



FINAL TAKE  
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# Sprucing Up

A LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT TURNS AN UPPER EAST SIDE ROOFTOP INTO A GARDEN RETREAT



"TRADITIONAL WITH A TWIST." That's how landscape architect Daniel Richards, of Plant Specialists, LLC, describes the chic, bluestone-tiled rooftop terrace he created for this year's Kips Bay Decorator Show House, an annual benefit for the Kips Bay Boys and Girls Club.

The twist, in this instance, is literal: On this Upper East Side rooftop, three spiraling spruce topiaries rise from tapered white-resin planters from IAP San Francisco, juxtaposed with an undulating high-gloss black resin chair and footstool from Troy (which Richards proposes as an eco-friendly, all-weather alternative to the iconic teak steamer chair). Meanwhile, lush evergreens grouped into a low hedge function as a graphic, parterre-style border and living privacy screen, as well as a striking illustration of the architect's stated mission to create "contextually appropriate, traditional plantings."

Working within an existing framework to create something fresh and new, Richards, a native of Australia, always seeks to infuse history with "hip"—conjuring a wholly contemporary space that remains, nevertheless, rooted in tradition. In doing so, he honors an unspoken New York zoning code: Let no square foot of living space go underutilized—or under-designed. This rooftop rises to its full potential on both counts: May it serve as inspiration this summer. **SEE RESOURCES**