



Benefits of rooftop and terrace gardens

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Investing in outdoor living and communal spaces can be viewed as much an amenity as a gym or attractive lobby to developers and owners of both new residential and corporate spaces. Many companies seek to increase productivity through employee well-being, and by offering amenities to keep employees close to the office. Full complement kitchens, improved coffee service, gyms, and outdoor garden spaces serve to enhance the day to day work experience. Terrace and rooftop spaces create ideal environments for team-building exercises, company lunches and cocktail parties, or simply as a quiet place for employees to take a work-day escape for lunch or a mental break. Built in tables and benches, or arrangements of lounge chairs and sofas, safely tethered to the paving surfaces, provide multiple opportunities for outdoor gathering or relaxation.

Residential building rooftops, terraces, and courtyards offer apartment dwelling New Yorkers new opportunities to access outdoor living environments, otherwise restricted to public parks. These spaces serve as private to semi-private places to gather, entertain, sunbathe, get the kids out into the sunshine, or even to play in the rain. Many common terraces and gardens include outdoor cook spaces with grills, dining tables and chairs to encourage residents to gather in small groups or for larger events for the buildings' occupants. These sorts of spaces encourage community building beyond chance encounters on elevators or by the mailboxes.

Thanks to ever-evolving green roof technologies, the landscape designer has a broad range of options to create novel plantings. Lightweight soil blends, foam, and improved moisture retention capabilities allow plantings in as little as 2 -3" of soil, up to 3 - 4' deep planters for trees and shrubs.

An added benefit we have seen on some of our terrace installations is an increase in "urban wildlife" activity. A recently completed terrace 25 floors above Fifth Ave. has created a new, vegetated perch for some of Central Park's famed Red Tail hawks. It is not unusual for birds to begin nesting in trees or vines growing on trellises, or for butterflies to find their way to newly provided habitat and food sources offered by a variety of perennials and flowering shrubs. It's also possible to come across a praying mantis hiding among the foliage, thanks to the new safe habitat provided to these beneficial insects.

Custom, built-in stone topped table and ipe benches, surrounded by evergreen shrubs, wall climbing vines, flowering trees, and a variety of perennials serve as a hunting perch for a Red Tail hawk.

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