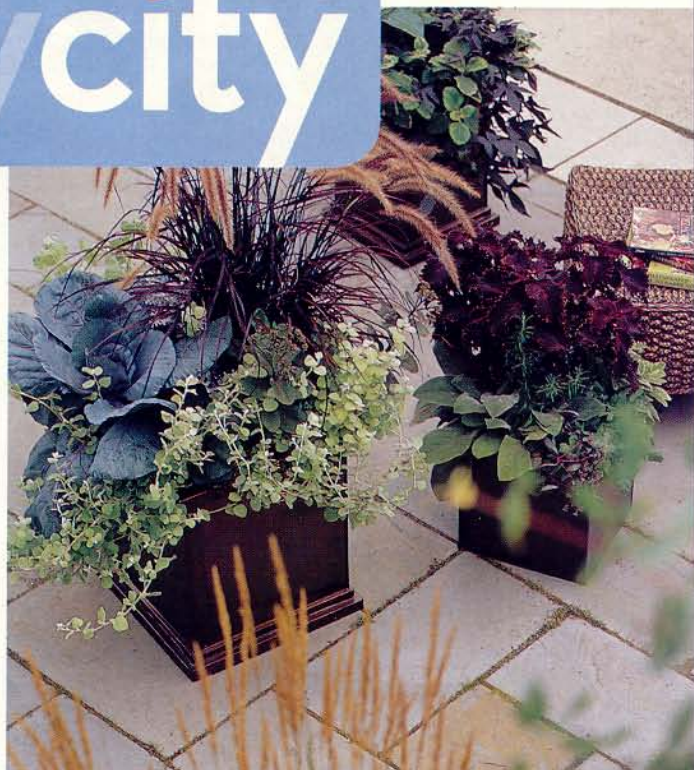


BY COLLEEN HEATHER ROGAN

**blooming passions** Across the city, balconies jut from apartments and high rises. Container gardening allows urban green thumbs expressive ways to convey condo cool—and well beyond the first frost. How to plan for plunging temps? Landscape designer **Cindy Schultz** of **Hawks Nursery** suggests adding the flourish of red fountain grass to a mix of sedum, ornamental cabbage, hosta, lamb's ears, fennel, variegated sage, sweet potato and lemon licorice vine, ensuring fragrant autumnal texture.



## HOME

**ready reference** With the entire country shifting into home improvement overdrive, **Taunton Home** revs it up with a 12-book series, **Do It NOW, Do It FAST, Do It RIGHT**, specifically tailored for the beginning to mid-level weekend warrior ([www.taunton.com](http://www.taunton.com)). This new generation of do-it-yourself books makes personalizing space as easy as it gets, covering everything from materials lists and tool tips to prep and cleanup guides, plus foolproof advice, step-by-step photos, dozens of design ideas and other invaluable "insider" information.

KEVIN J. MIYAZAKI

### MAKING THE SCENE

Boasting uncomplicated design in crystal-clear acrylic, the **Riley chair** from **Torres & Tagus Design** is a smart and inexpensive expression of a growing trend to create modern negative space with glass, light and translucent surfaces. Chrome accented, durable and convenient, it also manages to vault folding chairs smack into the new millennium. We spotted it at **Shoestring Home**, Waukesha (\$125).



### BREAKING THE MOLD

The days of ho-hum floors are over, with options like the radically new, cut-to-fit **Tarkett Personal Expressions FiberFloor** (about \$3.68 per square foot). By incorporating fiberglass between layers of vinyl, the flooring lays flat and stays that way without a drop of adhesive. Suddenly, putting down new flooring is as easy as changing your mind. Or how about anchoring an interior with the urban polish of **Am-tico's Techno line** (\$11.48 per square foot). Though you'd swear they're metal, these smooth tiles are actually acrylic given an unbelievable 3-D textural effect (above). We discovered both at **Stu's Flooring** in Milwaukee (744-9400).



### interior obsessions

As bathrooms morph into home spas, design melds with indulgence to create dramatic interior statements. Drawing on the sophistication of a bygone era, **Kallista's Glamour Collection** by **Kohler** combines beveled-mirrored finishes with hand-honed black granite surfaces, evoking opulence with enough grace to take the edge off of today's hectic pace. We saw it at **The Final** in Mequon.

