

AROUND TOWN



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Grow A Garden Up Your Backyard Wall

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SO WHAT if you don't have an immaculately-manicured lawn due to lack of space. Now you can have it up your wall, literally. Frenchman Patrick Blanc, who's just finished growing varieties of plants (including the banyan) on the wall of the French Embassy has been sowing the seeds for a vertical garden for the last 20 years.

It's a passion that pays, as he gets to travel all over the

world too, "as part of my research," says Blanc, adding that there is no difference in the plants in France and India. He also explains the concept of the banyan tree planted high: "The roots gets space to spread out and the branches and leaves look like a virtual jungle."

And there is way of maintaining it. "The trick is to water them every four hours through a pipe placed strategically on top of the wall. The water contains the minerals,"

Patrick Blanc has been in the business of growing vertical gardens for the last 20 years

he says. How did he come up with the idea? "As a child I was fascinated with the aquarium. The little plants and shrubs I was able to grow inside it would climb up the wall of the fish tank. I also learnt that it kept the water fresh. That's how I discovered that tropical plants could grow on walls if watered properly." Blanc charges as much as 400 Euros per sq metre. "Of course, it won't be that expensive in India," he smiles.

Blanc has grown plants on the walls of reputed museums, architectural buildings and even a parking lot. "It's a good feeling that a parking lot, which is almost like a dead space, has life and greenery because of plants in the vertical garden," he says. ■