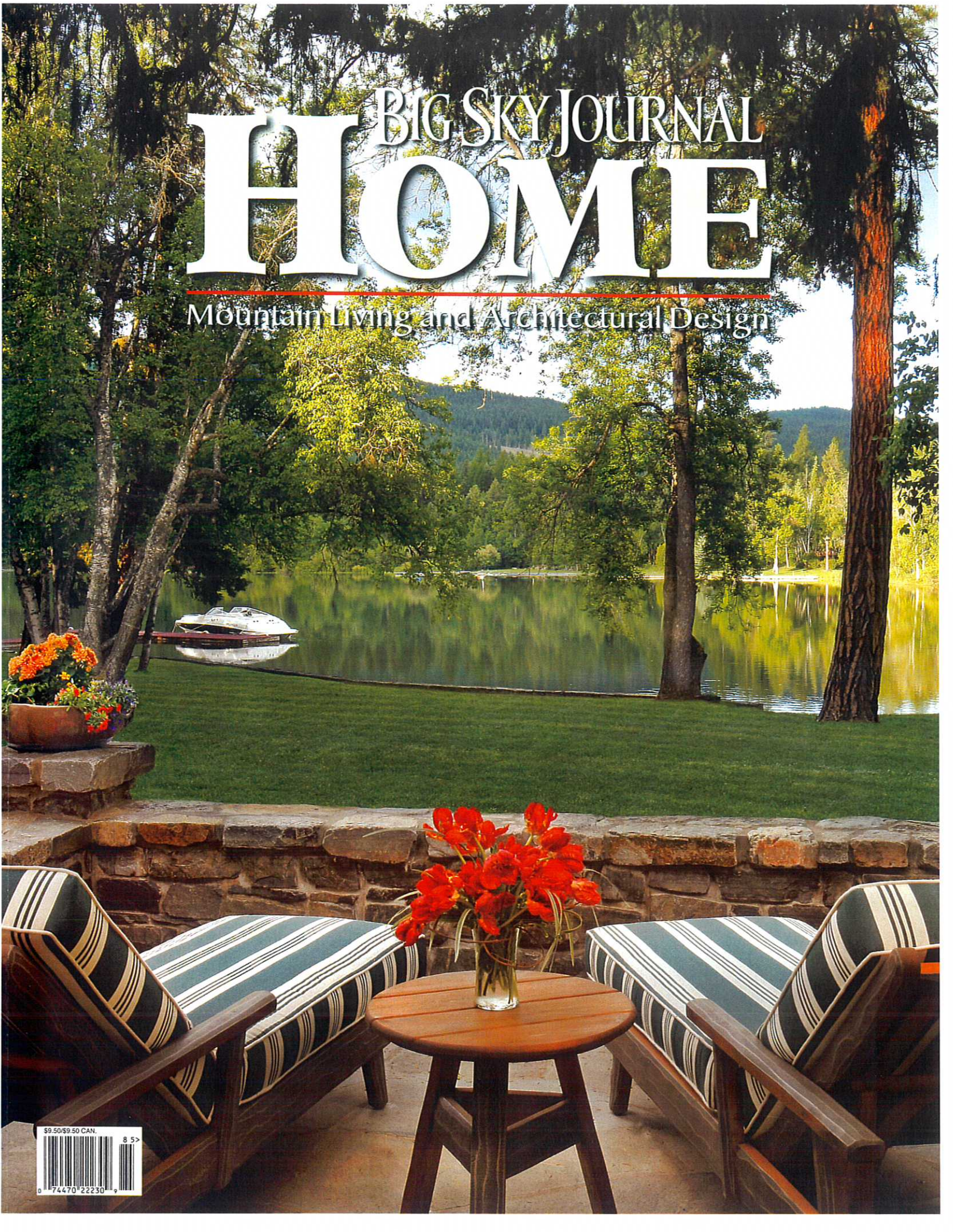


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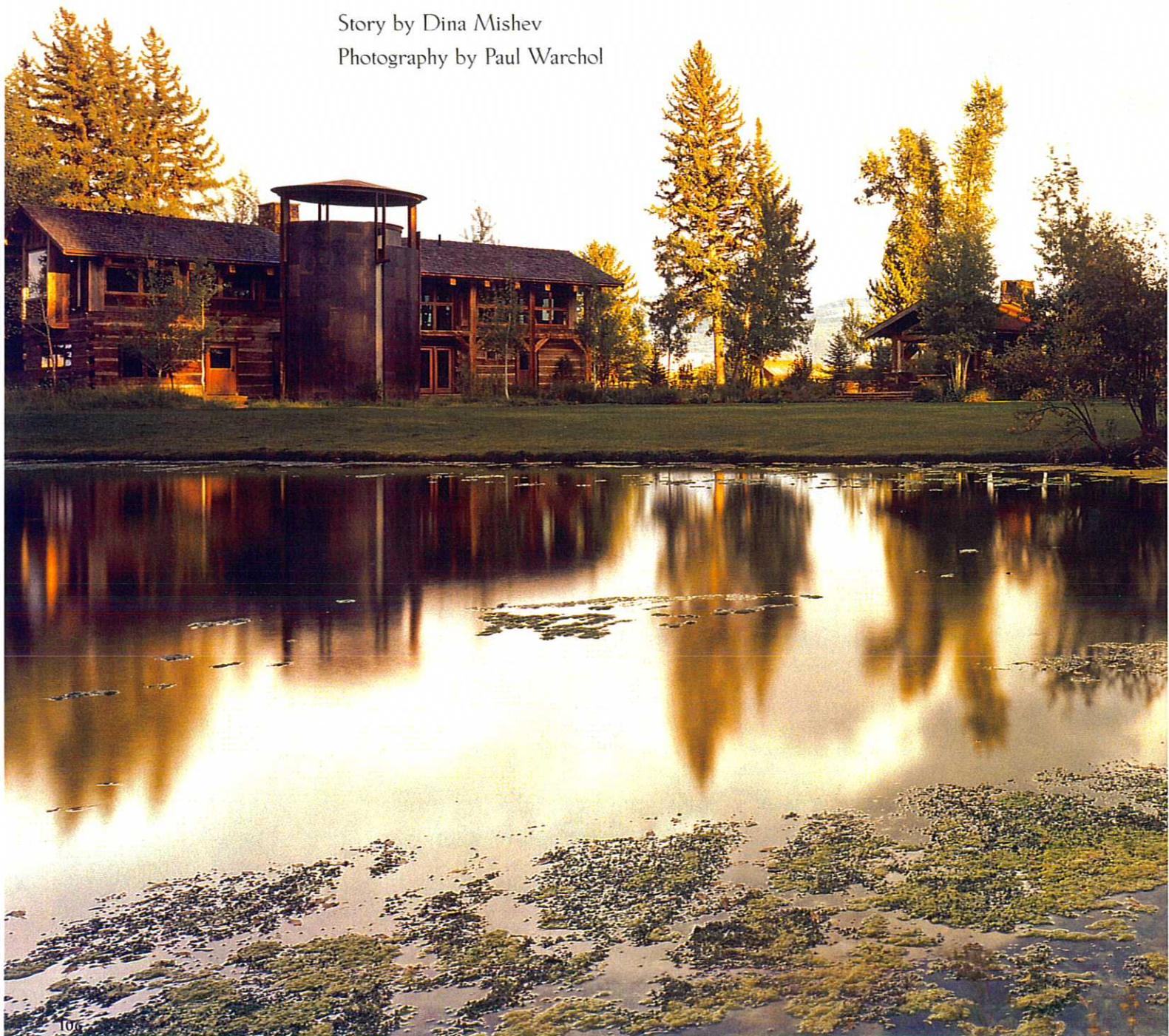


# WINE & WILDLIFE

A wine lover works around an obstacle  
to create a completely original wine cellar.

Story by Dina Mishev

Photography by Paul Warchol







Jackson Hole architect Eric Logan didn't need to see the number this particular fax – a rough sketch of a kind of wine cellar -- had come from. His only client who would have thought to make a wine cellar a wine silo was Ray Thurston.

Thurston and Logan, AIA and a principal with Carney Architects, had already worked on several structures together – a 7,600-square-foot lodge-style main house and, on the same 150-acre property north of the town of Jackson, a slightly more contemporary outlying shop/office/entertainment area Thurston calls his “más macho” building – by the time Thurston faxed the sketch. “But this idea was totally different from anything we had done together before,” Logan says. It was also different from anything



**Left:** Borrowing from agrarian structures, the pure silo form is clad in oxidized steel plates to gracefully weather and blend with the existing buildings and landscape. Architect Eric Logan of Carney Architects designed the sculptural outbuilding for practical wine storage and also for entertaining. **Above:** The sculptural 300-square-foot silo is connected to the mas machos building, where all the parties happen on the property and is visible from the main house.





Logan had done with any other client. “I had done wine rooms and cellars before, but nothing as sculptural as Ray was proposing here.”

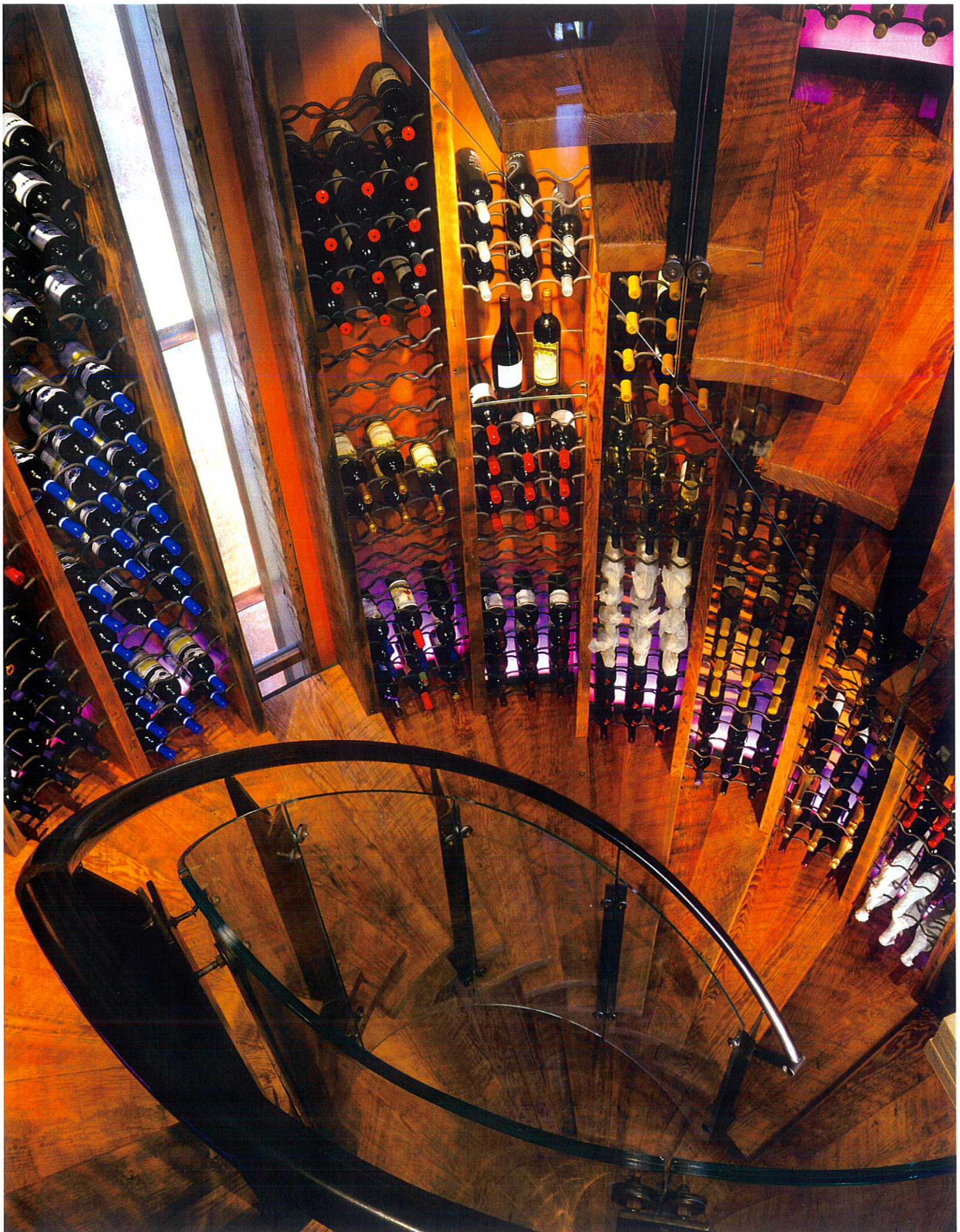
The structure, finished in 2006, received the 2007 Custom Home Magazine Grand Award for an Accessory Building and the Residential Architect Design Award of Merit from the Western Mountain Region Chapter of the American Institute of Architects.

Thurston, who, with his family, splits time between Jackson Hole and Arizona’s Paradise Valley, wasn’t necessarily

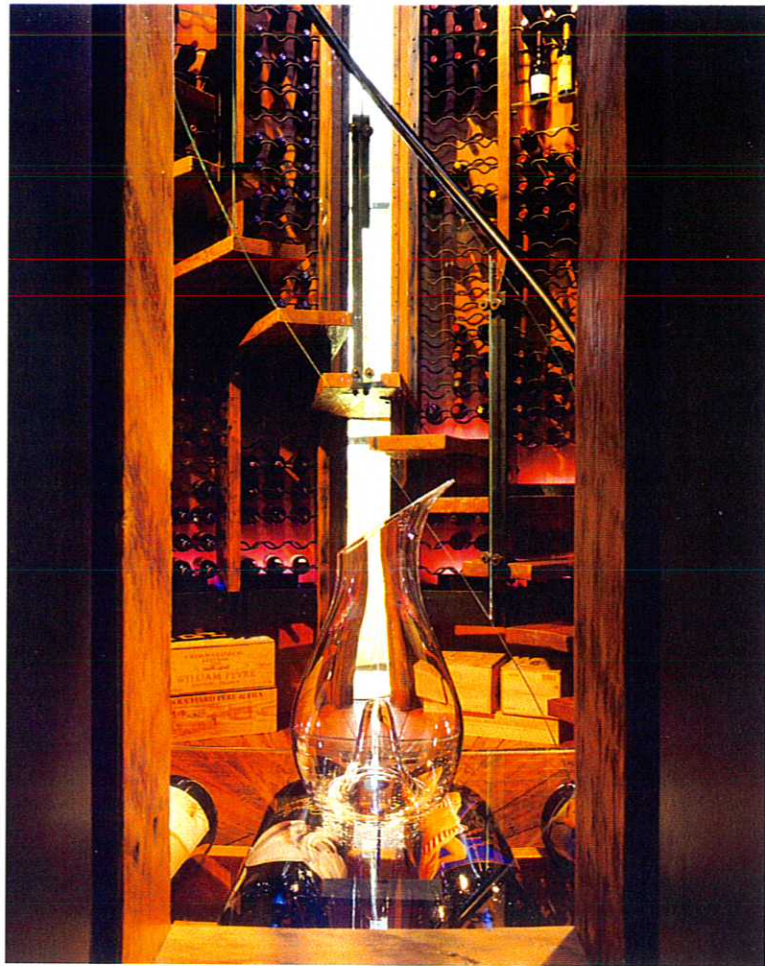
**Above:** The Thurston’s property is within the Snake River Plain, which prevented the construction of a traditional below-ground wine cellar, but the creative above ground solution has been a successful alternative. **Right:** A transparent glass walkway leads from the entertainment building to the wine silo. **Opposite:** Inspired by a wine cask, the interior of the silo is characterized by reclaimed fir woodwork and a spiral staircase that leads to a top-floor observation deck.











thinking about his wine silo as sculpture when he first came up with the idea. Mainly it was practical — their land sits in the Snake River floodplain so going into the ground wasn't an option — with a nod to an aesthetic that would mesh with the ranch-inspired buildings already on the property. "I had been playing around with a bunch of designs when I saw a farm that had a silo sitting next to a barn," Thurston says. "I thought that would go well with the land and house, spent a weekend playing around with a rough silo-based design and faxed what I came up with to Eric."

While there were some engineering hurdles to overcome during the wine silo's two-year design and construction process, one of the biggest difficulties had nothing to do with cooling, ventilation or structural integrity. Instead the hardest question encountered was: Where should it live on the property? "Because of the entertainment value and function of the

A crystal decanter catches the light sifting in through a vertical window that spans from floor to ceiling in the wine silo.

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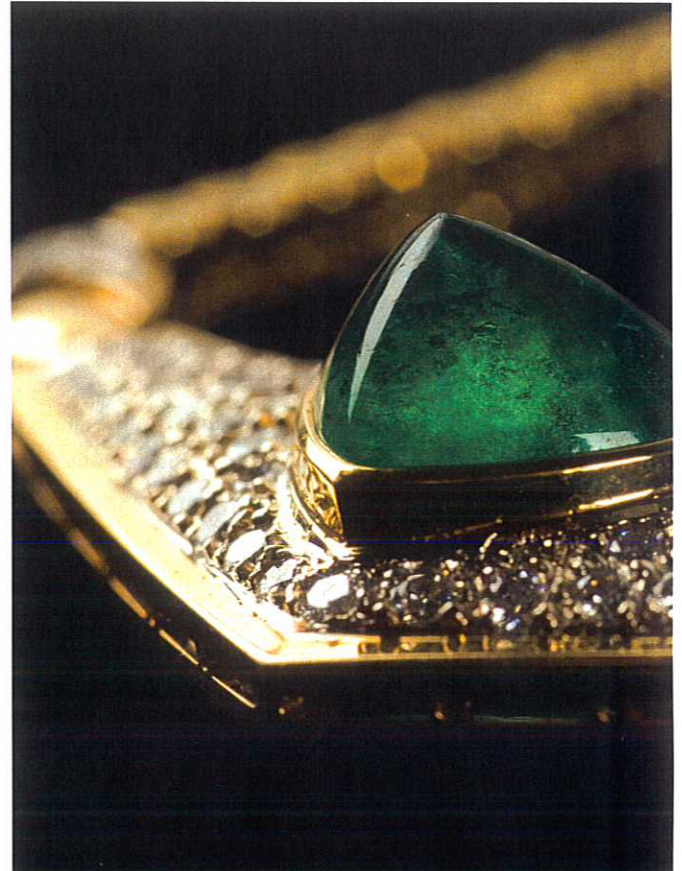


ALMOST AS IMPRESSIVE AS WHAT YOU SEE IN THE SILO IS WHAT YOU DON'T SEE. FIR ON THE INSIDE AND PATINAED STEEL ON THE OUTSIDE, THE SPACE BETWEEN THE TWO IS NEARLY ONE FOOT THICK. "REMEMBERING THIS BUILDING'S MAIN FUNCTION IS AS A WINE CELLAR, WE PRETTY MUCH HAD TO BUILD A BIG COOLER."

silos, it sort of gravitated toward the más macho building," Logan says. Because Ray wanted the new building to be interesting as sculpture and not just as an entertaining and wine storage space, they attached it to the building's western side, where it could be seen from the main house ... while allowing the silo itself views of the Tetons, a pond, creeks flowing through the property, a thick stand of cottonwood, osprey, heron, a resident herd of bull elk and, on really lucky days, a visiting bison. "There are some benefits to having your wine cellar go up rather than down," says Thurston, whose first home in Jackson was a 90-year old, 1,000-square foot cabin right in Grand Teton National Park.

Connected to the más macho building via a transparent walkway screened on the south side with bands of the same kind of oxidized steel used on its exterior, the silo's best views come from a 30-foot high rooftop aerie. Intermediate views come from a narrow, north-facing UV glass window stretching almost the full height of the silo's interior — 18 feet — and shaded with steel screens. A member of the board of directors of Conservation International for nearly a decade, Thurston keeps a pair of binoculars next to the stemware — crystal for both red and white wines, of course — just inside the entrance. "You might come out here for a glass of wine, but you never know what you'll see," he says.

Few guests to the silo race for the roof though. Reclaimed foot-wide fir planks — once part of a warehouse in British Columbia — line the interior walls. It doesn't take much of an imagination to feel as if you're inside a Brobdingnagian wine cask. The fir in the floor — recycled from the same warehouse — was cut in wedges and set, sunburst-style around a blackened steel center that mirrors a design on the ceiling. The walls, all the way around and from floor to ceiling are lined with custom contemporary steel racks able to hold a total of about 2,000 bottles. Occasional glass shelves accommodate large bottles. Fir-treaded, glass-enclosed, steel-supported stairs wind around and up without taking any attention from the wine display.



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Even visitors who don't care about vintages find themselves lingering in the space.

Almost as impressive as what you see in the silo is what you don't see. Fir on the inside and patinaed steel on the outside, the space between the two is nearly one foot thick. "Remembering this building's main function is as a wine cellar, we pretty much had to build a big cooler," Logan says. Between the fir and the steel are concrete-filled, rebar-reinforced foam blocks that insulate the interior and support the exterior steel plates.

Most guests to the wine silo — whether there for one of the impromptu neighborhood potlucks the Thurstons often host or for a more formal dinner benefiting the Jackson Hole One Fly Event — don't care about how the cooler was created. Standing on the covered, open-sided roof deck, a glass of

Thurston's preferred sip — currently Domaine William Fèvre Chablis — in one hand and a pair of binoculars in the other, cottonwoods whispering and painterly cumulus clouds accenting the Tetons' snowfields, practical details are the last thing on one's mind, even if it was a practicality that made this cellar a silo in the first place. **H**

*Dina Mishev writes about travel, sports, adventure, gear, art, people, and lifestyle topics for Outside, National Geographic Adventure, The Chicago Tribune, Big Sky Journal, Western Art & Architecture, Sunset, Cooking Light, NWA World Traveler, United Hemispheres, Wyoming Tourism, Arizona Tourism, and Mobil Travel Guide. Assignments have taken her from spas in Africa to granite cliffs in Tasmania. Her first book, Wyoming Curiosities, was published by Globe Pequot in July 2007.*



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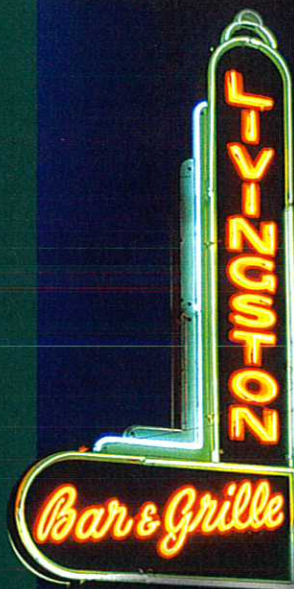
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