

MEMBER-ONLY CONTENT

Wine fridge reviews

We put wine fridges, both large and small, through their paces in our laboratories to find out which are best for your precious drops.

Updated: 8 Jul 2014 | Author: Matthew Steen 



01 .Introduction

We review more 12 wine fridges priced from \$279 to \$4790.

Through our rigorous testing we reveal which wine fridges perform the best. You can use this report to:

- find the best [wine fridge](#) for you out of 12 models tested
- discover the ones we recommend
- check the performance of wine fridges from big brands such as [DeLonghi](#), [Eurocave](#), [Grand Cru](#), [Haier](#), [Liebherr](#) and [Vintec](#)
- choose from a selection of different-sized wine fridges, from under-bench to tall full-sized wine cabinets.

On this page:

- Brands and models tested



- How we test

For more information about [Fridges and freezers](#), see our [Kitchen](#) section.

We've reviewed and compared 12 wine fridge models to see which one came out on top.

Models tested

- DeLonghi DEWC166S
- DeLonghi DEWC54S
- EuroCave V-PURE-M
- Grand Cru GC40
- Haier JC110GD
- Haier JC160GD
- Heller WCH40
- Liebherr WKb 1712 Barrique
- Liebherr WKEs 553
- Palsonic PAL42BWF
- Vintec V110SGeS3
- Vintec V30SGeS3

How we test

There is no Australian standard for testing wine fridges, so we've devised a variation of our fridge method to test them based on wine storage ideals of maintaining a temperature of 14C, and used a loaded fridge in all scored tests.

- Ambient - We check the temperature operation range for the wine fridges' ability to operate in external conditions ranging from 10°C to 40°C.
- Fluctuations - We measure temperature fluctuations to see if the cabinets can maintain steady temperatures over the short term as the cooling system cycles.
- Uniformity - Are compartment temperatures generally uniform, without warmer or colder areas?
- In some of the fridges we test humidity control, though this is less important these days given the proliferation of screw tops.
- We measure energy consumption to see how your running costs will rack up over 10 years.

- We measure the vibration of the operating fridge, which is said to have an affect on wine storage. We also measure noise, for those who will be installing their wine fridge in, or close to, living areas.

Quietness / noise

Wine fridges will generally make a combination of noises that some people may find annoying. More noise is produced when the compressor starts up. Some models have an external fan system to help keep the compressor cool, which can add to the noise level. Where the fridge is located will affect what you'll hear. Our testing has found which models are noisier during normal running, but some of these more unusual noises can be more noticeable with models that are quieter during normal running.

Running costs over 10 years

The running cost is calculated from the energy used over 10 years, using a rate of 26 cents per kilowatt hour. A 10-year period provides a useful indication of the long-term differences between high and low energy usage. Wine fridges are an unregulated product, so their energy use can vary wildly.

Price

Recommended retail, unless otherwise specified. You can probably get a better price by shopping around.

02. What to buy

We recommend wine fridges that score 90% or more overall.

2 CHOICE buys

Liebherr WKb 1712 Barrique

Scored 94/100 | \$1499

94%

Good points:

- Excellent overall temperature performance
- Excellent response to seasonal change
- Excellent for fluctuations
- Very good for uniformity
- Has a door alarm

Bad points:

- None to mention



Liebherr WKEes 553

Scored 91/100 | \$2920

91%

Good points:

- Excellent overall temperature performance
- Excellent response to seasonal change
- Excellent for fluctuations
- Relatively quiet
- Low vibration
- Has a door alarm

Bad points:



- High energy usage per bottle

03. Comparison table

Comparison table list

- By default, all tested products are listed. You can select up to five items to view in a side by side comparison.
- Additional columns can be viewed by using the Next/Previous buttons.

Using the filters

- Use the filters to show only products that meet your specific requirements or which have the specific features you're interested in.
- Selecting filters automatically updates the comparison table list.
- The number shown in brackets represents the number of products displayed if you select that filter.
- You can view additional filters by selecting the Show more filters button.

Make a selection

Filters

Brand	Price (\$)	Door alarm	Lock	Humidity control	Child lock on controls
▪ Delonghi (2)	▪ \$0 - \$1000 (6)	▪ No (9)	▪ No (5)	▪ No (5)	▪ No (7)
▪ EuroCave (1)	▪ \$1001 - \$1500 (2)	▪ Yes (3)	▪ Yes (7)	▪ Yes (7)	▪ Yes (5)
▪ Grand Cru (1)	▪ \$1501 - \$2000 (0)				
▪ Haier (2)	▪ \$2001 + (4)				
▪ Heller (1)					

Liebherr (2)






Palsonic (1)

Vintec (2)

[More options \(3\)](#) +

Compare products

Items to compare		< Previous		Showing columns 1 - 9 of 34				Next >		
Select up to 5 items below. Then click the compare button		Overall Score	Price (\$)	Bottle capacity claim	Cost per bottle/yr (\$)	Ten Year Running Cost	Ambient score (%)	Fluctuation score (%)	Uniformity score (%)	Measured energy use (kWh / year)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Liebherr WKb 1712 Barrique	94	1499	60	1.5	900	100	90	85	346
<input type="checkbox"/>	Liebherr WKEes 553	91	2920	18	2.71	488	100	90	70	188
<input type="checkbox"/>	Grand Cru GC40	84	599	40	1.68	672	92	85	60	258
<input type="checkbox"/>	Vintec V110SGeS3	78	2650	121	0.78	948	86	70	70	365
<input type="checkbox"/>	Vintec V30SGeS3	76	700	32	2.3	736	84	80	50	283
<input type="checkbox"/>	Delonghi DEWC166S	73	2499	166	0.9	1487	68	90	60	572
<input type="checkbox"/>	Haier JC110GD	72	587	36	1.8	648	72	85	50	249

<input type="checkbox"/>	Haier JC160GD		69	977	51	1.86	948	66	85	50	365
<input type="checkbox"/>	EuroCave V-PURE-M		63	4790	168	0.7	1174	72	50	60	451
<input type="checkbox"/>	DeLonghi DEWC54S		59	1399	54	2.69	1453	90	20	40	559
<input type="checkbox"/>	Palsonic PAL42BWF		41	235	42	3.04	1275	30	70	25	490
<input type="checkbox"/>	Heller WCH40		34	279	40	3.63	1452	0	90	35	559

Compare
Clear
|<
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Showing columns 1 - 9 of 34
Next >
>|

Using the table

Scores The overall score consists of: ambient temperature (50%), fluctuation (30%) and uniformity (20%). **Features** see [What to look for](#). **Energy use** (kWh/year) is based on the fridge's energy consumption. **Noise level** These are comparative measurements taken 1m up and 1m away from the fridge during normal running. Fridges can sound noticeably louder as the compressor starts. **Vibration** While not definitively proven, there has been one study completed and much anecdotal evidence about the affect of vibration on wine. According to the study, vibrations under 200mm/s² are acceptable. **Humidity** We tested a number of the fridges for humidity and list whether they keep humidity within 5% **Claimed bottle capacity** This is how many bottles the manufacturers claims to be able to fit into the fridge. **10-year running costs** are calculated at a rate of 26c/kWh. A 10-year period gives a useful indication of the long-term differences between high and low energy use. **Price** Recommended retail, as of July 2014.

Table notes

na Not applicable nt not tested

04. What to look for

When shopping for a wine fridge, keeping these factors in mind can help you narrow down the model search.

When buying a wine fridge, consider a few factors that will help you narrow down your model search.

Location Where will you keep your wine fridge? If it's close to a living area, noise will be a key consideration. If it's to be in your kitchen, you'll want to install it away from extreme temperatures such as though coming from the oven. If possible, install it away from any area that's subject to natural temperature swings, such as garages, lofts or the laundry if you have an electric-vented dryer that vents into the area. Just like a fridge, make sure there is plenty of room around the sides, rear and top of the installed wine fridge to enable good air circulation. And try to keep it away from direct light.

Doors All the wine fridges we tested have glass doors, so you can look into your wine fridge and see what you want before opening the door and letting the temperature change. Some also have solid doors, which may help with insulation and the amount of UV to which your wine is exposed, otherwise you can check that your glass door has a UV coating. Wine bottles are typically coloured to provide some marginal protection from direct light, and any additional protection helps to keep the wine from ageing or degrading too quickly.

Bottle capacity Are you a wine hoarder? Do you buy a couple of hundred bottles at a time? Then plan for either a larger model or a number of small models. If you need an under-bench model, consider the space you'll need and buy more than one if you want to keep a lot of wine. If you go through a lot of champagne, you may want to check if the wine fridge can accommodate these typically wider bottles. If you tend to buy a small amount of wine at a time, one of the smaller models should suit you well.

Shelving The less expensive models in our testing tend to have metal shelving, which makes it harder to pull out your wines and can scratch bottles or labels. The more expensive wine fridges have wooden shelving with good sliding mechanisms, which means less vibration and better ease of use, however it's thicker than metal shelving, which means less wine storage space. Check out the shelves before buying, as some have wooden shelving that has no sliding mechanism.

Individual or bulk storage? Some wine fridges provide bulk storage of wine bottles where they stack on top of each other. This means you can fit more in, but it also means bottles are lying on top of each other and so are harder to get to - and there is potential for breakage or scratching the label of that special bottle. Individual storage means more shelving, which reduces wine storage space but may also keep wine safer.

Locks Some wine fridges have a lock to protect your wines from theft.

Lights Some wine fridges come with an LED light so you can see deeper into the back of the fridge.

Humidity control Some wine fridges have a purported humidity control, which consists of a small container in which you occasionally place water. This gives the fridge humidity sensor the capacity to evaporate the water and keep the humidity at a certain level (70% is generally considered good relative humidity) that maintains cork moisture. This is not particularly relevant for screw tops, but can be for wines with the traditional cork.

Multi-zone If you're keeping different types of wine to store at different temperatures, you might want to consider buying a wine fridge that has multi-zone, or the capacity to have different temperatures in different areas of the fridge. That way you can store, for example, white for drinking at a low temperature in the bottom, and red for storage at a higher temperature at the top.

Low vibration Like fridges, all the tested compressor-type wine cabinets vibrate, particularly when the compressor runs. Whether vibration “agitates” and affects the quality of wine is contentious. A single study suggests a higher vibration measurement of 20Gal, or 200mm/s², led to an accelerated change in organic acids, tannins and refractive index. Some anecdotal information also suggests that increased vibration during cellaring is probably detrimental to some extent.

Vibration

Like fridges, all the compressor-type wine cabinets vibrate somewhat, particularly when the compressor runs. Whether vibration “agitates” and effects the quality of wine is contentious.

One single [study](#) suggests that a higher vibration measurement of 20Gal, or 2mm/s², leads to an accelerated change in organic acids, tannins and refractive index. Some anecdotal information also suggests that increased vibration during cellaring is probably detrimental to some extent.

Wine storing tips

The Australian summer is great for barbecues and days at the beach. But it certainly doesn’t provide the best climate for wine storage, with ideal storing temperatures (those found in a cellar) generally being around 12-16°C. Wine should also be stored in the dark, with a humidity level around 70% or so (so the cork doesn’t dry out).

Temperatures should never become so hot as to spoil the wine or reduce its quality as it matures, and it’s always better to go too cold (but not freeze) than too hot, to avoid spoilage.

If your house gets hotter than around 25°C and you’re keen to cultivate a collection of fine wine, a wine fridge is certainly a valid option. Our 2007 tests revealed it’s not a perfect one, but if your home is a really unsuitable temperature it’s probably better than nothing.

Other storage options

Decided a wine fridge isn't for you? Here are some hints on how to store your wine.

- Store it out of the sun and away from sources of direct heat and cold.
- Never store wine in a garage. They’re usually poorly insulated and can become very hot from your car’s engine.
- Store it in a well-protected area, not in a draughty or well-ventilated space that’s likely to get hot or cold breezes frequently.
- An area near the centre of a home is best, away from hot external walls, heaters, ovens, etc, and preferably low down to get the coolest air.
- Putting wine in well-sealed foam boxes or similar can insulate it from changes in air temperature.
- Use a min/max thermometer to check what temperatures you’re getting where your wine is stored.

- Find a place that's likely to get the least variation in temperature, both day to night and summer to winter. Fast temperature change inside the bottles is worse for the wine than slow temperature change.

If you simply don't have room or don't want to take up the space - or, heaven forbid, you have too much wine to store in your home - there are alternatives such as off-site storage.

- General storage businesses such as Kennards offer wine carton storage for a fee depending on the number of cartons. Fees can start from \$15 / month.
- Specialty wine storage companies offer a similar service, though at a higher price than standard storage.
- Some wineries also offer storage if you become member and pay a fee.

What about a bar fridge?

A bar fridge isn't a good alternative for wine storage. They're usually too cold and you can't adjust them to be warmer. They tend to have very large temperature fluctuations, and they don't control humidity in the same way as a wine fridge. Also, they don't have purpose-built shelves.