

## Making Your Home Saltwater Aquarium Picture Perfect

Imagine the joys of being able to take the picturesque beauty of the Baltimore National Aquarium and bring it into your home. Unless you are a true enthusiast of the aquatic world you probably do not have the resources required to install a twenty foot tropical fish tank in your walls or an open shark tank in your living room (and really, why would you want to?) but with some creative aquascaping you can make your home saltwater aquarium every bit as picture perfect as the ones designed by the professionals in Baltimore.

When selecting decorations for your home aquarium you will be given an option of decorating with either plastic accoutrements or bringing nature into your home by installing live plants and other organisms in your aquarium. The choice is certainly yours; however, bear in mind that the fish you will be installing in your tank undoubtedly would be using the types of things that you would consider decorations for shelter when out in the wild. Therefore, it is in the best interests of your fish (and your aesthetic senses) to go the natural route.

Live rock is an invaluable addition to any saltwater aquarium, serving not only as an aesthetically pleasing ornamentation but as a vital part of the aquarium's ecosystem. Live rock is rock that is covered with both micro- and macroorganisms which will help filter the waste products out of the water, making it a safe habitat for its aquatic inhabitants. Driftwood and sand are also essential elements of a saltwater fish's natural habitat and provide a beautiful backdrop to showcase the glorious beauty of your saltwater fish.

Live plants are also a beautiful, functional addition to your saltwater aquarium, as they serve to help oxygenate the tank and provide the fish with a spot to inhabit and, if you are incredibly lucky, lay their eggs. There are a variety of choices for you to choose from, and it is very helpful to choose the breeds of fish which you wish to place in your tank prior to making a decision. They will thrive best with the same types of vegetation which would be present in their environment had they been allowed to stay in the wild rather than coming to grace your home aquarium. It may be necessary to make some special concessions in order to assure the well being of your saltwater plants. Plants need carbon dioxide and light to perform their photosynthesis process, so your tank is going to need to be well lit at least part of the day and may require the addition of an artificial carbon dioxide producer. The sand, silt or gravel which you choose to cover the bottom of your aquarium with must be of an adequate depth to allow the roots of the plant to take hold; around 8 cm is generally adequate, although this may vary from plant to plant. These adjustments may seem like a great deal of extra work but will be well worth the end results.

The beauty of a well decorated saltwater aquarium is incomparable, and will bring pleasure to its owners for years to come. For further assistance in selecting tank accessories that are both beautiful and functional consult with your local vendor of tropical fish.