



This page: Design First Interiors' stunning glass enclosure.
Opposite page: Innovative space-saving wine cellars by Florida-based ie: Designs (top), Brandon Architects of California (center) and KBC Developments (bottom).



by LINDA DUNLOP

Vintage Venues

YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE A CONNOISSEUR TO SAVOR THIS TREND. A NEW GENERATION OF DESIGNERS PROMISES PALATE-PLEASING PROXIMITY TO YOUR COVETED FINE WINES.

"WINE IS THE MOST CIVILIZED THING IN THE WORLD," Ernest Hemingway once said. And what could be more civilized than rescuing your prized vintages from dark, damp basements and proudly displaying them in plain view? Today's savvy designers offer an intoxicating blend of storage options that place your beloved Bordeaux and Barolos at the center of your home's decor. With insulated walls, temperature and humidity controls, plus customized LED lighting and racking systems, these jaw-dropping spaces are sure to pique the curiosity of your dinner guests while igniting their thirst.

Step into the foyer of one oceanfront home and gaze down through a 1.5-inch Plexiglas lid into a 600-bottle wine cellar (pictured above). Accessible by a spiral staircase, this delightfully dizzying display won a Product Design Award from the American Society of Interior Designers for Florida-based ie: Designs.

What started as a divider between an entrance and dining room became the deluxe wine enclosure (opposite page) from Ottawa's Design First Interiors, boasting stone veneer walls, sliding glass doors and wine-cork flooring. The homeowner added a finishing touch, adorning the space with a chandelier of upside-down glasses. "Wine is a part of life for many people," says Design First founder Friedemann Weinhardt. "Of all things that are collectible, wine will always bring happiness to those who enjoy it." These swanky spaces certainly do the trick. **A**