

FAREED ZAKARIA ON THE GOOD NEWS OF 2009

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WHY WE CAN'T LOOK AWAY

UNDERSTANDING AMERICA'S CRAVEN CELEBRITY CULTURE

BY NEAL GABLER



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Austria €4.50	France €4.50	Italy €4.50	Norway Kr 42.00	Spain €4.50
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Storing Wine in Plain Sight

BY ELISA MALA



Aram's chariot.

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

Champagne in the Sphere bed.



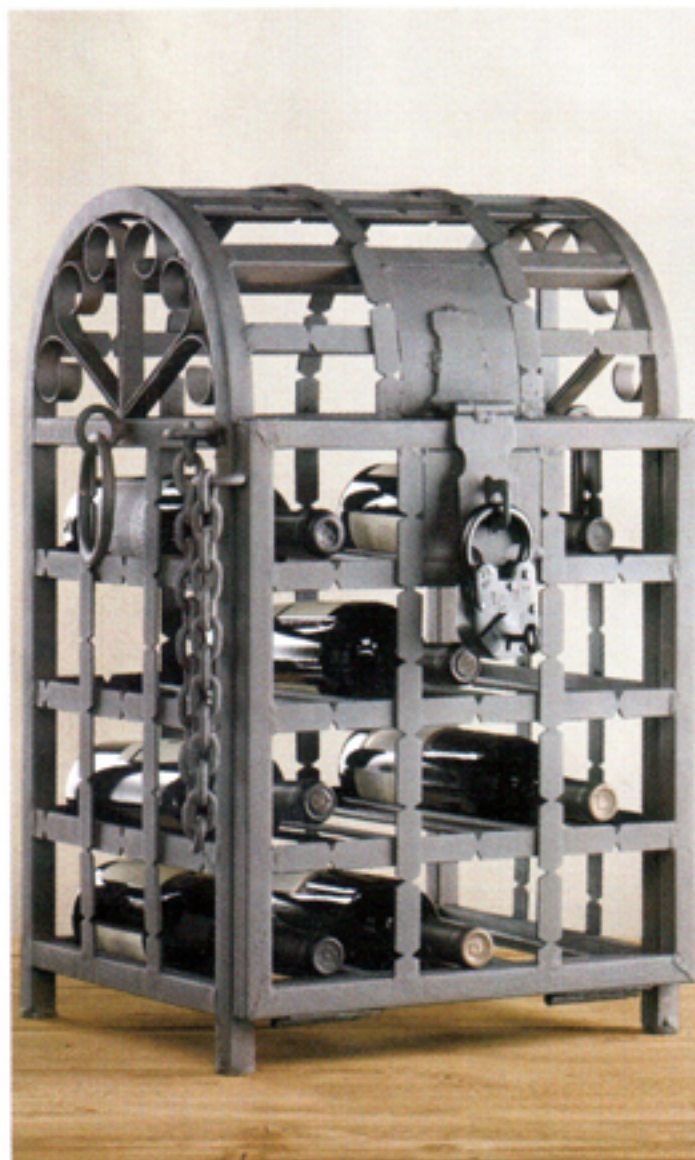


The Toto bar is like a cellar on wheels; wine cage (below).

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; restorationhardware.com).

Confinement is a foreign concept to designer Ron Arad, whose Infin-



ity rack expands—or contracts—to accommodate collections of all sizes. Each brightly hued plastic tube holds a single bottle. The tubes attach at the edges and can be stacked or aligned in any configuration, making them ideal for oddly shaped spaces (\$81 for 16 pieces; 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).

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).

Even single bottles can be showcased in style. Putting wordplay and fabric strips to use, the tongue-in-cheek Slee-

The best options simply turn wine bottles into part of a home's décor: a sleek cooler that sits on the kitchen counter, a portable bar, even a cage to keep rare vintages locked up.

vino slipcase resembles a suit sleeve with a shirt cuff peering out (\$14; unicahome.com). Michael Aram, whose hand-crafted housewares often reflect Indian influences, provides the royal treatment with a nickel-plate caddy that resembles a chariot (\$99; 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 guarded 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). 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), 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.

Swarovski
Crystalline.



Opulent
Items.



Varga
Imperial.

Seeing the Glass All Full

BY KIRA DUDLEY

STORING WINE IN STYLE IS ONE THING, but what about once it's opened? Oenophiles know that the vessel matters almost as much as the vintner. A beautiful glass can make even a mediocre wine seem more elegant and refined.

The Diamond Wine Glass by Opulent Items is hand-blown in Austria and crafted from state-of-the-art borosilicate glass, making it superior to traditional glass in durability and heat resistance. So it helps maintain the wine's temperature, even in warm hands. Its proportions and balance make the glass ideal for swirling and releasing the wine's aromas, and the 0.15-carat diamond fused to the stem adds an element of indulgence (\$3,750 each; opulentitems.com).

With a festive approach to practical design, Steven Weinberg created crystalline glasses for Swarovski. The faceted base supports a delicate stem filled with shimmering Swarovski gems, and the tapered shape of the bowl concentrates precious aromas toward the nose (\$390 for two; swarovski.com). Bringing a twist to contemporary glass design, the Neiman Marcus Imperial stemware from the Varga collection features an engraved floral motif, making any vintage they hold look like a special one (\$200 apiece; neimanmarcus.com).

Etienne Meneau has taken the French proverb "In wine, one beholds the heart of another" literally. His Little Heart is complete with atria, ventricles, and an aorta. Fusing geometry and nature, the glass is as attractive as it is functional (\$1,500; strangebarafe@gmail.com). Bottoms up!