



A 'TOP CHEF
ALL-STAR' AMONG US
TELEVISION (page 13)

BREATHING EASY
IN YOUR HOUSE
HOME (page 24)



metro®

BOSTON

Wednesday, December 1, 2010

NEW YORK

Wednesday, December 1, 2010

PHILADELPHIA

Wednesday, December 1, 2010

at home with metro

www.metro.us

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 1, 2010

Now you can breathe easy



► The Andrea can transform any household plant into an effective air cleaner for your home or office.

► These plant-based air filters absorb chemicals from your home and give off oxygen-rich air ► The benefits of having one in your bedroom, living room or office

During the dark, cold age of winter it's likely that more of our time is spent inside, insulated from inclement weather. The result is the lack of fresh, oxygen-rich air, which isn't good for health or well-being.

"If the percentage of oxygen in the air is going down in enclosed environments, then levels of chemicals are going up," says David Edwards of the Wyss Institute for Biologically Inspired Engineering. Along with heightened CO2 levels, those chemicals include formaldehyde, benzene and other gases given off by furniture, construction materials and even so-called air fresheners.

"Some plants do oxygenate the air better, but when it comes down to the Andrea, efficiency is increased; and one doesn't work better than another." EDWARDS

Spider, snake and many other common houseplants have long been prized for oxygenating homes. "Typically, the more leafy substance the better," says Edwards, who, along with French designer Mathieu Lehanneur and a team at La Laboratoire in Paris, went several steps further and de-

veloped the Andrea, a completely natural filtration system using living plants.

"Initially, the idea was to make a plant smarter. Plants filter chemicals, but if you add convection then nature really works for us," he says. Andrea's simple, futuristic design improves the air filtration capacity of natural plants. Air is pulled into the system through a fan, which propels it through the leaves and root system of a plant. The plant then filters out chemicals and gives off oxygen-rich air that is then re-circulated into the room.

 **LINDA LABAN**
linda.laban@metro.us

How well it works

"We did lots of different tests to validate its effectiveness in filtering chemicals like benzene, formaldehyde and CO2. Of the air and molecules that are pulled into the Andrea, 50 percent come back out into the air. That means 50 percent don't," confirms Edwards. "Compared with the average of one percent for the typical HEPA filter, that's impressive. I believe this is the beginning of using green matter in our homes more." **The Andrea, \$199, www.andreaair.com**