

It seems that each spring home owners are looking for new ways to spruce up their landscaping. Everyone likes to have a nice looking yard. There are many trends now to help people extend their living space into the outdoors. This is done through outdoor furniture, planters, rock gardens and creating separate areas in the yard. Even small yards can be arranged to create useful welcoming spaces.

Many people with small yards feel that they are limited in what they can plant, however with the development of miniature trees, now even the smallest yard can have a wide variety of trees and plants. A new favorite among home owners of compact yard are miniature fruit trees. These trees are developed to take up much less space than traditional fruit bearing trees. The miniature fruit trees have a shorter height at maturity and have more compact branches. They still have beautiful blossoms in the spring of the year and produce edible fruit. Another advantage is that many of the miniature fruit trees are self pollinating so if you only have room for one tree it can still bear fruit.

One of my favorite yards in our neighborhood has a small lot, yet the owners have created a wonderful space for their family to enjoy. They have built a small deck in the front of the house and have a patio table and chairs on the deck. They have also placed planters with bright colored annuals to give the space a welcoming appearance. On either side of the deck they have planted miniature fruit trees. They chose apple trees that have pale pink flowers in the spring and medium size apples in early fall. The owner told me that the trees are very hardy and resistant to most blight so they do not have to spray them. The fruit is more abundant every other year, but they did have apples the second year they planted the trees. To the north side of the deck they have created a small rock garden with perennials that do well in the shade. These lush green plants are a nice contrast to the color of the annuals in the pots on the deck. On the small south side area they have created a fire ring surrounded by two benches and two chairs. The over all effect is a welcoming space with plenty of seating. By breaking up the yard into zones they have utilized all the space they have, without making the space look cluttered. It gives the home a great deal of curb appeal.