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SPRING 2011

CityBites

TORONTO'S GUIDE TO GREAT FOOD & DRINK

THE WINE ISSUE



PLUS! PANCAKES + BOOKS + SPOT PRAWNS + WHISKY

Contain Yourself!

NO BACKYARD? NO PROBLEM!

You're dying to grow your own food but you don't have a plot to plant in. No worries. There are many options for the space-starved.

Container gardening has been around for centuries, not only because it's practical but also beautiful. Even a small collection of pots can transform an empty patio, balcony, driveway or deck into a lush and edible landscape. A humble bucket, a recycling bin or even an old teapot can make a great home for salad greens, peas, beans, tomatoes and peppers. Most fruits, vegetables and herbs can be grown in containers as long as they get enough sun, a proper-sized pot with drainage holes and the right soil. One nice thing about containers: you can move the pots to follow the sun.

WATER WATER EVERYWHERE

Container growing means more frequent watering. A pot is a relatively small space compared with a garden bed and is more likely to dry out. Those pretty terra cotta pots are notorious for absorbing water so

they have to be watered often. Try planting in self-watering pots that have a reservoir at the bottom, forcing the plant to drink from below through its roots. If drainage is poor, plants will be vulnerable to root rot. You need to strike a perfect balance between draining and retaining.

SUCCESS IS IN THE SOIL

Keep it light and fluffy. A pot filled with triple mix will turn into a cement block after a few good rains, and that's not good for airflow or healthy root growth. Start with a good quality organic potting soil and amend it with something nutritious such as vermicompost (worm castings).

SIZE DOES MATTER

The pot must fit for the plant. Plants with shallow root—like lettuces and greens—are ok in shallow pots, while tomatoes, peppers and eggplants prefer large vessels so the roots can spread out.



THINK VERTICAL

Containers can be placed on shelves or tables and that means less stooping. Another benefit: because each plant has its own self-contained ecosystem, you're less likely to be hit by a major bug or weed infestation. Add a trellis to your containers for climbing plants like peas and pole beans. Bamboo hoops can support a shade cloth to cool your plants at the peak of summer—and you can switch to clear plastic sheeting to create a mini greenhouse when temperatures dip in the fall.

Arlene Hazzan Green co-owns The Backyard Urban Farm Co. in Toronto. Visit bufco.ca.

PHOTO: ARLENE HAZZAN GREEN



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Patrick McMurray, Owner of Starfish Oyster Bar & Grill, May 26, 6-8 pm, \$80 per guest



Trevor Wilkinson, Owner & Executive Chef from Trevor Kitchen & Bar, June 9, 6-8 pm, \$95 per guest



Peter George, Executive Chef of 360 The Restaurant at the CN Tower, August 25, 6-8 pm, \$95 per guest



Timothy Palmer, Restaurant Chef of the Fairmont Royal York restaurant EPIC, September 15, 6-8 pm, \$95 per guest

The executive chef series includes a five or six-course tasting menu, wine and food pairings and all gratuities. Register at kitchen@stlawrencemarket.com or call 416-860-0727 stlawrencemarket.com [facebook.com/stlawrencemarket](https://www.facebook.com/stlawrencemarket)

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