

# CityBites

TORONTO'S GUIDE TO GREAT FOOD & DRINK

| FREE |  
WINTER 2011/2012

## TORONTO'S TOP CHEF

THE CN TOWER'S **PETER GEORGE**  
DELIVERS SERIOUSLY HAUTE CUISINE

**SPARKLING  
WINES + SAKE**

OUR EXPERTS  
PICK THE BEST

**SLOW COOKING**  
WITH TAWFIK SHEHATA

**VEGAN IN THE CITY**  
WHERE TO EAT  
AND WHY

**RESTAURANTS**  
GET SERIOUS  
ABOUT CHEESE

**PLUS!** EATS IN MAUI + HOLIDAY GIFTS + CREAM LIQUEURS + BAKERBOTS

# Windowsill Farming

## WINTER SURVIVAL OPTIONS FOR THE YEAR- ROUND GARDENER

Winter can be a tough time of year for those who've been bit by the vegetable gardening bug. The ground is frozen, the days are short and dark and the only green vegetation is a Christmas tree. But don't despair, here are some ideas to keep your hands dirty.

PHOTO: MARC GREEN



Herbs love a windowsill in winter.

### IN FROM THE COLD

Anything already growing in pots outside will likely do well indoors. We managed to keep a pepper plant growing all winter and brought it back outside in the spring. You don't have to leave your perennial herbs lying dormant in the ground. Sage, thyme, oregano and other perennial herbs will come back in the spring, but if you want fresh cut herbs all winter long transplant them into pots and bring them in.

### SOW NEW SEEDS

Many tasty veggies grow well in pots, especially shallow-rooted plants like lettuce, spinach and arugula. You may even have success with radishes. Try chard, kale, basil and cilantro, which do really well in pots. All you need is a south-facing window, a planter with a drainage hole and saucer, potting soil, seed or seedlings and a watering can. You can start your windowsill edibles from seed or you can get a head start by planting seedlings. Visit Richter's Herbs just north of Toronto for a wide range of culinary and medicinal herbs.

### DO IT YOURSELF

For DIYers, make your own self-watering container by converting any pot or windowsill box using perforated pipe, landscape cloth and a plastic water bottle with the bottom cut off. All you do is lay the pipe in the bottom of the pot, score a hole in it at one end then invert the bottle and insert the end into the scored hole. Lay a sheet of landscape cloth over the pipe and fill the pot with potting soil. The inverted bottle will poke above the soil line and serve as a funnel for water that goes directly to the roots. Make sure you score a little overflow hole in the side of your container a few inches up from the bottom so you'll never overwater.

### GIFT IDEAS

This is the month for giving, so treat a pining gardener to a little indoor gardening kit. Instead of store-bought sweets choose a semi-homemade gift that can be eaten. Fill a decorative pot with gardening gloves, a spade, a growing medium like potting soil or coconut coir, a pack of seeds or a gift certificate from Urban Harvest.

*Arlene Hazzan Green co-owns The Backyard Urban Farm Company (bufco.ca).*



BRUNCH-LUNCH

**Thurs. Fri. Sat. Nights \$25 Prix Fixe**

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416.504.2657 hanks9church.com



## Solution To Menu Boredom

9 Church St. Toronto

416.504.9463 9church.com