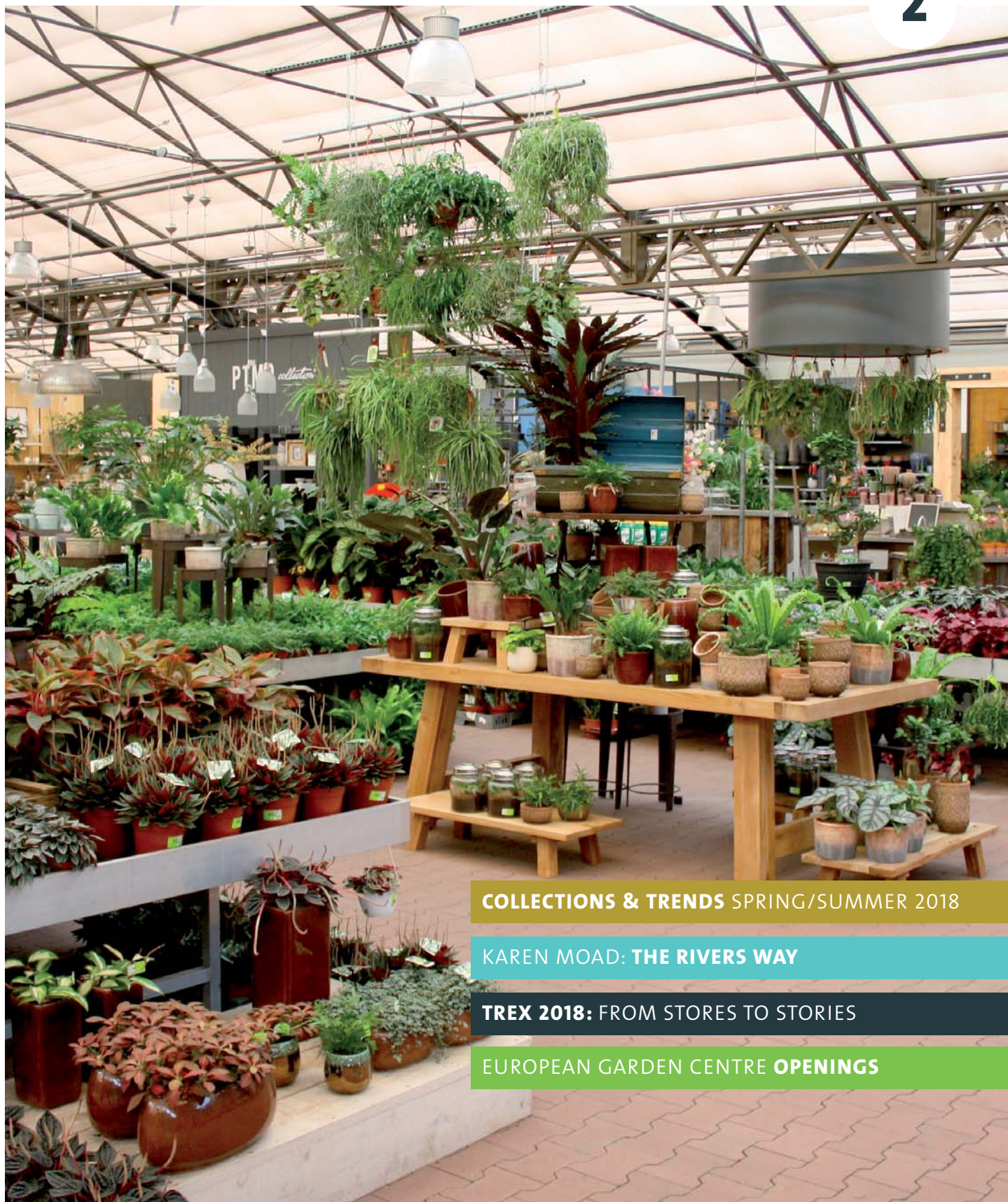


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EUROPEAN GARDEN TRADE MAGAZINE • 2-2017

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## Published by

TPK Media & Events B.V.  
P.O. Box 322, 6130 AH Sittard  
The Netherlands  
tel. +31 46-4818600  
e-mail: [info@tpk-media.nl](mailto:info@tpk-media.nl)

## Publisher

Tjeerd G.M. Posthumus

## Editorial

Anita Meuleman (*editor in chief*), Ilse Broers,  
Paul Geerts, e-mail: [redactie@tpk-media.nl](mailto:redactie@tpk-media.nl)

## Contributors

Markt in Gruen, Santiago González (*Verde es Vida*), Trevor Pfeiffer (Garden Trade News),  
Elisabetta Sari (Sari Landscape)

## Advertising sales

tel. 046-4818600, fax 046-4818601  
[sales@tpk-media.nl](mailto:sales@tpk-media.nl)

## Graphic design

TPK Media Partners, Debbie Kanders

## Translation

Translation Kings

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ISSN 2468-8320

## Good green times

The new economic flow is in full swing. Not only in the Netherlands, but in Belgium, France, Germany, and Great Britain, the green industry is reaping the benefits of the economic recovery and consumer confidence appears to be largely restored as well. In addition, the weather was good and green is very trendy. In this Garden Retailer, a number of European green entrepreneurs look back on a successful first half year.

We have been working hard as well – the preparations for the upcoming Garden Retail Experience 2018 (TREx) are in full swing. This unique annual information and inspiration event for international garden retail is moving to a larger and more central location in Nieuwegein (NL). Here, we will show a broader range, offer more inspiration and knowledge, and receive more visitors from home and abroad.

The main theme of the upcoming TREx, From Stores to Stories, is about an ongoing transformation: from distribution channel for garden products to storytelling spots and platforms for discovery, engagement, experience, and interaction. TREx will be your guide in this evolution to new green store concepts, supplying information, inspiration and ideas to stay ahead!

In this edition of Garden Retailer, you can already find a number of beautiful stories of successful new construction projects, renovations, and expansions of garden centres in Europe, as well as newly launched sales concepts, webshops, and other special activities.

One inspiring story comes from down under, where Karen Moad, owner of Rivers of Yarrambat, demonstrates a special look at the garden centre of the future. Rivers started as a garden centre, but grew into a vibrant lifestyle centre where visitors can easily spend an entire day. Through the Rivers Way, Karen Moad takes on health and well-being as the underlying theme.

Stories also form the basis of the product presentations for the latest trends and collections of suppliers. With a variety of topics, from craftsmanship to health and from history to nature, they tell engaging stories that give products or concepts an additional dimension for the consumer. Green and botanical are still the central themes, which appears to be something the consumer cannot get enough of. We live in good green times.

See you at the September trade fairs!

## Anita Meuleman

*Garden Retailer, editor in chief*

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## The English are increasingly buying flowers online

The English are increasingly buying flowers online. Especially consumers between the ages of 30 and 39 years know where to find the online channels and offer the most purchasing power. In 2010, three percent was bought online, rising to ten percent in 2015, and by now, thirteen percent of the English are buying flowers via the Internet. A trend among young people (18 to 29 years old) are seasonal flowers such as peonies, tulips, daffodils,

gladioli, and sunflowers. This is shown by the England country report of Royal FloraHolland.

There are many online flower providers in Great Britain. Remarkable is that a fifth of the British flower purchasers is from London. This is where the highest amount of money is spent on flowers. After all, the average Londoner has more to spend. Source: Royal FloraHolland

## Import stop

British nurseries, retailers, and landscape architects are stopping the import of host plants from European regions where *Xylella* has been found. The Horticultural Trades Association (HTA) recently published a list of over fifty independent garden centres, garden centre chains, nurseries, and gardening companies that have decided that they will no longer import from regions that have been infected with *Xylella fastidiosa*. The HTA is calling on other British companies to embrace this initiative. Source: Floribusiness

## Cooking and eating as a lifestyle



'The seasons on the table' is becoming part of the Intratuin formula. 'Cosy cooking and eating together has become part of your lifestyle', says director Peter Paul Kleinbussink. The concept includes everything involving cooking and dining: tasty, healthy, and with great company in and around the garden and the house.

Intratuin Maastricht ran a pilot for this concept. On and around a large cooking island, located centrally at the department, there are cooking demonstrations and workshops. Children can bake pizzas or pancakes, adults can make sushi or go barbe-

cuing. Young mothers are also bringing their children to the garden centre. It fits with the development, Kleinbussink feels. 'The garden café has evolved from a coffee corner into an important component. And vegetable gardens are also very trendy. With 'The seasons on the table', we want to combine the garden table with barbecue and herbs. Spending quality time together is what we find important.'

'The seasons on the table' is slowly being deployed in 35 to 40 stores, Kleinbussink estimates. 'We are a physical retailer. Our core quality is in the store. We still believe in the future of the physical store.'





## Metamorphosis for Squire's Garden Centre near London

Squire's Garden Centre's branch in Woking near London is being renovated by Smiemans Projects. The existing garden centre will receive a complete metamorphosis and an expansion of the sales area by almost 1,700 m<sup>2</sup>.

A HighLight arched greenhouse will provide more space for indoor plants and other product groups. The Venlo covering ensures that customers can buy outdoor plants even in bad weather. In addition, there is a new spacious entrance, most doors are being replaced, and the existing building will get a large roof light. Construction will commence after the summer.

## No relaunch for Mantel & Mosselman

Mantel & Mosselman Holland was declared bankrupt on 27 June, exactly one year after the merger of the two flower bulb export companies. There will be no relaunch, says curator Sweets. 'Both companies were suffering losses even before the merger. I suspect things hadn't been going well for at least a few years. They probably thought the merger would strengthen their position on the market. What a shame. These are old family companies with solid roots in the region.' 24 employees lost their jobs.

The merger was intended to enlarge the market for organic flower bulbs. According to directors Ralph Koopman (Mosselman) and Natasja Mantel (Mantel), a stronger organisation and efficiency gains could be made. Koopman left in late February and started working as the general director at breeders association Decorum as of 1 March.

## The Garden Centre Reading

Making visiting more attractive for customers is a constant challenge for any garden centre. It takes novel ideas and special events to stand out from the rest. The folks at Iserlohn-based Asbeck market gardening came up with something unusual themselves: 'Murder in the Greenhouse' is the title of a crime novel reading event planned to draw in new customers to the garden centre by the main cemetery. From purely a marketing POV, the idea is an exemplary measure suited to provide new people who would otherwise show little interest with a reason to come and have a first look at the things the place has on offer.

[ MARKT IN GRÜN ]

## The going gets tough for Wyevale Garden Centres

Reports circulating online sources in the UK suggest that life is not getting any easier for Terra Firma's Wyevale Garden Centres operation, which is facing re-structuring and re-financing after disappointing earnings.

The 149-centre chain's latest review of retail operations, appears to restore a previously abandoned reporting procedure involving a team of regional managers instead of a north and south area set-up.

In a statement, retail operations director David Anderson, who was appointed in May, announced changes to his leadership team designed to 'deliver excellent customer service and improve retail standards, whilst also providing support and development to colleagues in centres'.

Meanwhile, insiders confirmed reports that Wyevale is negotiating a re-financing deal before it publishes its annual accounts by the deadline of 30 September. [ GARDEN TRADE NEWS ]



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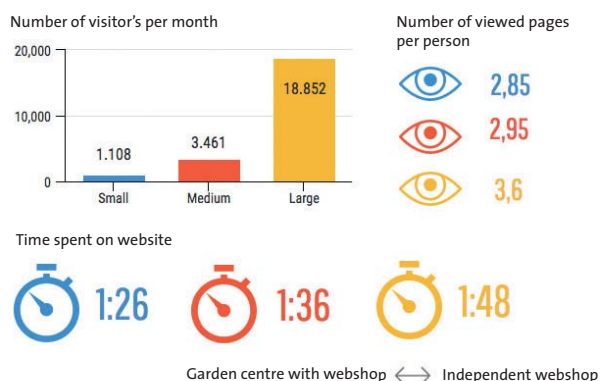
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## Benchmark websites & webshops of garden centres



Garden Connect has mapped the figures of the websites and webshops of garden centres in the Netherlands and Belgium. Based on last year's figures, we now have a complete picture of the number of visitors, viewed pages, and the time spent on websites. For webshops, the conversion rate, the average order amount, and more are now visible.

A distinction has been made between websites with an additional webshop and fully independent webshops and between small, medium, and large garden centres. What is striking is that

large garden centres not only attract more visitors, but also keep them for longer: 1:48 minutes and 3.6 pages per visit on average. This is likely due to the sites being larger, causing visitors to stay longer. What stands out for the webshops is that the order amount is quite high. Consumers are spending a lot online, including at garden centre websites. The conversion percentage is subdivided into two figures. Garden centres who combine a webshop with information about stores, activities, and news score 0.48% on average. This means that 0.48 orders are placed per 100 visitors. Webshops who focus entirely on online sales have a conversion rate of 1.84%: about 4 times higher. People who visit the latter webshops do not look for opening hours or directions, but only want to make online purchases.

The figures represent an average based on twenty Dutch and Flemish garden centres per group, so 60 websites and/or webshops in total. More info: [www.gardenconnect.com](http://www.gardenconnect.com)



Measurement from July 6<sup>th</sup> 2016 till July 5<sup>th</sup> 2017 based on Google analytics by Garden Connect

## Beeztees takes over German Karlie



In May, Beeztees took over German company Karlie. The German supplier and manufacturer of pet supplies is the number two on the German market. With this acquisition, Pet Supplies, the parent company of Beeztees, has become twice as large.

'We heard about Flamingo's bankruptcy in late 2016,' managing director Job van Riel of Beeztees explains. 'That is when we got the ball rolling.' Five months later, the acquisition of Karlie was a fact. 'We chose to let Karlie remain a stand-alone brand. We believe in the German people and think the added value with

our product design and new products already offers a lot of synergy.

Besides the fact that we will innovate under the Karlie label, another 500 Beeztees products, mainly products that are innovative and special, will be in stock at Karlie. By the end of the year (November/December), all of the new products and the Beeztees products will be available to the German market. Not much was added in terms of completeness over the past six years.'

Eighty percent of animal supplies purchases are impulse purchases: you need to keep feeding that and continue to follow the trends, which is our strength', says Van Riel. 'Together with the team of managing director Dominique Müser, we can truly put the old Karlie back on the map in Germany and let it sparkle.'

The Dutch Beeztees grew from a traditional pet food wholesaler into an all-round brand supplier that also takes care of store furnishing and shelving. Beeztees delivers to 45 countries and has the Netherlands, Belgium, and Germany as its home markets.



## Earth Matters



The Earth Matters exhibition, which could previously be seen in Stockholm, is on display at the TextielMuseum Tilburg (NL) until 26 November. Visitors are guided by the story of a sustainable cycle and the importance of material research. The exhibition shows experiments that can make the production

process cycle more sustainable at a small or large scale – from fashion to design, and from both renowned and young designers.

Sustainability and respect for our planet is high on the agenda of the design world, science, and business. Consumers

are consciously looking for the origin of raw materials and the emergence of products with a focus on sustainability. The exhibition was created by Lidewij Edelkoort and Philip Fimmano.

Earth Matters, until 26 November 2017, [www.textielmuseum.nl](http://www.textielmuseum.nl)

## Gartenjunkie.de gives good advice, saving you time

A web portal that procures and sells gardening equipment and puts an emphasis on making shopping easier than ever? What's been bog standard in other sectors like apparel for a long while, Bijan Peymani has first introduced to the gardening sector by establishing his online store Gartenjunkie.de in late 2016, pursuing its own philosophy: Curated Shopping

Peymani got the idea while browsing the internet for gardening accessories without getting any relevant results despite his best efforts. 'Sure: if you've got the time and the energy, eventually, you may find what you're looking for, but even then, you may end up agreeing to compromises,' Peymani writes on his website, 'Gartenjunkie.de cuts the research process short, yielding a gamut of relevant results at a glance.'

Conveniently divided into five style categories – Vintage, Classic, Modern, Exotic, and Elegant – the customer finds select furniture, decoration, containers and other accessories for their loggia, their balcony, their terrace, and their garden. Gartenjunkie.de states they're selling the products partially on their own accounts, partially as procurers for renowned partner companies such as Garten XXL, Home24, and Westwing. [ MARKT IN GRÜN ]

## 25,000 gerberas at colour run



Over 25,000 Dutch gerberas were delivered by Coloured by Gerbera to the organisation of The Color Run. The world's first colour run event, with the Flower Power theme, drew over 10,000 visitors to the Sloterpark in Amsterdam. During this anniversary edition, the 100,000<sup>th</sup> runner crossed the finish line.

Coloured by Gerbera was official partner of this colourful event. The runners were welcomed with a gerbera at the entrance, the entire area was decorated with gerberas, and runners also received a gerbera at the finish line. Participants came up with the most creative things; putting them in their hair, around their arms or legs, or in their shoes. People stood in line at the photo point with a Coloured by Gerbera photo wall.

## Buying and selling

Yarnton Nurseries near Oxford has been sold to investors New-core Capital Management for an undisclosed sum believed to be more than £10 million.

The Blue Diamond Group has acquired of its 20<sup>th</sup> garden centre at East Bridgford, near Nottingham. Blue Diamond has taken out a 35 year lease on the site, which also has the potential to produce a turnover of £10m per annum and will employ 150 people. A new 140,000 square foot centre will open in March 2018 following a £4.5m fit-out that starts in November 2017.

A bittersweet moment says Scotts Miracle-Gro's CEO Jim Hagedorn as he announces UK, Europe and Aussie sell-off. He had

just announced that Scotts had received a binding offer from Exponent Private Equity of around \$250 million for its non-US businesses, which includes Miracle-Gro in the UK and Europe. The deal is expected to be completed by 30 September.

After months of speculation, Town & Country has been sold to EP Barrus. The Town & Country brand will join Barrus's current extensive line-up of leading garden machinery and garden tool brands including Cub Cadet, Lawnflite, Agri-Fab, WOLF-Garten, Wilkinson Sword and Energizer. [ GARDEN TRADE NEWS ]

More UK news in the weekly GTN Xtra e-mail newsletter. Send your contact details to [trevor.pfeiffer@tgcmc.co.uk](mailto:trevor.pfeiffer@tgcmc.co.uk).

## Amazon grants flowers maximum exposure

Online shopping giant Amazon is at the forefront again! According to a recent study, the platform offers the greatest exposure for flowers, beating even dedicated vendors.

The study titled eVisibility 2017 ranks Amazon as number one in terms of online exposure for flowers specifically. Dedicated vendor FloraPrima ends up in second place, followed by DIY supplies store chain Bauhaus, then Poetschke.de and fleurop.de in places four and five.

### The research criteria:

- Which vendors place their ads in search engines?
- Which companies lead the search results?
- Which competitors are listed on product comparison websites? How does the company present itself in social media to gain attention?
- Which vendors are consistent in their eVisibility, showing strong presence in all four online categories?
- What share of eVisibility in total is held by each of the categories?
- Which big brands make it into the eVisibility Top 100?
- How do the Top 10 vendors fare within the competitive environment?

According to the study, flower vendors, holding an eVisibility share of 44 percent are significantly more present than gardening stores holding a share of 23 percent. General, non-dedicated vendors reach a visibility of 17 percent. [ MARKT IN GRÜN ]

## The gardening sector fuels sales growth

The German DIY supplies industry is looking back at a profitable first half of 2017, chalking up a sales growth of 1.6 percent compared to the same time last year. This is according to the current market stats of the Registered Society of Trade for DIY, Building, and Gardening (BHB). As the society details, it was in particular the first quarter with its strong sales growth of 5.4 percent that was responsible for the half-year performance results.

In the second quarter, however, bad weather 'in the traditionally strongest-sales months of April and May, combined with the lower number of business days compared to last year, has held back the industry,' stresses managing director of the BHB, Dr. Peter Wüst. A significant share in the sales success in the first half of 2017 can be attributed to the gardening sector. Its total gross sales of 2.65 billion Euros (*live plants 641.5 million Euros, tools/irrigation/drainage 603 million Euros, garden decoration 776.4 million Euros, outdoor furniture 222.2 million Euros, chemicals/turfs/seeds 406.7 million Euros*), the gardening sector contributes about 28 percent of the total sales of the DIY supplies retail.

Looking at the product range performances, product segments 'leisure/seasonal' (+8.5 percent) and the gardening range were the main contributors throughout all product groups. Especially the segments of garden equipment (+6.4 percent), live plants (+6.1 percent), chemicals/turfs/seeds (+3.9 percent), and tools/irrigation/drainage (+3.3 percent) saw significant growth. [ MARKT IN GRÜN ]



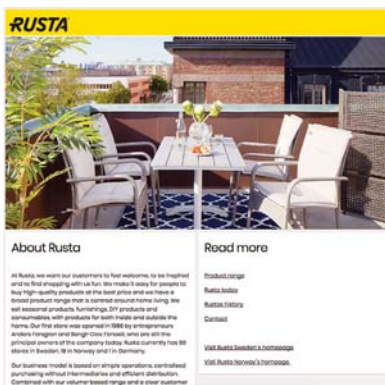
## The Netherlands as partner country at Ambiente

Dutch designer Robert Bronwasser (1968) will prepare the exhibition at Ambiente, the trade fair that will take place in Frankfurt from 9 to 13 February 2018. The Netherlands is a partner

country this year. Detlef Braun, board member of Messe Frankfurt, is happy with this collaboration. 'The Netherlands are innovative and unconventional at the same time. It is a country that

is known for its impressive design; both minimalist and experimental, which matches what Messe Frankfurt wants to show its visitors in February.'

## Rusta offers a rich gardening line-up



'Moin Lübeck!' – that's how the Swedish discounter proclaimed the opening of their first store in Germany on May 18<sup>th</sup> this year. Rusta's broad gardening line-up is one among six product categories they offer.

The Swedish furnishing & DIY supplies chain currently operates a total of 104 stores in Sweden and Norway – and now also one in Germany. The 30,000

products on offer can be divided into six main product categories: home & decoration, DIY supplies, leisure (*including accessories for your pets*), cosmetics, and gardening. The gardening line-up ranges from BBQ grills through outdoor furniture, decorations, and gardening tools, to lighting and swimming pool equipment.

Following the company's German debut in Lübeck, the next store opening in Germany is planned for early September already, i.e., in the shopping district of the 'Ostseepark' in Schwentinental, near Kiel. In the longer run, the company plans to expand to all of the federal state of Schleswig-Holstein as well as the Western part of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern.

[ MARKT IN GRÜN ]

## Germany's gardening sector satisfied with seasonal sales

Since late May this year, the garden industry has been in high gear. As a survey by the Registered Society of the Garden Industrial Association (IVG) among its 130+ members illustrates, the gardening sector is looking quite favorably upon its seasonal performance so far.

Almost 90 percent of companies within the garden industry also rate their economic situation as 'favorable.' Anna Hackstein of the IVG: 'Our sector is benefitting from the good mood in the country as well as from the fact that 'green topics' keep trending. Facing mostly stable weather conditions is another important factor in this, naturally.'

[ MARKT IN GRÜN ]

## Consumption is recovering in Spain

'The sales this spring have been good since the weather has been very beneficial, in addition to the gradual exit of the crisis in our territory', says Santiago Gonzalez, of the Spanish garden centre association. 'Trends indicate that consumption is recovering and the Garden Centres are achieving their targets for a few months. Spain is growing every quarter in imports of plants over a 13% which indicates that the sales of plants in our country have increased, in addition to growing also in exports of plants to third countries.'

[ ASOCIACION ESPAÑOLA DE CENTROS DE JARDINERIA ]

## New setup Salon du Végétal

This year, Salon du Végétal, the French trade fair for the flower and plant industry, has a new location, date, and a surprising theme: Dream up easy plants! The organisation wanted to demonstrate the ease with which plants and flowers can be used in gardening.

More than 600 international exhibitors represented this theme by exhibiting a wide range of plants. The fair moves from Angers to Nantes this year, where there is a larger trade fair area in Parc des Expositions de la Beaujoire. The date of the trade fair also moved from February to June so that it would attract more visitors. Buyers look beyond just plants and flowers; that is why there was also room for products and decoration at the fair this year.

## The 2017 IGA Berlin



Berlin's international garden season lasts until October 15th 2017. Then, the 2017 IGA Berlin will have had its gates wide open for a total of 186 days. An estimated 2 million visitors will have passed through those open gates. The 2017 IGA Berlin focuses on the future of urban green. It's also the city's very first IGA (*International Garden Exhibition*). The 2017 IGA Berlin connects green spaces throughout a city, which people

originating from 185 nations worldwide call their home. Landscape architects from five continents have designed innovative exhibit gardens as 'international garden cabinets', allowing comparisons between contemporary approaches to garden design throughout the different regions of the world.

The 'Garden of the Mind' by the Thai landscape architecture agency PLA, for in-

stance, has made it on the shortlist for a World Architecture Festival (WAF) award. The garden combines quaint traditions and modern dynamism into a vivid expression of the contemporary Thai sentiment de vivre. Its design vocabulary has been inspired by the geological processes that formed the islands in Thailand's south and their unique landscapes.

[iga-berlin-2017.de](http://iga-berlin-2017.de) [ MARKT IN GRÜN ]

## Genetically modified petunias pulled from the market

The Finnish Food Safety Authority issued a statement on its website that orange-coloured petunias and seeds for growing such petunias had been withdrawn from the Finnish market – reason being the detection of gene modifications present in these flowers.

Various flower brands were genetically examined due to the unusual color of their blossoms. Thus, it became evident that they had been genetically modified. In the EU, growing and/or selling genetically modified petunias is not allowed, so the flowers in question had to be withdrawn from sale.

According to the authority, respective scions and seeds had been procured from Germany and the Netherlands. Petunias are annual ornamental



plants. Neither the flowers nor their seeds are hardy.

[ MARKT IN GRÜN ]

## Organic Ornamental Plants Project

In the context of the Federal Program for Organic Farming and Other Forms of Sustainable Agriculture (BÖLN), the Organic Ornamental Plants Project has been receiving support for five years now. The project's focus lies on the optimization of procedures and processes. In April 2017, the project was extended with the objective of further optimizing cultivation techniques and organic pest management. Furthermore, the aim is to expand existing networks and to strengthen the exchange between research, counseling, and business practice within individual companies by means of modern communication technologies. In doing so, new knowledge is expected to be gathered, further fueling organic ornamental gardening in Germany. [ MARKT IN GRÜN ]



## Mediterranean touch, grow your own & tasty food

In Italy in the first quarter of 2017, according to Ismea, Institute of services for the food agricultural market, the seasonal trend, deemed normal, favoured crops and plants maturing within standard times.

In the month of February the demand for seasonal flowered plants like primulas, cinerarias and violas, was in tune with the timing of what was on offer. The response of the national market was very good for some products and the sales of seasonal plants in nursery racks, blooming indoor plants and plants baskets were higher than those of the same period in 2016.

The weather conditions brought many benefits to productions as both temperatures and rainfall were favourable for the growth of the plants, and the producers easily found sales channels on both the National territory and on the foreign markets.

Moreover, yet again the interest in house plants is reconfirmed. For many years green plants, uplifted in status by pots and fashionable containers, were the target of decoration trends and now they seem to come back and reconquer the consumers' favour.

Probably this is due also to the fact that over time the offer of this type of product has become more significant, with new plant varieties, to satisfy the requirements of the market more and more, with collections composed, for example, of Mediterranean plants of various types like citrus, agave, olea and succulent plants, and of modern design pots, ideal for ornamental small gardens, terraces, balconies or simply to give a Mediterranean touch to the indoor spaces.



Sarom

The strength of the Italian furniture industry allows the garden centres to offer several solutions to their customers and lately the market proposals are characterised by flexible solutions, lively coloured, that can be used also indoor and that can be stacked for a higher flexibility and suitable for both reading and rest.

As a complement, there is great interest in the do-it-yourself solutions for growing a kitchen-garden on the balcony, through practical design solutions that adorn your environment, to satisfy the requirements of people who live in an urban context but do not want to give up cultivating their own green space, and that allow you to work in a vertical position, almost effortlessly.

Still in the field of outdoor life, Italian conviviality, characterised by tasty food, meets a contemporary and versatile vision of the outdoor BBQ, thanks to metal products conceived and designed with utmost care and refined in every detail with the purpose of replying to the more and more demanding market requirements. Consequently, shapes and colour choices bring out the Italian design without compromising the performances and ergonomics of products, likewise architecture recalls the traditional archetype of the fire place. [ ELISABETTA SARI ]



Model Net Relax, Nardi

[ ADVERTISEMENT ]

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## Carol Paris leaves the HTA



The Horticultural Trades Association (HTA) announced in March that CEO, Carol Paris, would be leaving the organisation at the end of April. Carol served the HTA for seven years in total, as Vice President, President and CEO.

As part of a review into the management structure the HTA have since appointed Mrs Alex Vick as the Senior Executive Director and more recently the HTA Board has decided to appoint a Chairman to assist them in coordinating the activities of the Executives and their teams at Horticulture House.

[ GARDEN TRADE NEWS ]

## Botanical garden in old harbour area



Smiemans Projecten is involved in a major redevelopment project for an old port in Fleetwood in the west of England. Development company Wyre Dock Development LTD created a plan

for the redevelopment of the harbour area with the purpose of transforming the historic waterfront into a vibrant area where people can live, work, shop, and recreate.

Smiemans Projecten was approached for the design and construction of the large glass structure, Gardens of China, which will house multiple botanical gardens and an integrated crafts market hall. The botanical gardens will be connected to each other by means of an elevated walking route.

## Marshall at the helm of Dobbies

Nicholas Marshall who has over 30 years experience in the garden centre sector joined Dobbies Garden Centres as Chief Executive Officer in March 2017. He founded and built two garden centre chains, Country Gardens PLC, which was sold for over £120m and Country Homes and Gardens PLC. He was also CEO of Wyevale

Garden Centres for four years, taking it from near administration to a successful sale for £300m.

Andrew Bracey, Chairman of Dobbies Garden Centres, commented: 'I have known Nicholas for many years. He is one of the most successful leaders the industry has

ever seen and we are thrilled that he has joined Dobbies as CEO.' Since joining Dobbies, Mr Marshall has recruited a number of experienced garden centre executives to his team and an agreement has been set with online retailers Ocado for the development of an on line Dobbies gardening offer. [ GARDEN TRADE NEWS ]



ECONOMIC GROWTH, CONSUMER FOCUS ON GREEN  
AND ALMOST PERFECT WEATHER

# Green enterprise look back on a successful spring

Granted, the weather was good. However, other factors also contributed to the first half of a pleasant 2017 that showed growth. In Belgium, France, Netherlands, but also Germany and Great Britain, green entrepreneurs reaped the benefits of the economic recovery. Green, after all, is trendy at the moment. 'The consumer finds comfort in this. More and more we withdraw into our own world.'

**Text** Paul Geerts, Anita Meuleman

**Michel Brunet, Jardiland (FR)**  
**'Consumers are optimistic again'**

In contrast to many of his Dutch colleagues, Michel Brunet, owner of Jardiland in French Saint Aubin Sur Scie (Dieppe), does not look back fondly on 2016. 'It was a bad year', he stresses. This had more to do with the political situation than with trade. The refugee crisis raged on, with the painful results of the Jungle of Calais, a hastily raised emergency shelter in the northern port city. The attack in Nice came on top of that and also the tail end of the crisis was still palpable. 'And yet we ended up in the plus.'

At the end of the year, he still wasn't reassured. 'I thought 2017 would be a difficult year.' Wrongly so, as it turns out after six months. 'The results are better than last year. Consumers are positive again', he notes. But the main reason for the increased turnover has been the weather,

according to Brunet. 'The elections in France have caused concern among consumers, but the weather compensated in that', according to the entrepreneur who is also happy that Macron, and not Le Pen, was elected president. 'This has raised confidence for a majority of the French population: so it's not all bad. The focus is back on Europe, and that is what France needs.'

Not all product categories performed equally well. Although Brunet can't complain about the performance in January and February, the sales figures for indoor plants were disappointing. He doesn't have an explanation for this. Also the animal department of the establishment in Jardiland in Saint Aubin Sur Scie, part of a nationwide chain, suffered a fall in turnover. 'But that has to do with the competition.' Garden plants dragged sales figures, as well as decorative accessories for the garden. 'I expect we'll continue this positive trend.'

**Martina Mensing-Meckelburg,**  
**Gartencenter Meckelburg (DE)**  
**'Outdoor living is a trend'**

There is a development in Germany going on that benefits garden centres. 'Germans want to grow their own vegetables, fruits and herbs', outlines Gartencenter Meckelburg's Director Martina Mensing-Meckelburg, a chain with nine offices in Central Germany. 'Garden centres are jumping on the bandwagon. Young people are responding to this, because they come not merely for a bunch of flowers.' The explanation is simple: home-grown crops give the consumer a sense of security, after becoming disillusioned with all the toxins in their produce.

She can't complain. It's not in her nature anyway. Over the first half of 2017 she can only be optimistic. If only for the fact that consumer confidence in Germany has risen to its highest level in nearly 16 years.



Yet it was a case of hit and miss. January, February and March were well above expectations, sales in April dropped dramatically with the cold weather. In May it was the total opposite, giving Gartencenter Meckelburg positive results at the beginning of summer.

Also the larger, outdoor flowering plants are doing well. 'The consumer wants to see what the result is going to be in the shop,' says Mensing-Meckelburg. 'Outdoor living is a trend; Germans spend more and more time in their garden and want to enjoy this without worrying about maintenance. That is why product groups such as BBQ and patio furniture do especially well.'

Consumer confidence may be high, but the refugee crisis, terrorist attacks and the upcoming elections, make for an unstable political climate. Mensing-Meckelburg finds it difficult looking ahead.'

People who are afraid, are generally longing for the past.

That was visible last year with traditional Christmas colours like red, green and gold being the dominant force. This year we are focusing more on luxury, with a 'Coming Home For Christmas' theme. Because being in peace, together, is what people want.'

**Peter Paul Kleinbussink,  
Intratuin (NL)**  
**'The weather gods are smiling'**

No, you don't hear Peter Paul Kleinbussink, Director of Intratuin Netherlands, complaining about 2016. Even though the rain heavily fell during the spring, in the end that year was not that bad after all. So he was expecting a modest growth of around two percent for 2017. Even that was modest.

'The first six months of 2017 we have done better than expected,' concludes Kleinbussink. It started in January. With the favourable holiday season consumers knew where to find the garden centres in the first weeks of the year. Winter was short. 'That's not bad, because we then go on to prepare for spring. The violets sold fast.'

The good months then succeeded each other. April was somewhat cold, but in May the sales went up again. The hot June month boosted barbecue and garden furniture sales. 'The weather gods are smiling this year', notes Kleinbussink.

Yet, according to him, there is more to it. 'The economy is picking up, people are moving again and there is more interest in green. The puzzle pieces are falling into place, enabling us to realise a growth of 6.5 to 7 percent.'





Product groups that stand out are indoor plants, indoor pottery, barbecues and outdoor furniture. 'When it comes to the forecast for the second half of 2017, then I'm a little more careful. Why? Because the second half of 2016 was so good. We should be very happy if we could match that.' But he remains positive, also because the political upheaval predicted by some failed to materialise.

### **Jacky Michels, GroenRijk (NL)** 'Consumers want to unburden'

The numbers were good, in the first months of 2017. Yet they were, according to Jacky Michels, Director of the Dutch Garden Centre chain GroenRijk Retail, equally erratic. Last year, all branches still profited from the growth, now there is more diversity. Depending on region and size, for example, one business owner did better than the other. But Michels is by no means dissatisfied, if only because the effects of the path taken is visible everywhere. 'Our focus is on green as our

specialty. Looking at the different categories, you will see that green has enjoyed huge increases, as well as the related products to green groups. Houseplants, garden plants and indoor and outdoor pottery did well, but also outdoor furniture.' And that's surprising, because according to Michels, GroenRijk did not specifically focus on these.

Although consumers are investing in the garden, there is a need to unburden. Michels therefore argues for more collaboration. 'Progress means you should dare to work together, even though others might not find that rational. Omnichanneling is the key word here. This autumn we will present a new webshop, we will also be more active on social media. I'm positive, but I'm keeping both feet on the ground.'

### **Rudi de Kerpel, Eurotuin (BE)** 'We supply safety and comfort'

The weather in Belgium, according to Rudi de Kerpel of Eurotuin, was extreme-

ly favourable. 'Because if it was bad, undoubtedly more garden centers would have gone out of business.' Nothing of the sort. Spring was even so good that Eurotuin is back on the level of 2014. 'In each month high turnovers were smashed, historic even.'

Green, in particular, has contributed. 'Indoor plants are in demand, which is reflected in the interior design industry. That development has extended to the outdoors. The consumer has gone back to green, to the Earth, where he or she finds comfort.' De Kerpel draws a comparison with cocooning, a concept that was launched in the 1980s by trend watcher Faith Popcorn. 'We pull back into our own world.'

Only now is the economic recovery becoming visible in Belgium. There are more people in employment, according to De Kerpel, with more money to spend. But the balance is shaky, because of corruption scandals in Wallonia, through which Belgians have lost confi-



dence in politics. Still, De Kerpel thinks garden centres can benefit. 'We are suppliers of safety and comfort, of affordable luxury.'

More and more young people seem sensitive to this. 'It's a matter of upbringing. Our campaigns do well with young people.' He wants to emphasise this, especially as an investment in the future. But he would rather not predict too much. 'I have a good feeling about the second half of 2017, but you do not know what lies ahead. Something might happen and then everything can again look different.'

### **Iain Wylie, The Garden Center Association (GB)**

#### **'Brexit currently doesn't really have much influence'**

'Brits still love gardening, but in good weather', says Iain Wylie, CEO of The Garden Center Association, the central trade association for more than 160 members garden centres in Great Britain and

Northern Ireland.' We have less and less enthusiastic and passionate gardeners. Most people just enjoy being outdoors and like to enjoy their garden – but having a beautiful garden does require a little work.'

'British garden centres have had a very good first six months, says Wylie. With a sales increase of more than six percent, he is more than satisfied. 'The most significant growth and the best results were obtained in March and April when the weather was also perfect for gardening. Mild and sunny, for us that's a very good start to the gardening season. The double digits shown then, in terms of growth for these months, were unfortunately tempered in May and June. This was mainly due to the weather.'

Brexit currently doesn't really have much influence, Wylie thinks. 'During the campaign and the lead up to the election day is always volatile in terms of trading. But the people continued going out to garden centres. The elec-

tions in May have not changed this in the short term.'

'Tree growing products have done very well this year. Product groups such as seeds and bulbs did grow, but not as fast as our main category of perennial plants and shrubs. Also, garden furniture, pottery and barbecues sold very well. Early in the spring season people bought these for immediate use. In July the weather was also good; just in time for another small peak in barbecue and garden furniture sales. With regard to outdoor furniture the casual sofa-like types sold well but the majority of the market is still more inclined to opt for traditional wicker and rattan.

In the UK, garden centres at this point in time invest particularly in catering and restaurants. 'A good restaurant draws people to the garden centre, regardless of the weather conditions. That's an important point.' 



# Rosebourne Andover's 1st year anniversary

Photo: HPW Architects



The first year since its opening has been successful for Rosebourne's first garden centre in Andover. Rosebourne marks a new type of food-led centre, and its first year has seen some impressive achievements\*:

- Food is 60 percent of turnover
- Overall turnover is €4.8m

\* Source: HTA Catering Conference

## The right ambiance for food experiences

The restaurant plays a key role. Director Salim Sajid: "Table service gives a point of difference over the high street and online". The restaurant is accommodated in a special part of the building with an elevated roof designed with curved trusses to create an attractive, romantic ambiance for food experiences such as high teas.



## Beyond expectations

Thermoflor and HPW Architects were asked to consider the 'value for money' principle in designing this garden centre, which was built last year. The new garden centre exceeded the expectations of the customers, but also those of Rosebourne, who had commissioned the new build.

Managing director Neville Prest: "We are very pleased with the building in terms of value for money and the quality of the structure. The building was delivered on time and on budget and the Thermoflor contractors worked very efficiently. Overall we would recommend Thermoflor to other operators considering expanding their garden centres."

Would you, too, like to make your dream of a profitable garden centre come true? Contact Ferry Breugem for advice without any obligations.



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# Renewed and new garden centres

In 2017, consumer confidence appears to be largely restored in Europe and the green industry is moving rapidly. An ideal moment to implement plans for new construction, renovations, and expansions. What are the latest developments in Europe's garden centres?

**Text** Ilse Broers, Paul Geerts, Santiago González, Anita Meuleman, Trevor Pfeiffer, Elisabetta Sari

## Green dominates in new setup of Belgian Tropiflora

The garden centre has not reached its final form yet, but that does not seem to bother customers. Later this year, the renovation of garden centre Tropiflora in De Panne, on the Belgian coast, will be completed. Owners Christophe Develtere and his wife Bo Bossuyt are in no hurry. Their focus is on sales.

There are already five linked greenhouses with glass in the ridges that causes light to flow in abundantly. To the right of the new construction, another new greenhouse is being built that will house accessories and deco. A contemporary enterprise with an emphasis on green and comfort – that is how they describe the garden centre with its twenty employees. Out of the 20,000 m<sup>2</sup>, 5,000 m<sup>2</sup> is reserved for deco and ani-

mals, and the rest is reserved for green. 'This region has a mostly rural character. We focus on green combined with domestic elements.'

After a large fire in May 2013, Tropiflora was mostly reduced to ashes. That unfortunate situation offered an opportunity to rebuild the business from the ground up. They worked together with Nobutec

for the renovation, and they chose the De Haan Group for the interior. 'Our customers mainly come from Northern France and West Flanders and are attached to greenery, so we couldn't make it too modern. When you enter our garden centre, you are immediately greeted by indoor plants, which gives the feeling of a nursery. That is how it was and we wanted to keep it that way.'





## Second Bauhaus opens in the Netherlands

Functionality trumps inspiration, says Herwin Oost, the new general director of Bauhaus Netherlands. He opened the second Dutch location in Hengelo in April. 'Expansion in the Netherlands is high on my list.'



The new branch is attracting customers from all over the region. 'All the way to Germany, where Bauhaus is, of course, top brand. Yes, we immediately conducted a postal code survey.' Nearby crowd pullers include McDonalds and Ikea.

The construction market houses fifteen specialty stores under one roof, includ-

ing Bathroom Land, Tools, Floors, and Lighting. And one large garden department, the Stadstuin, with its own entrance and cash registers.

Offering a complete product range and service and advice, is what Bauhaus distinguishes itself with, says Oost. 'Customers can also come to us for bathroom

or shower designs, and of course, our assembly service. We offer quality, but also focus on pricing. In our store, you can see that functionality trumps inspiration.'

Bauhaus focuses on both the private and professional markets, where professional knowledge serves as an important foundation.







### Phoenix Fonteyn is back on its feet

We will be open again by Easter 2017. That was the thought that drove Dolf Nieland (48) to rebuild his outdoor living mall in Uddel (NL) at a rapid pace. Within six months, the building was rebuilt by construction company Nobutec Tuincentra Projekten. Walls were moved back, walking routes were redesigned, and an expansion of approximately 3,000 m<sup>2</sup> was realised, due in part to the construction of an additional open space.

After the devastating fire that laid three quarters of his building to ashes in July of last year, Nieland and his team worked hard to reconstruct it. The nine linked halls, with a 20,000 m<sup>2</sup> shopping area, were created in the style of the French Halls, in old Dutch green coated steel.

‘The scars are below the new floor. You can see our house colours everywhere: outdoor green, sandy earth, and sky blue. That is what we stand for: we offer

everything you need for a comfortable outdoor life.’

The store has remained just as wide, but was able to extend in the rear, because the fire also destroyed a non-movable wall. ‘Everything we could not do during the previous renovation now became possible. We were able to further perfect the design. In that sense, the fire wasn’t all bad – it brought something good as well.’

Nieland sums up the seven specialties: ‘Garden furniture and barbecues, gazebos, verandas, spas and saunas, and swimming pools. I saw a huge growth market in spas fifteen years ago. Now, we are world leader, with two subsidiaries in the United States and Australia, where we sell under the name Passion Spas.’

In addition, in June, Fonteyn Outdoor Living Mall received the award for best garden furniture store in the Netherlands at the B3 garden furniture fair.



## Dutch Hornbach number 12 and 13 are largest, large

You cannot miss it from the motorway: the new Hornbach branch in Amsterdam-West is located right next to the A5. Traffic is stuck here every afternoon, which allows motorists to take their time to see the huge building. A new Hornbach has also opened in The Hague (NL), and it drew as many as 12,000 visitors on the first day. Evert de Goede, director of Hornbach Netherlands: 'The store is located next to the busiest motorway of the Netherlands, the A13 from The Hague to Rotterdam. It is a true eye-catcher.'



Hornbach Amsterdam

The twelfth branch in Amsterdam, with a surface area of 20,000 m², has two floors, seven elevators, and two escalators. A drive-in for building materials and a complete garden centre. However, not every customer is aware of this yet. Ellen van den Ham, Hornbach's only female branch manager, walks around energetically. 'Our expectations are being exceeded, even in the garden centre.' They call themselves a project construction market. Van den Ham: 'We help custom-

ers with their entire project. And we are not focused on presentation, but on knowledge and service, with practical 'how to do' modules in the store. Our guideline is: the customer wants our help, or they would have made their purchase online.'

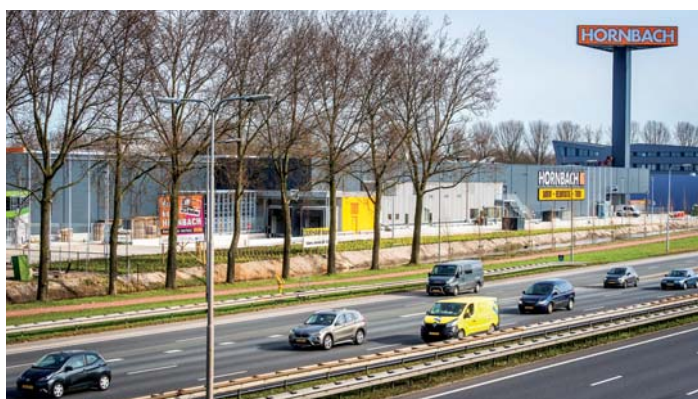
The low pricing is visible in the store by the large stock, runners on the walking route, and the dominant orange colour that loudly expresses: we are the chea-

pest! The garden centre has its own entrance and with its different signing and colour scheme, it appears to be an independent establishment. But that is not the case. 'We see the garden centre as a department, just like our kitchen, bathroom and hardware departments.'

The exterior in The Hague is quite different. 'The façade colour is anthracite grey, which was a requirement of the municipality of The Hague, which did not want an orange façade. Anthracite also has its charm, but it will not become Hornbach's new style.'

With the garden store, Hornbach focuses on quality and price. 'On average, we offer better prices than garden specialists, and we offer a good selection of plants. In addition, we want to work with gardeners more in order to be able to offer and implement garden designs. We are currently working on that and want to bring this concept onto the market next year. It suits us: we want to offer the customer everything they need for their home, from the foundation to the conifer in the front yard.'

Hornbach The Hague





### Intratuin Leidsche Rijn reopens

After an extensive renovation by construction company Thermoflor, Intratuin Leidsche Rijn (NL) has been reopened festively. The store was expanded by 1,100 m<sup>2</sup> and fully restructured. The new signing and house style of Intratuin can be seen here. Owners Mark (41) and Wendie (38) Vernooij, brother and sister, are extremely happy with the result. 'You can definitely see the atmosphere of a home furnishing store here.'

The store was fully redesigned with a new route. Wendie: 'We no longer have a mandatory walking route, there are various places you can cross now. The store has become a bit more open. The Garden Café was also completely renovated in a rural, botanical style. We offer a small menu with many fresh products.'

Mark: 'The location is great, but accessibility could be better. After ten years, we know exactly what we want: a compact store that is accessible, with good hospitality, and lots of attention to greenery and home furnishing. We are right in the middle of a new construction district: our Garden Café and play corner for kids

are very popular. 100,000 people live in the immediate area, and some of them visit us two or three times a week, often by bicycle. They even come here to work: people like sitting here with a coffee and their laptop.'





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## Authentic appearance on the island of Texel

The new construction of garden centre Van der Werve owned by brothers Jeroen and Stefan van der Werve in Den Burg on the Dutch Wadden Island of Texel was a grand undertaking. The old greenhouses were demolished and a new greenhouse complex arose. Owner Jeroen van der Werve (46): 'We evolved from a plant centre into a garden centre.'

The brand new building is a steel structure with tinted glass, five ten-metre wide greenhouses, and one raised segment that protrudes slightly. 'With the atmosphere of an old station building. That authentic appearance fits these surroundings beautifully. Especially if you know that black and green are the colours of Texel.' The building was expanded quite a bit, from 200 m<sup>2</sup> to 750 m<sup>2</sup>.

The outdoor mall of Fonteyn in Uddel served as the example in terms of construction style. 'The owner put us into contact with Mark Segers from Nobutec Tuincentra Projekten. And it turned out



beautifully, almost like a luxury store.' Soft colours were used indoors: pastels for signing and routing. A new cash register system and a modest coffee corner with Texel cake. The trusses feature an old Dutch green coating.

'Our main competitor is online shopping, which has also grown significantly here. Our greenery is now beautifully displayed and has plenty of space. No online store can compare to walking and looking around here.'

## South European novelties

In the south of Europe, in Spain and Italy, several new garden centres have been opened.



In Spain the new Cocos Garden (*Andratx-Mallorca*) shows a great leap towards agriculture, landscaping and the sale of gardening accessories, along with their usual florist services. The results of the first months have been very positive.

Arvena has reopened in Pamplona (*Navarra*), which has become an excellent option as a premium establishment in the area and a dozen comprehensive reforms have been carried out in existing garden centres throughout Spain.

The Verdecora group has inaugurated the garden centre of Verdecora Alcalá de Henares (*Madrid*) plus two urban stores in the centre of Madrid. In Alcalá de Henares (4,000 m<sup>2</sup>) nature lovers of Corredor del Henares and the province of Guadalajara can experience the world of plants, animals and outdoor decoration.

In Italy new garden centres open more and more with a clearer and more modern distribution, with decoration solutions and accessories typically 'made in



Italy' making them a strength, as in the case of the Bardin Garden Centre in North Eastern Italy, whose layout was studied in such a way that the customer can tour freely through the store, discovering in a comprehensible way the various departments that follow one after the other, following a 'logical supply chain', seemingly very simple, but effective.

## Take two: Bunnings and Squires

Two British garden centres re-opened this spring, both just off the M25 and within 40 minutes' drive of each other; Bunnings Warehouse at St Albans and Squires Chertsey.

They are both garden centres that sell plants, garden sundries, tools, outdoor leisure and have coffee shops but the approaches are worlds apart. At St Albans, Bunnings have implemented their first UK version of the warehouse style of trading that has been so successful for them in Australia while at Chertsey, Squires have created a small boutique garden centre that includes all the usual facets of a UK garden centre, just on a smaller scale.

Squires Chertsey incorporates an octagon shaped lodge building from the Na-

poleonic Wars in leafy Chertsey. In the planteria, all the benching is moveable so that displays can easily change through the season. A small seasonal area includes the bestselling outdoor leisure items from the full Squires range.

An appealing home and gift sales area between gardening and the café bar has a range of fine foods, teapots and crockery to complement their boutique café bar style where afternoon tea is a key feature.

Bunnings have used metal shelving on blocks to create pyramid plant displays to

deliver great visual impact. The Outdoor Leisure sales area includes display models high up in top of the racking with a wide range of BBQ's and furniture available.

They have not included any 'home and gift' in Bunnings first UK store though their tool shop will provide many a gift for the DIY'er in your household. Customers can relax and enjoy a great cup of coffee at the Hardware Café complete with children's play area.

Squires



Bunnings warehouse





## Dehner celebrates 70 years of garden happiness with expansion

In celebration of the 70-year existence, Europe's largest garden-centre group Dehner is launching a cross-media jubilee campaign under the slogan '70 years of garden happiness'. Since its founding in 1947, the family business has evolved into the market leader in the garden-centre industry with currently 5,000 employees, 122 garden centres and online shops in Germany and Austria. This continuity is also reflected by the company

philosophy: entrepreneurially orientated by the needs of the time with the highest standards of quality. Sustainable as a responsible company, which sets great value upon high ecological standards.

Dehner continues to expand in the anniversary year. They open a garden centre near Salzburg (AU), and take over the garden centre group Münsterland. In addition to the garden centre flagship

in Münster, the two branch offices in Osnabrück and Rheine will also be operating under the name of Dehner, starting July 1<sup>st</sup>. The takeover by Dehner guarantees the continuation of the three locations; furthermore, Dehner secures the jobs on site. The reopening of the stores under the Dehner brand is scheduled for spring 2018. Up to that point, sales as garden centre Münsterland continue as usual.

## Shopping and adventure park Blumenpark



Modern and spacious as a shopping mall – that's how the Dehner Blumenpark in Rain presents itself to its visitors from march on. After a four-month construction period, the shopping and adventure park in trendy loft-design is now shining in a new splendour with a unique combination of display garden, recreational fun, shopping adventure and culinary mile.

Even the entrance showcases a twelve meter high trowel, which acts equally as

a brand image and visitor attraction. The main entrance was complimented by a light-flooded cube of brick and glass, which guides the visitors directly into the interior of the arcade. There, the customer is presented by a shopping mall, which serves as an optical and functional link between garden-centre, gastronomy and parking facilities.

Major changes are also noticeable in the food court. In the new, roughly 1,000 m²



big garden bistro, with a 24m long culinary mile and around 240 seats, visitors are welcomed at the entrance by two aquariums and a waterfall. Internally, natural materials such as wood and stone determine the interior and provide a feel-good atmosphere. The guests choose seasonal dishes, which can be enjoyed at the bar, at tables or in cozy garden lounges. For the start of the day, there are special breakfast offers daily from 8am.



## Garden centre in Pforzheim



After almost five months of reconstruction, the starting gun for the new Dehner garden centre in Pforzheim echoed on April 6<sup>th</sup>.

In autumn 2016, Dehner had taken over the former Praktiker location. In the 121<sup>st</sup> location of the company group, customers from the region await a modern cross-

channel shopping experience with a large assortment of home-, garden- and pet-associated products.

## Salzburg Dehner



On June 17, Dehner opens a garden centre in Wals-Siezenheim near Salzburg, the 11<sup>th</sup> garden centre in Austria. In the past year, Dehner took over the gardening business of the Brugger family, who were in search of a suitable business successor. The new Dehner store offers a wide range of home-, garden- and pet-associated products on approximately 3,500 m<sup>2</sup>.

The new building in the style of a greenhouse was built in a seven-month construction period. The new garden centre offers a potted plant section, a orchid theme area, a florist shop, garden supplies, garden maintenance and equipment, a home & trend department, a garden furniture exhibition and a zoo department. A B.A.R.F shop (*biologically*

*approved raw food*) is also in place. Digital infopoints allow customers access to the online shop as well as the electronic catalog with 30,000 product items. And they can be delivered to your home on the desired date by the new Dehner Express delivery service.



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### Hagebaumarkt with garden centre

After a one and a half year construction period, a new Hagebaumarkt opened in Haan (Nordrhein-Westfalen, DE) on the 19<sup>th</sup> of June as part of a business relocation. The 'quintus' GmbH & Co.KG Hagebaumärkte invested 15 million euros in the new location.



Hagebau, Kirsten Nijhof

The quintus group now offers the complete range of Hagebaumarkt classic products with garden centre and building materials hall on the doubled sales area (5,700 m<sup>2</sup>), says Kai Kächelein, Ma-

naging Director Sales & Marketing of Hagebau Retail. DIY-enthusiasts and garden lovers are supplied from a single source. The location is conveniently located on the outskirts of Haan, to the east of Düsseldorf.

The new Hagebaumarkt also features a garden centre – which shall increase the footfall of the Hagebaumarkt branch: The newly opened branch is part of a new specialty retail market.

‘We have created 15 new jobs. With a total of 45 employees, including skilled tradesman and gardeners, we ensure the quality of service and consultation for our clients,’ says Christoph Dahmen-

Herburger, executive partner of the quintus group. Services such as rental vans and key service are offered as well. The range focus of the garden centre consists of an attractive combination of seasonal and perennial foliage plants as well as gardening equipment, garden furniture and also decorative and creative items.

The stationary shopping experience is considerably broadened by the installations of the cross-channel-element of In-store-TVs and information centres. Even as the customers are in the market, they can order additional items online and have them delivered home free of cost.





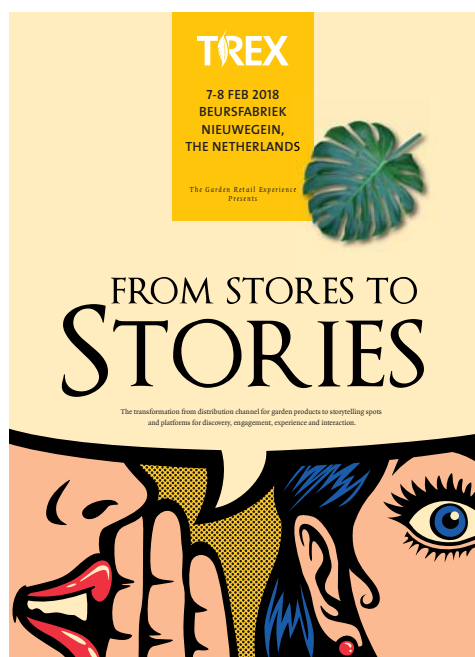


*'The power of TREx event is that it's tailored to and for garden center people! In contrast to the major European exhibitions, you can get in touch with the most important suppliers, get acquainted with their novelties and attend a number of top workshops on retail innovations and trends, in a very clear and short-term perspective.'*

**Rudi De Kerpel**  
Eurotuin | Belgium

THE GARDEN RETAIL EXPERIENCE 2018

# From Stores to Stories



The upcoming The Garden Retail Experience 2018 (TREx) is already in full development, and is once again a must for the garden retail professional to keep up with what's happening in green retail today, tomorrow, and in the future. TREx 2018 will take place on 7 and 8 February 2018 in the Beursfabriek in Nieuwegein (NL), a new central location. Chantal Riedeman is the creative director for TREx18. The main theme for the upcoming seventh edition is From Stores to Stories.

**Text** Anita Meuleman





TREx is not a trade fair, but a unique annual information and inspiration event for the (inter)national garden retail. The sale of garden products to consumers is central at TREx. Exhibitors do not have a trade fair stand, but a place in a large garden centre concept store where they can show how their products and concepts can be effectively presented and sold in retail.

There is a packed programme of readings, master classes, workshops, demos, sales and presentation techniques, and expert tours by experts from the industry and outside of it. The latest insights and ideas in the field of trends and consumer behaviour and the sale of living green, garden products, and decorative items are central. Each visitor can create a programme menu according to their personal preference and interest.

'TREx wants to continuously offer new ideas, concepts, and insights to green re-

tail in order to improve sales and professionalise further', says Tjeerd Posthumus, publisher of Garden Retailer and organiser of TREx. Our ambitions for TREx 2018: we will show a broader range, provide more inspiration and knowledge, and receive more visitors from home and abroad. That is why we chose a new, central location in Nieuwegein, where the event will take place on Wednesday 7 and Thursday 8 February 2018. In addition, the creative team has been further expanded and, led by Chantal Riedeman, will convert themes and ideas into inspiring and commercial cases.

### Customer Happiness

'With Chantal Riedeman, we have chosen a creative director with a wealth of retail knowledge and ideas, including from outside the garden industry', Posthumus explains, 'moreover, with the keynotes she has given at TREx in recent years, we have seen that Riedeman is very good at get-

ting information across and communicating with, inspiring, and training garden centre professionals. She can ensure that the translation to the store of all knowledge we demonstrate here can be even further improved. We want the information and inspiration to make an even bigger impact, so that our visitors profit even more from their visit to TREx.'

Riedeman has a background in retail (including Ikea). In 2009, she founded her company Shopology. Over the past eight years, together with her team, she has taken care of many lectures, trainings, and

*'TREx is the only show that fits exactly with our own brand values: Indulgence followed by experience, expertise and trustworthiness.'*

**Erwin Meier-Honegger**  
Garten-Center Meier | Switzerland





Impression of TREx 2017



workshops, and provided advice to companies who wanted to generate more reve-

### Who are TPK Media & Events

Connecting Green Business – that is the mission of TPK Media & Events. More individual success through co-operation! With our titles Tuinzaken, Tuinpro, De Pook, and GardenRetailer.eu, we bring news, highlight developments, and offer high-level inspiration. Professionals in the green industry receive high-quality and independent information. Need-to-know info that leads to valuable understanding. For manufacturers, importers, growers, retailers, florists, and garden professionals.

TPK Media & Events is also organiser of the most important garden centre event in Europe: TREx (*The Garden Retail Experience*). Founding partners are Tuinbranche Nederland and De Haan Group. TREx combines retail knowledge, demonstrates it to the international garden industry, and gives direction to the development of the garden retail of today and tomorrow. [www.tr-ex.eu](http://www.tr-ex.eu)

nue by making the difference in the customer experience. It is all about Customer Happiness: put the customer – not your product or service! – in the middle, make them happy, and easily make more sales. Happy consumers become loyal customers, and generate new customers as ambassadors. Only happy customers ensure structural revenue growth. Stop striving for satisfied customers!, is her creed.

### Retail future

There are three trends that determine the retail future of the green industry. Firstly, the modern consumer is becoming increasingly determinative, which is why they are central to the event. 'We see that the industry is still very product-driven', says Chantal Riedeman. 'But the link to the wishes and expectations of contemporary and future consumers is not yet being made sufficiently. They do not want to struggle through a huge number of irrelevant options. They either want to be inspired based on their lifestyle or find the solution to their problem or wish as quickly as possible. That is why it is so important to know who your customers are and what they want. Close the gap between your offer and store presentations and the expectations and wishes of your customers.'

'And what is also important is that the largest and most important customer groups are truly from a different planet. Try to speak the language of your main target groups and make choices! A store that is for 'everyone' is actually for nobody.'

### Evolution

Secondly, new technology is changing retail and the way of shopping. TREx wants to show how technology can be used in existing and new retail concepts for the garden industry. Lastly, the retail future is determined by the rapidly changing role of physical stores from distribution channels to places for storytelling, aimed at discovering, participating, experiencing, and interacting. Therefore, the main theme of TREx 2018 is From Stores to Stories.

With this evolution into new retail models, TREx wants to offer its visitors ideas, inspiration, and information with the

*'Why would we go back again?... because of the great ideas on merchandising, cutting edge displays of plants with creative and interactive displays that simply say WOW and left us entranced and inspired.'*

**Rachel Doyle**  
Arboretum | Ireland



Expert tour and Inspiration square



Garden Centre Tour: Bosrand Woerden, Intratuin Leidsche Rijn and Ranzijn Velselbroek



goal of not only being more successful today, but tomorrow and the day after that as well. Our team devises cases and examples (*Stories*) as content for this. The participating suppliers can also be part of this effort. That is why it is important for them to participate in the event at an early stage.

‘With TREx, we want to connect the different links in the green industry in order to better serve consumers together. The future calls for extensive cooperation and platforms in order to be successful. Every man for himself will not do in this age’, says Tjeerd Posthumus, organiser of TREx.

### TREx Academy

Also new this year is the TREx Academy, which offers a specific training programme for professionals in the garden industry. ‘With the evolution of garden centres into new store models, the roles of entrepreneurs, managers, and employees are also changing. In order to keep adhering to the requirements these new roles set, we will offer trainings, workshops, and master classes at various levels’, says Posthumus.

‘From my experience with TREx and retail organisations in the garden industry, I see a great need for professional retail

skills and retail knowledge’, Riedeman adds. ‘How can you get the most out of the garden centre and its customers? In a way that makes customers truly happy, has them spend more unconsciously, and stimulates them to come back soon. That is why at various places in the routing of TREx, we will set up practical cases with short ‘Stories’ that can give visitors concrete inspiration and tips that they can apply in their store the very next day.’

### Experiencing and meeting

TREx is set up to be an experience for the green industry. Not only is it informative, but it offers two fun, surprising, pleasant days with a great atmosphere, that has everyone return home with the inspiration and motivation to start the new season full of energy and enthusiasm. TREx is the kick-off of the new garden season!

Green retail is a guest at TREx. They can visit the event for free and make use of the catering free of charge. There is a networking drink on both days, and prior to the event, there is a Retail Gala for exhib-

itors, VIPs, and invitees from green retail. TREx is the place to meet and network with the decision-makers in the green industry. Suppliers who want to join can register with the trade fair organisation.

Upgrade your visit to TREx with the Garden Center Tour on February 6<sup>th</sup> along three inspirational examples of the Dutch garden retail. The guided tour visits garden centres Intratuin Leidsche Rijn, De Bosrand Woerden, and Ranzijn Velselbroek. Price €50 including lunch.

You can add accommodation, transportation, and more activities such as a dinner cruise in Amsterdam to match your own itinerary. Go to [www.tr-ex.eu](http://www.tr-ex.eu) to sign up and compose your own programme.

### Reserve the following dates in your schedule:

TREx 2018 – Wednesday 7 February and Thursday 8 February 2018 in the Beursfabriek in Nieuwegein (NL).

[WWW.TR-EX.EU](http://WWW.TR-EX.EU)

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## EFSA SPRING AND SUMMER TRENDS 2018

# Four new trends in the spirit

The EFSA Spring and Summer Trends 2018 are in the spirit of Love, Enjoy, Play, Do. These trends are aimed at reaching a specific target audience with the right atmosphere, colours, and materials. With these trends, EFSA wants to offer a compass for entrepreneurs to innovate and appeal to new audiences.

**Text** Ilse Broers

Each trend is intended for a certain audience and creates an atmosphere that suits their preferences and lifestyle. Scenes that connect to each particular target audience were chosen for the presentation of the products. Ulrike Ziegler, EFSA Manager: 'This way, consumers who love luxury or nature, the younger generation, or the adult group of friends are all approached in their own way. As an entrepreneur, you have to be able to respond to those different perspectives. Loving, enjoying, playing, and doing are the umbrella atmospheres'.

For instance, the California Cool trend is intended for the Facebook and Instagram

generation. Ziegler: 'This theme says: Look at me, my life is a stage and I create my own image of my home, outfits, meals, friends, and city. The Garden Glory theme, on the other hand, focuses more on people who are together and share together, such as a group of friends enjoying a barbecue on a sunny day with children playing in the grass'.

The trends are based on the prediction of the renowned design agency Nelly Rodi Paris, which works together with major international brands and is an expert at predicting international fashion and lifestyle trends. EFSA members use

these trends as inspiration to develop new collections.

The new retail trends can be seen at spoga+gafa in Cologne in the EFSA Trade Show concept. Ziegler explains: 'At the Tendence in June, these trends could already be seen as a preview in a small setting. At spoga+gafa, there is a larger showcase in a retail environment with shelves. The store was designed and executed together with store designer De Haan Group and Dedicated People, our creative partner and maker of the EFSA Trend Magazine. Please feel free to come and enjoy a tour of the EFSA Trend Zone'.





# of Love, Enjoy, Play, Do

Persian Palace

## **For the luxury consumer Persian Palace: romantic and oriental**

Persian Palace is a classic, romantic theme with a rich oriental ambiance; welcome to the Persian Palace. Warm, powdery colours are combined with rich fabrics and small furniture. It is an early spring theme, modern but with historical influences.

The Palace theme is intended for consumers who prefer a luxurious, soft environment and materials, decorative and full of embroidered textiles and flower prints. Brick and clay give it an earthy

tone. With its classic shapes and flamboyant flowers, it appeals to those consumers who love a sophisticated, warm ambiance.

As accessories, we see odour lamps and wax, stained glass, and small side tables made of metal and hard plastic. Materials that go with this are ceramic, copper, hard stone, minerals, and semi-precious stones such as jade and opal.

The base is a warm dark brown with accents of soft and fresh red and soft ochre yellow, together with copper tones. We see a lot of cherry and apple tree blossoms, the first flowers of spring, in addi-

tion to sculptural flowers like gladioli. The pomegranate is the fruit that symbolises this theme.

**Cut flowers:** *Hippeastrum, Cattleya*, parrot tulips, *Paeonia, Anemone, Ranunculus, Cosmos atrosanguineus, Scabiosa atropurpurea*, peach and Japanese cherry blossoms

**Indoor plants:** *Calathea, Echeveria, Hoya, Medinilla*

**Garden plants:** *Azalea, Rhododendron, Camellia, Magnolia, Cotinus*



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### For the young consumer **California Cool:** graphic and tropical

California Cool is a graphic theme with many prints, focused on design, with influences from California and Asia. It is a modern, stylish theme, intended for young consumers who display their lives in images on social media like Facebook and Instagram.

California Cool combines natural elements with innovative design products

for a theatrical atmosphere with futuristic elements. Major sources of inspiration include the artistic trends of street art and pop art, with abstract expressionist artists like Roy Lichtenstein and Andy Warhol. We see stylised products, bright pop art colours, and a wealth of graphic details such as stripes and dots. The base colour is dark grey, almost black, with accent colours such as mint green, turquoise, yellow, and red, which goes with the metal that is often used here. This includes tropical plants with large leaves. Indoors, the banana tree (*Musa*) rubber

tree, *Yucca*, and *Philodendron* provide a jungle feeling.

**Cut flowers:** *Alpina purpurata*, *Etlingera elatior*, *Musa*, *Heleconia*, *Anthurium*, *Calla*, *Lavatera* 'Blushing Bride', *Protea*, *Agapanthus*

**Indoor plants:** Airplants (incl. *Tillandsia*), *Euphorbia turucallii*, *Alocasia*, *Ficus elastica*, *Peperomia*, *Chamaerops*, *Heleconia*

**Garden plants:** *Eucalyptus*, *Phormium*





**For the creative DIY-ers**  
**Garden Glory:**  
**everything that makes a party**

Garden Glory is a vintage theme with a modern twist. Made for creative DIY-ers; the modern consumer who loves parties and appreciates traditions. Memories of the past are brought to life here. Together, enjoy and share the colourful environment inspired by North America and Scandinavia.

It is a modern and colourful theme which combines home-made items with white, red, and blue flowers, retro shapes and

fabrics, or printed textiles. Garlands, ribbons, paper stars, and balloons: everything that makes a party is included. This epicurean loves bringing the garden into the home. The functional ambiance has an industrial flavour; the materials are robust, such as enamel outdoor tableware, and wooden, coloured furniture with a thick lacquer layer. Glassware has dots or stripes. The base colour is dark brown with an ochre tone, and accent colours include off-white, middle red, indigo blue, sand, and moss green. Fresh flowers and lots of green go well with this, as well as aromatic herbs like mint, parsley, and dill. It is also a seasonal

theme for Easter, reflecting tradition with cute chickens and easter bunnies.

**Cut flowers:** *Bellis perennis*, *Gomphrena*, *Dahlia*, *Eryngium*, *Salvia*, tulips, *Aster*, *Hydrangea*, *Myosotis*, *Muscari*, *Anemone*, *Cosmea*

**Indoor plants:** *Duchesna indica*, *Hedera*, *Primula auricula*, *Cyclamen*, *Betulia*, *Begonia*, ferns

**Garden plants:** *Salvia*, *Bellis perennis*, *Ceanothus*, *Viola*, *Lobelia erinus*, rosemary, *Thymus*, lavender



**For nature lovers**  
**Hudson Heaven:**  
**nature and craft**

Peace and harmony, far from the urban jungle: that is Hudson Heaven. The late summer is perfect for finding tranquillity in nature. The northern atmosphere is combined with an Indian Summer here. For consumers who are aware of their environment and nature, and love high quality craft products.


This theme includes natural materials: wooden wall panels and floors that show the wood structure. Linen, cotton, or wool

in bleached and faded colours. Velvet and embroidered textile creates an even more poetic environment. Rustic colours are combined with fabrics, ceramics, craft bricks, and terracotta. Associated wood types are light and resinous, such as oak, beech, and olm.

The basic colours are warm grey and sand, with earth tone accents such as marsala red, mustard yellow, and old blue. These are combined with metals with a green tone. The artichoke serves as the symbol of this theme. We also see late summer flowers, grasses, thistles, and dune flowers.

**Cut flowers:** *Euphorbia spinosa*, *Scilla*, *Astrantia*, *Hydrangea*, *Allium*, fennel, *Alchemilla*, *Scabiosa*, *Nigella*, *Eryngium*, chervil

**Indoor plants:** *Scilla peruviana*, ferns, *Campanula*

**Garden plants:** *Lagurus*, *Briza*, ferns and mosses, *Stipa*, *Bromus*, basil, tarragon, chervil, parsley, fennel 



# ‘Travel’ with a focus on nature, craft, and sustainability

The first showrooms with the latest collections of our suppliers opened in late May, and trade fair Tendence in Frankfurt (DE), held this year in June for the first time, already presented a glimpse. The new deco collections for the spring and summer of 2018 display a lot of expansion in the product range as well as innovations in materials, and an increase in new applications in natural materials and plenty of vintage and travel influences.

**Text** Anita Meuleman



## **Wim de Roo, Dijk Natural Collections:**

‘More and obvious choice for natural products’

Dijk Natural Collections has chosen five themes within the trend collections: Outdoor living, Wonders, Greenery, Joy, and Dolce vita.

‘We increasingly and clearly choose natural products –the basis from which Dijk once got started,’ says Wim de Roo. From special seed capsules to vines, from horns to the roots of teak trees, and from cactus ‘gardens’ to succulents in wooden boxes. The large collection of artificial plants and flowers, including the popular paper flowers, give the presentations a very botanical look; a theme consumers cannot get enough of.

The Outdoor living theme shows many warm colours and textures in wood, bamboo, paper and leather. Combined with metal and vintage finds, it creates a crafty industrial look with a lot of green.

Greenery is the sowing and harvesting theme with lots of authentic looking terracotta pots, crates, plant hangers, and cultivation tables. The base colour is green: combined with blue tones and white, it is the perfect colour scheme for spring and summer.

### Esther Faulhaber, Kaemingk:

'Every customer can choose their own route'

The range of Kaemingk is becoming increasingly complete because the groups of garden furniture, fountains, and lighting, keeps growing. 'We have the ambition to expand this further, thereby continuing to increase our customer offer,' says Esther Faulhaber. 'With garden furniture, we focus on renewal in modern and natural materials in stead of a basic collection.'

The ten themes of the Kaemingk collection are based on one central theme 'A journey full of inspiration.' During the inspiring journey, each type of customer can choose their own route; a selection of the themes.

Oasis has returned to nature, but with the luxury glamping version in safari tents and with outdoor showers. Travel is a source of inspiration – from jungle to city. Remarkable are the furniture and rugs with woven leaf patterns, a custom design.

The Green life is a natural home-based theme with an emphasis on healthy and vital and cultivating your own plants and herbs. Central to this theme are the kitchen and dining with family and friends. A special label has been designed for this growing group: Kitchen Goods & More.

Work place has industrial influences that go hand in hand with craft and workmanship. The textile collection, which includes rugs, takes a leading role here.









### Petra Wilbrink, Ter Steege:

'In addition to a homely feeling, crafts and history are important'

What Ter Steege uses in all expressions is a homely feeling. 'In addition, the company's crafts and history are important', says Petra Wilbrink. 'We use our own themes for the collections. For indoor, these are Denim Raw, Tropical Botanic, and Lovely Nature, and for outdoor, we use Green Energy, Modern Dream, and Urban Celebration.'

Denim Raw is cool, yet chic at the same time. Different blue tones combined with warm brown and orange, which goes well with the many authentic accents and large green plants in handmade pots.

Tropical Botanic: nature truly comes to life in the home with orchids, succulents, lush green plants, and tropical bird decorations. Pot-plant combinations create true eye-catchers in the home.

There are many new store presentations and new product developments within the popular Artstone brand, such as a new square shape and an egg shape, as well as the new warm brown oak colour. There is also a growing set with a lid that matches the popular cultivating & harvesting theme.

Artstone is mostly known for its outdoor pottery, but Ter Steege has now also developed an indoor Artstone collection. This important group has been newly introduced. Moreover, the lightweight plastic-stone mix pots are also waterproof.







**Tirza van der Linden, Edelman:**

‘We truly enjoy bringing forth something new’

Edelman has released a collection with five different themes: Summer vibes, Garden festival, Urban native, Ocean view, and Exotic delight.

Summer vibes is very decorative and cheerful, with grey pastels such as grey pink and grey blue. You can see flamingos and birds here in a Miami-like atmosphere.

Exotic delight is a very richly decorated theme that includes golds and ceramics with matte glazing. Many rich materials and exotic plants such as palms and exotic flowers. The colours are dark grey, warm pink, and copper.

Urban native is the sowing and harvesting theme. Beautifully crafted ceramics that you can use for cultivation. Many earth tones and terracotta. ‘Urban native is a theme we have had for a number of years’, says Tirza van der Linden. ‘We keep changing the look and innovating the prints and implementations, so it just keeps growing. Consumers still like to be actively engaged in sowing and planting.’

‘We are very broad as a supplier and offer our collections to a very diverse group of customers. But we also like bringing forth something entirely new, such as Exotic delight, to see what our current customers think of it. This can differ strongly between countries as well.’







### Dick den Boef, Hakbijl

‘From classic royal purple to yellow retro accents’

‘Hakbijl has four new unique theme collections this spring that each represent their own colour style according to the latest trends’, says Dick den Boef. ‘The colour styles range from a classic royal purple and soft pink in the theme ‘Purple Rain’ to the ‘Late Sunny Summer’ green and yellow with its retro accent. From the tropical azure atmosphere in ‘Fresh Sea Breeze’, we end up in the high-contrast black and white ‘Multi Adventurous’ theme that takes our customers to various world cities.’

‘Since last year, we have expanded our range with earthenware, textile, and metal lines. This allows for playfully making optimal use of the diversity offered by glass within the themes and completes our offer for the customer.’

Hakbijl has designed the new glass series Beijing, Beijing Up, Paris, Tokyo, and Milano, which will be presented in the coming months.

### Maartje Mutsaerts, Capi Europe:

‘The move also includes a renewed collection’

2018 is a year of change and renewal for Capi Europe. ‘In late 2017, we will be moving to a new building and triple the production of our flower pots’, says Maartje Mutsaerts. ‘This large step also includes a new collection.’

‘Due to the success of the Capi Made in Holland pots, our designers were inspired to start working with new structures, shapes, colours, and sizes.’ The Urban collection has been expanded with the new Tube structure. ‘With the Urban collection, we want to appeal to consumers who love city life and want a beautiful, sleek interior in their homes and gardens with cool pots.’ The Tube collection is available in black, grey, ivory, and the two new colours dark brown and anthracite.

The Capi Nature pots, Made in Holland, will also be available in dark brown and anthracite from early 2018. Nature will be expanded with a new structure in 2018: Rock, a distinctive, cool pot with a robust rock structure.

‘Interior is hot and happening. Our indoor pottery has been expanded with the new structures Wood and Stone. Trendy pots that are eye-catchers in any interior.’







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### Karsten Haak, Lechuza

'Fresh herbs, always at hand'

Balconissima, Cursivo, Cilindro & Yula. Behind these interesting names are some of the new Lechuza products for the coming year, Karsten Haak says enthusiastically.

The new balcony box Balconissima has room for three cultivation pots, which are easily placed, even without repotting. Thanks to the practice-proven spearwatering system, they are optimally provided with water for a long time. Fresh herbs, always at hands – even on the balcony!

Do you prefer to go a bit smaller? Yula expands the range. Little space can offer a lot of room for design, which is proven by the three-piece YULA set with table pot, plant bag, and watering can. Cilindro Color is a minimalist design with small details and beautiful stripe look that creates a great effect in any interior.



### Jasper Jansen, NDT International:


'We can add a bit of luxury'

NDT International has three different collections of outdoor pottery; lightweight, glazed, and non-glazed. 'We still have our clean sharp square models, but this year, we also chose more organic, round shapes,' Jasper Jansen explains. 'This is also the trend we see and what customers are picking up on.'

Beaumont is a beautiful lightweight series with a luxurious appearance. The pots with a further developed limestone look have subtle natural tones and are made of lightweight eco composite.

The demand for glaze has increased significantly, says Jansen. 'With the glazed pots, we see that younger customers are also seeking sustainability. A glazed pot simply lasts longer.'

The new collection of NDT has a lot of decoration and pastel tones. A more robust, 'non-perfect' appearance with terracotta edges is also being further applied to the new collections. The new Bonn series in the glazed range also has that beautiful coarser look and a robust appearance.

'In general, you could say that we can add a bit of luxury to indoor and outdoor. People want to spend money, and that should result in a few shiny things.' 



## THE NEW OUTDOOR FURNITURE COLLECTIONS 2018

# Lots of comfort, wood,

**Text** Ilse Broers

The bucket seat and low platform sets are popular in the new 2018 outdoor season collections. We also see innovative wickerwork, and a focus on balcony sets. Often seen combinations are teak with teak and teak with aluminium.



Savoy, 4 Seasons Outdoor

The outdoors are moving more toward the indoor looks of, for instance, the lounge sets with the outdoor textile. The origin of the material becomes more important: consumers want a good product that gives them a good feeling. Natural tones, earthy colours, and light grey go hand in hand with bright colour accents in, for instance, chairs or outdoor cloths.

### **Bucket seat and thicker cushions**

New at Allibert is the more luxurious flat-wicker set Sapporo with thicker cushions, a set in a higher price category for Allibert

Garden Furniture. The set, with an entirely new look and a modular design, is made of flat wicker in the colour graphite with lighter cushions in cool grey. Sapporo is the successor to California, a basic modular lounge set. These modular sets are popular due to their flexible setup options.

In early 2018, Allibert will launch the Akola bucket seat. This is the manufacturer's convenient response to the demand for bucket seats. This well-priced bucket seat with great seating comfort is fully made of plastic, including the

frame. Available in the standard colours graphite and cappuccino, the two leading colours at Allibert.

### **Luxury to action platform sets**

Persoon Outdoor Living is launching expansions to their luxury platform set Paradiso; the Villa set is intended for the middle segment, and the action set La Vida, with excellent quality at a low price. With these three low open sets, the entire spectrum of the low to high segments is covered. The platform sets, which fit into the lounge/chilling theme,

# and open platform sets



De cupchair Akola, Allibert



Paradiso lounge, Persoon Outdoor Living



Mabel, Persoon Outdoor Living

are available with an aluminium frame in white or anthracite, and with a frame made of light teak FSC, polywood, or Eucalyptus FSC. With the Paradiso and the Villa, the all-weather cushions are available in taupe, dark grey, mint, and light grey. The sets are upholstered with Sunbrella or Nanotex, the best imaginable outdoor fabrics.

New in the vintage line is the St. Pieter set, available as a lounge set or as a coffee set, made of teak FSC with Olefin cushions. Wood is making a strong comeback rela-

tive to wicker, and Persoon is responding to this pervasive trend. Furthermore, the Mabel line, with high chair Mabel, has been expanded with matching stools, poufs, and pillows. In the designer theme, we see the new Sidney line and the Harp line; sleek rope sets with wood or aluminium. The spacious lounge sofas in Silvertex and Sunbrella are also being further expanded.

## Striking design

With the Savoy lounge chair by 4 Seasons Outdoor (*the showpiece of the new*

*collection*), the new wickerwork is clearly visible. A round thread has been further developed in grey and beige shades and is braided in an ingenious way. A prominent development for the manufacturer that is presenting 32 new series, such as the Oslo series in rope, with a sophisticated Scandinavian appearance and a light, accessible design.

The popular platform sets are a major part of the collection. Duke, one of the low island sets, has a distinctive design without armrests but with tables. The





Havana loungeset, Sieger



Ego, Kettler



Table Tortuga with chair Madrigal, MBM

Aragon dining chair is an elegant aluminium chair. A true trend at 4 Seasons Outdoor are the bucket seats with different frames. The manufacturer has definitely taken mixing and matching to a higher level: the beautiful warm colours are combined with frivolous design. Stools and side tables complete the sets.

### Lounge sets in soft grey tones

Kettler uses sunbrella, the functional all-weather fabric, in its collection for the first time. We see it in the new lounge sets Ego and Fino. The comfortable Ego lounge set is designed with soft grey tones and has an aluminium frame. The Fino lounge set is the casual dining version. Kettler is launching a total of four new lounge sets.

The modular system has been the leading theme at Kettler for 2018: Be Mod. With lounge and table systems that can be mutually combined. This offers the consumer the possibility to create an individual and creative set following last year's Tafelwereld – a line of tables with table tops made of four materials (*hpl, FSC teak, plastic, ceramic*) and three different frames in four colours. Tafelwereld caused an explosion in sales figures last season.

### Award-winning

The Havana lounge set from Sieger recently won the silver design award at the Gardiente in Frankfurt. The award-winning set has sunproof upholstery and an adjustable seating element, as

well as a two-tier table. The dark grey aluminium frame is finished with FSC teak wood. Sieger, known for its extensive table collection, offers German solidity with Mecalit and Puroplan table tops, and fixed or foldable frames.

The German brand MBM, which works exclusively with Resysta, is combining this extremely hard material made of pressed rice husk with wickerwork for the first time. For instance, the new trendy Miami chair with Mirotex Rope naturally has a Resysta frame. The demand for this wood-coloured environmentally friendly material is increasing due to the more conscious consumer.





Sophie, Hartman



Talo Diningserie, Queen's Garden



Hartman

The Madrigal chair is also available in black Mirotex for the first time.


At Queen's Garden, we see the popular bucket seat shape in the Capo dining chair made of wicker with teak wood. This series has been expanded with a rolling lounge. Queen's Garden works with pure FSC teak wood and combines it with other materials. The Talo dining series made of matte grey painted aluminium with recycled teak wood is also available for large gardens or balconies (80x80 cm). The Talo lounge series, made of the same materials, has a coffee table with a glass ceramic table top. You can compile the loose elements yourself, with or without a backrest. Available in

matte grey and white, and can be combined with the stackable dining chair Pico in taupe or soft green, with teak wood armrests.

### Stackable bucket seat

Hartman is expanding the successful bucket seat Sophie with a version without armrests, but with the same fresh design and high seating comfort, that is – very conveniently – stackable. The bucket seat is now available in six colours. Sophie was already available in Xerix, Taupe, and Royal White, and the new colours are Vulcano Red, Carbon Black, and Misty Grey. Furthermore, Sophie is now also available with a teak frame for a more chic look. In addition to expanding Sophie with teak,

other innovations can also be seen with this material, including the Delphine wicker chair; a luxurious combination with three-colour braiding.

More than ever, the new collection consists of complete families. For instance, in the aluminium programme, we see adjustable up/down tables combined with lounge sofas, corner sofas, dining chairs and tables, loungers, and a few new full aluminium recliners. A larger number of tables is available as well, with scratch-resistant and heat-resistant hpl table tops. By means of an experience dealer package, Hartman's retail concept fully focuses on the sets in this package. 







KAREN MOAD, RIVERS OF YARRAMBAT, AUSTRALIA

# The Rivers Way: health and wellness as the central thread

There are no limits to what's on offer at Rivers of Yarrambat in Australia. Starting as a garden centre, Rivers of Yarrambat has grown into a lively, green-based lifestyle centre where guests can easily spend a whole day. And they do – from the Rivers Café, the yoga studio, the conference centre to the good old garden centre. Owner Karen Moad reveals her particular, 'down under' vision of the garden centre of the future.

**Text** Anita Meuleman **Portrait** Fred Roest

Yarrambat is 45-minutes' drive to the northeast of Melbourne, Australia, in a semi-urban environment. Rivers of Yarrambat started as a garden centre on a 0.8-hectare piece of land by a lake in the early eighties. When we asked Karen Moad what the centre has on offer, a long list follows: a garden and leisure centre that features in its shop all kinds of products in the fields of gardening, food (*homemade and regional products*), fashion, bags, accessories and jewellery, gifts (*also for babies and children*), home (*this includes lamps and carpets and an outdoor living room*), body care and kitchen and tableware. There is the Rivers Café with healthy, homemade dishes and two reception rooms that are used for events, parties for adults and children's parties (*these are offered complete with workshops and dress-up parties*) and a conference hub. But the list does not end here. There's also a day spa, a hair studio, a yoga

and pilates studio, a health clinic and a fitness studio with personal trainers.

'It's not exactly a traditional garden centre,' owner Karen Moad laughs. She studied Hospitality and Business Management before starting to work for her parents' company 21 years ago. 'My parents started the garden centre in 1981. My father, Ian, was the landscape architect and my mother, Marilyn, a teacher, started with the plants. After completing my studies, I launched the Rivers Café and introduced service and hospitality to the company. Over the years, the café simply became organically intertwined with all other aspects of the company. We started adding an increasing number of things relating to leisure activities.

We now consider the centre to be more of a green-based lifestyle centre than a garden centre. My parents have retired now.

Since 2009, I have been running the company with my brother David. He's a horticulturalist and a real plant enthusiast. I'm primarily concerned with maintaining an overview of all our activities.'

The thing about the garden centre sector that really appeals to Karen is the space it offers to recreate itself and adapt to lifestyle changes and trends, while incorporating influences from fashion, food and an interest in particular types of plants. In addition to a host of plants, seeds and tools, the Rivers garden centre also offers a broad range of products and a number of services (*amongst which, professional advice from gardeners and Rivers green specialists and garden design and maintenance advice*) that are beyond the ordinary scope of the sector. You can also have soil tests done and get assistance identifying a specific plant, plant disease or plague.





That they don't like half measures at Rivers becomes clear from the care they give to surprising and servicing all target audiences. They offer health and fitness, yoga and pilates, meditation, but also hair, beauty and spa services, complete with hairdressers and beauticians. Their range of services also includes special wedding arrangements, wherein the bride and her bridesmaids (*often friends*) and close family members can enjoy a complete series of treatments – including getting their makeup, hair and nails done, tanning under a sunbed and enjoying a relaxation massage – ahead of the big day.

### The garden centre of the future

'In 2009, we introduced health and wellness to our company's range of services. This is the part of the company that is currently undergoing the most significant growth. In the future, we want to be able to incorporate and expand the elements of health and wellness into

each part of our company. It is the central thread of our company and our business practices. We serve healthy food in the Rivers Café and we aspire to inform people of the health-related aspects of plants and how wellbeing can be introduced to one's life simply by surrounding oneself with plants. In line with this philosophy, our company has gardens and spaces where people can enjoy being around abundant plants.'

'It often feels more like a lifestyle centre than a garden centre. In Australia, the trend surrounding health, wellness and so-called 'self-care' is one that has been growing steadily in recent years. People often visit yoga studios, but, at Rivers, they can visit the yoga studio, enjoy a bite to eat at the café, and follow these activities up with a visit to the shop. It's a unique range that is received very well. People enjoy everything we have on offer. But the continued focus in everything we do is health and wellbeing.'

For a year, Rivers has been successfully organising Mums & Bubs Playdates, 'a free monthly event for new mothers during which they can meet other mothers. Each month, we raffle twelve free neck-and-shoulder massages, and the district nurse is present to provide advice and assistance in matters concerning the babies. It is fantastic to assist others with this and facilitate a service that attracts people to our centre and, on top of that, generates a lot of publicity.'

### Spine

The catering service is another important aspect of the business. Karen started the Rivers Café – which is open for business seven days a week, but closes in the evenings – in 1995. A team of 9 (!) chefs, led by head chef Matt Brennan, provide super healthy, homemade meals on a daily basis, of which a significant part of the vegetables and herbs they use have been grown in the company's own vegetable garden.





'Rivers Café is the company's spine. It gives us stability all year round. Other parts are more variable in terms of the business they generate due to their seasonal dependence, but the café generates income throughout the year. We employ nine full-time chefs. They make all the food from scratch themselves. All cakes, breads and buns, soups and dishes that we serve in the café for breakfast, lunch and with coffee, have been made by our chefs, as well as the catering for weddings and parties.'

### Customer approach

Karen also has her own philosophy in terms of approaching customers. 'We approach our customers more like friends. In our very own Rivers language, we call our own people 'team members.' Customers are guests. But, when we get to know people better, they become friends. The fact that you talk to them and relate to them makes people come back. And as a result of this philosophy,

a whole network of friends has been created; a community of genuinely well-meaning people. Showing heart; being involved with our guests in a more personal way.'

### Day Makers

There's also a special approach for the team. 'The Day Maker Training teaches team members how they can make another person's day. Making someone's day can be done through a particular comment or a compliment regarding something they're wearing or their perfume, for example. The focus here is on being truthful and friendly, and focusing on the other person, rather than simply trying to sell a product or take an order to get on with other tasks. We try to establish more contact with our guests; connect with people more. We try to focus on presenting unique things within the company, or to get people involved with the way we do things. We call that the Rivers Way.'

'In addition to training programmes, schooling and a monthly newsletter, we organise many events and social activities to spend time together. These include barbecues, Christmas drinks, an Easter breakfast, and a so-called 'shared table' (for which everybody brings traditional, homemade dishes from home) in winter.'

### Future plans

'We are going to expand our garden centre and our wellness range with inspiring places for mindfulness and meditation. We're also going to expand the events area – a growing part of our business – with a new reception room in a greenhouse with many garden plants and living, green walls. We are also going to freshen up our brand, and renovate and upgrade the Rivers Café. Here, there will also be an expansion with open air dining, where you can sit outside and call for a service using a pager system.'





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RHS CHELSEA FLOWER SHOW 2017

# Green versus concrete: a challenging matchup

You might call 'green in the city' the central theme of Chelsea 2017.

In particular, the battle of green versus concrete is considered a challenging matchup. What if you let everything take its course? On the one hand, there is the science that nature always wins, and on the other hand, attention must be paid to vulnerable, unique landscapes that will not survive unless the balance is restored. This results in a number of controversial but prize-winning concept gardens.



Feel Good Gardens



**Text and Photos** Anita Meuleman

The annual RHS Chelsea Flower Show in London is a leading and trend-setting force in the field of gardens and greenery. Each year, there are a large number of leading garden designers who design a show garden especially for Chelsea, and there is the Great Pavilion in which growers of flowers and plants beautifully present their entire range. An ingenious professional jury award system generates high tension among the participants each year as they all deplete for the highly sought-after Gold Medal.

There were fewer large show gardens at Chelsea this year. This was mainly attributable to the fact that the decision-making moment fell within the confusing period around the Brexit outcome, which caused a number of sponsors to decide not to participate. Also, a number of sponsors chose to be present at the first edition of the RHS Chatsworth Flower instead of at Chelsea. After all, in terms of sponsoring, we are fishing in the same pond.

There was no lack of inspiration offered by the garden show. Even though there were fewer large show gardens, the smaller gardens were actually larger in number this year and at least as inspirational. A surprisingly large number of solutions for gardens or greenery applications in the city were on display, in which the battle and victory of green over concrete was sometimes literally depicted. Biodiversity, sustainability, and green solutions all remain very current topics.

The plant use was quite striking and focused on natural-looking plants. The lush English cottage garden was hardly found in this edition of Chelsea. After its comeback three years ago, the lawn was also completely absent in the show gardens this year. Remarkable was the subdued use of colour; the few gardens that did display a significant colour scheme, such as the Silk Road Garden and the Fresh Garden Beneath a Mexican Sky, received even more attention as a result.





## The M&G Garden

This year, the Best Show Garden is the M&G Show Garden designed by James Basson. His inspiration came from an abandoned Maltese quarry. The garden consists of blocks of limestone with grasses, evergreen plants, and soil coverings typical of the Mediterranean island of Malta. The show garden is divided into different zones, each with their own ecology,

from garrigue vegetation to mountain pastures. Basson's message is that we really need to take action to preserve the fragile ecosystems of our planet. Sustainable water collection, recycling, and composting are all essential for maintaining, for instance, the delicate landscapes of Malta.

Designer: James Basson

Rating: Gold

Category: Best Show Garden



## Breaking Ground

Designers: Andrew Wilson and  
Gavin McWilliam  
Rating: Gold  
Category: Show Garden

The garden design of Breaking Ground is based on the human thinking process. The greenery is inspired by the rural environment of Wellington College that is supported by sponsor Darwin Property. Eighty percent of this landscape has disappeared since the nineteenth century.

Sandstone, gravel and water channels, crumbling walls and a water basin between stone slabs form a natural, balanced landscape. The geometric, four metre high metal trellis has the

same structure as nerve cells. Hand-written texts on the walls express the future thoughts of 200 students of the Wellington Colleges in China and Great Britain. The natural use of plants consists of groups of grasses, ferns, and small bushes like heath, broom, and *Rosa multiflora* alternated with trees from the region (*Betula pendula*, *Crataegus monogyna*, *Pinus sylvestris*). *Salvia* 'Caradonna' are used as ribbons throughout the garden. These outburst of purple represent fragments of thought.







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## Silk Road Garden Chengdu, China

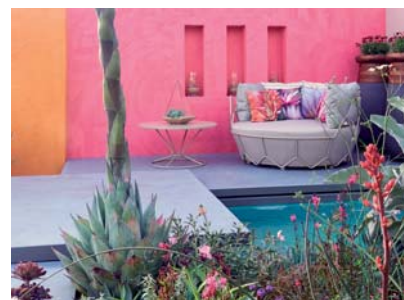
The Silk Road Garden Chengdu, China depicts the legendary silk trade route in China. The garden design combines architecture and plants to express the rich culture, history, and landscape of Chengdu and the province of Sichuan. In addition, it is a tribute to the rich plant diversity in this Chinese region.

The garden is planted in a way that creates colour transitions between the flowering plants; from white and yellow via pink and purple to dark red and blue. You see a lot of peonies,

primroses, and rhododendrons here: plants that occur naturally in Sichuan and were brought to Europe by plant finders in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Striking accents are provided by the blue poppies, *Meconopsis* 'Lingholm', the white royal *Lilium regale*, and the *Hemerocallis citrina*. True plant enthusiasts can also admire more subtle gems such as the *Incarvillea delavayi* and *Primula bulleyana* here, as well as the diverse *Epimedium* – 'Wudang Star', 'Fire Dragon' and 'Mandarin Star'.

Designers: Laurie Chetwood  
and Patrick Collins  
Rating: Silver-Gilt  
Category: Show Garden





## Beneath a Mexican Sky

With the garden Beneath a Mexican Sky, designer Manoj Malde honours Mexican architect Luis Barragán. His signature coloured walls in orange, coral, and cappuccino form a dramatic background for the planting scheme. The swimming pool is also an element that often returns in Barragán's works.

The Kenyan-British Manoj Mal applied beautiful XXL drought-resistant plants which, together with the materials used and the

exuberant colours, create a Mediterranean atmosphere. The two plant sections feature two multi-stem strawberry trees (*Arbutus unedo*), surrounded by a high-contrast planting of succulents (*Delosperma*, *Echeveria*, *Sedum*, *Senecio serpens*), annuals (*Eschscholzia californica*, *Verbascum* and *Cosmos*), and flowering perennials (*Salvia*, *Tradescantia*, *Iris* and *Gaura lindheimeri*). Large specimens of *Agave* and *Dracaena* leave their signature with their characteristic shape.

Designer: Manoj Malde  
Rating: Silver-Gilt  
Category: Fresh Garden




## City Living

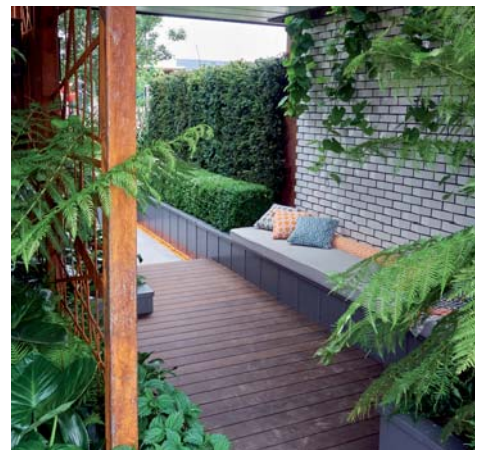
With her garden City Living, a distinctive Fresh Garden, designer Kate Gould shapes her strong environmental message for more green in the city. As a garden designer (*she won gold at Chelsea three times before*), she has a lot of experience with gardens in and around London. At Chelsea, she has a relatively small surface area of twelve by six metres this year, with three floors that display an impressive number of beautiful and sustainable solutions for green in the city.

Designer: Kate Gould

Rating: Gold

Category: Fresh Garden

Gould uses many large green leaf plants, which turns City Living into a distinctly green oasis. There is a lush green wall on the outside and a base with densely planted greenery (*large ferns and Melianthus major*) around sheltered seating areas in a shaded courtyard. On the first floor, glass walls shield the distinctive planting (*incl. Dicksonia antarctica*) from excessive wind. As a 'cherry on the cake', the roof terrace features an impressive cork oak. 





The background of the advertisement is a lush garden scene. In the foreground, three large, dark green, ribbed metal planters are filled with various plants, including pink and purple flowers. In the background, a person is walking on a path through a dense forest of green trees. A semi-transparent white circle is overlaid on the right side of the image, containing the Edelman logo and the collection name.

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