

Project Category: Residential Interior Element

Residential Interior: \$30,000 and Over

Completion Date: March 16, 2020

Location: Madison, WI



AFTER: VIEW OF WET BAR AND WINE CELLAR

These clients, who were new residents to Madison, WI, found us online not long after buying their home. They visited our office to interview our designers, and having been presented with a recently designed contemporary project full of texture and geometry, they quickly chose to engage us to begin their wet bar design.



BEFORE: EXISTING BASEMENT AREA WAS UNUSED SPACE

They had the vision of using an unused alcove in their lower level for a bar, but didn't know exactly how it would come together.

AFTER: UNUSED SPACE WAS TURNED INTO THE NEW WET BAR AREA



In the end, they ended up getting even more than they ever imagined.



BEFORE: DOOR LEADS TO STORAGE UNDER STAIRWAY

Next to the unused basement area was an under the stairway storage closet...



BEFORE: VIEW OF STORAGE UNDER STAIRWAY



AFTER: VIEW OF NEW WINE CELLAR

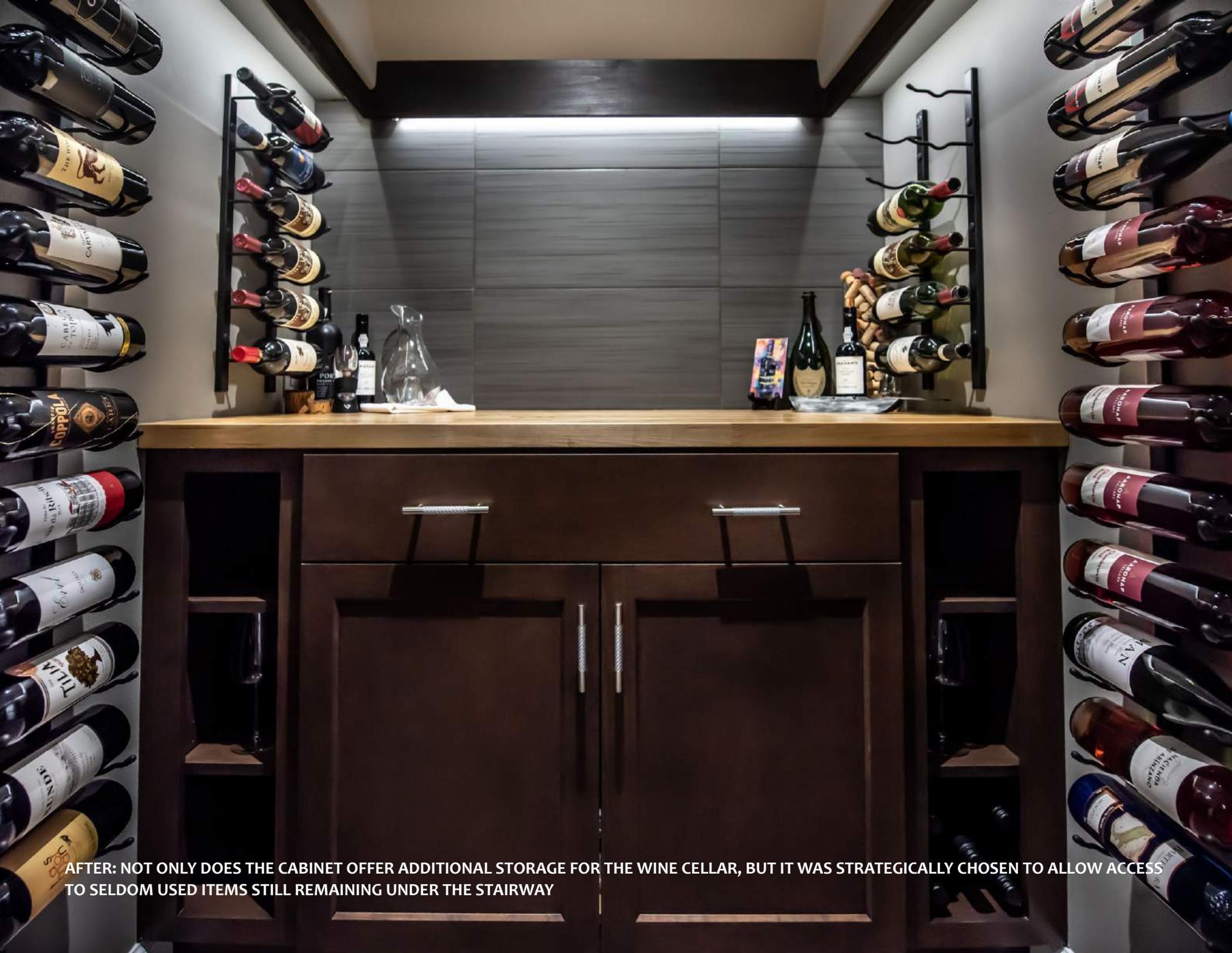
...which was transformed into an unexpected wine cellar at the base of the stairs.



AFTER: VIEW OF NEW WINE CELLAR



AFTER



AFTER: NOT ONLY DOES THE CABINET OFFER ADDITIONAL STORAGE FOR THE WINE CELLAR, BUT IT WAS STRATEGICALLY CHOSEN TO ALLOW ACCESS TO SELDOM USED ITEMS STILL REMAINING UNDER THE STAIRWAY



AFTER



AFTER

Although our homeowners were open to suggestions on how to make their dreams become reality, they also had a wish-list for their new wet bar and wine cellar that included a larger-than-bar sink, an under-counter wine chiller, and a beverage fridge.

AFTER: VIEW OF NEW LARGER-THAN-BAR SINK



In keeping with the circular concept that plays out in both the wet bar area and the wine cellar, our designer selected a round stainless sink that accents the space perfectly.

AFTER: UNDER-COUNTER WINE CHILLER AND BEVERAGE FRIDGE





AFTER: A PERFECT SPOT FOR THE HAWKEYES LOGO

Also amongst the clients' wish-list, was a spot for their framed, 3 dimensional Iowa Hawkeyes logo,



AFTER



AFTER

as well as storage for various wine and cocktail glasses and dishes for entertaining.



AFTER



The design was to be contemporary in keeping with the feel of the rest of the house, but more timeless than trendy, so as not to grow old quickly and negatively affect a future home sale.



AFTER: A TIMELESS BUTCHER BLOCK COUNTERTOP IN THE WINE CELLAR IS THE IDEAL SURFACE FOR REMOVING STUBBORN CORKS AND POURING WINE INTO EXPENSIVE STEMWARE. IT ALSO PROVIDES GUESTS EASY ACCESS TO SNACKS DURING EVENTS



AFTER: A WHITE SUBWAY TILE GLASS BACKSPLASH WITH OMBRE EDGES AND GRAY GROUT TAKE THIS TIMELESS LOOK TO A NEW LEVEL

AFTER



The use of woven wire grille in the upper cabinets is not just a design statement. It is also a functional solution.

AFTER

Located above the bar sink is a double return air intake, which serves a significant portion of the lower level. This air intake could not be relocated without significant drywall and mechanical work. The solution we decided upon was to hide the return grille in plain sight, which allows the needed airflow back to the furnace.

AFTER: THE RECESSED CABINET'S WOVEN WIRE DOORS OPEN TO REVEAL BLACK PAINTED INTERIOR



AFTER: VIEW OF THE HIDDEN AIR INTAKE GRILLE - IN PLAIN SIGHT



The look and solution were repeated as a design feature in the two cabinets to the left and right of the grille. No one would be any the wiser without opening the doors.

AFTER



AFTER

Perhaps one of the most significant features of this remodel, is the uniquely curved soffit, which mimicks the curves of the table below.



CAD drawings allowed us to draw precise circles and radii at full scale by locating exact center points.



AFTER

Once you turn the corner at the base of the stairs, past the wet bar, you approach a long hallway. The tasting table was designed to help break up the linear monotony. And the beautiful curved soffit was designed to complement the tasting table perfectly, making every piece of this project designed with intention.



AFTER

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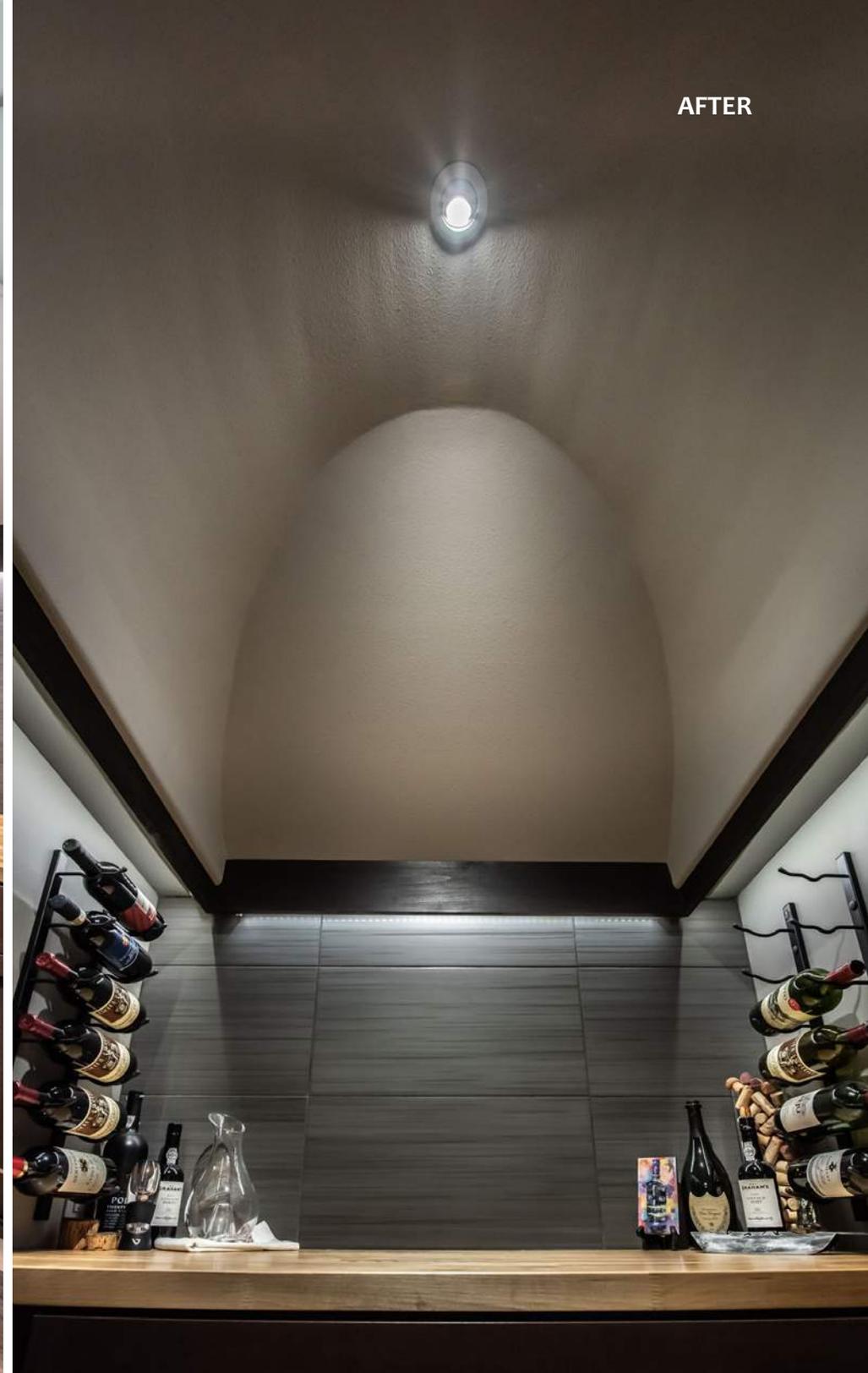
Having a sharp eye for design, both homeowners were open to new ideas, allowing us to refine each and every detail - even up to the lighting. These pendants that resemble sparkling champagne were the perfect unique and eye-catching complement to this space that was keenly designed for entertaining.



AFTER



AFTER



AFTER



CRITERIA RESPONSES

To what degree were the expressed needs of the client met?

We were charged with the task of creating a lower level bar area in an awkward, underutilized portion of the lower level, next to the stairs. The client had an extensive wish-list which included ...

- a larger than bar sink
- an under- counter wine chiller
- an under-counter beverage fridge
- a spot for their framed 3 dimensional Iowa Hawkeyes logo
- storage for various glasses and dishes to be used for entertaining
- an area for snacks that was separate from the bar

The design feel was to be contemporary in keeping with the feel of the rest of the house, but more timeless than trendy so as not to grow old or be a negative toward future home sale. We achieved all of these goals, and the sink is large enough to use an Insinkerator, and incorporates into the curved design with its round bowl.

To what degree does the project enhance the existing structures functionally?

The alcove space was rather nonfunctional before the project started. Now it is the perfect location for the fully stocked bar, and the area under the stairway has been converted into a wine cellar. But the space under the rest of the stairway is not lost or wasted: a custom oversized access panel inside the cabinet allows the clients to access occasionally-used items stored below the stairway landing. A butcher block countertop in the wine cellar gives guests easy access to snacks during events. The home gained features that it never before had, and the appeal of the entire lower level has been enhanced.

To what degree does the project enhance the structure aesthetically?

The clients had already chosen paint colors for the lower level and had new flooring installed. These choices became the inspiration for the rest of our finishes, tying in the cool grays and deep browns. Every detail was carefully thought out. The split-entry home has a half foundation and a ledgeboard. This horizontal line determines the height of the tasting table, as the countertop is used for the ledgeboard and extends across the wall, echoing the soffit above. Backsplash tile wraps around from the left under the ledgeboard, while a piece of wood trim matching the cabinetry flows off to the right. This trim piece supports the countertop, flows into the custom built liquor storage, and works with the overall geometric composition. Lighting was also a part of the design rather than an afterthought. There are hidden LED strip lights in the wine cellar to light the bottles, toe kick LED strip lights, tiny spotlights for display, under cabinet lights, and a high end 3-light mini pendant. All of the ceiling lighting in the adjacent family area was also upgraded.



CRITERIA RESPONSES

Is there evidence of superior craftsmanship?

There are several ways in which the level of precision and framing and finishing show this evidence. The curved soffit framing itself is architecturally appealing, as well as the arched ceiling in the wine tasting room, which accents the curved drywall work beautifully. The trimwork was executed with precision with perfectly painted cut lines. Custom built floating shelves create a perfect liquor cabinet, and the precisely cut wire cabinet doors (at \$600) offered no room for error.

Were innovative uses of material and/or methods of construction used in the project?

The use of the woven wire grille in the upper cabinets is not just a design statement, it is also a functional solution. Over the bar sink exists a double return air intake which serves a significant portion of the lower level and there was no location to which this could be relocated without significant drywall and mechanical work. The solution became to hide the return grille in plain sight. The woven wire doors of the recessed cabinet open to reveal the black-painted interior, allowing the needed airflow back to the furnace. The look and solution were repeated as a design feature in the two cabinets left and right of the return grille. No one would be any the wiser without opening the doors.

Did the contractor overcome difficult obstacles?

When we started design, we expected to be able to break a little concrete to tie drain lines into the floor drain in the mechanical room, just behind the bar. However, while estimating, we realized that radiant heat tubes make it so we could not break the floor. Instead, we decided to install an above-floor greywater basin and ejector pump which then pumps the waste water through a small diameter pipe and into a plumbing stack about 20 feet away. All this was accomplished without damaging the floor and with only the need to do drywall patching in a closet rather than through a series of rooms.