



THE BLUE MOUNTAINS – SYDNEY’S ROOFTOP GARDEN

A Kitchen Garden in every Blue Mountains’ Home

Blue Mountains residents – are you ready to take up the challenge and create a kitchen garden in your home?

By 2011 Cittaslow Katoomba Blue Mountains hopes that most homes will be growing their own leafy green vegetables. Not only does home-grown food taste better, it also helps to reduce the emissions that result from food production and transport thereby easing the local impact of climate change.

Above all, it’s easy to do. Whether you’ve got a balcony or a plot of land, just collect your seeds and start planting. To make it easier, Cittaslow Katoomba Blue Mountains has partnered with Oasis Horticulture to make the following offer. All you need to do is take the voucher appearing in the Blue Mountains Gazette to participating nurseries* in order to receive 2 free punnets of Oasis "B" vegetables or "Vegie Patch" seedlings when you purchase 2 punnets of Oasis "B" Vegetables or "Vegie Patch" vegetable seedlings. This offer is for local residents and is valid from the 26th March to the 31st May 2008.

Sharon Fairbairn from Oasis Horticulture says of the initiative "Oasis Horticulture are proud to support A Kitchen Garden in Every Blue Mountain’s Home. This is a wonderful initiative that will benefit our local and wider community. What better way to look after the health of ourselves and our families than by growing and harvesting fresh salads and vegetables from our own backyards. Home-grown always tastes better."

Cittaslow Katoomba Blue Mountains has also produced a free Planter Box Guide with complimentary seeds which will be given to participants who take their voucher to local participating nurseries.

"We are very excited about this project, because it addresses key issues such as food security, community health, food miles and encourages efficient use of soil and water – critical in this era of climate change," says Anne Elliott from the Cittaslow Katoomba Blue Mountains Working Party.

Don’t think you’ve got a green thumb? Are you ready to take your garden to the next level? Well help is at hand. The Katoomba Chamber of Commerce and Community has set up a website at www.katoombachamber.com with

a section for questions and answers. Information will also be available on specially-created courses ranging from a hands-on workshop for absolute beginners right through to courses on planting seasonally. Locals are also invited to share photos and stories on the forum.

It's not just homes that are being asked to turn the Blue Mountains into Sydney's rooftop garden. Cafes, restaurants, hotels, b&bs and guest houses are also encouraged to don the gardening gloves and set up a kitchen garden.

John McNaull from Organic John the Gardener planted a crop of coriander, parsley and rocket at Blue M Cafe in Katoomba and said "it was a talking point with customers even before it was finished...hopefully this will become a hallmark of cafes throughout the Blue Mountains area."

Cittaslow Katoomba Blue Mountains hopes that the A KITCHEN GARDEN IN EVERY BLUE MOUNTAINS HOME will provide the inspiration for communities across Australia to take up the challenge to be home-grown.

A little bit about Cittaslow...

Cittaslow (Italian for Slow City) derived from the Italian Slow Food Movement, whose principles are based on using local, seasonal produce, supporting small producers and restoring time-honoured methods of production. There are only around 100 Cittaslow villages in the world, mostly based in Europe and in 2007 Katoomba Blue Mountains was accredited with the prestigious title.

Cittaslow towns take the time to identify what is important and special about their town, whether it be art, cultural traditions, and then implement strategies to preserve these unique qualities. Essentially, it's all about creating a great quality of life that brings benefits to the community.

For further information on Cittaslow and Slow Food visit www.cittaslow.net & www.slowfood.com

Photos available upon request

***Participating Nurseries:** Glenbrook Garden Centre, Highway Hardware, Blaxland, Honygem Nursery, Springwood, Katoomba Garden Centre, Leura Country Gardens, Longview Garden Centre, Wentworth Falls, Mt Boyce Nursery, Blackheath & Springwood Garden Centre

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