

Giardina 2016

LATEST TRENDS IN BALCONY GARDENS

Terraces and balconies are valuable oases of relaxation, especially in urban areas. Today, these outdoor spaces are designed and furnished in such a sophisticated manner that they can be enjoyed all year round. In a dedicated section of the exhibition, Giardina 2016 is presenting intelligent solutions and the latest trends in the design of small terraces and balcony gardens. Switzerland's biggest, indoor 'live your garden' event is being held at Messe Zürich from 16 to 20 March.

A longing for greater sensuousness

Many of us find nature to be a calming alternative to our everyday lives, where we can stop and draw new strength. On terraces and balconies too, there is a growing desire to experience feelings and an individual connection with nature. "Outdoor spaces are increasingly becoming refuges, offering not only a very high level of living comfort and personal enjoyment but also an area where people can recharge their emotional batteries", confirms Kathrin Stengele from fior di terrazza. A holder of a diploma in landscape gardening, she adds: "The current trend is towards sumptuous vegetation, with character, which can certainly be dynamic in nature and, at times, rather wild and disordered. Giving free rein to nature in this way is then coupled with the very latest furnishings and high-tech systems. This symbiosis between current design elements and natural-look vegetation can be denoted contemporary garden romanticism."

Solitary plants as a mark of individuality

It is plants with character that have the biggest impact in a small space. Carefully positioned, they will form an attractive centrepiece on residential balconies and terraces. The specific plant selected will depend on the person concerned, being a highly individual choice. Some like filigree plants, while others prefer archaic shapes. A strong trend is evident towards designs incorporating solitary plants – one reason being that they do not require excessive care", explains Patrick Daepp, managing director of Gartenpflanzen Daepp in Münsingen. Ideal plants for big, decorative pots are slowly-growing trees and wood shrubs which have their own particular character, such as Japanese maples and hydrangeas. Imposing, self-supporting flowering plants, like phlox, gaura or Mediterranean spurge, are a source of vegetation that provides character for limited spaces.

Atmospheric arrangements

"Japanese maples are exceptional garden treasures", says Roman Schwitter, owner and manager of Gärtnerei Schwitter AG in Inwil, Canton Lucerne. These plants for true garden lovers are a source of delight the whole year round, with their graceful shape and their light, chic leaves. In the autumn, their intensive colouring changes to a vibrant display, extending from golden yellow and orange right through to magenta and burgundy red." Individually shaped solitary plants, such as mountain pines, yews and junipers can be decoratively highlighted with effect lighting. Flexibly positionable spotlights, for example, will produce ever-changing garden scenes. The materials and colours to be used for plant pots and containers are a matter of personal taste. When it comes to furniture and floor coverings, ingenious contrasts or carefully configured repetitions will produce an impressive effect. Indispensable in this season are lightweight designer plant pots, which can be made of aerated concrete, high-grade powder-coated aluminium or break proof, frost-resistant polyester resin. "Not only do the plants thrive in these pots, they also look exceptionally good", says Roman Schwitter.

High-tech with a green thumb

Anyone who has to plan the watering of their garden themselves and wants to go away on holiday is confronted with a problem if no neighbours are at home to help. Today, a garden can be watered from anywhere in the world – including via a smartphone. This is made possible by the new app-controlled watering systems based on intelligent plant sensors. These systems constitute the eye and the sensor in the garden. They continuously measure the current values for soil humidity, light conditions and outside temperature and send this data directly to a smartphone or tablet. The latest watering solutions will be on display at Giardina.

Nature and the city

Not only do decorative elements make an impact that contributes to an authentic natural experience on terraces and balconies but the variety of species too. "Where plants flower and attract insects, birds are not far away either", says Andreas Schedler from Hauenstein AG, Baumschule & Gartencenter Rafz. "With winter-hardy flowering plants, a water basin and a small insect hotel, people can do everything to promote the variety of species. In this way, people's living environment can be livened up without a great outlay, even in highly built-up areas", the garden professional advises. "Butterfly pots" with wild oregano, thyme, sage and basil will thrive in sunny locations. And these aromatic herbs can be used in fresh herbal cuisine at the same time.

A wealth of inspiration and ideas

At Giardina 2016, leading Swiss nurseries, garden centres and garden designers will be presenting real-life architectural examples to show how a wide variety of plants and sophisticated furnishings can provide an enhanced experience on terraces and balconies. Visitors can receive firsthand advice on their own personal, feel-good green space and obtain detailed information on all the different aspects of design.

Giardina – Europe's highest-quality indoor 'live your garden' event.

This unique exhibition heralds in the season in a dazzling fashion at the start of spring each year. The most important suppliers from the sector present new products, creative solutions and upcoming trends in garden design on an area of some 30,000 m². Amidst spectacular sample gardens and artistic installations, visitors will find a wealth of inspiration and ideas for their personal world of flowers and plants in the garden or on their terrace or balcony.

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