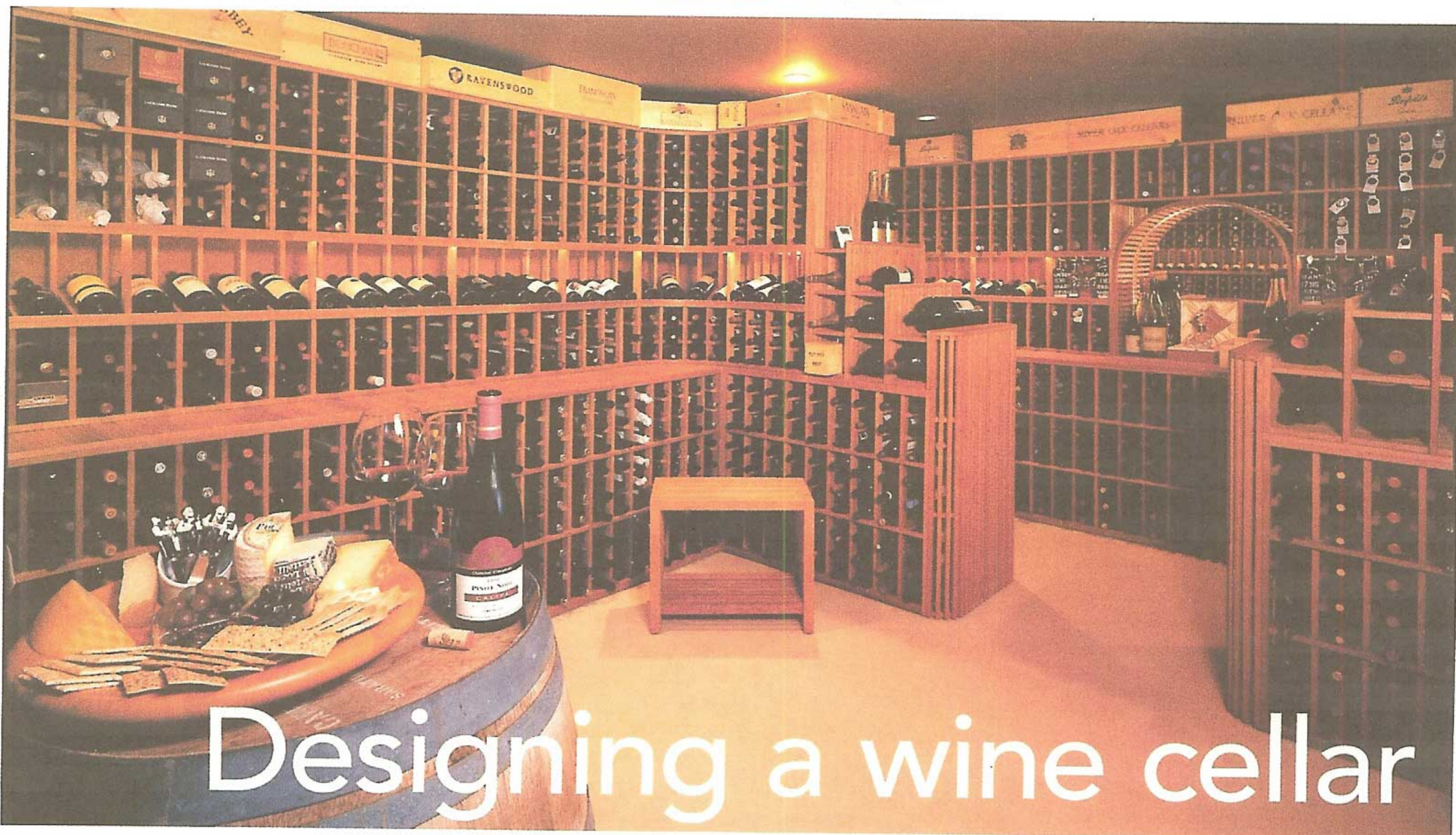




Designer FYI

By Kris Linder

Photo by Kerry Paul



Designing a wine cellar

If you are passionate about wine, and your collection is plentiful, you may be ready to enjoy the benefits of a wine storage area or cellar. There are a couple options: one is a free-standing unit with refrigeration, and the other is a custom “built-in” cellar.

Today I will discuss the “built-in” idea. If room allows, it can be a full-blown temperature-controlled cellar and tasting room or, if space is limited, a smaller room dedicated to showcasing and storing your favorite wines.

Think about the areas in your home. Do you have an enclosed space that can be converted into a wine room? Do you have a closet in a hall, the contents of which you could relocate to another spot? Do you have a two-story home with room under the stairs or behind a wall? Can you bump out a 4-by-10-foot area into your garage from a wall in your house? All of these ideas have produced very creative wine storage rooms or mini cellars. A space for a 250-bottle cellar can be as small as 3-by-8 feet. However,

if your imagination and budget allows, the sky's the limit as far as size.

For my own wine room, I chose a space under a staircase. I pulled up the carpet to reveal a concrete subfloor, which I stained a wonderful terra-cotta red. I also painted the sheetrock walls with a deep red stain in a swirl pattern to create the look of plaster. I installed a racking system using a combination of wood and iron racks, combined with a decorative wrought-iron wine case. For the finishing touches, I hung art, installed sconces and used a piece of marble to fabricate a tiny shelf for showcasing specialty wines and glasses. When the sconces are lit, you can walk by and see through the new French door into this charming wine “mini-cellar.” It has become another room where before there was none.

Lighting, colors, theme, presentation and temperature are all important forms and functions of a wine storage area. To build a large cellar and tasting room for an extensive collection, one would turn to a professional to design the layout,

choose the racking system, cabinet style, ambient lighting, flooring and wall treatments. Costs will vary depending upon the size of the cellar and the quality of the materials you use.

For larger wine cellars – 2,500 bottles or more – often there is room set aside for a dining table and chairs. This can double as a second dining room in the home for entertaining and wine tasting. A popular design for this type of cellar is to replicate a cave. Use stone or brick flooring, a textured multi-dimensional treatment on the walls, niches to showcase rarer wines, and specialty lighting. Hang some fabulous artwork along with your vintage wine collection and *voilà!* – you’ve got a European/California winery in your very own home. *Salute!* ↑

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