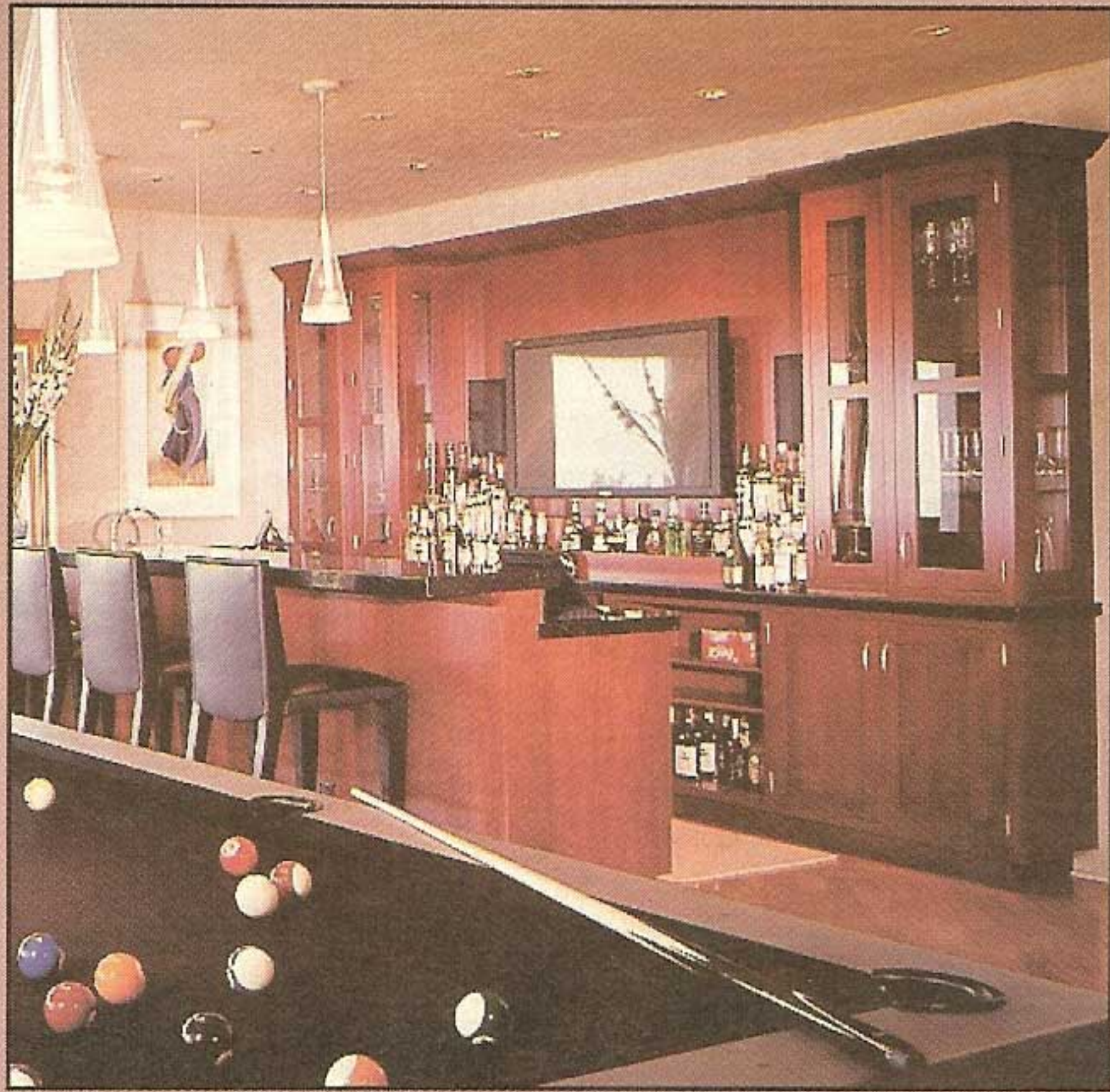


DESIGNER FYI:

Serving Up a Home Bar



By Kris Linder

If you love to entertain at home, then it may be time to introduce a new area into your house — a built-in “home bar.”

This installed piece of furniture/cabinetry has multiple uses. You hardly ever see one without a wine refrigerator, therefore the upper shelving or cabinets usually are designed to showcase all the lovely wine glasses one uses while enjoying the fruits of the vine — the large round ones for red wines, and the narrow tall ones for the whites — although most wine connoisseurs will tell you any old glass will do for a great wine!

Even more labor-intensive drinks — i.e., the mixed drink — have their share of glasses to house. Bar drinks are not only making a comeback, but are as varied as most wine lists these days. (How many different martinis are on your favorite restaurant’s menu — need I say more?)

So how to create an attractive place to show, store and pour? The range of designs for home bars is as endless as the drinks you can make at them: A beautiful wood-base cabinet, whether stained or painted... A fabulous granite or tile counter... Creative lighting... An interesting backsplash... Glass shelves and mirrors... Cabinet doors with insets in clear or art glass... All of this can be designed to coordinate with your existing space or — if you’re a bit braver — can be completely different and unique from your existing space.

Typically, home bars are built near the family room, living room or kitchen, but you can have one installed wherever you like to entertain — next to the pool, perhaps, or in a den or game room.

Most of all, have fun with the design. The most common style is a “walk up” bar — which is a cabinet or built-in against a wall with a counter top of granite, marble, stone or tile, where one literally walks up and prepares the beverage of choice. Usually added to this are lower cabinets with drawers and doors for storage of appropriate accessories, bottles and other accouterments. This lower cabinetry area is also where one could place a wine refrigerator to keep wines at their ideal temperatures.

A more elaborate set-up places you *behind* the bar. There, you have storage for bottles, glasses, larger design elements and a full front bar to serve from, thereby allowing people to be at the bar with you.

Whichever your choice or budget, creating a home bar can be a wonderful addition to your home. And the possibilities are truly endless. Cheers!

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