

**Will that be red or white?: Wine cellars are gaining popularity, but few stock a 1947 Chateau Lafite-Rothschild**

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Joe Princiotta likes a good bottle of red wine and a game of poker with friends. So it isn't surprising that the president of the Princiotta Group wanted a wine cellar and a poker table in the \$1.2-million home he built for the Ottawa Hospital Foundation lottery.

Set into a niche beside the cellar is a wine-tasting area with a high table and bar stools.

"I can see people using this area when they want an informal meal with friends," says Princiotta, who thought briefly about including a workout room in the home.

Games, movies and wine won out, prompting the veteran builder to call the Manotick bungalow a fat house for folks who like to play, stretch out on a leather sectional sofa and watch movies on the giant TV screen. Exercise is not on the menu, but fine wine is at the top of the card.

The wine cellar isn't large, but it has an eclectic collection of wines, including a \$36,000 bottle of Chateau Lafite-Rothschild 1947 Pauillac Premier Cru Classe.

"The Chateau Lafite-Rothschild 1947 is a ripe, opulent wine that represents some of the greatest vintages of the 20th century," says Nico van Duyvenbode, a wine journalist, consultant and appraiser who helped select wines for the lottery home's wine cellar.

It can be a touchy issue putting a price on a rare bottle of wine, says local wine appraiser and fundraiser Dan Ortolani, who was also a consultant setting up the cellar. Ortolani donated the bottle.

"I didn't pay that much for the wine. I bought this bottle five years ago from a private collector in Toronto," he says, adding it cost him close to \$10,000. "I have never tasted this wine, but Nico has tasted two bottles. Lucky him."

The red wine fetched \$36,000 in a separate auction.

It is the star in a 100-bottle collection that will tempt the tastebuds of the lottery winners, says Ortolani, who has seen an increase in the popularity of home wine cellars.

"You don't have to spend a lot of money to have a wine cellar. You can get started for under \$5,000 with racking for 100 bottles and humidity and temperature controls." Buying a small wine fridge is another option, he says.

C.A. Paradis on Bank Street supplied the racking and controls that keep the cellar at the right temperature and humidity behind the glass doors. There is a cold storage next to the cellar, which could easily handle more racking.

It's certain the Chateau Lafite-Rothschild will not go missing when the thousands of people who are expected walk through the lottery home. The cellar is set behind a stone wall, protected by customized iron gates securely locked with a heavy chain.

You can see, but not taste.

**Illustration:**

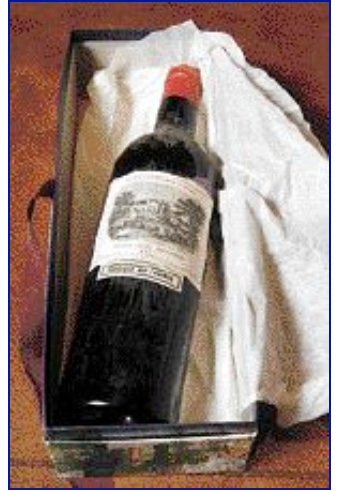
- Photo: Kier Gilmour, The Ottawa Citizen / Joe Princiotta, president of the Princiotta Group and the building brains behind the lottery house, likes a fine glass of wine, but hasn't tasted this 1947 vintage.
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 Joe Princiotta, president of the Princiotta Group and the building brains behind the lottery house, likes a fine glass of wine, but hasn't tasted this 1947 vintage. (FPinfomart: Restricted, Canada.com: Restricted)



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