



Carleo of Plant Fantasies has been greening Manhattan from courtyards to rooftops since 1987

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For Teresa Carleo, it all started with a part-time job tending plants in some of the city's most high-profile office buildings. The young woman's clients were quick to recognize her innate horticultural savvy. She was soon "promoted" to floral arrangements.

"I saw the more ambitious assignments as challenges and knew I could meet them," she said. "I was looking for a way to translate my passion into a business."

In the 23 years since she founded Plant Fantasies Inc., Carleo, president and owner of the full-service landscape and green roof contractor, has carved a niche for herself in the most challenging of markets: N.Y.C. real estate development. Her prestigious roster of clients includes: E. W. Howell; TF Cornerstone; Word-Wide Holdings Corp.; Jack Resnick & Sons; O'Connor Capital Partners, Macklowe Properties; The Trump Org.; Spitzer Engineering LLC; and The Donald Zucker Co.

Properties served include such celebrated sites as 250 Hudson St. where Plant Fantasies created a one-of-a-kind, prairie-like setting for a green roof accessible to the building's elite commercial tenants; Miraval Living where Carleo and crew recently completed a bucolic, spa-like design; the Corinthian condominium, a distinctive high-rise with a large entrance plaza; Manhattan House, an iconic residence that has one of the city's largest private gardens now graced with the sculpture of Hans Van de Bovenkamp; the luxe residence Casa 74; The Element, a luxury building which includes a landscaped outdoor space of over 12,000 s/f including a sundeck, outdoor lounge, great lawn and garden; and two buildings with spectacular views-the elegant and fully landscaped 15 Central Park West and one of Midtown West's newest luxe residential rentals, 505 West 37th St.: meticulously landscaped with mature trees, evergreen shrubs and seasonal flowers.

Plant Fantasies has also installed and maintains numerous public gardens including Worldwide Plaza; Metropolitan Tower at 56th between 6th and 7th Aves.; 600 Third Ave. at 39th St.; and Symphony House at 235 West 56th St. and 8th Ave.

Jonathan Resnick, president of Jack Resnick & Sons has called the green roof at 250 Hudson St. "a magnificent amenity," adding, "Our tenants enjoy the beautiful roof garden, and benefit from its sustainable qualities."

Scott Melching, FXFOWLE project architect for 250 Hudson St., said, "We worked closely with Teresa Carleo. Her expertise helped define our palette and achieve our goal of making the roof a feature of the building that people will want to use and, at the same time, made the project environmentally responsible."

According to Carleo, "Green roofs are increasingly in demand. A beautifully landscaped green roof adds significant value to any property and is extremely desirable."

Widely known as a single source providing everything from landscape design, installation and

year-round maintenance of interiors and exteriors to penthouse and terrace landscapes, floral arrangements, courtyard garden design, and holiday decorations-including the tree at Trump Tower, Plant Fantasies' has concentrated increasingly on the design and installation of green roofs in recent years, for new construction and retrofitting of existing structures. Additional green roof projects include Millennium Tower Residences in Battery Park City, 6 W. 48th St., a site affiliated with members of the Rockefeller family, and Mount Hope Community Center.

Carleo, who founded Plant Fantasies in 1987 and had it incorporated and certified as a WBE (woman-owned business enterprise) soon after, is also becoming known as an entrepreneur extraordinaire. She was recently profiled in Success for Women magazine and was a featured speaker on the Entrepreneurship panel as part of Columbia University's sixth annual Women's Business Leadership Conference, "Inspiring Women, Inspiring Change."

Accustomed to often being the sole woman "in a man's world" in her profession, Carleo said that she has overcome obstacles and challenges that come her way by offering "highly attentive customer service," and "never, ever giving up."

Plant Fantasies is continuing to brighten an ever-expanding number of spaces throughout Manhattan.

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