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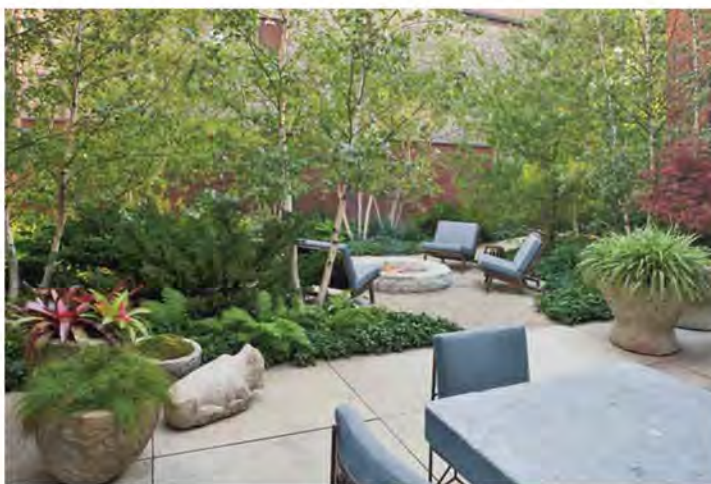


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Creating Space

Rooftop gardens can be beautiful anywhere, but they make the most sense in urban areas, where space is at a premium. In Chicago, for example, only about 20 to 30 percent of the average residential lot is dedicated to outdoor space. Most garage roofs in the city are unused, yet taxed, real estate, but many homeowners are realizing that modest investments to transform this neglected space into a usable one—typically around \$25 to \$35 per square foot—can be recouped at resale. Better still, capturing an additional 400 to 500 square feet of previously unused outdoor space can dramatically alter how the garden is experienced. There are cautions for the homeowner who wants to attempt this: Before hauling anything up, you should find out from a structural engineer what load capacity your specific roof can handle; a capacity of 100 pounds per square foot may be fine for one type of construction but inadequate for others. Zoning codes may also limit the height of structures or walls you can put on the roof. —*Doug Hoerr*

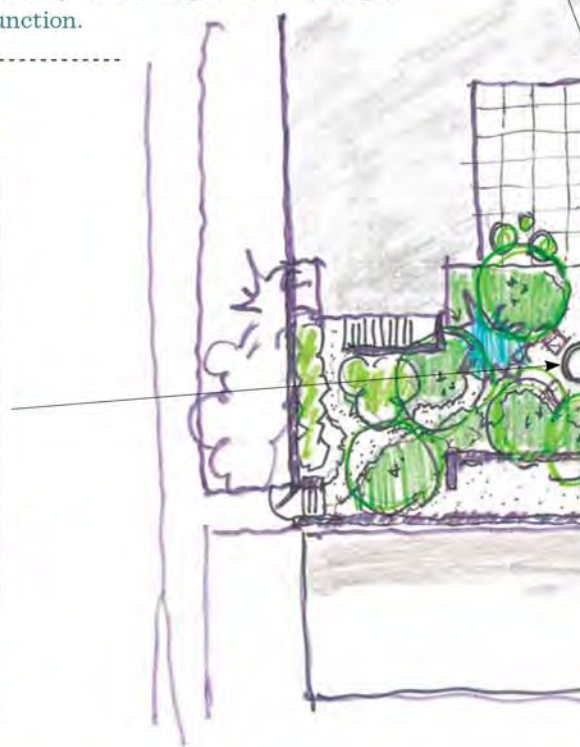
For more informaion, see Find It Here on page 74.



THE NEW HOME'S FOOTPRINT created several courtyards that could be viewed from every room, but neighbors' windows overlook the property and power lines crisscross the alley. All of this meant that there were no views to frame, so the focus of the garden turned inward. To do this successfully, we used vertical elements (trellis and fencing) in the landscape to provide screening, designed to be visually interesting in their own right, regardless of their function.



IN THE CASE OF THIS NEW, single-family home in the Lincoln Park neighborhood of Chicago, the homeowners wanted the garden to accommodate a wide range of activities, including a play area, a place to grow vegetables, entertaining and cooking areas, and an outdoor "campfire." With limited space available for landscape, the garage roof quickly became an important asset.



AT GROUND LEVEL (right), wood lattice covers a brick wall that separates the property from the alley. Its clean horizontal lines provide a serene backdrop to a Zen-like courtyard garden that is the main view from the home's nerve center, the kitchen/family room. The design of the screen relates to the stone pavers and also adds texture to the space.

ILLUSTRATION: HOERR SCHAUDT



ON THE GARAGE ROOF, going vertical with vines and climbers provided another great way to screen unwanted views. The roof overlooks the contemplative garden, so we used the same lattice “fence,” but in a slightly different way. Without the brick wall backdrop, it acts as an openwork screen; by summer’s end it is covered by clock vine, trumpet vine, and Boston ivy. Planter boxes along the walls spill over with plants meant for cutting and edible “finger foods” intermingled with ornamental plants that give a potpourri of color. We used certified-organic soils throughout the site as part of a maintenance program based on eco-friendly ingredients and methods.



BECAUSE OF ITS ELEVATION and proximity to neighbors, the roof garden, more than any other part of the property, gave the homeowners the uncomfortable feeling of being in a fishbowl. Even with the lattice screen, someone seated on the roof would be distracted by the utility poles looming over the wall. To counterbalance this, we designed a pergola that runs along the top of the trellis along the side of the roof that borders the alley. This brings the horizon line forward and defines the space as something to look into. Whether looking at it from within the house or sitting on the deck enjoying cocktails, it attracts (and captures!) your eye and keeps it from roaming beyond the site.



PHOTOGRAPHS: THIS PAGE: TOP (2): HOERR SCHAUDY; ALL OTHER PHOTOGRAPHS: PP. 16-17: SCOTT SHIGLEY