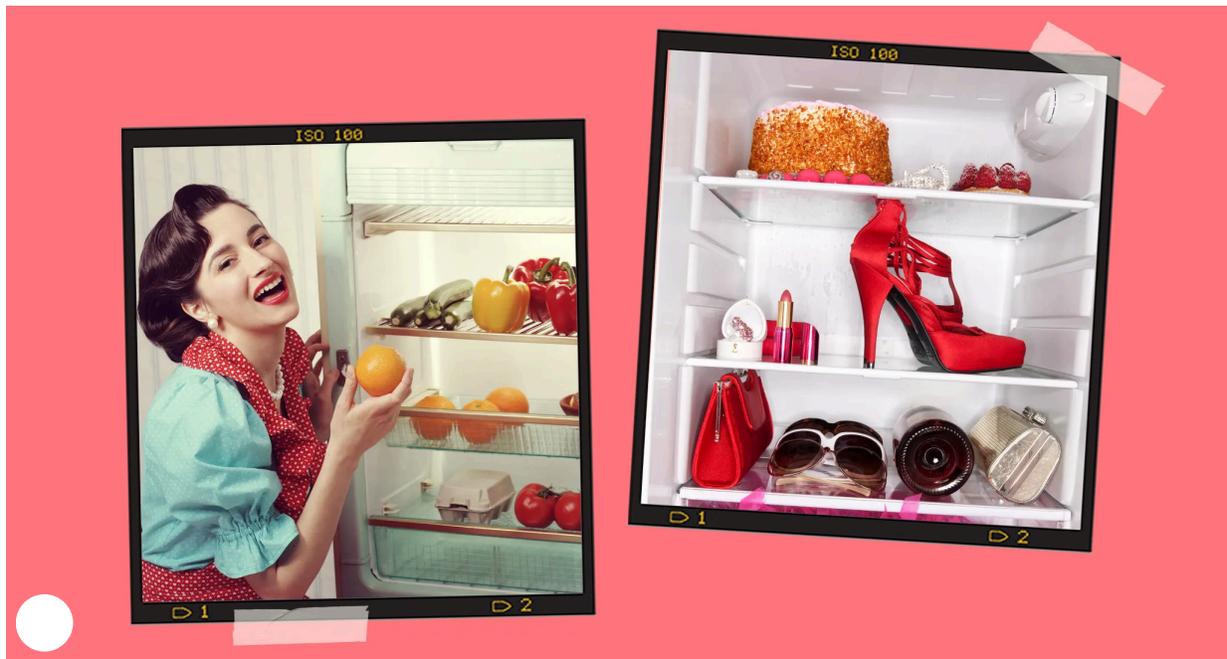


I'm Convinced That TikTok's 'Fridgescaping' Trend Is Quietly Keeping Women in the Kitchen

WE'RE OPENING A FRIDGE THAT DATES BACK TO THE 1960S



BY [SYDNEY MEISTER](#) • PUBLISHED JAN 9, 2025



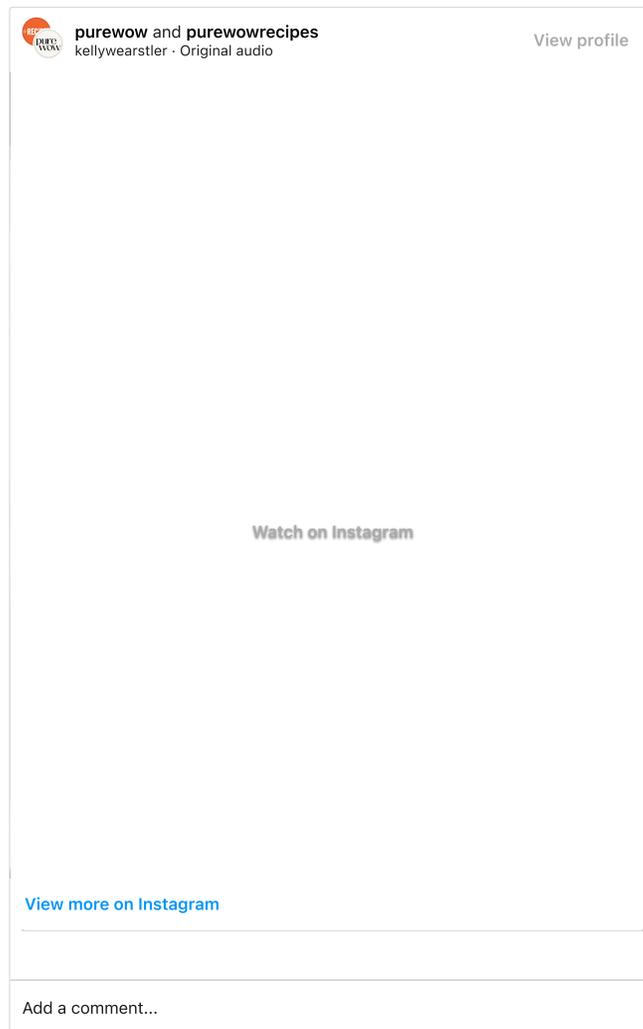
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We've styled [dark academia bookshelves](#), DIYed [framed TVs](#) for the living room, and decked out [jazz-inspired wet bars](#) for dinner parties. But now, the latest frontier in aesthetic living has moved behind closed doors—physically. Enter **Fridgescaping**: the art of transforming your refrigerator into a miniature gallery. It's a trend that's garnered millions of views on [TikTok](#), where people are replacing Tupperware with dainty porcelain bowls, regular condiment packaging with glass mason jars and *Bridgerton*-inspired florals in lieu of cardboard egg crates.

At first glance, it's storage meets storytelling—your groceries, the stars of the show. But beneath the florals and heirloom ceramics lies something worth examining. Why are we seeing yet another “[girlified](#)” version of the [1960s kitchen](#)? Is fridgescaping just a whimsical byproduct of pandemic [overconsumption](#)—a way to make the everyday Instagram-worthy? Or could it speak to something deeper, more systemic: a quiet return to traditional ideals where a woman's role is still most valuable in the kitchen? I'm opening the fridge (literally and metaphorically) and take a closer look.

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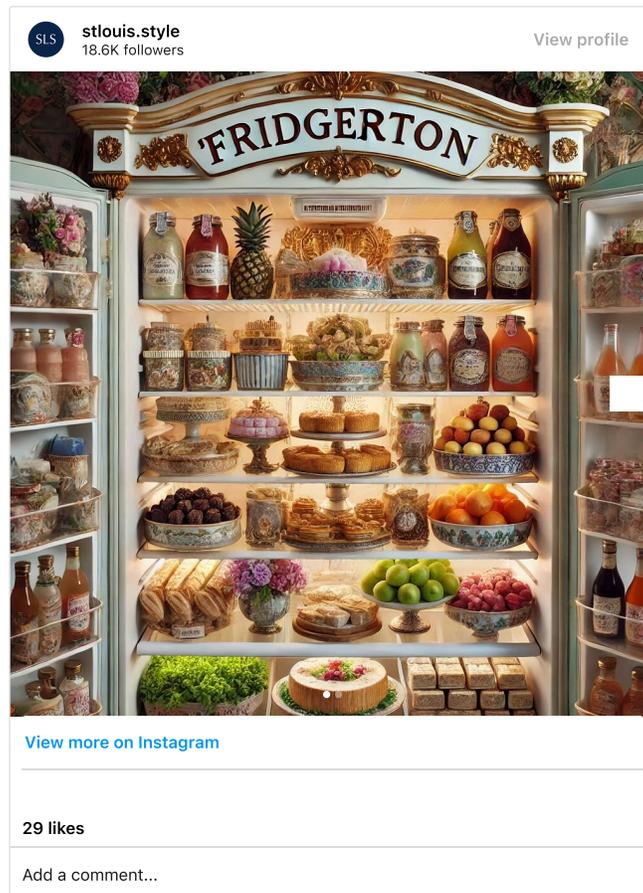
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What Is Fridgescaping?

Fridgescaping, in short, is about styling the inside of your refrigerator like an art exhibit. Imagine hand-painted trinket bowls brimming with berries. Sprigs of rosemary flowing from etched-glass bud vases. Even vintage-style milk jars lined up in rows under twinkly fairy lights. It's a far cry from ["restock" TikToks](#), which focused on sleek labels and neatly arranged produce containers. Fridgescaping, in contrast, trades efficiency for artistry. It aims to create a mood.

Case in point: The ["Fridgerton"](#) shown below, which is fit with gilded cake stands, chinoiserie serving bowls and floral vessels that could be plucked from the set of [Bridgerton](#). While some setups turn groceries into literal themes—as in everything from [Hobbit fridgescapes](#) to [beachy fridgescapes](#)—others act more as decorative vignettes. Think: A [vintage-inspired fridge](#) with framed photos, decorative obelisks and even [book stacks](#) tucked between rows of fruit bowls.



But *Why* Are People Decorating the Inside of Their Refrigerators?

As one creator explains in her [viral 'girl fridge' video](#), "It really captures that whole '[girl dinner](#)' vibe of, oh yes, this is exactly what I want, and I'm treating myself with it...I can pick and choose. I can redecorate things... I know everything's going to stay right where I put it." That said, fridgescaping isn't entirely new. The term was coined back in 2011 when Kathy Perdue, a retired design consultant, asked in a [blog post](#): why not add a little beauty to the space you open multiple times a day? Her version was more aligned with hyper-organized "restock" videos that gained traction during the pandemic. Yet, as social media evolved, so did the outrageousness of the concept.

The link to this photo or video may be broken, or the post may have been removed.

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The Controversy Over Fridgescaping

In August 2024, [a Reddit thread called out](#) the trend in a controversial spotlight. One user complained that their partner's elaborate setups made the fridge feel inaccessible. "Before she started fridgescaping, it would take me 30 seconds to grab something quick –now it's a whole ordeal," he explains. "My wife gets upset when I don't put things back perfectly [and] my son finds [the decor] annoying, too." To that end, another Reddit user likened it to decorating an oven: "A fridge is meant to be functional... This is like decorating the inside of the oven, or the drum of the washing machine. It's just not fair to the people you live with." Still, by this point, TikTok had latched onto the trend with millions of videos flooding the [#Fridgescaping hashtag](#).

So now, it's worth examining how these polarized responses capture the heart of the trend. On one hand, enthusiasts love the joy it brings—a touch of luxury and beauty in the humdrum act of grabbing a snack. Yet, on the other, people argue it's performative—dismissing the reality of shared spaces, busy lives, limited fridge space and the sheer energy footprint of keeping the doors open. But fridgescaping's rise isn't just about aesthetics versus functionality. The real question is: is it an expression of creativity or yet another ploy to get women to perfect their homes?



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What This Trend Says About The Current State of “Home”

Let's return to the [viral 'girl fridge' video](#) for a moment. The creator says, “I know it might be silly but this is an area of my home that brings me so much dopamine when done right.” Essentially, she's saying fridgescaping is benign—it's a fun way to add charm to the banality of meal prepping and grocery shopping. But when we zoom out, it's impossible to ignore how this trend ties into the recent sensationalization of [“girlhood.”](#) For decades, the kitchen has been culturally positioned as a woman's domain, a place where she's expected to prepare meals, raise children and manage the household—that is, unless it's a celebrated Michelin Star restaurant. Fridgescaping rebrands that role in a shiny, Instagram-friendly bow, selling homemaking as aspirational self-expression. And when you pair it with other sixties-inspired trends like [kitschens](#) and [hostingcore](#), it signals a nostalgic—and troubling—return to antiquated values.

It's no coincidence these trends gained traction at the same time America leaned conservative in the polls. Fridgescaping, touted as a playful way to “make every day pretty,” carries a subtle message beneath its dainty bowls: a woman's time is still most valuable spent in the kitchen. It encourages us to direct our ideas inward—literally, spending hours decorating the inside of a *fridge*—rather than pushing creativity outside of the home for a broader impact. Yet, what's most insidious about the trend is how imperceptibly it rewrites history. At its core, it pulls from the same rhetoric of the 1960s—[“I'm just a girl!”](#)—a reinforced idea that women are incapable of handling complex tasks. It packages regression in a cutesy, aesthetic fridge that says helplessness is endearing, not limiting. (The scariest part is that many women forget that, not so long ago, organizing a fridge was *all* we could do.)



Furthermore, it's ironic how this trend makes homemaking more laborious. Fridgescaping glamorizes archaic norms while adding unnecessary complexity to a space that's meant to simplify. As critics on Reddit aptly pointed out, fridges are appliances: intended to preserve food and make cooking easier. For a family of five, a fridge filled with vases and floral arrangements becomes a logistical nightmare. Not to mention the upkeep—are you supposed to beautify after every weekly Trader Joe's haul? While cooking is an art, and homemaking itself can be creative, fridgescaping blurs the line between functionality and frivolity. It sells an impractical ideal that, for many, only adds to the already overwhelming demands of managing a home. (I can't stop envisioning [Betty Draper's "sad clown dress"](#) from *Mad Men*, above.)

In fact, in many ways, fridgescaping feels like a modern riff on Betty Draper's archetype: a housewife with a meticulously curated exterior that conceals the immense effort required to maintain it. It reminds us how domestic spaces have long been used to minimize a woman's skillset while concurrently wearing her down from said skills. From keeping track of expiration dates to ensuring everyone gets the nutrition they need, the simple act of keeping the fridge stocked is a thankless and never-ending task. Yet, trends like fridgescaping romanticize the labor it takes to maintain—and the lack of appreciation that often comes with it. It's a different era, but the messaging feels eerily similar: A woman is to be seen and not heard. Beauty and perfection is tantamount. Don't bore anyone with the details of the process.

And so, before rearranging those berries into porcelain bowls, it's worth pausing to ask: who is this really for? Is it about finding joy in the mundane or feeding into a system that asks women to use their creativity in service of an idealized home? Whether you love it or loathe it, one thing is certain: fridgescaping isn't just about food. It's about the stories we tell in front of—and behind—closed doors.

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