

LOVING AND LIVING WITH PLANTS  
BY LAILA KARIM



# A Green Makeover

For many of us, redecorating the house ahead of celebrations like pujas is a common affair; others simply rearrange the existing furniture to create a new look every once in a while. On occasions like Puja, which is just weeks away, many opt to add some touch of colour in their lives, and green simply should not be ruled out.

Plants add vitality to our living spaces and speak volumes about our personality and choices, our lifestyles and standard of our living – most importantly, it gives the impression about our very vision of life.

To keep matters simple, let us first consider just rearranging the existing set up of plants around the house. They require some pruning, addition of fertilisers and change of the base soil; even replanting in pots may become necessary at times. If the containers become old and monoto-



nous, this is a good opportunity to bring some change. Take a good look at the current arrangement and make some quick fixes. Simply adding or switching around a few plants may give a fresh and new look to your house.

While reconsidering shifting the pots, consider size, colour, shape and individual need of the plants. Not all plants have the same requirements for survival – some need ample room to 'breathe', some require sunlight, while others even thrive in the darkest corners of the rooms. So place the plants according to their needs.

Now let us consider some special arrangements using small plants. I am sharing some ideas for arrangements here which are simple and inexpensive. I favour using available containers - old ice cream cups, empty jam/jelly/honey

jars, coloured mugs, tea pots, odd/different shaped bowls, used serving trays and plates, and even bamboo baskets! The options are endless-- just let your imagination run wild.

It is not difficult to find nice terracotta pots in and around the city. One can find many interesting items even on the road side pottery shops. All you need to do is make your pick depending on your needs. Get the right plants to fit into the right containers; this is of utmost importance. A wide variety of the small indoor or table plants are available in the neighbourhood nurseries and common places like Aarong outlets, Unimart and other chain shops.

A huge, inexpensive collection is actually available on the pavements in front of the Shishu Academy (opposite Curzon Hall,

close to the High Court) in Dhaka city. I believe similar pots are available in other cities or smaller towns.

This is my way of doing things. 'Why?' you may ask. Simply because this instantly gives the personalised look one can feel attached to.

Tips to remember

After finishing the plant arrangements, place the vase/tray on a monochrome mat, or on a piece of wood. Please remember that the placement material should be a little larger to give the arrangement a complete feel!

Please feel free to send emails to share your thoughts, feedback, and photos of your garden, or to tell your story; or ask a question on the garden issue. Email: [lifestyleds@yahoo.com](mailto:lifestyleds@yahoo.com).

Photo: Collected



LS SUGGESTS

## Potting pieces of nature

A blooming foliage in summer, cool showers dripping from lush leaves in monsoon and the luxury of an earthy feel all year round; ornamental plants pique the nature lover in all of us. Swinging, pendulous branches enliven any dull space and a vertical garden may just be the way to go for your balconies, terraces or even an old wall.

While it is difficult to pinpoint exactly where hanging plants are sold, a few focal areas are nurseries in Agargaon, street sides of Kalabagan and even Satmasjid Road in Dhanmondi. Vendors setting up shop to sell decorative plants can be spotted practically anywhere in Dhaka city. However, if you are one true hobbyist, chances are you already took home your very own hanging pot-holder, or even three from the Jatiya Brikhha Mela organised at Agargaon. Such seasonal fairs are perfect to get an ideal



basket of hanging plants? Simple potholders do the trick and divert all the attention to the aesthetic plants, true. But you can also take up a DIY project and add a fresh coat of colourful paint to your potholders and wooden baskets. Pull out all the stops and opt for a glass mason jar instead. Recycling an old pickle jar or getting an amazing deal on these nifty containers would give your hanging plants a unique and rustic charm. All that'd be left to do is string an aluminum wire and hang your plants for a refreshing feel.

A weekend project, an impulsive purchase or just to liven up a rooftop; a pot of ornamental plants may be planted for different reasons but it never goes unappreciated. And it certainly never disappoints.

By Ramisa Haque

Photo: Sazzad Ibne Sayed



deal at cheap prices, not to mention from a great variety!

These varieties are ultimately what decide the range of prices at which the plants are sold. Deals range from Tk 100 for the most ordinary decorative plant to even as high as Tk 10,000 for an expensive pot of bonsai.

Hanging plants come in a wide array of breeds; the most common being 'lipstick plant'. Apart from being unusually named, these work brilliantly as both an indoor and

outdoor plant and bloom with red buds in minimal conditions; perfect for an enthusiast on the threshold. You can also give in to the charm of a bonsai plant, a money plant or even to a tiny pot of cactus. Also there in the options are the humble ferns and climbing plants or even vines which are sure to add another dimension of visual interest to your collection of ornamental plants!

For the people with an artistic flair and interest, why not go the extra mile with the

