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Five vertical gardens in Singapore that have hit a high mark

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Singapore is often hailed as a Garden City, but have you heard of its vertical gardens? Tree House, a condominium project by City Developments Ltd, now holds the Guinness World Record for the world's largest vertical garden. We check out more of these towering landscaped beauties that can be found right here in Singapore.

1. Parkroyal on Pickering

This 12-storey structure was designed by award-winning Singapore-based architects WOHA. The vertical garden, which envelops the hotel in central Pickering with its lush greenery, was designed by Tierra Design. It was built around a "building-as-garden" concept, and connects the Central Business District with neighbouring historic districts such as Chinatown and Clarke Quay. Plants feature prominently both on the exterior and the naturally lit interiors in a garden-themed aesthetic. The structure also includes solar-powered vertical gardens, reflecting pools, green valleys and water features covering 15,000 sq m. The building received a Building and Construction Authority (BCA) Green Mark Platinum rating for its extensive sustainable design, the highest certification level for green buildings in Singapore. The top floor also features the Orchid Club Lounge, which presents multi-functional space and city views. On the fifth floor, the 330m-long garden strip has an infinity pool and a wellness centre.

2. Rainforest Rhapsody

 ST SIX BATTERY ROAD 120614e

Completed and opened in 2011 by Capita Commercial Trust Management Ltd, this first and largest indoor vertical garden is situated right in Singapore's Central Business District, in the main lobby of the office building of 6 Battery Road. It was created by award-winning French botanist Patrick Blanc, who has designed over 140 vertical gardens. The office building has received the Green Mark Platinum award for its

efforts in energy consumption. The garden features 120 plant species from Singapore and other parts of Asia, which are arranged and planted in an oblique direction. This is inspired by the natural growth pattern of plants which grow along vertical cliff surfaces and branches of rainforest trees. The plants absorb environmental pollutants and add oxygen to the air, thereby refreshing the building's lobby.

3. Ocean Financial Centre ST OCEANFINANCIALCENTRE 120614e

Spanning a total area of 2,125.56 sq m, this garden previously held the Guinness World Record for the largest vertical garden in the world. A unique green wall uses different plant species to depict maps of Singapore, South East Asia and the world. It utilises a special "digitised-pixelation" technique that uses an estimated 51,000 potted plants to create the map imagery. Tierra Design was also the landscape architect behind the eye-catching wall. Special 3-D effects are also employed such that the various plants imitate mountainous regions, land mass and oceans. A hybrid system for auto-irrigation with fertigation - a combination of fertilisation and irrigation - is used to ensure self-sustainability and minimal requirement for maintenance.

4. Gardens by the Bay (Supertree Grove)

ST GARDENSBYTHEBAY 120614e

The popular Supertrees are vertical gardens with over 162,900 plants comprising more than 200 species and varieties of orchids, ferns and tropical flowering climbers. There are a total of 18 Supertrees within Bay South in the Gardens, with 12 situated in the Supertree Grove and the remaining six placed in clusters of trees near the Arrival Square and Dragonfly Lake. Ranging from 12 to 16 storeys in height, their large canopies, shaped like an inverted umbrella, provide shade and shelter in the day. At night, the trees come alive with lighting and projected media. Some are fitted with photovoltaic cells to harvest solar energy for lighting up the Solartrees. Eleven of these trees are embedded with environmentally sustainable functions, including being integrated with cooled conservatories and serving as air exhaust receptacles.

5. Commercial Vertical Farm

ST VERTICALFARM 120614e

While not exactly a garden, Singapore has the world's first commercial vertical farm. Built by Sky Greens Farms, it helps Singapore grow more food locally and reduce dependence on imported produce. The farm produces 1 tonne of fresh vegetables every other day, which are then sold in local supermarkets such as FairPrice Finest. It is made up of 120 aluminium towers stretching 9m tall, and currently grows only three kinds of vegetables. However, the farm is looking towards an expansion which would enable them to include more varieties.

An earlier version of this story did not mention Tierra Design as the landscape architect behind Park Royal and Ocean Financial Centre. A clarification has been made.

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