an inner-city courtyard, an urban ‘pocket handkerchief’, or a ‘no soil’ balcony, verandah, roof top or patio – read on!

The appeal of a small, attractive and easily maintained garden is universal, but for many gardeners urban location and the constraints of space make it a necessity. World population has increased hugely during the twentieth century; when its present 7 billion people doubles in the year 2050, space for living will already have diminished dramatically, placing us irrevocably in the age of the small garden.

It has been said many times that the garden is another room of the house. The value of this additional living space is important to us all, but it is of vital importance to urban dwellers who are surrounded by noise, dust, pollution, traffic and crowds of people. The garden is our refuge, our secret retreat, a place of green and peace created by our own hands. It is an oasis of calm where we can hide from the noise and bustle of the world

*Above:* Tiny road-front garden planted entirely in troughs and pots.

outside; where we can shed the heavy cloak of stress and strain placed upon us by the pace and competition of modern living

Whether the garden is a tiny, walled inner-city courtyard, a roof garden, a collection of pots on an apartment balcony, the patio of a retirement unit, or the suburban dweller’s modest backyard, the therapeutic value of this precious space is unparalleled. We can still practise sustainable gardening here, enjoy the satisfaction of saving and sowing our own seeds and watching them germinate, and tend and harvest organically home-grown salad greens, fruit and vegetables.

No matter how small the space, with clever planning and planting, it will allow us to sit in sun or shade, read a book, eat al fresco meals with family and friends, and watch our children at play. We can even make our own compost, run our own home worm farm, dry the laundry and create discreet places to screen dustbins, tools and toys just metres from the door.

In short, the small garden must offer as many, if not all, the facilities of the large garden. The challenge is to become fiendishly clever at methods of fitting them all in!