

GardenNews



Putting pots to good use
Pat plans to recycle these containers from her medal-winning Chelsea garden

DID YOU KNOW?

Many plastic containers are made from polyethylene. 'PET' or 'PETE' stands for polyethylene terephthalate.

and shapes

Shiny metallic finishes, brilliant colours, organic shapes and fun designs all feature in the new ranges on offer from specialist companies and at garden centres.

Metal, lightweight plastic and polystyrene containers now look every bit as sturdy as stone and lead, but with the advantage of being easy to maintain and light enough to move around.

No room on the patio? Go for Moroccan style wall planters, ironwork scrolls or salvaged items. Wall planters add the final flourish to a crammed-full garden, as well as being a great solution for gardeners in terraced properties.

Make plants the stars

Use unusual plants such as grasses or succulents; fill containers with decorative vegetables or clever topiary shapes. Choose colours that inspire you, 'Bonfire Choc Orange' is a new flame-coloured begonia.

If you need help, many plant companies supply plug plants in colour mixes guaranteed to give a designer look. Try Suttons 'Sunshine Collection' or Thompson & Morgan's pelargonium 'Flower Candy'.

Plug plants of vegetables are available from garden centres and by mail order from companies such as Organic Plants; tel: 01354 740553 or visit www.organicplant.co.uk

Keep them happy

Container plants need good drainage. Puncture holes in the bottom of containers and stand them on pot feet or bricks. Put a thick layer of gravel at the bottom of recycled containers without drainage holes. Feed plants weekly with liquid feed or add pellets to the compost in long term displays.

Get online

Find more great ideas and container projects on our website www.liveforgardening.com

GN's top container ideas

HERE are some great ideas to help you create a container display that really makes an impact this year.

Recycled objects

Modern design, cheaper foreign imports, technical advances and innovative garden designers have encouraged gardeners to use a vast array of decorative containers.

Containers don't have to be perfect to look good - weathered stone, verdigris copper and rusted ironwork are all good traditional examples. Quirky containers such as cracked and broken terracotta pots look good planted up with houseleeks and succulents and lend themselves to a

Mediterranean planting theme.

Press wicker baskets into service in a country garden; line them with polythene before planting to stop them from rotting. Even the old pair of Wellington boots that have sprung a leak in this winter's snow can be wrapped in chicken wire and moss and planted up!

Once you start to think of everyday objects as garden containers the ideas are limitless.

Steal the show

Steal ideas from garden shows, TV and magazines. Garden News regularly features inspirational ideas from readers' gardens - we plan

to report all the latest trends from shows in 2010, too. Great container ideas that emerged from the Chelsea Flower Show in 2009 were living walls of plants, with containers filled with everything from salad crops to grasses, definitely an idea to steal.

A great idea from Aralia's garden was an acrylic cube filled with water and pebbles to grow watercress. Another exhibitor used small wire cages (gabions) filled with pebbles and planted up with nasturtiums and trailing plants to decorate their stand.

Find gabions at Stone3 Gabion Concepts, tel: 0845 230 0013 or visit www.stone3.co.uk

garden for the regional heats of Worldskills UK Garden 2010. Pat's garden design company Aralia, based at Hatfield Heath in Hertfordshire, won silver at Chelsea in 2009 with 'Fully Prepped', a quirky take on a kitchen garden that used kitchen items to contain plants.

Now she has been selected to design a garden in a small space for the Worldskills UK gardening competition that culminates with the winning exhibit being shown at the 2010 Malvern Autumn Show.

Contact Pat at Aralia Design, tel: 01279 730040 or visit www.aralia.org.uk

