

... a whole new perspective



Home delivery available



Support The Guardian

Available for everyone, funded by readers

Contribute →

Subscribe →

Search jobs

Sign in

Search

UK edition ▾

The Guardian

News

Opinion

Sport

Culture

Lifestyle

More ▾

Fashion Food Recipes Travel Health & fitness Women Men Love & sex Beauty Home & garden Money Cars

The Observer Gardens



Harriet Sherwood

@harrietsherwood
Sat 16 May 2020 12.35 BST

2

And here’s the kitchen garden: cooped-up Britain moves the indoors outdoors

As lockdown forces us to use every inch inside our homes, those lucky enough to have outside space are going al-fresco



▲ Gardeners will be denied the colourful displays of last year's RHS Chelsea Flower Show for the first time since 1913. Photograph: Mark Thomas/REX/Shutterstock

A bench and a slightly wobbly table used to be adequate for sitting and eating outside on warm days. Now the vogue is to turn your garden into a sophisticated outdoor living room, with rugs, cushions, scented candles and fire pits.

Lockdown has forced people to use every inch of their homes to accommodate work, education, exercise and leisure. Since the “stay at home” order was issued on 23 March, retailer John Lewis has seen a 63% rise in sales of its outdoor range, with barbecue sales more than doubling compared with a year ago. Some homeowners are going further and building outdoor kitchens, with fridges, ovens and sinks.

“Outdoor living rooms are not a new idea, but it’s definitely a huge thing for 2020,” said Ann-Marie Powell, a garden designer. “People are desperate to utilise whatever space they have at the moment, from a big garden to a tiny urban balcony, to help them stay sane in lockdown.”

Lockdown, the closure of garden centres and the sunny weather have also combined to create a record demand for seeds, up more than 250% - and a surge in online requests for advice to the Royal Horticultural Society (RHS). But garden enthusiasts will be denied an important fixture of the horticultural calendar this week as the Chelsea Flower Show moves online.

For the first time since 1913, apart from during the two world wars, the show will not take place in the grounds of the Royal Hospital this year. Instead, its website will host experts and designers showing off their own gardens, offering advice and demonstrations, and answering questions from the public.

Nikki Tibbles of florists Wild At Heart started working on her first garden for this year’s show more than a year ago. “Everything is ready to go, all the plants are perfect. It’s incredibly disappointing that it won’t see the light of day,” she said.

Since you’re here ...

... we have a small favour to ask. You’ve read [18 articles](#) in the last year. And you’re not alone; millions are flocking to the Guardian for open, quality news every day, and readers in 180 countries around the world now support us financially.

The crises we’ve faced in 2020 have underlined why factual information is indispensable to us all. We’re determined to provide journalism that helps each of us better understand the world, and take actions that challenge, unite, and inspire change. With no shareholders or billionaire owner, our journalism is free from political and commercial bias - this makes us different. We can give a voice to the oppressed and neglected, and stand in solidarity with the struggle for truth, humanity and justice.

Supporting us means investing in Guardian journalism for tomorrow and the years ahead. The more readers funding our work, the more questions we can ask, the deeper we can dig, and the greater the impact we can have. Your support protects our editorial independence and autonomy, which allows us to fearlessly investigate and interrogate the words of those with political and commercial power - and help bring about a brighter, fairer future.

Your support means we can keep our journalism open, so millions more have free access to the high-quality, trustworthy news they deserve. So we seek your funding not simply to survive, but to grow our journalistic ambitions and inform more people. If there were ever a time to join us, and help accelerate our growth, it is now. You have the power to support us through these challenging financial times and enable real-world impact.

Every contribution, however big or small, is so valuable for our future. **Support us today from as little as £1 - it only takes a minute. Thank you.**

Support the Guardian →

Remind me in October



Topics

Gardens / The Observer

Coronavirus outbreak / features



Reuse this content



Paid content

About ▾

'We're so keen to reopen': how one primary school is preparing to welcome back pupils

Paid for by

All together →

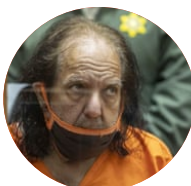
Most viewed



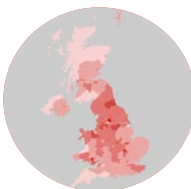
Live UK coronavirus live: Johnson says country prepared for more 'wretched Covid' as some pupils return to school



Tony Abbott: some elderly Covid patients could be left to die naturally



Ron Jeremy: adult film star charged with 20 new rape and sexual assault counts



Coronavirus UK map: Covid confirmed cases and deaths today



Live Coronavirus live news: Russia cases exceed 1m; Poland bans direct flights from 44 countries

Most popular

Fashion Food Recipes Travel Health & fitness Women Men Love & sex Beauty Home & garden Money Cars

News

Opinion

Sport

Culture

Lifestyle

Sign up to our daily email

Email address

Sign up

About us

Contact us

Complaints & corrections

SecureDrop

Work for us

Privacy settings

Privacy policy

Cookie policy

Terms & conditions

Help

All topics

All writers

Modern Slavery Act

Digital newspaper archive

Facebook

Twitter

Advertise with us

Guardian Labs

Search jobs

Patrons

Discount Codes

