

# Welcome to the Club

AN OPEN-PLAN SADDLE RIVER BASEMENT  
SETS THE TONE FOR SOPHISTICATED SOIRÉES

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The bar area is outfitted with five LED lighting systems that can change color and vibrate to music. “The choice of cabinet colors, stone, tile, black ceiling with gold trim, murals, colored lights and art all create the atmosphere of a fabulous party,” designer Julia Kleyman says.

The barware gleams against a dramatic antiqued mirror backdrop with gold veining.



Darlene and Jack Finn had a plan for the expansive basement in their Saddle River residence, and that plan involved a departure from their usual aesthetic. “The homeowners had renovated rooms upstairs and created beautiful classic and modern interiors. Their style and design choices were impeccable,” says Julia Kleyman of Ulrich Inc. in Ridgewood. “For the basement, however, they wanted something different; something a bit more daring, with a nightclub/lounge flair, but still very tasteful.” Darlene Finn describes the look in more detail. “I pictured a New York City club atmosphere — chic, but comfortable and welcoming. I wanted a little glamour without it being too feminine.”

During the project’s planning stages, the Finns thought carefully about how they wanted the space to be organized. Jack Finn explains, “We deliberated having separate rooms for wine storage, the TV and the pool table, but we really liked the idea of one open area. We wanted all the pieces blended together coherently in a large open space.” The Finns entertain frequently, and their get-togethers often involve large numbers of people. “First on the wish list was a bar that could comfortably allow





room for 16 people,” Julia says. “The next requirement was to provide space for 70-to-80-person parties that still felt intimate and cozy for family nights.” The original plan for the approximately 2,500 square feet of living space was to situate the bar in the center of the basement. “But,” the designer says, “as we reviewed the flow of the space, we decided the bar would be better placed along the back wall, leaving a large area to gather (or dance!) in the center of the room.”

To help demarcate the gathering place/dance floor, the ceiling above it was elevated — a feat that can be challenging within the confines of a

basement. “The only place we could get that height was in the center of that space,” Jack says. “We moved some water lines around and were able to raise that section of the ceiling to over 9 feet.” To add drama, the raised ceiling was swathed in wall covering featuring moody tones infused with streaks of light. Light fixtures accentuate the look. “The dropped drum lighting, along with multifunction and multicolor LED perimeter lights, creates a wonderful dynamic, highlighting the space,” Julia says.

The bar itself is another highlight, featuring large-format, striated porcelain tile on the seating side illuminated with integrated LED lights

that change color. “There are five LED lighting systems in the bar area, and they can vibrate to the music,” Jack notes. “It’s a pretty nice club set up.” Across the dance floor, a standing bar is set into lally columns wrapped in cabinet material. “The standing bar was created to allow extra landing zones and leaning surfaces when a big party is happening,” the designer explains.

As it happened, a big celebration occurred soon after the renovation. “I had a birthday party for Darlene with 65 or 70 people. It worked beautifully,” Jack says. His wife was thrilled — not just with her

The bar can serve as a small kitchen with its appliances, storage and counter space. For an extra dash of glamour, the counter backsplash is accented with gold. “We found a wonderful gold tile stick mosaic. We had just enough material to get creative and do the bar backsplash with Art Deco flair.”

A raised ceiling highlights the gathering space next to the bar. The bar tables can be removed to create room for a dance floor. The pool table is just a few steps away.

A large, U-shaped sectional sofa provides ample space for comfy conversation. The temperature-controlled wine enclosure (rear) holds 450 bottles.





A jungle mural greets guests at the bottom of the stairs. The walls, which display playful portraits of women, are painted a deep wine hue. The door to the movie room (at right in photo) is a high-gloss red. "It creates a special, festive feeling inviting one to peek inside," the designer says.

SOURCES design, Ulrich Inc. in Ridgewood; suspended ceiling, Chuck May in Oradell; Milliken & Co. carpet and Hampton vinyl flooring, Abbey Carpet & Floor of Hawthorne; wine racks/wine rack enclosure, Wine Enthusiast; wine room glass enclosure, Modern Shower Doors LLC in Dover; countertop material and fabrication, Stone Surfaces in East Rutherford; bar apron fabrication, Creative Countertops in Paterson; bar, wine enclosure and column cabinetry, Wood-Mode Fine Custom Cabinetry; cabinet hardware, Top Knobs in Branchburg; bar footrail, Lavi Industries; tile on seat side of bar, bar back wall and counter backsplash, John P. Fischer Tiles Inc. in Hawthorne; gold tile stick mosaic on bar counter backsplash, Artistic Tile in Paramus; antiqued mirror with gold veining behind bar glassware, Architectural Glass Effects in Paterson; speed oven and warming drawer (not shown), Wolf; refrigerator/freezer combo drawers and ice maker, Sub-Zero; dishwasher, Miele; stainless steel sink, Franke; stainless steel faucet, Grohe; raised ceiling linear LED lighting, GlowbackLED; "Urban Jungle at Dusk" wall mural at stairway/entry wall, Koziel; Loom 14 flush square bar decorative ceiling lights, Tech Lighting; dance floor Plura flush drum lights, Cerno®; "Rain with Sun" wallpaper in the raised ceiling, Wallsauce; light gray wall color, "Misty Memories" by Benjamin Moore & Co.; dark paint color behind bar, "Shadow" by Benjamin Moore & Co.; theater door color, "China Red" by Benjamin Moore & Co.; wall color in entry/theater area and drop ceiling over bar, "Elderberry Wine" by Benjamin Moore & Co.; painting and wallpaper application, Fontanella Painting LLC in Oakland.

birthday party, but with the overall space. "I wanted the space to have style — that's certainly why I turned to Julia. She worked with us and talked about our goals. It really was a coming together of the minds. She was wonderful to work with." The designer adds, "It was truly a pleasure working with these homeowners; they were genuinely excited about the project and open to all ideas. We collaborated wonderfully throughout the entire process." **DNJ**

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