

# Real Estate

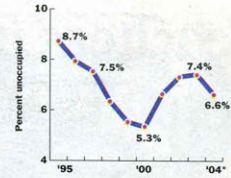
TRENDS

## RETAIL VACANCIES

Retail space vacancy rates for the Valley:



\*As of third quarter  
Source: CB Richard Ellis



# Luxury without bounds

Sky's the limit with custom features for home buyers

BY MIKE PADGETT  
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Money and imagination are the only limits to the luxury options added to today's custom homes. "Whatever the owner wants and can afford, is what he gets," said architect Jim Hann of James Hann Designs in Scottsdale.

If a luxury home were a gold ring, the sophisticated options become the jewels. And there are many jewels from which to choose.

For years, the hot items have been high-tech audio/video systems, top-of-the-line appliances, and automated systems allowing homeowners to dial up the home's electronics to adjust thermostats.

Today, while those features remain popular, there are some new high-end options emerging on the home scene.

One is wine storage, and that option ranges from climate-controlled systems that fit into a converted closet, to wine cellars with redwood racks for thousands of bottles, said Sandy Horwitz, president of Innovative Wine Cellar Designs in Scottsdale.

"We have people who have extremely large wine collections, and they're moving here from different parts of the country with collections of 3,000 or 4,000 bottles," Horwitz said.

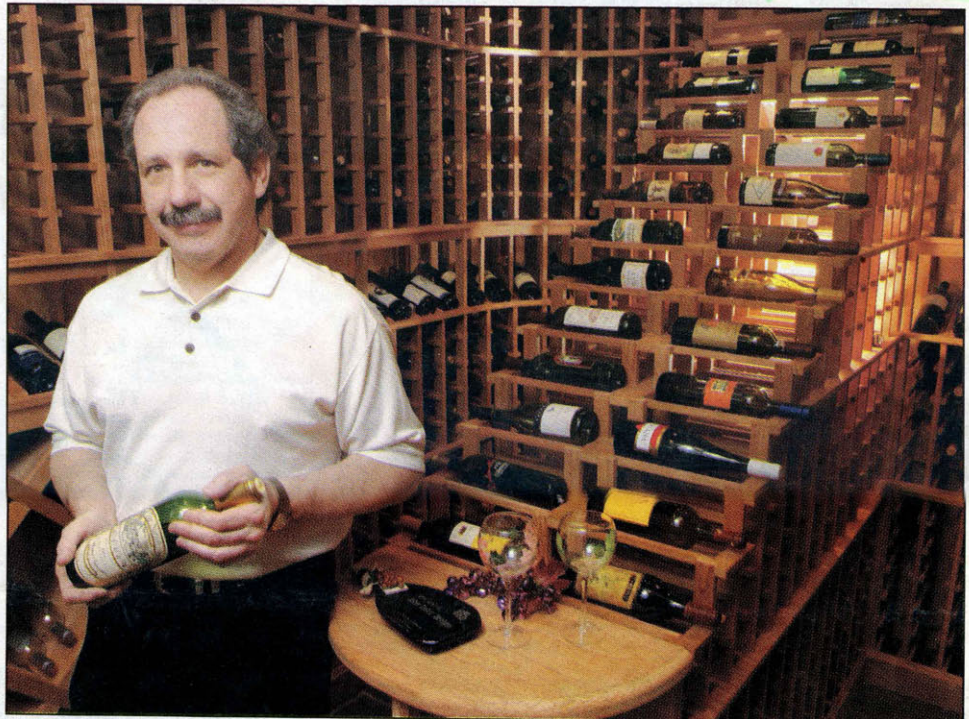
Hann said he is designing a basement wine cellar that will look like a contemporary New York nightclub. The door will be designed like a large wine cask.

"You open it and you walk through it, kind of a hidden door, like in a James Bond movie," Hann said.

Next to the nightclub-wine cellar is another room where the client, a Valley baseball player, wants a basement batting cage. Construction of the home is expected to start in early 2005.

### OPTIONS ENDLESS

If a wine cellar doesn't suit your taste, there are sound-proofed basement shooting



JIM POULIN/THE BUSINESS JOURNAL

One option popular for luxury homeowners is a walk-in wine cellar. Sandy Horwitz, president of Innovative Wine Cellar Designs in Scottsdale, recently added this wine cellar to a new Paradise Valley home completed by Cathedral Development. The wine racks will hold 2,030 bottles.

ranges; brickwork on ceilings; antique or custom-made wood doors; salvaged lumber for floors; and custom-made furniture, lamps and other accessories.

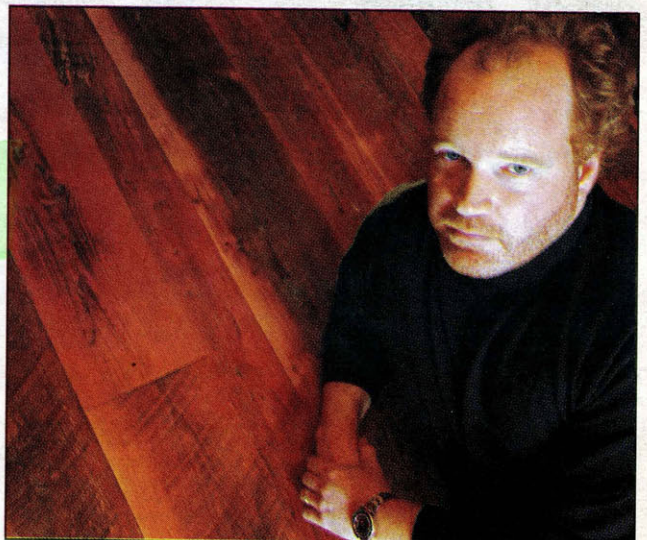
But the challenge is deciding how many bells and whistles to add to the custom home, said Scott Jarson of Jarson & Jarson Real Estate.

"The other thing we're seeing a renaissance in is lighting," Jarson said. "Using computer controls, you can push one button and the whole house's lighting drops down to create a particular mood or setting."

Another unique option is 100-year-old salvaged hardwood lumber for floors. Vintage Hardwoods, a company started three years ago by Peter Moosbrugger and Matthew Stanton, offers salvaged wood that dates to the mid-1800s. Most of their clients are in Arizona, Colorado, California, New Mexico and Massachusetts.

"We specialize in what we call 'exposed wood,' meaning it had to either be on the side of buildings or barns, or the floor of a cotton warehouse," Stanton said. "The exposed wood has character, like saw marks, knots and nail holes."

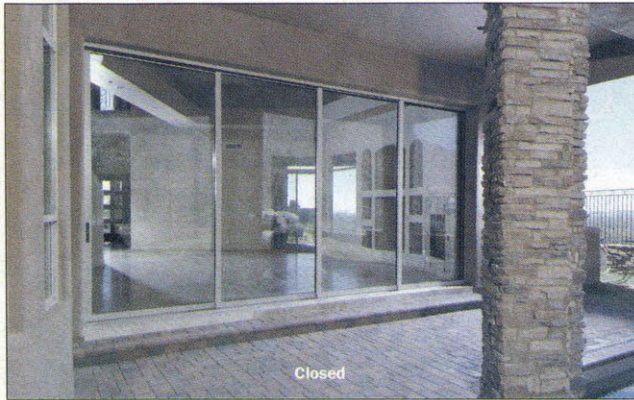
Nails hidden in the lumber were breaking teeth on saws in the company's Phoenix mill, so Moosbrugger and Stanton bought two old airport X-ray machines on eBay. Today, every board is checked for nails be-



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Sawmarks, knots and nail holes — and even an occasional bullet — give character to the old-growth lumber that Vintage Hardwoods partners Matthew Stanton (shown) and Peter Moosbrugger salvage from 1800s-era commercial buildings in the South. Much of the reclaimed wood goes into floors of luxury homes in Arizona and other states.

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Closed



Open

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**Doors in Motion has created a solution for those who want to enjoy the outdoors while remaining indoors. The heavy glass doors are built on a mechanical system that retracts them into the adjoining walls.**

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fore they are cut and processed. Much of Vintage Hardwoods' inventory was salvaged from old buildings in the Midwest and in the South, and most of the lumber is from 1850 to about 1900, Moosbrugger said.

In one case, Stanton flew to western Australia to salvage wood from the floor of an old wool store.

**CUSTOMIZED ACCESSORIES**

One Valley architectural company that specializes in custom homes and master-planned communities is boosting its interior design division, which offers custom-made furniture, lamps and lighting, wall coverings, doors, sculpture and architectural elements. Vernon Swaback of Swaback Partners in November hired Katherine Pullen as the new director of his company's Studio V.

**'If money is no object, you can do just about anything.'**

**James Hann**  
James Hann Designs

Pullen, the wife of Proposition 200 promoter Randy Pullen, will be meeting builders, architects and interior designers of luxury homes to introduce them to Studio V's custom-made furniture and accessories, called Skyfire Artifacts.

Swaback and Pullen said the accessories fit any décor because of their versatility and timeless design.

"It's a bit like selling fine art," Pullen said.

"The artifacts are so versatile because you can use them so many ways, and they create intimacy."

**DOORS ON TRACKS**

For homeowners who want to bring the outside in, or vice versa, Sam Ater and Jay Sperco have a solution. Their company, Doors in Motion, offers a mechanical system that retracts one or several heavy glass doors into the adjoining walls. These glass doors are installed as exterior walls so that when opened, they fully expose the inside living area to the outside courtyard or patio.

The company's clients are in Arizona, California, Nevada, Hawaii, Florida, Colorado and New Mexico.

The largest opening Ater and Sperco have fitted with their equipment is 60 feet wide. Ater said the heaviest panel they've worked with weighed 1,200 pounds. It had 1-inch-thick tempered glass, and it was 12.5 feet

tall and 5 feet wide. The frames are customized for clients, such as metal on the outside or wood on the inside.

The architects, designers and contractors who design, construct and decorate luxury homes don't miss a beat when their clients give them a list of options they want in their new homes.

"If money is no object, you can do just about anything," Hann said.

**GET CONNECTED**

**James Hann Designs:** 480-661-0517  
**Innovative Wine Cellar Designs:** 480-538-1288

**Jarson & Jarson Real Estate:** 480-425-9300

**Vintage Hardwoods:** 480-998-1879  
**Swaback Partners:** 480-922-3200

**Skyfire Artifacts:** 480-922-3200  
**Doors in Motion:** 480-922-2497



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