





# MAKING *a* STATEMENT

BY DONNA CEDAR-SOUTHWORTH



A WINE ROOM IS "ABOUT ONE'S LIFESTYLE...A STATEMENT ABOUT WHO YOU ARE AND WHAT YOUR INTERESTS ARE," SAYS GENE CLOUSE

According to Gene Clouse, owner of Caves à Vin, creating dedicated rooms devoted exclusively to either storing or—more commonly—showcasing one's wine is becoming increasingly popular: "It's about one's lifestyle...a statement about who you are and what your interests are."

As an avid wine collector himself, Gene feels he has a distinctive edge in designing and building wine cellars: "It's very difficult to find companies that have both a strong perspective on wine collecting and an understanding of how that impacts the way in which you design the space."

Gene brings to the design process an understanding and appreciation of the nuances of collecting investment-grade wines as well as less expensive wines. His

focus is on helping to match the client's needs with the final product: "When I engage a client, I ask two questions first: 'Is this a functional storage room or a decorative/entertainment room?' And I ask if it's going to be climate-controlled. Every wine room is unique."

Wine rooms are customized to any sized space available. If the rooms are to be focal points, Gene might incorporate serving areas, archways and accent lighting. The philosophy of his full-service design/build company is that "what matters most are the objectives of the client and meeting their unique goals."

Gene will be featured later this fall in an episode of the PBS series, "Wine, Food, and Friends," hosted by wine writer Karen MacNeil.

