



The Journal



Wine insight article



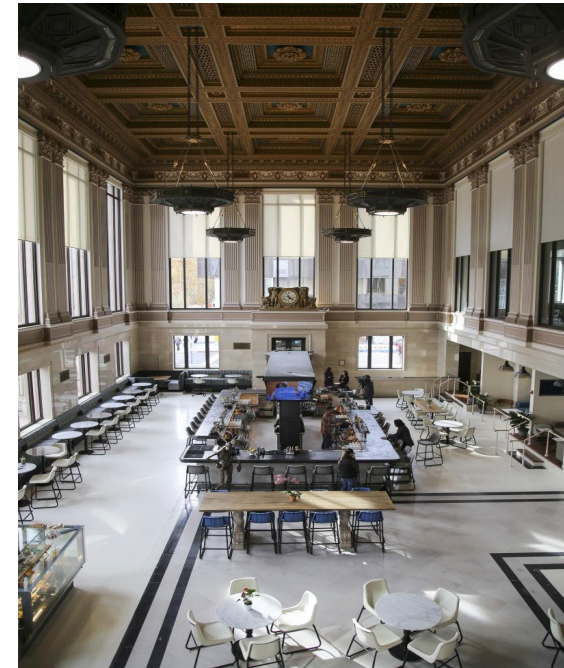
Sacramento, California's New Foodie Capital

A look at a Historical bank transformation

Feb 27, 2020 Courtesy of Sacramento Tourism by Blane Bachelor and Kate Washington: The Bank, the collection of fast-casual mini restaurants in a glamorous old-school former bank downtown, calls itself a food hall. You would be right to think of a food hall as something as lavishly upscale as London's famed Harrod's, overflowing with tempting gourmet options.

By that standard, The Bank has the space – its high ceiling gilded and beautifully painted, its marble halls agleam – but I'm not sure the food measures up. The five or so vendors slinging burgers, pizza, poke (you can't go anywhere without poke these days), and above all else beer seem more like the inhabitants of that rather less upscale phenomenon, the food court. Drinking is one lure, perhaps a bigger one than the food. A downstairs beer cellar offers dozens of pour-your-own taps, but it feels a little out of the way. Upstairs, the central bar is more inviting, with lots of atmosphere from the attractive setting, natural light from the big windows, TVs for watching the game and a friendly bartender.

Over the past several years, some of the best muralists in the world—including heavy-weight artists Axel Void and Shepard Fairey—have transformed the state capital's buildings into a giant plein air gallery, with more than 120 pieces of art. It's all part of Sacramento's Wide Open Walls, a two-week festival promoting the arts.



The Bank Interior Sacramento

During my running tour of the murals, my jogging buddy/guide was Jenn Kistler-McCoy, founder of Sac Tour Company, which specializes in tours via foot or bike.

At the time, Kistler-McCoy was training for the Boston Marathon; I was just hoping to detox a bit after too many culinary indulgences the night before. Along our six-mile route, Kistler-McCoy pointed out a dozen or so murals, explaining the artists and story behind each one.

“The mural movement started in the 1960s,” she said. “This isn’t a new phenomenon—it’s just finally getting the attention it deserves.”

The same can be said for Sacramento itself. Once described by now governor Gavin Newsom as “just so dull,” California’s capital is on a tear these days, transforming its longtime reputation as a stodgy political hub into a bona fide culinary destination and outdoor-recreation hotbed.



Oscartek Italia model at the Bank

In June, the Kitchen, a spacious restaurant serving \$135 prix fixe meals—with delicacies like roasted quail over port-braised red cabbage—was awarded the city’s first Michelin star. The chef-owner behind the menu, Randall Selland, has long been an institutional figure in Sacramento’s foodie scene, having taken full advantage of the region’s abundance of farms and ranches. The Sacramento Valley produces much of the country’s fruits, vegetables, and nuts, and it’s that rich agricultural heritage that inspired the moniker “America’s Farm-to-Fork Capital.”

“In the dead of winter, we’re still being supplied from local farms,” says Oliver Ridgeway, who, while executive chef at Grange, helped put Sacramento on the culinary map. In 2018, Ridgeway left Grange to open his brasserie-style eatery, Camden Spit & Larder, and many of the city’s culinary talents have similarly opened their own restaurants.

The city is growing on other fronts, too. In 2016, the \$557 million Golden 1 Center opened as the new home of the NBA’s Sacramento Kings—and as the world’s first 100 percent solar-powered arena. The public-private venture has transformed a formerly blighted swath of the city into Downtown Commons, or DoCo, which includes a luxury hotel; Punch Bowl Social, a hybrid bowling alley/arcade; and two dozen restaurants and retail shops. In two years, a professional soccer team is scheduled to play in a new \$300 million stadium in the booming Railyards district, a mega-development just north of downtown that’s roughly eight times larger than New York’s Hudson Yards.

“We didn’t just want to be that place between Tahoe and San Francisco anymore, so we decided to invest in ourselves,” says Raymond James Irwin, a Sacramento native and president of Fizz Champagne & Bubbles Bar, located in DoCo. “The city is changing because the leaders in our community decided, let’s do it instead of just talking about it.”

Sac's year-round mild weather makes it easy to burn off calories by exploring the city's leafy neighborhoods via foot or two wheels. For longer rides, cyclists have the 32-mile American River Bike Trail, which runs to the Sierra Nevada foothills. Closer to downtown, the Sacramento River Parkway Trail is popular among runners, with views of the river and its iconic, mustard-yellow Tower Bridge. Standup paddleboarders and kayakers are a common sight, and farther afield, there are several national forests rich in both hiking and Gold Country history.

Not unlike modern-day Californians, Sacramento's Gold Rush-era residents faced fires and severe flooding of the river; many left and never returned when the boom fizzled. But the city's infrastructure and economy have come a long way since then, and locals these days are finding plenty of reasons to stay for the long haul.

"You could have asked me 10 years ago if I'd be back in Sacramento, and I would have told you no way," says Dane Blom, a native of the city who was named executive chef at Grange in 2018 following stints in New York and Napa. "But now I have zero plans to go anywhere. I love it here."

Where to Stay

The boutique Citizen Hotel is a fitting nod to the city's stately roots, decorated with framed political cartoons from The Sacramento Bee. For a more see-and-be-seen spot, head to the Kimpton Sawyer, home to Sac's first rooftop pool.

Where to Eat and Drink

It's hard to go wrong with the Italian-influenced seafood dishes at Allora. Or get your brisket-and-beer fix at Urban Roots Brewing & Smokehouse. The Canon has amazing al fresco dining, with designed-for-sharing plates like bulgogi butternut squash.

Catch a Buzz

The Beer Vault, housed in a 1912 bank building, has 68 self-pour taps to sample from. Or revel in the old-school vibe at B Side, a Midtown bar where DJs spin vinyl on the weekend. Want vino? You can choose from 24 sparkling wines served by the glass at Fizz Champagne & Bubbles Bar.

Don't Leave Without...

...strolling around Old Sac, which offers a glimpse into the city's Gold Rush-era riverfront district...savoring Milk Money's absurdly delicious doughnuts with cheeky names like Bananas & Pajamas.

Wine Coolers Asserts Upscale Appeal

Feb 27, 2020, Ssan Francisco.

The global wine cooler market is expected to grow at a CAGR of over 6% during the period 2020-2025.

The need to preserve the quality and avoid unwanted spoilage of wine is driving the global wine cooler market. Since wine becomes detrimental when exposed to air, it should be properly stored at a specific temperature. Therefore, the impressive growth in modern refrigeration technology, which includes thermoelectric and compressor cooling techniques, is influencing several vendors to adopt advanced, robust wine cooling systems across the globe. The availability of convenient temperature controls and separate shelves for red and white wine is influencing the wine storage market. Hence, the rapid growth in refrigeration technology has led to the adoption of wine coolers in the market.

From multiple cooling zones to more flexible interiors and upgraded aesthetics, today's wine refrigerators make an elegant statement.



Multiple styles in wine display
(Oscartek Gala models)



Oscartek Provino Wine Chillers

New technological innovations continue to offer advanced cooling systems and improved performance, while those who like to show off their collection have multiple options with the newest designs.

Color is making some inroads as well, both inside and out, along with upgraded interior racks, multiple clear or tinted glass options and LED lighting.

Below are some of the hottest trends in wine refrigeration right now.

-Flexible size options in both freestanding and built-in models provide more choices for both large and smaller collections, while reversible doors provide added placement

-There's also a growing trend toward more flexible interiors that can be configured based on the homeowner's individual collection.

-Just as with other appliances, consumers are seeking features that work for the way they enjoy wine and entertain with it, i.e. separate zones for both red and white, a mode for deep chilling white wines, etc.

-Interiors are also seeing a marked upgrade, with better lighting to showcase collections, richly colored interiors and higher quality shelving.

-Safety features like tempered glass and safety locks to keep children out are also popular features.

As health-conscious consumers worldwide are oriented toward consuming low alcoholic drinks, which reduces cholesterol and strengthens the heart, the consumption is growing. Studies have revealed that wine helps to live longer, stay healthier, and even protect people against certain types of cancers. Hence, the proven benefits are helping to increase sales, which is favoring the growth of the wine cooler.

Factors such as price and affordability are expected to bolster the application of free-standing coolers. They are inexpensive and can store up to 150 bottles. These chillers are designed for quick installation and easy maintenance; hence they are witnessing a large-scale adoption in commercial and residential sectors. The built-in wine cooler segment generated over \$400 million in 2019.

Compressor-based technology is likely to bolster the market during the forecast period. Compressor-based coolers have a high storage capacity; hence a large number of bottles can be stored at the specified temperature for a more extended period without relying on external temperatures. Vendors are likely to focus on regions such as India, the UAE, and China to increase the penetration of compressor-based products due to humid temperature conditions. Compressor-based technology is expected to be widely applied for dual zoned coolers in countertop and free-standing types owing to their impressive cooling systems.

Dual-zone cooler extensively caters to commercial spaces where the storage demand is high. They consist of two different sections with varying temperature options, thereby helping to store red and white wine at the same time. Single-zone cooling equipment is designed to hold a small number of bottles at a constant temperature. These coolers utilize thermo-electric cooling techniques and are witnessing adoption in the residential sector due to their energy efficiency. They are inexpensive and can hold up to 25 bottles. Single-zone cooling equipment is likely to witness increased combination sales in growing markets such as APAC, Latin America, and MEA The increased consumption of wine in restaurants, especially in Italy, Mexico, and the US is likely to emerge as a major driver of the growth of the commercial segment. Further, the increasing popularity of social drinking is expected to be a key influencer for the growth of commercial equipment. The growing disposable income, a high preference among millennials, and the need to prevent bacterial growth in drinks have led to the adoption of wine cooler in the residential sector. Wine has become an essential beverage in birthday parties and family reunions. Therefore, the increasing acceptance of the beverage in socializing events is a major contributor to the residential segment growth.



Dry aged meat, Cheese and Wine display
(Oscartek Provino series)

B2B channels are major distributors for wine cooler. The requirement of chillers is high in the business sector and is likely to be one of the major factors responsible for the growth of the market by 2025. Specialty stores cater to consumers in the residential sector. The consumers from APAC is likely to buy from these stores as they enable them to have a broad scope and knowledge regarding the working of a wine chiller. Moreover, new collection members are expected to acquire technological assistance from agents and supervisors in the store.

Europe is expected to increase its revenue contribution on account of a large number of wineries and vineyards in the region. The growing number of export and import facilities from Italy, France, Germany, and Spain is expected to fuel the consumption of wine, thereby influencing wine cooler sales. The millennials in the UK and Italy are likely to be prominent in wine consumption and are expected to surpass baby boomers during the forecast period.

North America is estimated to be the fastest-growing region across the world due to the rapid drinking among US and Canadian households. The increasing consumption among females, especially in New York, Texas, Florida, and California, is also likely to influence market growth. The US market accounted for more than 75% of the total wine cooler market in North America. The US has a presence of more than 100 wineries in 13 states. Freestanding cooler emerged as the largest segment by installation with a revenue contribution of over \$350 million in 2019.

The demand for the freestanding chiller is likely to increase due to a low number of persons per household in the US and Canada. The APAC region is expected to increase its revenue share due to the presence of Australian vineyards, which are one of the largest wine exporters in the world. The high alcohol consumption in the aging population of China and Japan is likely to boost the market.

Insights by Vendors

The global wine cooler market is highly fragmented, with a large presence of vendors. The product is highly tech-oriented, and the difference lies in the application of advanced innovative technology at an affordable price. The cost factor significantly influences expensive chillers in developing countries such as India, where the middle-class population constitutes a major share of the total population.

The penetration of the internet has increased product awareness and consciousness toward the cost-benefit ratio. Vendors enforce to think from the customer point of view, thereby trying to promote the value-oriented approach. Vendors gain an edge over their competitors by improving customer support, quality, and aftersales services.



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