Top **3** Landscaping Trends

Refresh your landscape with these top trends.

1. Livable Outdoor Spaces

Many homeowners are treating their patios and backyards like another room of the house by adding outdoor kitchens with pizza ovens and using decorative planters and garden art to put their unique stamp on the space. How can you make your space more livable?

Add a deck or patio. Great for entertaining or for lounging during your free time, a deck or patio is a must-have feature. If natural stone or brick patio pavers are out of your budget, concrete pavers are a budget-friendly alternative.

Enhance your lighting. Set the mood and enjoy your patio into the evening with the right lighting. LED and solar are becoming increasingly popular. Use strings of lights, torches or LED glass pavers that can be incorporated into the hardscape.

Think comfort. Homeowners are turning their patios into outdoor living rooms. Out with the plastic patio furniture; in with oversized sofas, armchairs and tables made for the outdoors.

2. Low-Maintenance Landscapes

Water conservation efforts in many areas of the country are prompting homeowners to make their landscapes drought-tolerant. One of the benefits of these landscapes: they're lower maintenance. Make your landscape more low-key.

Plant natives. Plants that are normally found in your area have adapted to the soil, water and weather patterns of your area. This makes them easier to care for than non-native species.

Practice xeriscaping. Ideal for areas that don't naturally get a lot of water, xeriscaping utilizes low-water-use plants, native grasses, mulch and other elements to create a low-water, low-maintenance landscape.

Install artificial turf. It looks like grass but requires less maintenance and water. Many municipalities, particularly in the West, offer incentives to replace grass with artificial turf.

3. Gardening for Wellness

It's no secret that whole foods are the keys to good health. Many people have turned to their own yards to grow the fruits and vegetables required for good nutrition. Not only are you able to see the fruits of your labor grow and flourish, but gardening can also burn up to 400 calories an hour.[1] Get growing.

Prepare your soil. Healthy, fertile, well-drained soil yields healthy plants. To see if your soil is healthy, dig a hole and look for earthworms. The more worms you see, the healthier your soil is. Or, send a sample away to a lab for a complete analysis of the nutrients in your soil.

Plant what you love. Make a list of the fruits and vegetables that you love before you shop for seedlings. This will help to ensure that most of what you grow is consumed. Some popular plants to start with include pole beans, squash, tomatoes, peppers, salad greens, collards, herbs and strawberries.

No yard, no problem! If you don't have the yard to grow a garden, grow what you love in containers instead. Find a sunny spot on your deck or patio, and arrange your portable garden for optimal light.

Sources: 1. WebMD
2. Garden Media Group

73% of consumers say that homegrown vegetables taste better and are better quality than store-bought.[2]

Spruce up Your Interiors
with a Houseplant

A houseplant is a hardworking piece of your décor. Not only does it enhance the appearance of your home, but it also improves your indoor air quality. Here are a few houseplants to boost the look and health of your living spaces.

Boston Fern: Known for its sword-shaped fronds, the Boston Fern is one of the most popular houseplants due to its hardiness.

Potted Orchid: Although orchids require more care than the average houseplant, their graceful flowers make them the center of attention in any room.

Snake plant: Known by many names, including mother-in-law's tongue, snake plants are sturdy plants that can tolerate low light and little watering.