

## Storing Wine in Plain Sight

By **Elisa Mala** | NEWSWEEK

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For a libation so closely associated with celebration and ceremony, wine is often relegated to behind-the-scenes status when not being drunk, stowed away in cabinets, or tucked into the dark corners of the basement. Part of this is pragmatic: wines are like vampires, best stored in cool, dark spaces. But wine-storage options for the home are growing bolder and more whimsical, blurring the lines between practical and ornamental while placing bottles within easy reach.

The best alternatives simply turn wine into part of a room's décor. Like a sleek and shiny espresso maker, the Skybar sits alluringly on the kitchen counter, where it stores and chills up to three bottles of wine. Individual compartments keep each varietal at its appropriate temperature, and when it's time for a glass, a simple push of a button sends the wine pouring through a convenient spout (\$1,000; surlatable.com). For a more mobile option, the Toto bar, made of freijó wood and designed by Brazilian architect Isay Weinfeld, features a side strap that allows the wheeled set to be pulled around with ease (\$15,755; espasso.com). In the Wine Bench by the London-based Rabih Hage Studio, a cylindrical leg 25 centimeters in diameter doubles as a hidden compartment designed to hold bottles of wine (studioa.rabih-hage.com). Unbeknownst to its posh clientele, 'inoteca, at the tony Marcel at Gramercy Hotel in Manhattan, also stows some of its wine-list offerings in custom-made, hollow benches.

Less a piece of furniture than a high-tech, self-contained living space, the Sphere bed, designed by Karim Rashid for Hollandia International, features LEDs in its canopy, an 81-centimeter television opposite the headboard, and a mattress with massage options. The presence of a built-in champagne cooler, made of stainless steel and embedded in the side rail, comes as no surprise (\$50,000; hollandiainternational.com).

For suspicious types with a truly prized collection, the wrought-iron Metal Wine Cage can keep a dozen vintages in full view while safeguarding them under lock and key. With an aesthetic that appears inspired by King Arthur's tales, the piece features a decorative chain and a pragmatic padlock. If that's not enough to deter would-be pilferers, the cage stands 130 centimeters tall and weighs more than 18 kilograms (\$199; restoration hardware.com).

Confinement is a foreign concept to designer Ron Arad, whose Infinity rack expands—or contracts—to accommodate collections of all sizes. Each brightly hued plastic tube holds a single bottle. The tubes attach at



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the edges and can be stacked or aligned in any configuration, making them ideal for oddly shaped spaces (\$81 for 16 pieces; [unicahome.com](http://unicahome.com)). The Cru rack from Umbra accomplishes the same goal, but with tubes in varying sizes for keeping smaller or larger bottles (\$180; [umbra.com](http://umbra.com)).

With the increasing popularity of organic options, there are also greener ways to store the stuff. The aged wood of a refurbished ammunition case lends a rustic touch to a trunk that holds seven bottles (\$300), while an artisan in Georgia has refashioned a retired wine barrel as a wine cabinet (\$900; both at [uncommongoods.com](http://uncommongoods.com)).

Even single bottles can be showcased in style. Putting wordplay and fabric strips to use, the tongue-in-cheek Sleevino slipcase resembles a suit sleeve with a shirt cuff peering out (\$14; [unicahome.com](http://unicahome.com)). Michael Aram, whose handcrafted housewares often reflect Indian influences, provides the royal treatment with a nickel-plate caddy that resembles a chariot (\$99; [michaelaram.com](http://michaelaram.com)).

For those committed to building a traditional wine cellar, there are also plenty of new options. The Spiral Cellar, the storage unit of choice for famed British cookbook author Delia Smith, features curving shelves guard-ed by remote-controlled trapdoors that can be installed in three square meters of ground space—and it doesn't even require a planning permit (from \$24,000; [spiralcellars.com](http://spiralcellars.com)). In more than six years of designing cellars for well-heeled Americans, Alan Genee, the director of sales and customer service at Wine Enthusiast ([wineenthusiast.net](http://wineenthusiast.net)), has never met an obstacle he couldn't design around. One client had a basement with rocks that jutted from the wall, much like protrusions from a cliff, so he designed shelving to wind around the stones. Another installed a cellar under his daughter's life-size playhouse. "Wine cellars are something that people do to make themselves happier in the house that they're in," says Genee. "To spend half a million dollars renovating your house is still less than buying a new place." And if that doesn't do the trick, they can always drink away their sorrows.

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