



SMALL GARDENS

A HANGING GARDEN WITH BEAUTY AND JOY



Project Name: 'Clorofilla Kindergarten'
Location: Milan, Italy
Size: 300 m²

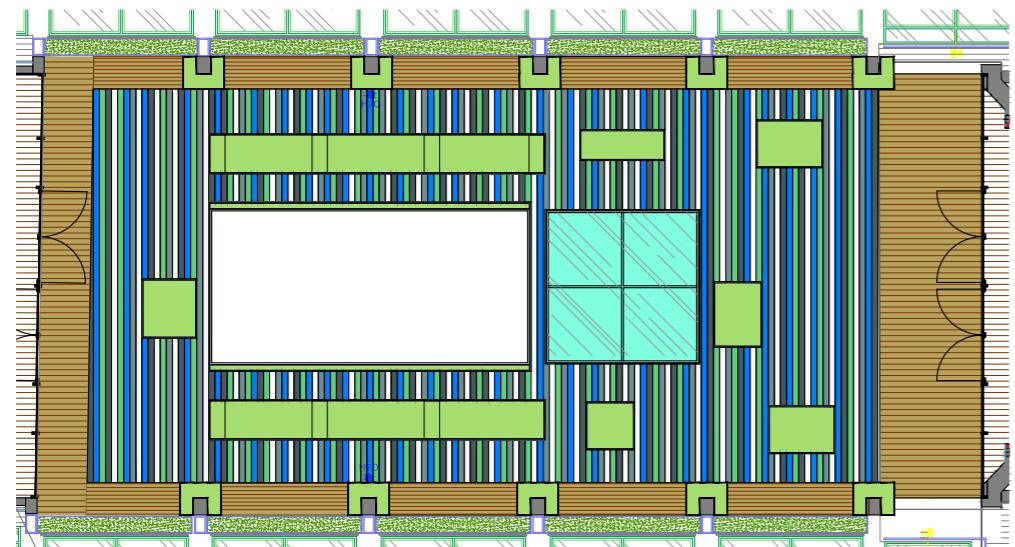
Design: Cristina Mazzucchelli Green Design
Leading Designer: Cristina Mazzucchelli
Photographer: Cristina Mazzucchelli

Design Concept

A top-notch nursery is born in the centre of Milan, which makes you want to become a child again, as well as extolling the "right to beauty".

Inspired by the most advanced educational theories for children, its name is Clorofilla: its very name underscores the wish to welcome plants and flowers within its walls, as well as putting nature within reach. Plants are actually the keystone of an educational project, welcoming nature as an unreplaceable teacher. The hanging garden epitomizes this goal, by offering an environment, which is both cheerful and overflowing with plants, and practical, where multiple activities go together with constant sensory stimuli, challenging the minds of the young guests.

The spacious hanging garden, geared towards children between 0 and 6 years of age, offers a happy and stimulating space, for playing outdoors, as well as for teaching. It is part of the roofing of the building, where the classrooms are located; its main striking feature is a row of supporting arches, left over from a previously existing dome.



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The main project outlines express functionality, for instance children needing to move about freely in the space. The requests were easy maintenance on a daily basis, offering a wide range of botanical species to stimulate sensory perception in small children, as well as providing interesting elements and flowerings all year long.

That's why a lawn wasn't included, as it would have been high maintenance, as well as having been endangered by being squashed by, not to mention low sunlight exposure. To the contrary, a low maintenance stress resistant flooring was selected, made of composite wood planks, laid following a pattern, giving rise to a cheerful pastel colors carpet.

It has a series of gaps, housing raised hedges, to protect the plants it contains from the children's feet, as well as offering the best possible growth environment for the fruit trees included, providing roots with substrate depth, which would otherwise be just roughly 35cm, therefore ensuring root stability. Raising the soil level also entails achieving the appropriate height, for constant visual perception by the children, who therefore end up enveloped by spikes and ears towering over them.



A glass tiles pavement light, located in the central area and shielded by shock and tread resistant azure glass, turns into a playground; the adjacent see-through steel mesh fence prevents children from falling into the interior court below. At its feet, a long series of downward plants creates a green tent, which you can see from the ground floor. Last but not least, you have two lateral vegetable gardens, always slightly raised for feet protection, where classes are held, and fruit and vegetables are produced for the annex kitchen.

Aromatic and fragrant plants are to be found along the perimetral flower boxes, to impart movement to the overall picture, not to mention soft texture or slightly hairy leaves, creating overwhelming olfactory, visual, and tactile stimuli. Jasmine plants grow on the outlying trellis, which prevents children from accessing the pavement lights; Canadian vine climbs on the arches marking the rhythm, creating a sequence of poetic scenarios.

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As all plants with roots potentially capable of damaging the insulating sheath are banned from the premises, ample space is provided for a range of herbaceous perennial plants (hand-picked because they are non-toxic), which are both easy to tend and adaptable to the limited available substrate, as well as offering copious flowerings.

The dominant colors are blue, azure, violet and grey, to stimulate the eyesight without causing sensory overload, to convey luminous harmony and matching the flooring's shades.

Grasses show off their beautiful ears like fireworks, as they invite the children, to play and run between hedges in bloom.



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Plant List

<i>Mespilus germanica</i>	<i>Carex 'Everest'</i>
<i>Olea europaea</i>	<i>Ceratostigma plumbaginoides</i>
<i>Prunus cerasus</i>	<i>Chasmanthium latifolium</i>
<i>Arbutus unedo</i>	<i>Deutzia gracilis 'Nikko'</i>
<i>Ceanothus repens</i>	<i>Fragaria '4 Stagioni'</i>
<i>Cotinus coggygria 'Canary'</i>	<i>Issopus officinalis aristatus</i>
<i>Escallonia ivesi</i>	<i>Leucanthemum 'Starburst'</i>
<i>Fejria sellowiana</i>	<i>Liatris spicata 'Alba'</i>
<i>Hydrangea paniculata 'Limelight'</i>	<i>Liriope graminifolia</i>
<i>Osmarea burkwoodii</i>	<i>Nepeta faassenii 'Superba'</i>
<i>Phillyrea angustifolia</i>	<i>Polystichum setiferum</i>
<i>Rapholepis umbellata</i>	<i>Rudbeckia nitida 'Herbstsonne'</i>
<i>Rosmarinum officinalis</i>	<i>Salvia nem. 'Caradonna'</i>
<i>Sarcococca confusa</i>	<i>Salvia officinalis</i>
<i>Spirea thunbergii</i>	<i>Satureja spicigera</i>
<i>Agapanthus africanus</i>	<i>Sedum spect. album</i>
<i>Agapanthus 'Blue storm'</i>	<i>Stachys lanata</i>
<i>Agastache 'Blue Fortune'</i>	<i>Stipa tenuissima</i>
<i>Allium senescens</i>	<i>Thymus officinalis</i>
<i>Anemone 'Honoree Jobert'</i>	<i>Vinca minor</i>
<i>Aster frik. 'Monch'</i>	<i>Vinca major</i>
<i>Calamagrostis brachytricha</i>	<i>Parthenocissus tri. Veitchii</i>
<i>Calamintha nepeta 'Blue Cloud'</i>	<i>Trachelospermum jasminoides</i>



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