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Stellar Cellars

By Robert Haywood

The fruit of the vine is influenced by many variables, including weather, sunlight, water, temperature, and some would say, history itself. No one wine is the same and that is what attracts the connoisseur, the type of person who enjoys developing an expertise and a discriminating pallet. To be a wine connoisseur, you not only have to be super sensitive to smell, taste, and color, you also have to learn the descriptive and specialized language of wine. Wine Spectator, for example, describes the Duckhorn Vineyard Merlot as a “powerful red, with concentrated flavors of red plum, cherry and boysenberry that are layered with plenty of rich spice and mineral accents.” To discern all of these elements in a single glass of wine requires learning, refined attention, and experience.

For the wine connoisseur, a home wine cellar is the place to store a collection of treasures. When designed as a separate room, a cellar is most often located on a basement level because that is the most humid and coolest place in the home. When stored with proper conditions, aging wines are a value and can improve in aroma, flavor, and complexity. The finest cellars are beautifully crafted with special stones and wood, with the space possessing a cavernous, rustic feel, creating a space entirely different from a kitchen or dining room.

The three cellars featured in this story are exemplary works of design, engineering, and construction. While glass-enclosed cellars installed near a kitchen or dining room are popular with homeowners who want a sleek minimalist look, the cellars highlighted here are below ground level and possess the warm feel of traditional wine cellars.



Two sides of full glass create a strong visual anchor for the basement foyer. The distinctive art within can be viewed from an adjacent interior pool.



The cellar includes a dining table with seating for ten and a brick barrel vault ceiling. Tableside cooking on a moveable cook top ensures an evening to remember.

For an Annapolis homeowner, architect Cathy Purple Cherry designed a striking cellar to accompany a specific bottle count and provide alternate display opportunities. The cellar, 10 by 15 feet, is located at the bottom of a three-story cantilevered floating staircase and includes niches for sculpture and artwork, with the ceiling design allowing for a unique feeling of depth by way of its spaced slat design. The cellar is unique, explains Cherry, in that there are “two sides of full glass creating a strong visual anchor for both the basement foyer and the distinctive art pieces, which can be viewed from the adjacent interior pool.”

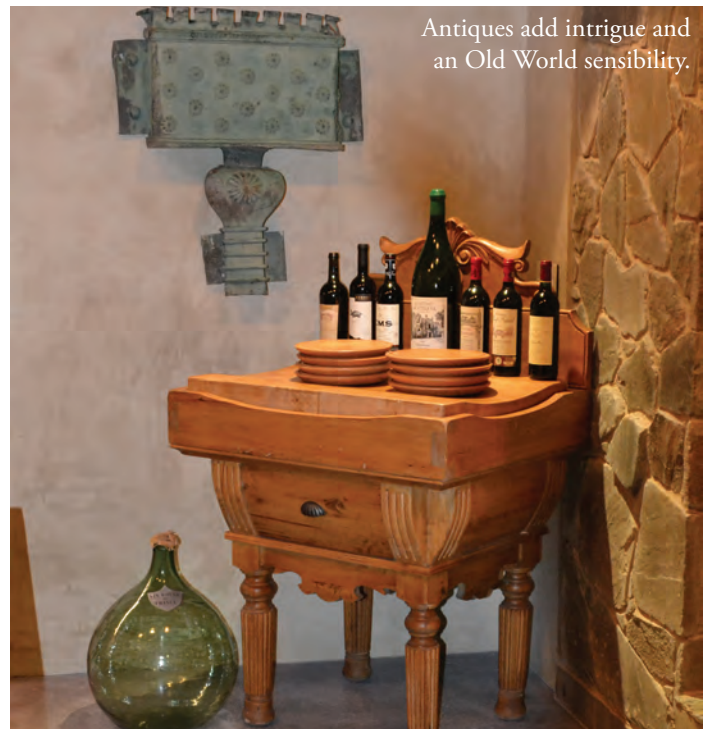
Previous Page and Above:

ARCHITECT: Purple Cherry Architects, purplecherry.com | CUSTOM BUILDER: Pyramid Builders, pyramid-builders.com | LIGHTING: Jones Lighting, jones-lighting.com | INTERIOR DESIGN: Interior Concepts, interiorconceptsinc.com | *Photography by David Burroughs*

Arlene Critzos, President of Interior Concepts, Inc., brings a designer’s aesthetic to her wine cellar. Her European travels and study, along with her expertise in decorative arts, is evident in every facet of the design. The cellar’s entry, framed with irregular stone, a brick barrel vaulted ceiling, and concrete and cobblestone floor set the old world feel. The cellar includes a dining table with seating for ten. Contemporary geometric wire high-back chairs with deep turquoise seats add an edgy twist. Tableside cooking on a moveable cooktop offers a unique experience for Critzos’ guests. This cellar allows for an evening of entertaining centered around conversation, food and wine.

Opposite Page:

INTERIOR DESIGN: Interior Concepts, Inc. (Arlene Critzos), interiorconceptsinc.com
Photography courtesy of Interior Concepts



Antiques add intrigue and an Old World sensibility.

