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JONATHAN CHANCELLOR



A William St, Brighton, house has a nightclub-style wine bar

RAISE YOUR GLASSES

There's something about Brighton homeowners and their predilection for installing bars in their luxury abodes. No doubt these private bars have been a joy during the lockdowns, when Melbourne night-life has been out of bounds. They're increasingly an uber-luxury inclusion in the suburb's bijou homes.

Retired cricket champion Shane Warne set the benchmark in his former home in the bayside neighbourhood. His abode at 15 Newbay Cres was much acclaimed after he installed a nightclub-style basement with a full wet bar and stools beneath its circular mirrored ceiling. Plus a noise-activated mirror ball. The space included a 500-bottle wine cellar and tasting room, gold class home theatre and Galaga arcade machine. Warne sold the home last December ahead of plans to move into a luxury apartment at the Saint Moritz, St Kilda, development.

Chris and Bec Judd did Brighton proud when they upgraded in the sandbelt suburb in 2019. While an over-the-top man cave in their former Brighton home was not replicated in their current domain, there was space for a stylish bar.

"We are not going underground because we are all getting older – it is a cocktail bar that is commensurate with our age," Chris Judd told *Herald Sun* columnist Fiona Byrne in 2019.

An LED strip pendant light illuminates the bar and its chevron timber floors. The benchtops are Emperador grey marble with brass Scala taps. The couple had Biasol studio design the interior, with styling overseen by Bree Leech. The bar features Iva bar stools, a Nikki bench, Featherston Scape armchairs, a Nook sofa,

Boyd floor lamp, and a pool table from Alcocks Billiard Table Manufacturers. The walls were painted in Judd Barely Grey from Haymes Paint.

A 1913 Edwardian home, Ashford, currently listed, includes a huge wine room with storage for more than 1000 bottles of wine. It's marketed as merging two eras of grandeur to create the ultimate in exclusive family living. The transformation by prestige construction company Davies Henderson is described as setting "a new standard in 21st-century indulgence".

Davies Henderson undertook last year's serious makeover of one of Brighton's most famous residences, Melville, a six-bedroom, six-bathroom mansion on Middle Cres which sold for \$18.8m in 2018. Its \$5.9m upgrade came after David Russell, billionaire founder of Singapore-based Equis private equity group, and his wife Elena, bought the property from Warne. The basement garage fits six cars, a wine cellar, a home theatre, rumpus room, arcade room, and a modelling/crafts room. The new home behind its heritage 1880s bluestone facade, and with gardens designed by Paul Bangay, was a collaboration by architect Christopher Doyle and interior designer Thomas Hamel.

Presently getting all the attention is a recently listed Brighton house built in 2019 that features a dramatic nightclub-style entertaining space with sound system, laser lighting and smoke machine. The soundproofed, Art Deco-styled basement space comes with emerald velvet carpet, Palm Jungle wallpaper by Cole & Son, and a striking 35-seater banquette in caramel leather.

One of the walls is a large, brass-framed underwater window that looks into the swimming pool above. The subterranean space comes with a dance floor and temperature controlled wine room, accessed by fingerprint recognition.

The three-level home was designed by architect Luke Seidler from the Seidler Group, who says the brief from his client was a "desire to escape, retreat, work and play" at the home. It was a collaboration with interior design studios Golden and Kmode Interiors. Seidler says the pool window diffuses light through the day and acts as a dramatic backdrop at night.

The William St house also has a bar concealed within the joinery in the kitchen, taking the entertainer's kitchen from day to night. And its master suite, conceived as a hotel-like retreat, comes with a discreet champagne-filled bar fridge that sits behind marble drawers.

"Evoking both transcendent experience and familial comfort, the residence is an ideal backdrop for a family who love to entertain ... an enriched family home designed for rest and for play," Golden's Kylie Buhagiar and Alicia McKimm say.

The 515sq m building block last traded at \$1.8m in 2016 when bought by the vendors, who had a background in the building and design space.

Estate agent Sam Inan at Hockingstuart Belle Property has given the home a \$9.5m to \$10.2m price guide.

"Its an entertainer's extravaganza on an epic scale – seeing is believing," Inan says.