



A water jug collects excess water that can be used to water the herb garden | Photo source Ivana Steiner

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DESIGNING A KITCHEN FOR ZERO-WASTE PRODUCTION

 ARCHITECTURE & DESIGN

A furniture designer has developed a plan to turn every kitchen into a zero-waste space

Spotted: There was a time when every kitchen was a zero-waste kitchen — when most ingredients were bought in bulk, and kitchens included bins for flour and sugar, onions and other ingredients. Today, Viennese designer Ivana Steiner is reviving and updating this approach in her modern zero-waste kitchen.

Steiner began with the idea that every move in the kitchen must happen with maximum efficiency, and every element must be designed for sustainability. The kitchen is made from recycled stainless steel and includes areas for glass storage containers, baskets for storing fruit and vegetables, a worm box for composting and a vertical herb garden. Humus produced from the composter can be used directly in the herb garden (which can also grow some vegetables).

With six zero-waste stores in Vienna, Steiner has also designed a kitchen to fit in with shopping opportunities that already exist. Including ample storage for jars allows people to buy smaller amounts of bulk food, so it does not go to waste. And although it may not be to everyone's taste, by integrating the garden and composter into the design of the kitchen, Steiner is trying to overcome the lack of knowledge or materials that prevent many people from composting or growing their own food.

Steiner has described her kitchen as a political statement as well as a place to prepare and eat food, [saying](#), “You want to eat, cook and live sustainably ... I would like to see the kitchen as a political revolution kitchen combined with a political message. The kitchen as a political instrument for

sustainability. This community is young and takes to the streets for their rights. The community shows a strong sense of attachment.”

Designing for zero-waste is becoming increasingly common in a wide number of industries. Homes and fashion are seeing an explosion of zero-waste design, but the concept is also taking off in everything from [beverage dispensers](#) to [yoghurt](#).

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Takeaway:

Steiner’s kitchen is strongly rooted in ideas of minimalism. For example, there is not a lot of storage for dishes, as Steiner maintains that the zero-waste lifestyle also involves only keeping things that you use every day. There is also no dishwasher, although there is a double sink and a place to dry the dishtowels. Although this kitchen has been designed to a particular style, and may not suit every home, the concept of designing for zero-waste from the outset is one that is likely to catch on and become prevalent in the near future.