

wine cellars

# Cool and collected

Today's wine cellars are a celebration of good living, as well as an investment in the future





# Salute to good taste

This wine cellar serves up a contemporary aesthetic with an array of vintage wines



**Architect:** Bjorn Skaptason, Atelier Arkitekta (Iceland)  
**Builder:** S&H Construction  
**Excavating, site work, concrete:** S+H Sitework Division; Beacon Site Developers and Consultants  
**Electrical:** Driscoll Electrical  
**Heating:** HVAC from Heatech  
**Plumbing:** Chase & Tolan  
**Paint:** Piano 2 in matte white by Andrew's Painting  
**Flooring:** Polished gray granite from CM Zottola, O'Hearn Tile, installed by Associated Stone & Tile Installers; Walnut Espresso from Patina Relics  
**Glass:** Architectural glass from Commonwealth Glass  
**Cabinetry:** Jonn Nonni Bergsveinsson  
**Lighting:** Wever & Ducr e  
**Lighting control:** Creston  
**Ventilation:** Lifebreath HRV  
**Wallcoverings:** Plaster by Pete's Plastering; satin-finish aluminum

**Story by** Charles Moxham  
**Photography by** Jamie Cobeldick



**Preceding pages:** A dedicated tasting room looks through a glass wall to a high-end wine cellar. Recessed ceiling elements contribute to a look that favors form and shape over a use of vibrant color.

**Above:** This basement-level corridor provides access to the adjacent wine cellar. The owners have a love of fine art as well as fine wines, and this area doubles as an art gallery.

**Dark, dusty, with a dingy stairway far from the living room – the traditional dank wine cellar is well past its sell-by date.**

This chic, expansive wine cellar, designed by Icelandic architect Bjorn Skaptason and built by Doug Hanna, is a picture of clean lines, modern materials and task lighting. The upscale wine cellar also has an adjoining tasting room, complete with its own kitchen facilities, to enable tastings or other informal gatherings in the space.

"This cellar is part of a whole-house interior remodel," says Skaptason. "The entire basement has been expanded and deepened – largely to

accommodate the new wine cellar, measuring over 600sq ft. The owners' wish list for the home matched their needs for this cellar – a modern space that is at once welcoming, user friendly and decidedly modern."

The wine cellar is approached either directly from stairs leading down from the first floor, or via an art gallery-style corridor, complete with seating, that runs alongside the wine storage space.

A dividing glass door allows the racks of wine to achieve maximum visual impact when seen from the tasting room. This sliding door also serves the purpose of keeping wine at optimum temperatures

while maintaining a comfortable environment for owners and guests in the adjacent tasting room and separate gallery space.

"The racks of wine, over 5000 bottles altogether, are an aesthetic feature in their own right," says the architect. "I designed the racks myself, repurposing sheets of corrugated steel that accommodated the circumference of a wine bottle exactly."

Granite floors, feature ceilings in the cellar and corridor, and a pared-back use of color are continuations of elements found elsewhere in four-level the residence.

"The use of grays, black and white is intended to

provide a degree of respite from the ongoing bombardment of the senses in the modern world," says Skaptason. "Elsewhere in the home, a minimalist decor provides serenity and allows the scenery to take prominence. The effect is similar here in the cellar, with the arrayed wine bottles allowed to take centre stage."

As with the rest of the home, the wine cellar is fully operable by remote technologies. However, while this sleek space bears little resemblance to wine cellars of old, it does share the traditional virtue of being underground – still a head start in keeping wine at cool, stable temperatures.

**Above left and above:** Wood barrels and cases provide touches of warmth in the largely granite, plaster and glass room. Black tiles set into the gray tilework provide visual contrast. Glass sliding doors, to the left, lead directly to the first-floor staircase, one of two entrances to the 600sq ft cellar. A nearby machine room houses the computers that regulate temperatures in the wine cellar.