

**By JOao Ferreira**

Posted May 15, 2008 at 12:01 AM

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Wine storage is often an afterthought; a thought that often occurs when a prized case of wine stashed under a staircase spoils after several years of waiting, or when a library suddenly turns into a wine storage space.

It's not too late.

You don't need to undertake a major reconstruction project and spend thousands of dollars. There are many wine refrigerators on the market that will keep wine in near ideal conditions.

Wine likes cool temperatures between 50 and 55 F, around 70 percent humidity and dark places. Unless a climate-controlled cave exists somewhere under your house, keeping wine at those ideal conditions is nearly impossible.

Enter the wine refrigerator, also known as a wine cooler.

I sniffed around a little to see what's available. A fancy wine fridge will cost \$5,000 or more, but there are many other affordable options, including used units that will fit more than just half-a-dozen bottles.

For those with more disposable income available, a Vinotemp Sonoma 500 Wine Cellar-510 Bottle is a fine choice available through [winecoolers.com](http://winecoolers.com). The cherry wood refrigerator looks like a fine piece of furniture and costs \$5,000. What the customer gets is a nice, two-door portable wine cellar with digital temperature control, top vent exhaust and other niceties.

Too expensive? The good news is that much more affordable models are available, given that you're willing to sacrifice storage space and the coolness effect, but are still interested in saving, and later enjoying, a good bottle of wine without having to worry about it turning to vinegar.

For example, at the lower end of the spectrum, the Magic Chef 45 Bottle Wine Cooler available from Home Depot is much, much more affordable at \$245, but then again, it only accommodates 45 bottles of wine and looks just like a glass-

door refrigerator. This cooler is designed to keep wine at the right temperature before serving, rather than for long-term wine storage, but I'd rather age my small collection of good wines in it than let them spoil in a warm closet.

Another option is buying used. For example, I found someone from Newton selling a 52-bottle wine refrigerator on [craigslist.org](http://craigslist.org) for \$75.

Many bottles of wine cost more than that.

With time, research, and some willingness to travel a bit to pick up that great find, there are many deals to be found on sites such as Craigslist and EBay on wine coolers ranging from the 500-bottle model to the six-bottle model.

Fairvalley 2004 Cabernet Sauvignon, South Africa, \$9.99. This cab offers a butterscotch nose, followed by plum and licorice on the palate, as well as strong notes of coffee, followed by mellower chocolate and vanilla. The Fairvalley cab is an interesting deviation from some more routine cabs.

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