AWARD OF MERIT

BEST CELLARS
New York, NY

Architects
The Rockwell Group
David Rockwell, Sam Trimble, Tim Archambault, Lorraine Knapp

Focus Lighting
Paul Gregory & Alex Sebeshalmi

This project is a radically new concept in wine retailing. The client's goal was to demystify wine, to make wine easy to understand, easy to buy, and to promote the concept of "wines for every day." Designed as a prototype for a national retail chain, the store sells 100 wines for under $10. Category titles such as fresh, soft, luscious, juicy, smooth, big, sweet, and fizzy are used to organize the wines instead of grape type or region.

A very light wood, American Sycamore, surrounds the room with accents of hand-rubbed burgundy plaster walls. The floor is polished concrete. The store's design allows the wine bottles to be the stars of the show. Custom back-lit cabinetry displays the bottles, providing a spectrum of color to the space and high visibility from the street.

The front of the cabinets are lit from the ceiling by halogen track lighting. The back lighting of the cabinets was rigorously tested and designed to minimize heat gain. UV light damages wine, so it was necessary to filter the light and ventilate the cabinets by fans.

A special UV-protected Plexiglas and UV blocking gels separate the lamps from the wine.