

Meals and menus in an upper-class household

Hot second breakfast

Broth in cups
Fried eggs with spicy sauce
Fried young chicken with salad
Bread and butter and cheese

A more refined luncheon

Herb soup
Ham in burgundy, garnished with vegetables
Lobster tails in dill sauce
Venison fillet
Salad – fruit jellies
Fresh asparagus
Strawberries with frozen whipped cream
Cheese sticks
Fruit

A simple dinner

Chicken with rice
Cold cuts
Butter and cheese

(Cookery book by Elise Hannemann, Berlin 1904)



Housewife and servant in the kitchen, Around 1904

About 1900, every woman's ambition was to have a household where servants did the kitchen work. The housewife planned the menus and the shopping. The cook prepared the meal, which was served by the maid. However, this was possible only in well-off, upper-class households. Cookbooks intended for these families had very elaborate recipes requiring many helping hands. More and more frequently, however, cookbooks were targeted at smaller households with working wives. Cookbooks dealt with all aspects of kitchen work, including the science of cooking, and practical work with measures and weights, ingredients, appliances and recipes. The books contained chapters on preserving and storage, explained how to make a Swedish cooking box, or how to make soap from scraps of fat. These cooking books were universal household helpers.

a separate entrance, and not connected to the adjacent living hall. Attached to it is a little larder, and a narrow pantry lies between kitchen and dining room.

Housewives spent little time in the kitchen. Even middle class households often employed "maids of all work".

The housewife had "only" a managing function. Guests were presented with a picture of perfect organization. The housewives' ambition was to implement the latest findings of hygiene and nutrition research in their households.

Kitchen cabinet with wallboard, late 19th century.

Articles of everyday use were kept on open wallboards.

Lippisches Landesmuseum, Detmold



The white kitchen – new hygiene concepts around 1900

The working wife on the other hand had to cope with her housework before and after work, and during the (short) weekend. If she was lucky she had daughters to help. For her, housework was a necessary evil rather than efficiency on show. Industrialization had led not only to the separation of living and working, but also to increased outsourcing of typical household activities such as baking,



Kitchen cabinet designed by Hermann Kopf
From the Villa Muthesius in Oerlinghausen, 1914

butchering and tailoring to external service providers. Kitchen work was reduced to the cooking of food.

Another, more far-reaching feature of the early 20th century was the "one-kitchen building", propagated by the socialist and suffragette Lily Braun. Her underlying intention was to help more women to go out to work. For this purpose, in her book *Frauenarbeit und Hauswirtschaft* (Woman's Work and House-keeping) published in 1901, she recommended construction of one-

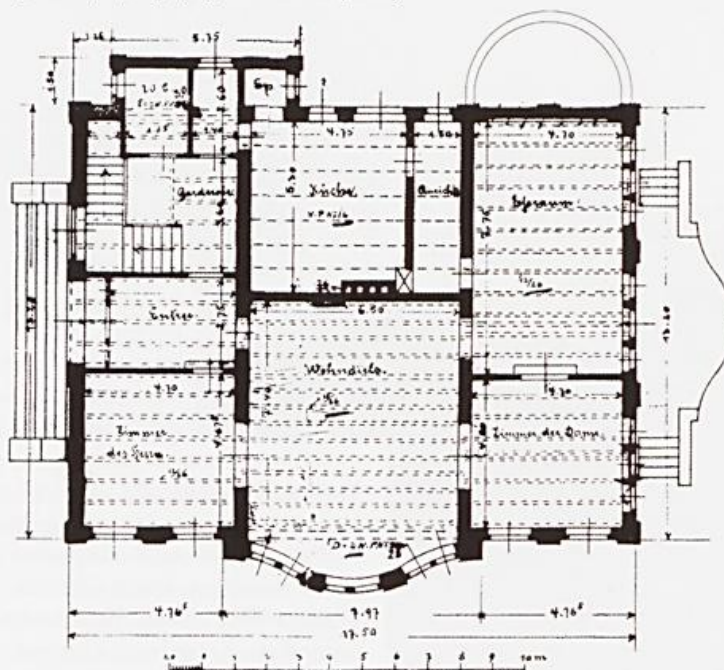
kitchen buildings, each with roughly 60 flats, none of them with a kitchen. A central kitchen was to free housewives from the chore of cooking. A standard meal would be cooked every day in the central kitchen for all families. Such a house was built for example between 1909 and 1912 by the company Einküchenhaus-gesellschaft in Wilhelmshöher Strasse 18–20 in Berlin. The central kitchen was located in the basement. Meals were to be distributed to the flats via nine food elevators. These one-kitchen buildings, built mainly for the upper middle classes, were luxuriously

furnished. Conservatives feared that one-kitchen buildings would lead to the dissolution of the one-family home. Very few of them were built.

In the industrial regions, concern with improving social living conditions led to the building of workers' homes. The houses in the settlement Krupp-Siedlung Alfredshof in Essen (1893–1918) were fitted with live-in kitchens. Its equipment, with cooking machine, sideboard and dining table, won a prize in a competition sponsored by Krupp to promote social housing for workers.

The Villa Muthesius home of a factory owner in Oerlinghausen, Design by Hermann Kopf, 1913/14.

The kitchen (top centre) with separate entrance and larder, separated from the dining room (top right) by the narrow pantry.





Kitchen in the home of a Krupp worker in Alfredshof, the workers' housing area in Essen, Exhibited at a trade fair in Düsseldorf in 1902

In those days, kitchens were furnished for the preparation and cooking of food. Cooking utensils were stored in cabinets and on open shelves. Upper class households frequently also had separate pantries located between kitchen

and dining room, which reduced noise and smells from the kitchen. Rural and upper class households often kept large stocks of provisions which were stored in cellars and larders, with only small quantities kept in the kitchen. Working class households kept almost no stocks of food. In upper-class households, work such as washing dishes and cleaning

appliances, often took place in separate sculleries for hygienic reasons. Working class households did not have the luxury of separate sculleries. They had a sink in the kitchen. Water often still had to be fetched from an outdoor tap.



Josef Hoffmann: fitted kitchen in the Palais Stoclet, Brussels, 1906–11, Custom joinery work

The lower middle and working classes were forced to expand the function of their kitchens from solely working to living kitchens, because they lacked space and a second source of heat. Kitchens

were furnished for families to live in, with eating tables and frequently also with sofas. With space very limited, kitchens also had to accommodate beds. By day, outwork was done in many working class kitchens.

The kitchens were furnished with separate cabinets and appliances aligned along the walls. The positioning did not always correspond to workflows. A high



Ménage, around 1900, private property

dresser, some shelves or boards, a holder for towels and tea cloths with a decorative towel cover, the cooking machine, a wood box, a washing table or sink with a water bench or water faucet. Normally, a table for preparation and eating of the meals stood in the centre. Upper-class households had separate dining rooms, their kitchens were the servants' dining rooms.

According to the hygienic concepts of the time, the colour white dominated the kitchen. Not only the painted kitchen furniture, but walls, tiles and the cooking

machine were also white. Even today, big kitchen appliances like cookers, refrigerators and washing machines are called white goods.

One example of an upper-class kitchen of the early 20th century is the house of Peter Behrens on the Mathildenhöhe in Darmstadt, which was completed in 1901. The house, including all the kitchen fittings, was unfortunately totally destroyed in World War II. In this house, the kitchen was in the basement. It was L-shaped, and a big dresser, a working and a washing table, shelves and cupboards stood along two walls. The chairs and all other furniture were made of white-painted wood. The brick stove on the opposite wall was covered with white tiles, and had a gas oven on top.

The Palais Stoclet in Brussels, designed by Josef Hoffmann in 1905, was completed ten years later than the Behrens house. Historic photos of the Palais already show an individually fitted kitchen. The wall opposite the windows is covered with fitted cabinets, some of which have glass doors. A U-shaped worktop counter runs along the window wall.

In the middle of the room, there is a big, sturdy worktable. The floor is covered with black and white tiles in a checkerboard pattern. Hanging lamps in different places make it possible to work standing in front of or behind the working table.

The pine furniture was either custom made by a joiner, or mass produced in a factory, depending on the buyers' social standing. The most important new material was linoleum, not as a floor covering (kitchen floors were mainly tiled or covered with stone flags), but on countertops, tables and cabinets.



Copper pots, around 1900, private property

Cooking was usually done on a cooking machine. Urban households also had gas cookers. Public gas utilities had existed since the middle of the 19th century. Public water utilities had been set up in the same period and this made it possible to install water pipes in the laundries, kitchen, bathrooms, toilets, bedrooms and gardens of

upper-class houses. Working class homes often only had one faucet with an outlet for waste water, for all tenants on the stairway.

Food was stored hygienically in airy fly-proof cabinets. In 1900, upper-class households began to buy the first iceboxes: insulated cabinets with iceboxes for natural or manufactured ice at the top or in the middle, and a container to catch the melting water at the bottom. Such iceboxes were widely used well into the fifties. About 1910, the first electric compressor refrigerators were launched on the market. They kept food cool independent of ice, but had similar dimensions to the iceboxes. At first, they were very expensive, and hence to be found only in commercial operations such as restaurants, and in upper-class households.