



REV UP THE ENGINE ROOM

Automotive works of art inspire bespoke housing that can make all your Batcave dreams come true

For anyone after extra amenity, garages are an easy grab. Adding residential extras such as a media room, studio or gym to what is often just an empty shell is easy. Yet for those with prized vehicles, it's invaluable real estate.

For the 1 per centers, storage may be too modest a word by today's standards, with a new breed of architecturally designed garages rivalling even the Batmobile's Batcave. From subterranean bunkers to converted barns – with everything from turntables to hydraulic lifts and mezzanine viewing platforms – nothing is off limits.

Leading the charge is Jonathan Clark Architects' Garage Deluxe. The company designs garages to house anything from one car to as many as a client might own (they are presently working on a project providing room for 35 supercars).

"The only necessary criterion is to design a layer of 'luxury' around the space in order to showcase the car/s to the maximum," says architect and company founder Jonathan Clark.

"Residential garages tend generally to be functional yet boring spaces, usually accessorised with a lawnmower, bikes, and general cleaning and storage items. We believe that classic cars or supercars are works of art in their own right and should be treated as such in their own 'gallery-like' space, with great lighting and wall,

floor and ceiling finishes. This means putting all the paraphernalia in a separate accessible space," he says, explaining the company's philosophy.

On the international stage, Aston Martin's Automotive Galleries and Lairs has taken it to the next level, with bespoke garage services designed in partnership with high-end architects.

Italy-based Supercar Capsule is also tapping into the market with freestanding, prefabricated constructions designed expressly to display cars rather than hide them away for safekeeping.

Designed as moveable glass boxes, they can function either as independent parking spaces or as an extension to the house, incorporating the garage with existing rooms and transforming it into an exhibition area for the car. The effect of glassed construction enables enthusiasts to enjoy their cars even from afar.

When builders and architects the Genworth Group and interior designer Georgie Shepherd of GSiD were tasked with designing a garage for an Adelaide-based client – a long-time collector who restores vintage cars – they responded by creating a transparent room to ensure the cars were always within view.

"Our client considered them as important as a piece of art and it was integral that they be visible from

different parts of the home," says Shepherd, who lined the floor in a motocross-inspired checkerboard.

For the residential garage they designed in South Australia, Architects Ink created a transparent structure that could be opened, with the highly contemporary building starkly juxtaposed against the owners' traditional Georgian house.

"The core concept was to create a single-volume car museum with a column-free mezzanine for entertaining that folds down into a display space for the special collection, with a feature picture window in a shape inspired by Formula One nose cones," says architect Mladen Zujic.

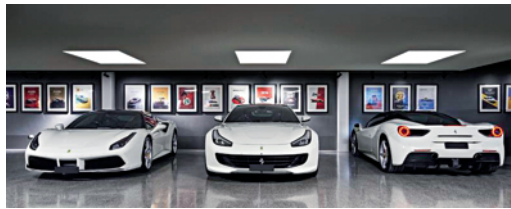
Practically, the layout needed to allow for the vehicles to be easily manoeuvred but also to function as a space for entertaining friends.

For many with "look-but-don't touch" hypercars or vintage sports cars that are too valuable to hit the road, home garages are becoming more like private showrooms kitted out in comfort.

In Hong Kong, design studio Substance created an immersive luxury environment with a lounge bar and leather banquettes from which to comfortably view the owner's personal, "library" of cars, including vintage Porsches, Ferraris and Paganis.

Cool garages

CARLI PHILIPS



PETER CLARKE



A Mornington Peninsula house by Shareen Joel has cars parked inside the living space

SHARYN CAIRNS



We deliberately designed and built it to be a living room with garaging, not the other way around



Architects Ink created a transparent 'car museum' in South Australia

Above, from top: vintage car posters and custom lighting feature in Mim Design's Melbourne garage; a Hong Kong collector's 'library' is viewed from an immersive luxury environment created by Substance

Custom cabinetry was also introduced for both storing and displaying memorabilia.

When Melbourne-based interior design practice Mim Design was looking for a place to present its client's vintage car posters, the basement walls proved to be the perfect choice.

Precision detailing, durable materials and custom-framed lights that both anchor and spotlight the cars make the elevated space worthy of the cars themselves.

Quite literally taking the car inside is what interior architect and designer, architectural building designer and industrial designer Shareen Joel did at her residential project in the Mornington Peninsula.

The compact house is only made up of two wings, so the entertaining annexe shares space with a stylish undercover carpark.

"We deliberately designed and built it to be a living room with garaging, not the other way around," says Joel, who has also worked as an automotive designer for Ford Motor Company.

A continuous level of terracotta tiled flooring (with the exception of an unobtrusive automotive sheet) seamlessly integrates the whole room and it is treated as a valued space, complete with art, upscale furniture and custom cabinetry. It's more than just a place to park.



Genworth Group and GSiD's motocross-inspired checkerboard floor for an Adelaide-based client

JENNA PIWANSKI