

THE GRAND OUTDOORS ISSUE | DESIGN & DECORATING

Find a Planter's Soil Mate



Make your terrace, porch or patio more posh with a potted tree, in a vessel that shows it best

By MICHELLE SLATALLA

THINK BIGGER THAN a crock of nasturtiums this year. "Potted trees can be magical," said Andrew Pascoe, a floral designer in Oyster Bay, N.Y. "You can create privacy on a roof terrace. You can use two to flank a front door. A row of them is an instant hedge."

Choose a tree that typically attains a height of no more than 10 feet, and pamper it in every season, said Mr. Pascoe, who grew up

in England's mild climate, where potted plants commonly become permanent landscape features. "In spring and summer, trees will exhaust the food supply in the soil of a pot quite quickly, so feed them well with fertilizer, and water them daily," he said. In winter, move pots out of danger of harsh winds and wrap them in burlap to protect roots from freeze-thaw fluctuations. Paired with the proper planter, a tree can become a living sculpture to artfully transform your garden year-round. Mr. Pascoe matches petite trees with new-to-market planters to make the most of both.



MODERN FAIRY TALE

"There's something very Gothic about the design of this planter" with its repeating pattern of pointed arches, said Mr. Pascoe. Pairing it with the frothy, very pale flowers of a miniature Cinderella crabapple tree would create "a classic blue-and-white palette—my favorite," he said, adding that the planter's sleek, aluminum surface updates the look. With long, slender branches that reach up and out like thin, curving fingers, Malus x 'Cinzam' "still looks enchanting in the winter when it has no foliage," he said. Omph Ocean Drive Outdoor Planter in blue, from \$1,575, chairish.com



CLASSIC SPIN

"This is a very traditional metal planter, with its little feet and the rings on its sides, and would look lovely if you paired it with the formal shape of a holly trained as a topiary," Mr. Pascoe said. Ilex 'Castle Spire' can be clipped to encourage it to spiral upward as it grows, like an evergreen church steeple. "For symmetry, I'd like to see two flanking an entryway." In summer, its glossy leaves provide a deep green, and in winter, brilliant red berries. Aged Grey Square Planter by the Vintage Gardener, from about \$190, societyhouse.co.uk



BEAUTY AND THE BRUTE

For this plump, fluted container cast from a mix of crushed marble, rock and resin, Mr. Pascoe chose Prunus 'The Bride' a flowering cherry tree with bouquet-worthy blossoms. "The shape of the pot reminds me of the shape of its delicate petals. Plus, the rough texture will play nicely against the pretty flowers when [the tree] blooms in spring." He recommends fertilizing the tiny tree in spring and judiciously pruning its crown to maintain a rounded, nose-gay silhouette even when branches are bare in winter. Petal Garden Planter, from \$650, pennynewman.com



URBANE SPRAWL

Of his decision to pair the gentle curves of a Japanese maple tree with the sharp angles of a modern planter made from high-density polyethylene (translation: recycled milk jugs), Mr. Pascoe said, "You need a contrast to soften its edges." An Acer palmatum var. dissectum 'Red Dragon' will grow low and wide, with a shaggy shape that brings to mind a shawl thrown across the back of a chair. "The red leaves will look dramatic against the bright green pot, and the shape of the tree will look sculptural even in winter when the branches are bare." Tessellate Slope Planter, from \$595, lolldesigns.com

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Double Your Picnic Options

We see a multitude of picnics in your near future, and without scope to vary them, they risk becoming as monotonous as these past months trapped at home. Instead of one blah blanket, try this padded cotton bontha mat, handmade in India using natural dyes. Each side features a different complementary pattern. Toss a foil-covered chocolate coin to decide which textile gets top billing first. Bontha Mat, \$425, lesindiennes.com



Ensooence Your Dog

Who needs more relief from sun than creatures compelled to wear a full-length fur all year? Shade your cat or canine outdoors with a wicker bed hand-woven in the shape of a pagoda—architecturally dramatic but not overly kitschy. The bed's designer, Tina Yaraghi, said she's drawn to styles that "blend the best of a current look with classical design." The 32-inch-wide perch includes a choice of two washable patterned cushions, so you can cuddle your backyard buddy selectively. Pagoda Pet Bed, \$495, enchantedhome.com



Thrill With the Chaise

When we ponder this luxe lounger, our thoughts drift variously to the Italian Riviera in the 1960s and the rooftop pool of a 21st-century hotel and then back to a reckless impulse to splurge on one of these chaises for ourselves. "It's a minimal,

timeless sun bed pared down to its essence," said Paola Lenti, who founded her Italian furniture and design studio nearly three decades ago. The chair's rounded pads evoke undulating ocean waves, and the woven-look fabric (a super-tough performance textile) adds a rich depth of sun-splashed color. Miramar Chaise, from \$6,240, paolalenti.it

Snip Like Royalty



Sculpting boxwoods into bunnies, trimming your David Austin roses or nipping daisies for a pickle-jar vase? These topiary shears—endorsed by the Royal Horticultural Society—help you do it all with ease and a slightly regal air. "They're beautiful hanging on a peg, and they function just as you would use your hand naturally," said Gary McNatton, who imports them from English manufacturer Burgon & Ball, which began producing steel sheep shears in 1730. The mechanism-free action won't rust or lose its spring like hardware-store snips. Topiary Trimming Shear, \$75, hudsongraces.com

Tote Starlight

The evening is warm and fair; the sky, literally stellar. Don't crash this bliss with the glare of a camping lamp or mundane phone flashlight. Instead, illuminate the night with a crystal lantern from the oldest cristallerie in Europe, French glass-maker Saint-Louis. "It brings this poetic glow anywhere," said interior architect Noé Duchaufour-Lawrance of the rechargeable lamp he designed. "It's like bringing part of a chandelier outside." Fotin Portable Lamp, \$2,100, saint-louis.com



MAYAN AND VISHALI (BUTTERFLY); AGATA WIEZGOCKA (PLANTERS); F. MARTIN BAMBUI (THE WALL STREET JOURNAL); (BLANKET); (SHEARS); (LANTERN)