

DREAMDESIGNS

Living with nature

Presence of well-designed green spaces is a life-enriching experience. The trend of landscaping is gaining ground in Pune



A trend that is fast emerging in societies and townships is creation of green oasis to bring back nature's treasures. The design and location of a residential project are two significant factors that contribute to its value. However, another element that is making its way into this likeability factor is presence of well-designed green spaces.

- The hustle and bustle of the city makes it imperative for residents to return to an environment that exudes greenery. "After a long drive through heavy traffic and pollution, all I want is to come back home and escape from the noise and dust," says Tashina Rao, IT professional and resident of Baner. "One of the main factors for me to choose a home in a society or township, was that it had to have a natural feel to it and was not just concrete everywhere. The society where I live has Zen gardens, meditative nooks, skywalks with potted plants and an open amphitheater space next to a large swimming pool. In the mornings, after a session of yoga, I take a walk in the garden, hear the chirpy birds and watch birds like the almost extinct sparrow bustling about in the lawn.

LANDSCAPING TIPS

- ▶ Enjoying an outdoor barbeque or a drink in the clubhouse is incomplete without a good view. However, paired with luxurious landscape architecture and a pool, this can become the perfect oasis
- ▶ Inward-looking gardens combined with sliding doors and French windows, mood lighting for the pathways and functional lighting for the pergolas will make the perfect entertainment space for your guests
- ▶ In summer, dry landscaping with pebbles and a small rock garden with a little fountain, quirky benches and concealed speakers for music will be perfect to sit out and enjoy the light summer breeze
- ▶ Elements such as glass decks over running water streams, floating cabanas, vertical gardens, arbours and terrace gardens give a connect between the indoor and outdoor spaces

"WE INVESTED HERE BECAUSE OF THE BEAUTIFUL LANDSCAPING AND SEPARATE ENTERTAINMENT ZONES FOR THE CHILDREN AND GROWN-UPS. THE GREENERY AND WELL MAINTAINED GARDENS ARE A TREAT TO THE EYES AND ALSO ATTRACT MANY BIRDS."

Shivani Jain,
Resident, Nandan Inspira, Wakad

This ambience energises me for the day," she adds.

If all the construction activity and urbanisation has been driving away our birds and insects and causing harm to the eco-system, there is also a rising awareness to bring them back by creating artificial eco-systems alongside the concrete jungle. "The focus today is to be sensitive and conscious and bring back these birds and insects by trying to create conducive environment," explains Sameer Thakare, chief architect, XRBIA Developers.

With space coming at a premium, gar-

dens are also going indoors, says landscape designer Harsha Manohar. "I saw a billboard for a property ad recently, where there was a picture of a sparrow and the tagline read-wake up to the sounds of the sparrow," says environmentalist Akshay Deshmukh. "The common sparrow now finds a place amongst the exotic and is being marketed as a brand. This depicts the sorry state of affairs of our eco-system and is a wake-up call to control rampant deforestation and urbanization," adds Akshay.

Use of natural materials for dry landscaping features, multi-layered landscaping and skywalks with meditation nooks provide exclusivity to any project," Thakare opines. "Nature trails, the concept of edible gardens and use of water in a wise way help in order to get back elements with connect to nature. However, the onus is on the residents to take the concept ahead once we have deigned the landscaping and these days, they do have a sense of responsibility towards their surroundings," he says.

Lighting too plays a vital role here and solar-based lights are used in continuance to the sustainability theme. The lighting effect has to be soothing to blend in and highlight the focal areas. Tiki torches, water proof lighting in water bodies, ornamental lighting poles along with varied types of seating and garden accessories such as birdhouses and birdfeeders can add that magical touch to a garden.

"Landscaping has become an extension of our spaces. With the kind of exposure that homeowners have to global lifestyles, they would love to live in a space where their children can play a sport and have a place for the family that is secure," says Ankush Seth, director, Marvel Realtors.

— Deepti Ganapathy