

HIDE YOUR CLUTTER IN PLAIN SIGHT

Everybody has way too much stuff and not enough places to put it. We may dream about downsizing to a condo in the city or a cottage in the country, and living with less. Or we might say we will finally clean out the back bedroom and transform it into a guest suite. But when it comes right down to the Hefty trash bag, we don't get rid of much. We really like our stuff.

The answer lies in finding attractive storage solutions that enable us to live amid our treasures, comfortably and clutter-free. Fortunately, a major design trend today is multi-functional organizational pieces that fade into your existing décor.

The Cava Wine Credenza by Vinotemp, for example, works as a classically beautiful piece of furniture while chilling 36 bottles of your preferred chardonnay. Available in two finishes, light walnut or rich maple, the unit features dual temperature zones, pull-out serving shelves and storage drawers. The cost is \$1,695 from vinotemp.com.

The innovative Desk Bed by ORG, a division of The Stow Company, converts small spaces without moving or adding furniture. An internal balancing mechanism provides a smooth transition without disturbing worktop paraphernalia, and a hidden compartment keeps twin-size bedding in place. The basic Desk Bed comes in 20 color and wood grain options and starts at \$2,500, professionally installed. But you needn't stop there. Add decorative side panels or surround the Desk Bed with a shelving system. Explore possibilities and dealers at www.homeorg.com.

Another space-stretching strategy is to turn a dead-end hallway into

a butler pantry, such as offered by Deerfield-based Meritus Homes. When dressed up with



Above: Cava 36-Bottle Wine Credenza by Vinotemp, light walnut or rich maple, \$1695, www.vinotemp.com

Left: Desk Bed by ORG, The Stow Company, from \$2,500, www.thestowcompany.com



cabinetry, glass doors and spot lighting, a butler pantry eliminates the need for a buffet or sideboard in a living or dining room. But rows of cabinetry begin to look heavy, especially when the wood is dark. Lighten the effect by inserting a few glass doors, which also makes display space for pretty china or glassware, says Meritus' president Brian Brunhofer.

Storage cubes have been around for such a long time, they are now a classic. But the problem with cubes is they are so, well, cube-y. Online retailer Module R showcases contemporary, geometric art and furnishings. Boom Design's Hive Cubes are elongated hexagons that pin together to make flexible and limitless shelving. Start with five hexes to fully evoke the beehive motif, then build on. The walnut veneer Hive Cubes are \$125 each from www.module-r.com.

Multi-faceted lives and a four-season climate call for extensive wardrobes, which easily overwhelm a standard walk-in closet. Helpful Hardware Man Lou Manfredini, Ace's Home Expert, is a strong advocate for closet systems. A range of price points are available, from do-it-yourself to professional installations.

"Use all the vertical space you have available," he says. "If your closet is eight feet tall, put up shelving as high as you can go to maximize the space."

Manfredini also recommends storing out-of-season apparel in plastic storage boxes. Invest in a bunch, all by the same manufacturer so they'll stack well. Next, number the boxes and make a list of the items you've packed in each one. That's how to avoid this situation: You put your winter clothes in storage when early spring temperatures soared to the 80s. Winter weather returns. You need your brown equestrian boots, but all your storage boxes look the same. Look at your list, you'll quickly see they are in Box Number One.

If you can find your list. □