

“Seasons... they-are-a-changing!”



With the warmer temperatures about to sizzle through, garden design professionals are once again faced with the annual challenge of getting rid of the grey hues and kick-start our winter cocooning into a luscious green spring-fever boldness.

Client's needs are ever shifting and expectations are raised with every season to apply our old friend “creativity” with the technology at hand, to come up with new angles and shades of colour combinations and the form and function that compliments.

Lately, in both residential and corporate garden environments, the bar has been raised extensively in order to follow a clients brief as well as making sure the practical sustainability pulls through.

In the next few articles, ON THE TERRACE deals with various aspects of inviting the green outdoors inside as well as vice versa, making the transition

from garden to indoors a virtual single, seamless environment.

One way to get this done is the smart implementation of pots, planters, containers and wherever else a member of our green “friends” are willing to live in.

For more than 20 years, Adri Neuper of Eeden Design Concepts, have been involved in various green projects, where she has been successfully applying her years of experience on many levels but it's the subject of pots that really got her passion in overdrive. It hasn't always been easy and says that on a few occasions – she literally had to make a “green” bunny appear from the proverbial hat (or pot) so to speak.

In all simplicity, if you want to see green but have no open soil to plant in, you need a container. It has limits but also offers an endless variety of options to fulfill and surpass any client's dream garden expectations.



Small Garden Situ

A small garden could be a big obstacle when you are limited on multiple levels AND have to create a look that's sustainable and pleasing to the eye of the beholder in one go.

When challenged with a this limited garden area, which was mostly paved walkway – boxed in by walls on all sides, facing full sun, Adri chose a few colourful but hardy succulents in charcoal rectangular window boxes.

Placed on the side of the walkways, the window boxes have minimum impact on the walkways space available and the depth of the planters allows for adequate root space down below. Adri arranged rocks and stones in between the plants to form a neat and firm soil level, while ensuring the plants are not too close to each other, allowing for sufficient growth and exposure.

This was contrasted with taller lighter coloured pots in between which worked well with the colour of the walls and complimented the shapes and colours of the plants, adding an interesting wave of level and colour to lead the eye to a bench of tranquility in the furthest corner of this tiny haven of peace.





**Steyn City Mansion**

One of the most interesting challenges for Adri was a Steyn City Mansion. The project entailed the entrance of one of the main residential mansions which included a little outdoor atrium garden and it all needed a bit more glamour.

*“It must look like the guys have gone to lunch and returning soon”* was the architect’s clear instructions.

Apart from that, the architect was very specific regarding the shape and colour of the pots requested, but the choice of plants was an even steeper hill to climb. Client wanted succulents but those fellows love the sun and this was all happening in a shady patch.

And don’t forget the colour and texture of the plant selections to find the artistic glamour of contrast against the grey hues of the mansion walls.

Sandile Radebe participated by painted a mural on the wall, but as this whole area had to be read as one space, Sandile took his colour cues from the plants Adri used.

A most unusual project but needless to say that the architect as well the client was over the moon with the final product.



**KFC Exterior**

As one of the leading fast food chains in the world, KFC are famous for offering “finger licking’ good” and “made by hand” meals. They have a very clear strategy where design is playing an important role to enhance customer experience by creating a welcoming and comfortable restaurant.

In this highly competitive market, KFC recognises the potential of “green” elements to enhance their appeal and incorporated face brick planter boxes and cement pots into the design of their stores to utilise the calming positive benefits of nature in the immediate consumer surroundings.

Working along with Adri, Portulacaria afra, also known as “spekbome” was chosen to form a hedge in the planter boxes. They are famous for producing oxygen, are water wise, grow easily and are available in all regions.

The Aloe Barberae was chosen to be used in the pots. They add colour and height in a elegant informal way, are water wise and readily available.

The face brick planter boxes and the cement pots also resonates the fresh modern contemporary design found in the energetic and surprising inner city of Johannesburg. dw

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