

YOUR URBAN  
JUNGLE INTERIOR

# WONDER PLANTS 2

IRENE SCHAMPAERT & JUDITH BAEHNER

## FOREWORD

You can find a good spot for plants in every interior. Some living greenery in our home is something we can no longer do without. And that makes sense, because plants are good for you. They make us happy by providing us with a piece of nature, and they literally make us healthier because plants purify our air. Plants are becoming ever more visible in magazines, in interior design books, in architecture and at leading trade fairs. They've even grown to be essential elements in virtually every contemporary interior. Not just a couple of small plants, but big plants, real statements, and entire collections of unusual plants.

In this follow-up to the book *Wonderplants*, you can find further inspiration for creating remarkable combinations of interiors and plants. We have consciously chosen interiors, including some that are rather outré, in which material, texture, colour, size, imperfection and sunlight each make their own mark and achieve an equilibrium as a result. In *Wonderplants 2* we want to prompt you to follow your intuition in your style with plants that you find beautiful. Be blown away by the plant wall designed by botanist Patrick Blanc in his home in Paris. Experience the irrepressible passion for plants felt by Hilton Carter, who found his dream loft in a former cotton factory in Baltimore. Moreover, be inspired by the Brazilian vibes in Avare, Maringa, but also in Antwerp and Madrid.

The book provides you with lots of information about the best plants to choose, how to care for your plants and what plants can do for you and your environment. But above all, it makes you dream.

We're delighted to share our passion for fantastic interiors and plants. Each with its own story, and each in its own way.

IRENE SCHAMPAERT AND JUDITH BAEHNER





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# FRENCH GRANDEUR

**PARIS** FR

Around the corner from Parc Montsouris, in the artistic Quartier XIV in Paris, Jean-Marc Dimanche had the house of his dreams built for him. The modernist residence, inspired by the works of Le Corbusier, as with many others in this district, includes an impressive, vertical-courtyard garden. It is the crowning glory of the interior, situated amongst a sophisticated, idiosyncratic mix of vintage and design.

**T**he last thing Jean-Marc had even dared to consider during his quest for a residence in the city was to have one built for himself, but that was exactly what happened. He has been living there with his wife and three children for about thirteen years now. The house is also the core of all his professional activities (Jean-Marc is an art director), with an agency on the ground floor and an exhibition space where artists can display their art privately and with ease.

Designed by the French firm XY Architecture, the residence was erected on a vacant lot between two buildings, and consists of seven storeys. Jean-Marc: "From the very beginning

of the preparatory thought process, it had been the intention to utilise the building as completely as possible. That meant that we would not create a garden, but instead equip each floor with patios in order to get maximum enjoyment from the outdoor areas."

When the family moved from the countryside to Paris, Jean-Marc dreamt of a vertical courtyard garden. The desire to remain surrounded by nature was strong. "Bringing green into my environment was the only way for me to give nature its place in the city," Jean-Marc says. "It would be a waste to banish it from the buildings. I love the dialogue between the patios and the salon, extended, continuous nature."





Botanist and friend of the family Patrick Blanc, who is famous for his vertical gardens and being specialised in exotic plants, designed the wall of plants. “The wall in my house more closely resembles a jungle than a highly structured mosaic carpet,” Jean-Marc continues. “Over the years, the plants have taken over the initiative and some versions have ‘devoured’ others. The current situation has strayed strongly from the plant chart Patrick had envisioned: it is almost as if nature practiced free expression here.”

And, that is a fortunate coincidence, as this plant lover prefers the organic and spontaneous, and therefore also wild gardens.

“Let us say that I am more inclined to the lushness of English gardens than the symmetry and patterns of the French gardens,” Jean-Marc concludes.

He takes us back to his childhood days to illustrate his passion for nature. “I believe I was six or seven years old when I started gardening. My mother’s enthusiasm for gardens was contagious, to say the least,” Jean-Marc reminisces. “I have been active in the garden-

ing world for twenty years now. For instance, I helped organise the Plant Days in Courson from 1996 to 2016. It was there that I met and befriended many landscape architects and gardeners, amongst others Patrick Blanc. Besides being one of my passions, it has also become an important part of my life.”

Jean-Marc was likewise as passionate about decorating the interior of his home. “It is safe to say that my interior is somewhat of a cabinet of curiosities; a mixture of designer items, old furniture and objects. I always trust my feeling. I first need to fall in love with a piece before I place it in my house,” Jean-Marc confesses. “Each object tells its own story and is associated with some kind of encounter. Bringing all those different elements together and having them engage in dialogue: that is what intrigues me.”

His biggest source of inspiration? Art and design guru Axel Vervoordt. “Because of his talent to reunite pieces of different origins and different periods, always respecting authenticity,” Jean-Marc concludes. “Something that I continuously pursue myself as well.”



PALESTINE  
ANTIQUITE  
AGE CLASSIQUE  
MODERNE

ALCHIMSKA B. V.  
DEADLINE









# DEPOT BOTANIQUE

ANTWERP BE

In a depot building of a former distillery situated in Antwerp's South (Het Zuid) district, Laurence Kluft has created a remarkable loft following an ingenious renovation. The existing structure and industrial character of the building were preserved. The interior is a playful take on contrasts, intensely tangible in the successful combination of plants and concrete.

All my life, I have been passionate about beauty, in all of its forms," says interior designer Laurence Kluft, who started her career as a fashion designer. She drew the design for the renovation of her residence herself. She was inspired by the Soviet architecture of the 1970s – in the days when concrete was combined with aluminium – and combined it with her fondness for Japanese interiors. "Even so, I often still hear that it almost looks like a Brazilian city apartment," says Laurence. That comparison makes sense,

as the apartment contains references to the sleek architecture of Brazilian architect Paulo Mendes da Rocha, with a botanical touch of lush plants. Laurence elaborates, "My loft ended up using softer tones. Even though the concrete is visible, it is smoother and refined in texture. For the walls, I spent a long time searching for that perfect pigment to infuse the 'cold' concrete with a 'warm' colour; I ended up choosing the colour of a sandy beach."

Beyond that vision for the loft, Laurence wanted to adopt a new perspective for the spaciousness of the building with her design











and allow for a maximum amount of daylight access by excising internal volumes and installing large expanses of glass. On the first floor, now rebuilt into a yoga room, you can still see the original industrial details, the steel columns of the old storage space. The second floor, where she lives, rests upon a grid of 3 x 5 metres made from old, steel columns that were in poor condition. “We were unable to change anything about that grid, sadly,” says Laurence, “and all the walls could only be built on that grid. That limitation spontaneously resulted in a new floor plan for the space, and the perfectly square form of the loft additionally brought out a natural *feng shui*. It was a challenge to create a functional and open living space with that limitation. Especially because my ‘demands’ were so wide-ranging: an entrance, large living room, desk, fireplace, media corner, eating area and kitchen.”

The luscious plants help contribute to a Brazilian feeling in the house. The patio, which blurs the line between the outside world and the apartment’s interior, received a concrete bench and a large planter containing an urban jungle that included bamboo, *Gunnera*, *Muehlenbeckia*, tree ferns and Italian cypress. The pond was placed with due respect for the *feng shui* of the house.

Inside, spread across the entire loft, the plants provide personal accents. Not an eclectic mix, but the right plant in the right place, providing the appropriate atmosphere for each room and every corner of the house – the striking African linden in the living area, the Swiss cheese plant with its beautiful dark leaves in the kitchen and the asparagus fern, thirsting for moisture, in the bathroom.

The carefully chosen green plants come perfectly into their own alongside to the sparse use of colour in the residence, the selection of vintage furniture, and distinctive decorations.











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# WHICH PLANT SHALL YOU CHOOSE?

*We can only gaze with envy at beautiful and contemporary interiors with mature collections of plants or with a delightful, big Swiss cheese plant (Monstera deliciosa), a bird-of-paradise (Strelitzia nicolai) or a sentry plant (Agave americana). Such are genuine statements in your interior design that shall only grow more beautiful when they spend more time 'living' with you. Anybody would like that, but how do you go about getting it? What is the secret behind these domestic jungles? What type of plant is actually the best match for you and your interior? What care do different types of plants require, and where should you place them? Gaining a deeper understanding of your plant's needs shall help you make this endeavour a success.*

## INTERIOR

Before you start buying plants, it is wise to consider the placement of your plants and where you have enough space to place them. Do not merely consider which place would look nice with some greenery, but also whether the conditions in that spot would truly be suitable for your plants. When looking, also consider the amount of daylight when deciding on a spot. Some types of plants actually thrive in a shady spot, but all plants need at least some amount of daylight.

Try to consider your plants' needs, and make sure you put them in the correct spot from the start. Most plants don't tolerate being moved around. You can often tell by the colour of the leaves if a plant lacks sunlight; it will turn darker green, or the brightly coloured patterns on the leaves will fade. You can also adjust your interior and move some furniture around in order to create the proper setting. Are you planning a relocation or renovation? Then, it might be prudent to allocate room for your plants in the floor plan from the outset. You may decide upon plants in beautiful alcoves in a long stretch of wall, or an entire vertical wall covered with plants. These are possible ways to make your greenery an integral part of your interior design.

## STATEMENTS IN YOUR INTERIOR DESIGN

*Alocasia (Alocasia Zebrina)*

*banana, or dwarf Cavendish banana*  
(Musa acuminata of Musa cavendish)

*variegated rubber tree, rubber plant or rubber fig* (Ficus elastica 'Tineke')

*dwarf date palm* (Phoenix roebelenii)

*air plant* (Tillandsia)

*Heteropanax* (Heteropanax chinensis)

*sentry plant* (Agave americana)

*devil's backbone* (Kalanchoë daigremontiana)

*Philodendron* (Philodendron 'Xanadu')

*fishtail palm or toddy palm*  
(Caryota mitis)

## TIME

When you've decided where your plants will look best within your interior, you shall have to consider how much time you want to devote to their care. Are you the nurturing type? Then you may decide to buy plants that will need some extra TLC. Are you capable of completely forgetting about your plants, or are you frequently travelling? Then you had better buy some resilient plants that don't mind getting watered infrequently or irregularly. Truth be told, you can always go wrong with a plant, because that's just nature at work. However, if you take an honest look at yourself and your habits, you are sure to make this work. Start out with just a couple of plants and take it from there.

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## 'EASY' PLANTS

### *cactus*

*Epipremnum or Scindapsus* (*Epipremnum pinnatum* or *aureum*, *Scindapsus pictus*)

*Swiss cheese plant* (*Monstera deliciosa*)

*Chinese money plant* (*Pilea peperomioides*)

*spurge* (*Euphorbia pseudocactus*)

*mother-in-law's tongue or sanseveria*  
(*Sanseveria*)

*succulents, such as Crassula and Echeveria*

*fiddle-leaf fig*(*Ficus lyrata*)

These plants are highly popular because they can thrive and survive in almost all conditions. A little too much shade or a day or two without water is no problem; these plants will be right as rain regardless. These plants are often also offered for sale on second-hand sites, as they do not need much care and can therefore grow quite old.

## BUDGET

The budget you can afford is also a factor. Larger, more mature plants can be quite expensive, but there are younger plants available that are already quite big, and inexpensive. They grow even more beautiful over time. The same applies to plants that you buy smaller that will grow bigger very fast. You could consider swapping shoots or cuttings with your friends. Even if you are on a tight budget, you can still collect numerous attractive specimens.

## FAST GROWERS

*Epipremnum or Scindapsus* (*Epipremnum pinnatum* or *aureum*, *Scindapsus pictus*)

*velvet plant* (*Gynura aurantiaca*)

*Swiss cheese plant* (*Monstera deliciosa*)

*African linden* (*Sparrmannia africana*)

*Philodendron* (*Philodendron squamiferum* and *Philodendron selloum*)

*rubber tree, rubber plant, or rubber fig*  
(*Ficus elastica*)

*banyan fig* (*Ficus benghalensis*)

*asparagus fern* (*Asperagus plumosus*  
or *Asparagus setaceus*)

*chestnut vine* (*Tetrastigma voinierianum*)

*Japanese aralia or glossy-leaved paper plant* (*Fatsia japonica*)

*fiddle-leaf fig*  
(*Ficus lyrata*)



# IN HARMONY

- 1 snake plant or mother-in-law's tongue  
*Sansevieria trifasciata*
- 2 fishtail palm or toddy palm  
*Caryota mitis*
- 3 Anthurium  
*Anthurium 'Jungle King'*
- 4 hedge cactus or queen of the night  
*Cereus hildmannianus*
- 5 Philodendron  
*Philodendron squamiferum*
- 6 Peruvian apple cactus  
*Cereus peruvianus*
- 7 mother-in-law's cushion  
*Echinocactus grusonii*



In Gerwin's house, you can see a passion and love for plants. The plants there have been meticulously chosen, with attention to special versions and variations. You can see the versatility of plants in a lovely symbiosis with the interior. An *Anthurium* on a stand creates a unified object, blending perfectly with its environment. The cacti on the dresser constitute a gorgeous collection captured in a still life. The selection of plants and the way they are collected and displayed brings balance to this interior.

# FRENCH GRANDEUR

- |                                                                                 |                                                |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| 1 leaf begonia<br><i>Begonia mazaе</i>                                          | 6 parlour palm<br><i>Chamaedorea elegans</i>   |
| 2 dwarf umbrella tree<br><i>Schefflera arboricola</i>                           | 7 Anthurium<br><i>Anthurium andraeanum</i>     |
| 3 Ficus tree or weeping fig<br><i>Ficus benjamina</i>                           | 8 bamboo<br><i>Bambusa vulgaris</i>            |
| 4 macho fern<br><i>Nephrolepis exaltata</i>                                     | 9 baby's tears<br><i>Soleirolia soleirolii</i> |
| 5 delta maidenhair fern<br><i>Adiantum venustum</i> and <i>Adiantum tenerum</i> | 10 rex begonia<br><i>Begonia rex</i>           |



Simply spectacular: a complete jungle wall filled with plants that can grow freely and run as wild as they like. No tidy ferns placed neatly in a row, but a living tapestry focused on one, central place, making full use of the complete height. This wall full of plants achieves maximum impact as a result. By choosing plants that can still grow bigger and fuller, you can get closer to nature. Some plants thrive better than others and you can see how nature works. The occasional plant shall disappear, while another might acquire more territory. In addition to a gorgeous and aesthetic impression, the wall also contributes to a healthy indoor environment. Due to the air-purifying effect of plants – some in particular, such as the dwarf umbrella tree (*Schefflera arboricola*) and the macho fern (*Nephrolepis exaltata*) – this wall provides fresh air and is therefore good for your health.



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