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Reading time: 3 mins

Growing Instagram-Famous Houseplants



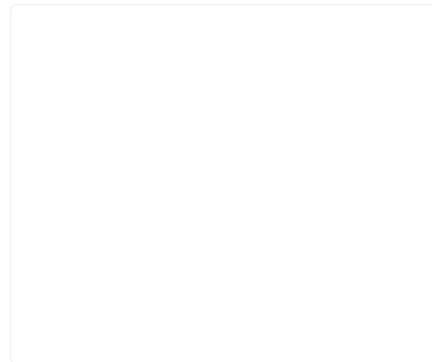
By [Gemma Alexander](#)

MAY 3, 2022

[house plants](#)



Thanks to social media, it's possible for trends to spread even during a lockdown. While it's not fair to judge people for the things they do to keep from going stir crazy, not all of the trending home-based pandemic hobbies are equally beneficial. **Online shopping** is hard on the planet while baking (or at least its products) is hard on your waistline. But one wholesome trend that came out of the pandemic was houseplants. My own urban neighborhood was home to one shop specializing in houseplants before the pandemic – now there are four. Even if you haven't noticed nurseries popping up like weeds, you're sure to have seen some potted plants on

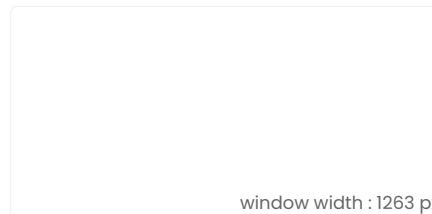
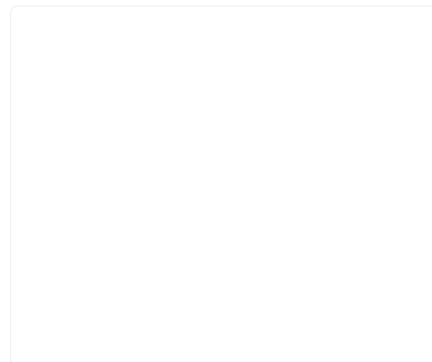


What Do You Think?

Are you considering moving because of climate change?

- Yes
- No
- I'm researching my options to decide

NEXT

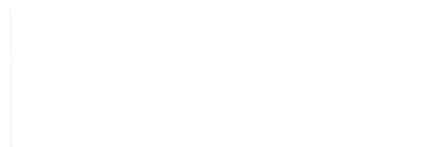


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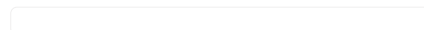
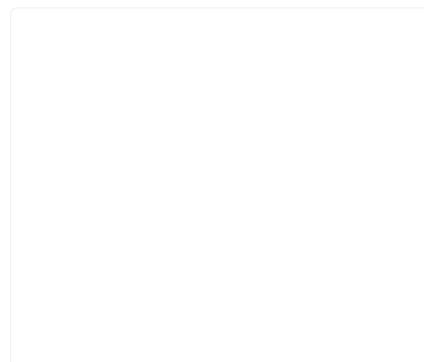
social media – the hashtag #houseplants has more than 8.5 million posts on Instagram.



Source: [chidaneh](#), Instagram



[Westlake Home - Luxury Organic Bedding](#)



Air Purifiers

Houseplants get a lot of attention for their ability to purify indoor air. While [some plants](#) have been shown to remove VOCs from the air, those studies were performed in a controlled environment unlike the average home or apartment. There is [not a lot of evidence](#) that houseplants make a meaningful difference in [indoor air quality](#). But houseplants still have [health benefits](#). There are other studies indicating that a room filled with plants can lower stress, boost attention and productivity, and even improve your mood. Not to mention that they look lovely.



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Source: [houseplantspage](#), Instagram

HouseFresh Houseplant Study

Although plants may not be better than an [air purifier](#), HouseFresh, an online magazine that reviews indoor air quality devices, noticed that people were really getting into their houseplants. The houseplant trend millennials started before the pandemic (gardening revenues in the U.S. grew [4.62% in 2018](#)) exploded in 2020 with 8.79% growth. Nurseries received 10 times more orders than expected. HouseFresh analyzed Google search data for the 230 most-Instagrammed houseplants to find the most popular plant in every country around the world. They produced 3D [photo-realistic maps](#) representing each area with its most-searched houseplant.

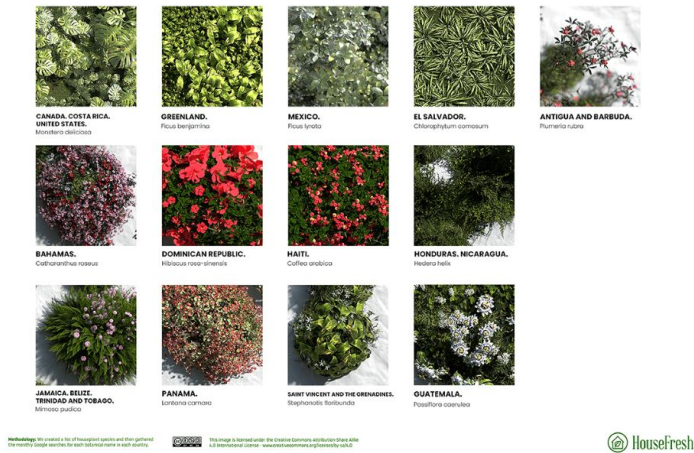
THE MOST POPULAR HOUSEPLANTS

in North America



North America are lovers of the Monstera deliciosa too, however there is another houseplant which ties as the most searched for - the **Mimosa pudica**. Its name, deriving from Latin, means "shy, bashful or shrinking." It is a perennial flowering plant that is part of the papilionaceae family. It is often grown for its curiosity value as it has a unique response to contact - the leaves fold inward when shaken or touched. This made the Mimosa an ideal candidate for experiments regarding plant habituation and memory.





@HouseFresh

Source: [HouseFresh](#)

Growing for the Gram

One plant was a near-global favorite. *Monstera deliciosa*, or Swiss cheese plant (so-called for the holes in its leaves), was the most popular plant in North America, Europe, Asia, and Oceania. It even has its own popular hashtag [#monsteramonday](#).



Source: [jonnybill](#), Instagram

Perhaps unsurprisingly, Monstera is a little less popular as a

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houseplant in the country where it **grows wild** outdoors. In Mexico, the most popular houseplant is *Ficus lyrata*, or fiddle-leaf fig.



Source: [plantaraxia](#), Instagram

In countries with more snow than gardens, like Iceland and Greenland, a different fig, *Ficus benjamina*, or weeping fig, was most popular.



Source: [evayr](#), Instagram

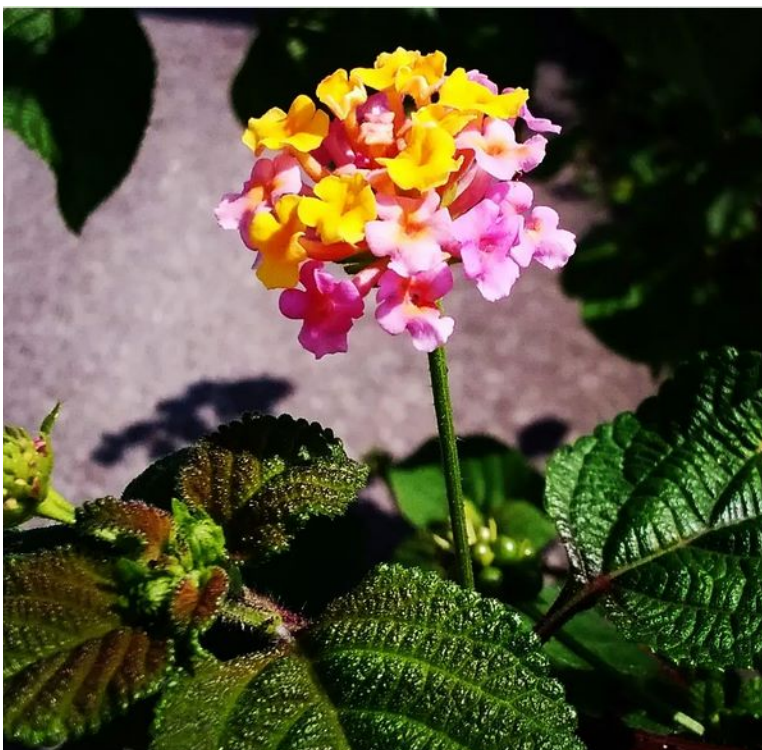
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Meanwhile, in heavily forested but equally chilly Finland, a flowering houseplant was most loved — Saintpaulia, better known as the African violet.



Source: [ellaturja](#), Instagram

In tropical Eastern Africa where the **violets are native**, 12 countries preferred *Lantana camara*, a flowering plant native to Central and South America. Its tiny orange to pink flowers are charming, but Lantana's reputation for **repelling mosquitos** may be part of its appeal in coastal tropical countries.



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Source: [ayulujiang](#), Instagram

Healthy Houseplants

Beautiful pictures on Instagram have inspired many poor purchasing decisions. Fortunately, if you find out you can't rock that corset top after all, **the retailer may recycle** it for you or you can donate it. But if you buy a succulent for your north-facing basement apartment, your investment is likely to become **compost**. Regardless of which plants are popular, choose a species that thrives in the conditions you can provide in your home.

Salespeople at shops specializing in indoor plants can give invaluable advice on choosing and growing a houseplant. But if you can't afford the specialty shops, **research** houseplants to find the right kind for you and learn how to select a healthy plant, even if you're shopping the sale rack at the hardware store. (You can buy houseplants **online**, although, of course, you can't inspect them before purchase.)

Plant Safety

Naturally, all houseplants grow wild outdoors someplace. But it's not a good idea to set your exotic houseplants free. At best, you will probably kill your plant. Most houseplants evolved to thrive in warmer climates than most North American and European gardens can offer. If your houseplant does survive outdoors, the outcome can be much worse. Without the conditions and predators that maintain balance in its native environment, the plant can grow out of control. Most **invasive plant species** in North America were introduced intentionally as ornamental plants. In fact, *Lantana* has become a **serious problem** in many of the places where it has been introduced.

Finally, many houseplants are toxic. Some dogs and cats (especially indoor-only cats) and even some toddlers will nibble on houseplants. If you share your home with more than just plants, either choose to grow only nontoxic species or be sure to place plants where pets and children cannot reach.



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Source: [jessklein18](#), Instagram

advertising

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[We Earthlings: Collect Your Used Cooking Oil](#)



By [Gemma Alexander](#)

Gemma Alexander has an M.S. in urban horticulture and a backyard filled with native plants. After working in a genetics laboratory and at a landfill, she now writes about the environment, the arts and family. See more of her writing [here](#).

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