

A look at the first of Philippe Starck's "ecologically conscious" prefabs



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When Slovenian prefabber RIKO and Philippe Starck introduced the PATH prefab last year I was somewhat critical, comparing it to another house and writing [The Starck difference between two "green" prefabs](#):

This is the worst kind of green design; build a glass box, put a green roof on it and then throw money at gizmos.

Now [Designboom shows the first built model](#) and it raises the question, was I a bit harsh? Designboom notes that the company "maintains a commitment to ecologically conscious design, with potential integration of photovoltaic panels, wind turbines, rainwater collection, and heat pumps." And indeed, when you look at the house it has retractable awnings to shade the glazing, a lush green roof with overhanging vines, and yes, there is a wind turbine on the roof. According to the [PATH website](#):



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Quiet, elegant and running independent of wind direction, Starck's Revolutionair home wind-turbine can generate 20 to 60 percent of P.A.T.H.'s energy needs and have a power output of 400W to 1000W of power. Combined with other technologies using renewable sources of energy, such as photovoltaics or solar thermal collectors, it further reduces P.A.T.H.'s carbon footprint and bring long-term savings.

Interestingly, there hasn't been a peep about the Revolutionaire since it launched with a splash on every website on earth in 2010 ([TreeHugger gushes here](#)) But it did go into production by Italian generator company Pramac. According to [its specifications](#), it will generate 152 watts in an 18 MPH wind, 900 watts in a 33 MPH wind, which will no doubt make a huge dent in the electrical requirements of this house.



They didn't skimp on the floor-to-ceiling glazing that encloses the entire house either;

The glass façade encased in high-quality aluminium Schüco profiles not only fulfils the imperative of design and allows abundance of natural light to enter the interior space, but also meets the complex requirements for maximum thermal insulation through the use of triple paned glass and venetian blinds, integrated between the glass chambers.



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Then there are automatic retractable awnings that "prevent the over-heating and the passage of UV rays into the interior of the house" and which retract and disappear in strong winds and rain.

UPDATE *Wallpaper** reports that this house is actually Starck's own residence, and that this house aligns with his own environmental concerns.

His prototype features rooftop energy-producing technologies, co-developed by French companies DualSun and IRFTS, that consist of 58 photovoltaic thermal hybrid solar panels, wind turbines (designed by Starck and fabricated by Pramac), rainwater recovery and heating [sic] pumps. With this energy system, the home will produce 50 percent more energy than it consumes.

I was critical of this house the first time around, noting that "designing for low-tech or no-tech is a lot greener, cheaper and resilient than covering it with turbines and photovoltaics." But it is a pretty glass box and you can get your own from [this very pretty website](#). Was I too harsh?