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Celerie Kemble and Nathan Turner with, from left, a Brickmaker planter; Mecox Gardens, Carlos P. Oly, and Kito All Weather Woven planter from Trail. See Resou...



The 10 Most Amazing Planters

Truth in Decorating: Designers Nathan Turner and Celerie Kemble unearth garden containers that are sure to stand out in any space

A planter pulls the verdant pleasures of a garden into any setting, indoors or out, supplying a touch of color and flair. "They're great accessories because they can bring height and depth to an area or fill in an awkward spot," notes Nathan Turner, who designs a signature collection for Elite Leather and is the owner of an eponymous Los Angeles home-furnishings shop. A pretty pot, he says, creates a striking focal point, while a more subtle style draws attention to what it holds.

When selecting a garden container, consider your climate. Though classically beautiful, terra-cotta and ceramic are fragile and may crack when temperatures dip. As an alternative, interior designer Celerie

Kemble recommends weather-resistant resin or fiberglass, which can mimic the look of limestone and fired clay but won't chip, fade, or corrode. These materials provide the added benefit of being lightweight, a boon when you're repositioning or repotting (on her Manhattan terrace, Kemble uses galvanized-steel containers that are easy to move inside during winter). Another durable option is teak, which is rot-resistant and acquires a lovely patina over time. Both Turner and Kemble point out that since drainage holes are necessary to keep greenery healthy, it might be necessary to place a tray underneath to prevent water stains on decks or floors. ▶

Text by Helen Yun · Photography by Joshua McHugh · Produced by Parker Bowie and Elaine Wrightman



1 ELIZABETHAN II PLANTER BY PENNOYER NEWMAN

"This makes me think of antique tin ceiling tiles in a SoHo loft," says Celerie Kemble, referring to the molding along the edges. "It softens an otherwise sharp square." Kemble is also a fan of the weather-resistant composite stone. Because of the planter's generous scale, she pictures it as the centerpiece of a circular drive, holding a small tree. Height: 32"; width: 30"; depth: 30"; material: pummeled marble, hick, and resin in lead-gray finish (custom sizes and finishes available); delivery: 2-3 weeks; price: \$2,500



2 CARLOS POT BY OLY

"Like a beautiful cistern," comments Nathan Turner, admiring the piece's gentle fluting, dappled color, and capacious silhouette. "And it's made of resin, so it's much lighter than it looks—you don't need six people when you want to move it!" he exclaims. Due to its large size, Turner envisions a pair fitted with palm trees next to a swimming pool. Height: 28"; diameter: 39.5" (smaller size available); material: cast resin in limestone finish; delivery: immediate; price: \$1,875



3 LEON BRICKMAKER PLANTER FROM MECOX GARDENS

"This is both rustic and grand," Kemble declares. "The textured reclaimed hardwood conjures the feeling of an old crate, but the iron lion's-head ring pulls and feet lend it a bit of pomp." She favors planting it with a citrus tree or obelisk-shaped boxwood to enhance its stately form. Height: 32"; width: 22"; depth: 22"; material: ashle wood and iron; delivery: 2-6 weeks; price: \$1,950



4 KITO ALL WEATHER WOVEN PLANTER BASKET FROM TREILLAGE

"I love it because it's California-casual," Turner remarks of the two-tone-weave planter. "The substantial profile gives it oomph, and the faux wicker recalls a 1980s Michael Taylor design," he says, citing the iconic West Coast decorator's signature use of overscale plants. Height: 20.5"; width: 28"; depth: 28"; material: woven faux wicker in brown finish (also available in gray finish and in other sizes); delivery: immediate; price: \$500



5 AMUR JAR FROM CHELSEA GARDEN CENTER

"The coppery tone is iridescent like raku pottery," says Kemble, referring to lustrously glazed Japanese ceramics. Its understated style and slender Egyptian-urn shape "beg for being planted with blooms that spill over the top," notes Kemble, who proposes placing the container on a terrace for a generous splash of color. Height: 24.5"; diameter: 19.75" (smaller size available); material: ceramic in bronze finish; delivery: 4-6 weeks; price: \$328



6 WOOD CROSS PLANTER BY ACCENTS OF FRANCE

"The most glamorous of the bunch," Turner says. "It's an update of an old-school Versailles design." With its shiny brass finials and painted-wood finish, it would work well in front of a Hollywood Regency house or anchoring an entryway, he says. An added bonus is the removable metal liner that makes swapping out plants a snap. Height: 26.75"; width: 26"; depth: 26"; material: Douglas fir in black finish with brass finials (custom sizes and finishes and other materials available); delivery: 6-8 weeks; price: \$720



7 METAL PANEL PLANTER BY RESTORATION HARDWARE

"An elegant French-zinc look but in galvanized steel, which is much less expensive," Turner says. Plus, it's sturdy and comes with a handy pullout liner that rests slightly above the bottom, facilitating drainage and giving the foliage extra height. Because its silhouette is ideal for narrow spaces, he suggests flanking a front door with a pair. Height: 30"; width: 18"; depth: 16"; material: galvanized steel (also available in bronze finish and in other sizes); delivery: 3-7 days; price: \$148



8 FLORIS PLANTER FROM DETROIT GARDEN WORKS

Kemble dubs this refined design "Zen modern." The teak's warm color recalls soothing saunas wood, she notes, and the exposed screws along the edges illustrate its "earnest construction." The planter's rustic slatting lends itself to the deck of a shingled beach house, says Kemble, who points out that it requires a liner inside to keep dirt contained. Height: 24"; width: 29.5"; depth: 29.5"; material: teak; delivery: immediate; price: \$1,245



9 GRATIA SQUARE PLANTER FROM DESIGN WITHIN REACH

"Clean and contemporary," says Turner, who appreciates the planter's lightweight fiberglass construction as well as the subtle shine of its natural-metal finish, which will take on an attractive patina over time. The boxy container is "so simple it could go anywhere," observes Turner, though he prefers it deployed in multiples to border a large garden. Height: 24.5"; width: 24"; depth: 24"; material: fiberglass in bronze finish (also available in black-nickel finish and in other sizes); delivery: 2 weeks; price: \$625



10 CHINESE OUTDOOR GLAZED PLANTER FROM PLANTER RESOURCE

"A workhorse pot" is Kemble's verdict on this earthenware vessel. "The proportions are great for grouping a few around a swimming pool," she says, adding that she's fond of the green cracked glaze because it transitions well from outdoors to in. Kemble proclaims the price a bargain: "You'll want to buy at least four!" Height: 18"; diameter: 20"; material: glazed earthenware in kiva (other sizes and colors available); delivery: 1 week; price: \$85