

Southern Living

SPECIAL COLLECTOR'S EDITION

ESSENTIAL

Garden Guide

143 IDEAS FOR
CONTAINERS, BEDS
& BORDERS



**GROW A
VEGETABLE
GARDEN!**
The best plants for
a fresh harvest

DISPLAY UNTIL MAY 16, 2014

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GET INSPIRED!

TOUR THE SOUTH'S PRETTIEST GARDENS

An arbor looks good year-round and provides a shaded spot to relax and enjoy the garden. Fruits and vegetables need a lot of sun to thrive, but consider your needs as a gardener and give yourself a little shelter from the sun.



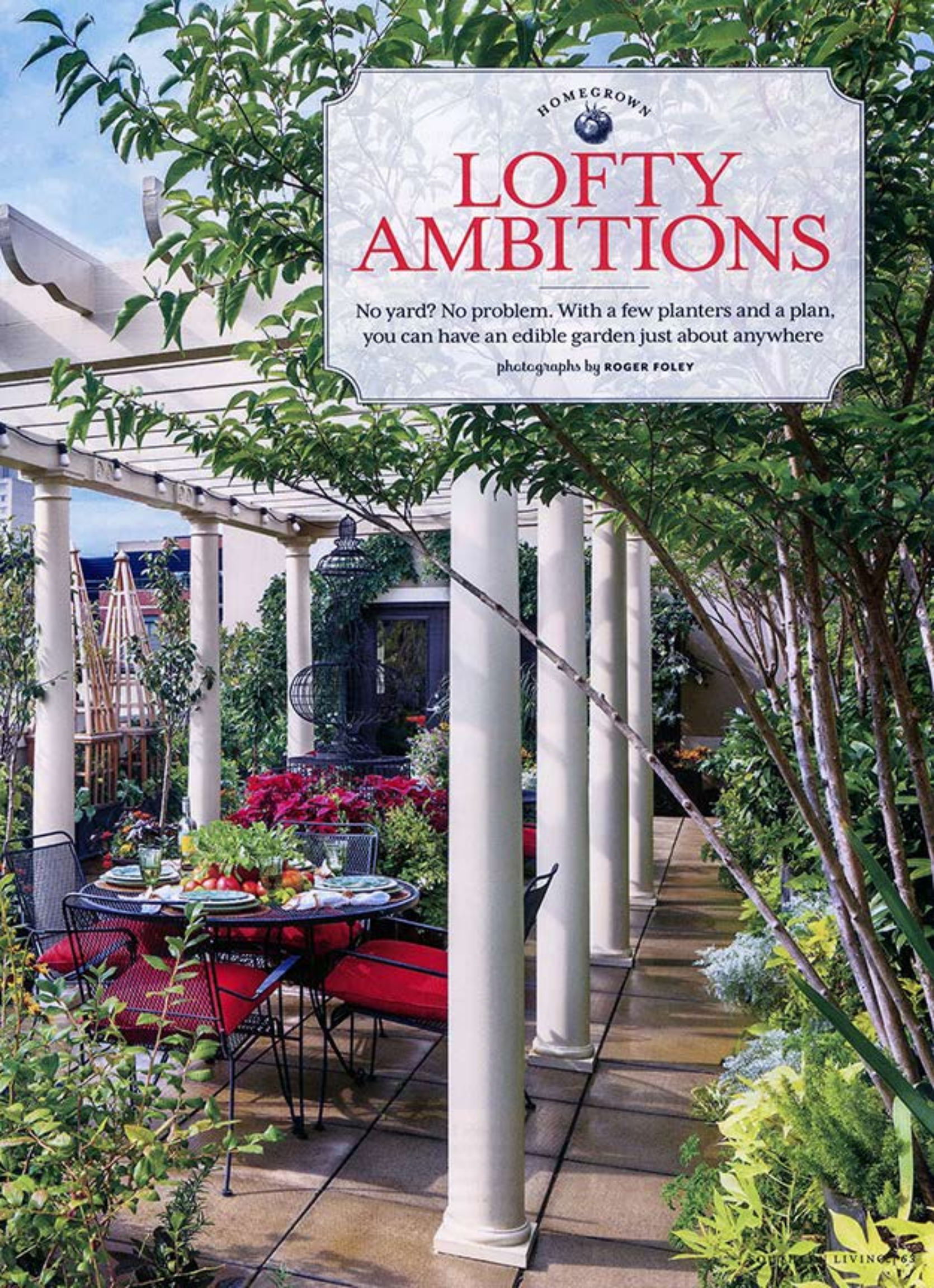
HomeGROWN



LOFTY AMBITIONS

No yard? No problem. With a few planters and a plan, you can have an edible garden just about anywhere

photographs by ROGER FOLEY



You might think you need a sizable chunk of land to grow fruits and vegetables. Meg Jewett-Leavitt, the owner of L.V. Harkness & Company, a fine gift store in Lexington, Kentucky, wanted a place where she could entertain or just relax after work. But the store is landlocked downtown. Luckily, she only had to look up for inspiration. The 21- by 58-foot rooftop of her store proved the perfect spot for her dream garden. She enlisted the help of fellow Kentuckian Jon Carloftis, who made a name for himself designing rooftop gardens in Manhattan. His signature plants are edibles because they are unexpected and do so well on rooftops, plus clients love them. Structures, focal points, seasonal flowers, and permanent shrubs keep these gardens beautiful year-round.



1 Going vertical lets you grow more in less space and provides privacy. Tomatoes line up to form a living screen. Use plant supports, such as these custom-made tuteurs, to add instant height to a newly planted garden. **2** Peppers are a good way to add a punch of color to your containers. **3** Don't let any space go to waste. Underplant trees with flowers. Here, marigolds and violas lend a sunny look, and eucalyptus adds fragrance. **4** Use large containers to showcase a colorful blend of herbs. Just be sure they have the same water requirements.

THE DETAILS

Urban Rooftop

THE BIG IDEA

Create an outdoor room that looks formal in winter (with structure, evergreens, and outdoor furniture) and casual in other seasons (with vines, flowers, veggies, and herbs). Edibles include tomatoes, peppers, eggplants, squash, chives, strawberries, basil, thyme, oregano, peach, nectarine, apple, fig, and cherry trees. The garden's elevation (cold air sinks) and Southern and Western exposures (steady sun warms the masonry) extend the growing period by three weeks in the spring and fall.

THE MATERIALS

A flat roof is usually somebody's ceiling, so reducing weight is key. Jon did this by using lightweight fiberglass posts for the arbor and high-quality fiberglass planting boxes. To further lighten the planters, he filled the bottom quarter with packing peanuts and then added a top layer of Pro-Mix potting soil and dehydrated cow manure. Edibles grown in pots need more frequent feeding than those in the ground, so Jon uses his own brands of organic fertilizers and soil conditioners called Soil & Root and Bloom & Fruit (available at local retailers and joncarloftis.com).

TIME AND ENERGY SAVERS

An automatic drip-irrigation system minimizes water usage and eliminates hand watering. Shading the roof with plants cools it in summer, cutting down on air-conditioning costs.



APPLE
TREE

CREPE
MYRTLE

CHERRY
TREE

PEAR
TREE

TOMATO

SWEET
POTATO VINE