

# GROWING TRENDS

Landscape designer Sandra Batley guides us through the top five trends for gardens this year.

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Photo from Suthi Picotte/www.planthire.co.nz

## 1 Urban Chickens

Hot on the heels of growing your own food and taking an active step towards becoming more self-sufficient is keeping chickens. It is becoming increasingly popular to have a handful of chickens in the backyard providing fresh eggs on a regular basis as well as making loving, surprisingly friendly family pets. Your urban chickens can be excellent workers in the garden, with their natural scratching and pecking often weeding the garden for you – they will happily clean up fallen fruit and consume all your kitchen scraps.

**RIGHT** A modern chicken coop that looks more like a sculpture. The nogg transcends ideas of what a chicken house usually looks like. It is designed to encourage domestic farming while adding a touch of playful elegance. [www.nogg.co](http://www.nogg.co) **BELOW RIGHT** A mobile pen or chicken tractor allows you to put your chickens to work within your vegetable garden from [www.bluemountaincoops.com](http://www.bluemountaincoops.com) **BELOW** The children will love having pet chickens and collecting the eggs for breakfast.



IT IS BECOMING INCREASINGLY POPULAR TO HAVE A HANDFUL OF CHICKENS IN THE BACKYARD PROVIDING FRESH EGGS ON A REGULAR BASIS.



## 2 Homegrown Revolution

By far the biggest trend worldwide has been vegetable gardening. With rising food prices and a growing global awareness of the dangers of agricultural chemicals, many consumers are choosing to grow their own fresh produce rather than buy from their local supermarkets. The interest in homegrown has seen a new generation of gardeners transform their suburban backyards, balconies and patios into edible gardens.

Households are also actively participating in the harvesting and cooking of their homegrown produce. The purchase of worm-farms, compost bins, heirloom seeds and raised vegetable garden kit-sets has also increased dramatically.

Photo by Suthi Picotte



IN A RESIDENTIAL SPACE, VERTICAL GARDENS PROVIDE THE PERFECT SOLUTION FOR 'GREENING UP' AREAS WHERE THERE IS LIMITED SPACE.

## 3 Living Walls

Vertical gardens, also commonly known as living or green walls, are plants that are mounted to a wall and grown vertically. Imagine a lush tapestry of plants growing up the side of tall city buildings and urban garden walls, plants thriving on the interior walls of offices, restaurants and cafes.

In a residential space, vertical gardens provide the perfect solution for 'greening up' areas where there is limited space, such as balconies, small courtyards or entranceways. Vegetable and salad crops can also be successfully grown in this style.

There are some magnificent examples of vertical gardens displayed around the world as well as locally. They have gained huge popularity over the years for the environmental and aesthetic benefits they provide and will continue to play a critical role in the future sustainability of our environment.

**ABOVE** Create an instantly lush vertical garden with the modular living wall system from woolly pocket, which can also be used to grow herbs outside (see page 136). Contact Natural Tree Products for more information. [www.planthire.co.nz](http://www.planthire.co.nz). **TOP RIGHT** Vertical gardens can look amazing in small areas, like this creative courtyard at [www.vertigarden.co.uk](http://www.vertigarden.co.uk) **RIGHT** Another unique vertical garden, at the Stephen Marr Salon in Auckland, from [www.naturalhabitats.co.nz](http://www.naturalhabitats.co.nz)





## 4 Roof Lines

Another rapidly growing design trend is the installation of green roofs. They make private and public buildings inviting and environmentally friendly. Roofs of existing and new homes or buildings are partially or completely covered with plants and soil in place of hard, impenetrable roofing materials. This adds insulation, reduces storm-water runoff, reduces air pollution, reduces energy consumption, captures carbon dioxide and creates a habitat for birds and other wildlife. Some green roofs are accessible to the public, helping to beautify built-up urban spaces.

**ABOVE** The High Line, located in New York, is a spectacular example of a public green space. Set 30 feet in the air, it utilises an old railway line, seen at [www.thehighline.org](http://www.thehighline.org). The Falcone Flyover pathway rises eight feet above the High Line, winding through a canopy of trees, between West 25th and West 27th Streets, facing south. **TOP LEFT** Gansevoort End, plaza and stairs, at the Gansevoort and Washington Street intersection. **LEFT** Falcone Flyover, an evening aerial view at West 26th Street, looking south. **OPPOSITE PAGE** Inventive gardening practices are making green spaces possible in the most unusual of places. This modern dwelling in the United Kingdom features a rooftop garden for added greenery, seen at [www.berc.co.uk](http://www.berc.co.uk)

Photography Iwan Baan

## 5 Going Green

Sustainable, environmentally friendly practices are no longer just trendy but commonplace with many savvy gardeners, consumers and businesses. Today, eco-literacy is a prerequisite for many landscaping and building companies.

An overwhelming trend towards purchasing organic soils and fertilisers for the garden has shown many consumers no longer want to have heavy synthetics in their home and garden for the protection of their children, pets, and overall health and well-being. The importance of being sustainable has seen us save energy and conserve water. Many garden designs will now include an in-built worm farm, compost corner and grey-water solutions as part of this. The increase of organic soil has also seen a decrease in harmful sprays and pesticides being used in the garden.

*Sandra Batley is an award-winning landscape designer and owner-operator of Auckland-based innovative garden design company Flourish, [www.flourishgardens.co.nz](http://www.flourishgardens.co.nz)*



“NATIVE WILD FLOWER AND TREE SPECIES ON THE ROOFS OF MY HOME HAVE SUCCESSFULLY ESTABLISHED A BIODIVERSE WILDLIFE HABITAT”.  
 – JUSTIN BERE, BERE ARCHITECTURE