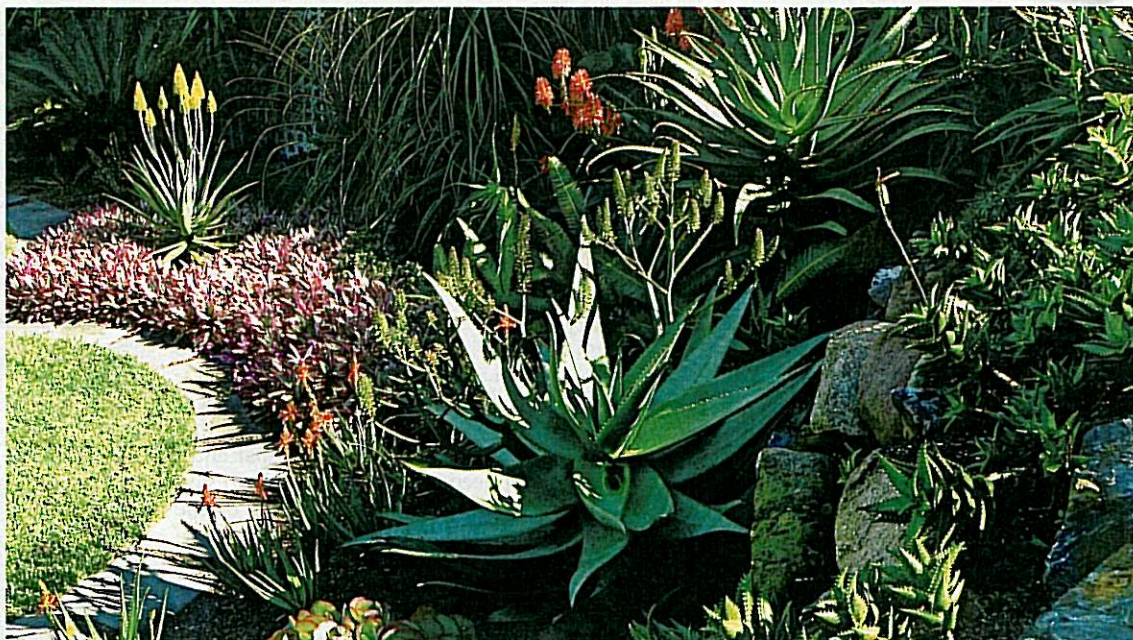




BED  
OUR  
GE  
ED.



SUCCULENT TREATS ... aloes add colour and striking architectural qualities to any yard, as Michael Dent's garden shows

## Drought breakers

More water may now be available than we've had for some time, but plants that are resistant to dry spells remain the best bet

**B**risbane's drought may have ended but that long dry period during winter reinforced the idea that we still need to be choosing water-efficient plants. It's also why I'm glad we made the decision to introduce more succulents at home, especially when they add such an array of bright colours during the colder period.

The aloe's tubular flowers are usually yellow, pink or red, with some hybrids mixing these hues with white.

The glossy foliage of these evergreens can be green, blue or grey, smooth-edged or with sharp teeth along the lance-shaped leaves. At this time of the year, some aloes are showing tinges of red thanks to the cool mornings.

Aloes need the morning sunshine (some but not all can cope with the afternoon heat too), air circulation to counter humidity and good drainage. They also need occasional watering in summer; their efficient storage system works best when moisture is regularly available.

Pests aren't a big problem but if you have aloes inside the house they can be affected by scale or mealy bugs, easily treated with white oil. Root rot is the biggest problem for outside plants and poor drainage is usually the cause. Add sand and gravel to clay soil, dig in gypsum, and form a mound to help keep excess water from the roots, which grow close to the surface of the ground.

The genus is native to Africa, with the majority of species from South Africa. Brisbane is an ideal environment for growing most aloes: just visit the arid zone at the Brisbane Botanic Gardens, Mt Coot-tha, to see. The shrubby Aloe

Acutissima blooms pink to red in June-July, while Aloe Barberae grows up to 10m tall. Aloe Fragilis has spotted green and white foliage, grows to 10cm high and is ideal for filling patches in the garden.

When Michael Dent migrated to Australia from South Africa, he saw the potential for introducing more unusual aloe hybrids and now distributes these beauties through Aloe-Aloe ([www.aloe-aloe.com.au](http://www.aloe-aloe.com.au)). Michael has selected plants that survive in drought and humid conditions and have architectural qualities.

**CELEBRATE 60 YEARS** of the Toowoomba Carnival of Flowers from Sep 18-27. Enjoy exhibitions, tours of the competing gardens, gourmet experiences and live entertainment. The main drawcards are the floral parade and the Flower, Food & Wine Festival. Details on [www.tcof.com.au](http://www.tcof.com.au)

### DIG THIS

Melissa King's range King in the Kitchen has just been launched exclusively at Mitre 10 stores. Each bowl (\$29.99) has a selection of herbs or vegetables with a barbecue, Asian or Mediterranean theme. Seasonal has already been added for a bumper crop and the bowls – so handy for apartment balconies – are biodegradable. Ph: 1300 001 010. [www.mitre10.com.au](http://www.mitre10.com.au)



VICKY SCHULZ 42  
// CO-FOUNDER  
YUVA SKINCARE

YOUR GARDEN  
TYPE?

Potted plants as I

live in a high-rise apartment.

ANY BIG GARDEN PROJECTS  
PLANNED?

Only big on a potting scale – adding some new herbs. I'm thinking mint for

iced teas and oregano for Greek salads for this summer.

GARDENING TRIUMPHS?

Potted strawberries. They were full of flavour and so sweet.

ANY DISASTERS IN THE GARDEN?

Cyclamens hate me. And the strawberries' pot mustn't have been fired – it just disintegrated after the first batch of strawberries.

TIP FOR OTHER GARDENERS

No matter how small your garden is

you can have herbs, vegetables and fruit. Give it a go and go organic. Nothing tastes better.

FAVOURITE GARDEN TOOL?

Gardening gloves and my hands. I don't need much more.

YOUR FAVOURITE PLANT?

Lavender – it smells great in the pot, can be used for fragrance, or dried under your pillow for restful sleep. It can even be used in cooking.

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