

## An Eco-Driven Countertop Compost Bin

### Description

*By Regina M. Connell, Editor-in-Chief, Handful of Salt*

We're always on the lookout for ways to incorporate the work of innovative makers into our daily lives in truly practical ways, and we've found the perfect one, courtesy of LA-based Cliff Spencer Furniture.

And what's better? It'll even make you feel *better* about yourself. How many things can you say *that* about?

Voilà—the Countertop Compost Bin: beauty for your kitchen that makes you actually want to do the right thing.

The roots of this particular box are, perhaps obviously, eco-driven. Though the desire to compost played a significant role, there was another component to its creation, too. Cliff Spencer, a company that designs and manufactures some rather glorious high-end wood furniture and cabinetry out of Marina Del Rey, was always trying to come up with small products to make out of larger pieces of leftover scrap wood. The box was the perfect way to marry the two goals. As Leigh Spencer says, "I feel like gardening is the new and the old 'green' thing to do. We have gotten our kids into it. How much more local can you be than your own backyard?" And with their gorgeous compost box (not words you often hear together, if ever), "even if you don't have room for a garden, you can add to the compost stream instead of filling up a landfill."

Now, one of my problems with composting (which I did try once) has always been the, um, logistics of it. That ugly green plastic bin. The smell. The cleaning of the bin. And did I mention the smell?

I was never one of those people who had a love for the science of it all (what goodness grows in decomposition), and the experience didn't do much to reinforce my inner princess.

This box just might change me, however. The great thing about this compost box is that it's beautiful, not just earnest. It looks good. It's easy to clean. (The insert can be removed with one hand and even put in the dishwasher.) Leigh points out that because deeper compost boxes are more work to clean, "you don't and they get stinky."

So will beauty and thoughtful functionality change behavior and inspire other princes and princesses into composting believers? Jury's out but these lovely bins have flown off the proverbial shelves since they were introduced last December. In fact, according to Leigh, it's been Food52's second best-selling item in that period. Nice. (Even nicer that each Cliff Spencer client who gets their kitchen remodeled receives one of these as a gift.)

One of the great things is that it's also taught the team at Cliff Spencer that there is a market for smaller, handmade objects. "We have been working on smaller objects for a long time. This one just seemed to hit a nerve at the right time. And, of course, we have other products in the works." Good to

know.

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