



THE TIMES

INTERIORS

Stay in. It's the new going out

People are recreating their favourite bars and restaurants in their homes, says Jessie Hewitson



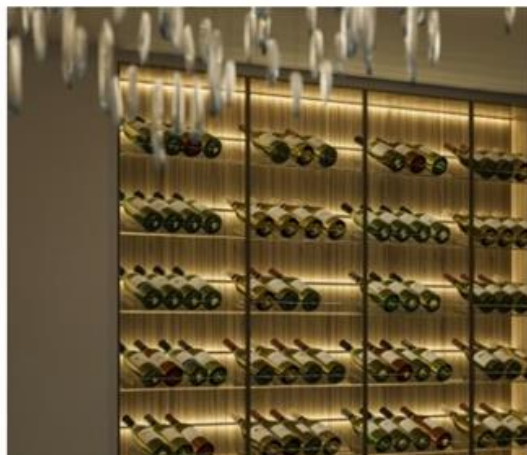
This barn conversion in North Dean, Buckinghamshire, on sale for £3.45 million through Knight Frank, features a bar

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This year has been terrible for restaurants. In August Jamie Oliver had to find £12 million to stop his restaurant chain from collapsing. Byron, the burger chain, has had similar troubles recently.

The problem isn't only that there are too many restaurants fighting for our custom, but more of us are opting to recreate the restaurant or bar experience at home. Interior designers and agents report that homeowners are increasingly installing bars in their homes. Some are going as far as recreating their favourite restaurants, or private members' club, to be enjoyed in the comfort of their home.

"I was recently asked to recreate a client's favourite Japanese restaurant, Nobu, at their Notting Hill home [in west London]," says Alan Waxman, the managing director of



Clivedale's Mayfair Park Residences near Hyde Park, where prices start at £4.25 million for a one-bedroom flat

Landmass, a property development and interior design company. “We installed a minimalist white kitchen with four ovens, two dishwashers, a Japanese grill, handmade plates sourced from Japan and a saké fridge, which is different from a wine fridge in that it has a special light and door coverings, which have an impact on the taste.”

James Gunn, the interiors director at Janine Stone, an interior design company, says that their clients are expanding their basement cinema rooms to include an adjoining private club-type bar area, where the lighting is dim and the furnishings resemble those of Soho House.

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“If you have an endless budget, we can arrange for any chef to cook dinner in your home,” says Penny Mosgrove, the chief executive of Quintessentially Estates, which offers concierge services for homeowners.

“The most elaborate dinner parties have become less about the food and more about the theatre. We’ve arranged recreations of the Last Supper, Cleopatra’s feast and Rothschild’s Surrealist Dinner from 1972. The attention to detail is the key, from antique Lalique glasses to gold-leaf plates and grand candelabras. Included in the theatre is the entertainment and we’ve arranged for the biggest names to perform, and flown in the world’s greatest orchestras for private dinners.



Suna Interior Design created this bar area in the Blackwall Reach scheme in east London. Prices start at £612,500

“One of my favourite stories was a dinner we organised for a British client at their château in France. The guests arrived by helicopter, the women were dressed like Marie Antoinette and the men like King Louis-Auguste, there was real rivalry with the costumes, it was a feast for the eyes. The dinner was held by candlelight, some 5,000 candles were used, it was decadence beyond belief.”

This trend for “experiential living” — creating out-of-the ordinary social experiences at home — is not limited to the wealthy. Tipi, a rental homes developer, has built a shared kitchen in its Alto scheme in Wembley Park, north London, where tenants host pizza parties after work, or wine-tasting evenings. Grainger, a housebuilder, has incorporated a dining room area into its Clippers Quay rental scheme in Manchester. Tenants can book the room, which has space for up to 12 guests, for £10 an hour.

In the country-house market, people are creating “party barns”, where they watch films, eat dinner or have drinks with friends, says Bruce Tolmie-Thomson, a partner at Knight Frank. “It’s about having a part of the home that is unique to you,” he says. “Party barns have evolved. They have projectors and big drop-down screens to watch a film or the rugby. We have a client who has a fire pit in a summerhouse with a central chimney, like you might see at Soho Farmhouse.”



The bar in a house in Fulham, southwest London, which is on sale for £2.65 million with Strutt & Parker

How to do-it-yourself

Anna Barnett, a food blogger who has worked with Habitat, recommends buying matching plates – all black, for instance – and mixing them up with ceramics and glassware. She is a big fan of Le Creuset. “I’ve got every size pot and pan. It looks really nice on the table and everyone can serve from the pot. It’s about making it look like you’ve gone all out, but it’s actually easy and everything is prepared in advance.”

Should you have a basement you don’t know what to do with, and an active social life, Gunn recommends using it to recreate a private members’ bar, with the lack of light being an advantage in getting the atmosphere right.

“Make sure any lighting is dimmable. Add antique or patinated mirrors, which gives a glamorous feel. For the bar, build it into a cabinet, so it still works within the home. We recently did a 1930s-era bar, with silk wallpaper. We painted the walls and the ceiling a very dark grey and had a marble coffee table, with antique bronze and brass accessories.”

To read more, please visit: <https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/stay-in-its-the-new-going-out-mf0ljzv7>