



FYI

The top down on terrariums

The grind of a 9 to 5 job has you recurrently stuck in a grey-white cubicle, devoid of any sign of life, other than a human's. The ever-demanding calendar even makes your home feel like a lifeless hotel room. You just shuffle in and out, caring only for the basic utilities. So, sometimes the heart and mind both yearn for a breather, an oasis amid this desert of drudgery.

But, the urge for green foliage raises the questions of prized space for your utilitarian, no-frills stuff. Or is it your own brown thumbs that has killed a few, innocent baby-plants in the past?

Fear not! Terrarium is the perfect answer for your desire to enjoy a little flora, self-made and exerting your imagination. And that too, without burning a hole in your pocket!

So, what is it? A terrarium is like an aquarium, but for plants instead of fish and reptiles. It is planted to look like a tiny garden or forest enclosed in its own little world. It is perfect for folks, who crave a patch of greenery in their living space, but are also starved of accommodating space and time.

The terrarium, as we know it today, is credited to Nathaniel Ward, a Victorian,

Natural History hobbyist. He created 'Wardian Cases,' big, enclosed containers for growing and transporting plants over long distances. The terrariums now used as trendy, hipster home decor items are modern, up-cycled versions of the vintage bauble.

But, what do you need to make this novel, green trinket? And how?

For any terrarium, you firstly need: a container of a size that will fit your available space. For instance — mason jars, drinking glasses, soup bowls, tea cups and even old baking tins. But, the best are wide-mouthed glass bowls, available at the Katabon pet shops. They are perfect for circulation of air and light, while clearly displaying the plants.

This brings us to plants — the most important element! Try to get miniature plants that will not grow too big for the glass bowl. I prefer small ones — succulents, cacti and air plants — of different colours and shapes. But, the best thing about these varieties is that they are very low-maintenance! These little plants can be bought from the local nurseries, at any residential area of Dhaka or at Agargaon.

The next issue is the potting supplies. You need: small to medium sized rocks; charcoal to help prevent odour and fungi; and potting soil. Additionally, you can add decorative marbles; pebbles; or shells. They can be bought again at Katabon.

A must for any great terrarium is a 'thriller!' The thriller adds an imaginative element to the expression. Add a mini tea table to a succulent terrarium to evoke the spirit of a Mad Hatter's tea party. Or, a fairy to create a fairy garden — another unique form of miniature gardening

Now, that we know what we need, let's make it! Easy way out is buying your pot and asking the person in charge of a nursery to make a terrarium for you; but, enjoy some DIY pleasure instead — it will take you simply twenty minutes to make a terrarium, all by yourself.

Start with a layer of rocks and charcoal, about one inch or so, at the bottom of a clean bowl. These will help with drainage. Then, fill the container up to half-full with potting soil. Use a big, flat kitchen spoon to do these steps. Then, fix your plants — arrange them to look nice, to breathe and grow.

Pat down the soil so they do not get uprooted easily. Again, use the kitchen spoon. If you are using air plants, no soil is needed. Add decorative pebbles, marbles, or sand. Water the plants — a teaspoon full at the root of each plant.

And, now add your showstopper to make your terrarium a complete, miniature garden. You are ready to place your terrarium on your desk or den.

A terrarium is very low-maintenance but, ensure the space has good airflow and indirect light. Do not over water the plants; a light misting every other week is suggested for growth and maintenance.

The little terrariums have taken off very much on Instagram and Pinterest as more people use them as home decoration, gifts and corporate favours.

And with this article, you are ready for making your very own terrarium to be the envy of your gang!

By Anahita Ahmed

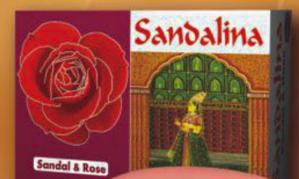
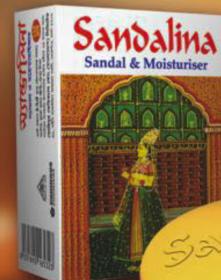
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