



Architect Rick Black considers both the conditions the wine needs for proper storage and alternative uses for the room when designing a wine cellar.



Glossy DOSSIER

For a stellar cellar, Rick Black keeps five things in mind

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Whether you are a serious wine collector or just enjoy having a good selection on hand to enjoy with family and friends, a wine cellar can be a valuable addition to your home design.

For those of us with visions of grape-infused gatherings dancing in our heads, local architect Rick Black of Rick Black Architect (1401 E. Seventh St. 472-2826, www.rickblack.net), whose firm designed the downtown Starlite and the Steeping Room at the Domain, offers us a list of the top five things he considers when designing a wine cellar.

INTENTIONS

We would first determine what the intentions of having a wine cellar are. Is it for housing a large, modest or growing collection? How important is display? Will it be accessed often

or occasionally? The answers to these questions give us a basic idea of its general layout, size and relationship to the rest of the house.

TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

Wine should be stored at a controlled temperature and humidity, because wine matures best with consistent conditions. In our climate, this usually means mechanical systems are needed. Also important is the configuration of the racks so that labels can be read, air can circulate around the bottles and various bottle sizes are accommodated.

ALTERNATE USES

We like to consider other possible uses for a wine cellar. One room that we designed has some of the cabinets air-conditioned and others not, so that they could be used for seasonal

or lockable storage. One might also get (or gift) their wine in wooden crates that could be part of the furnishings.

MATERIALS

The materials used in a wine cellar could be humble or lavish. Our intention is that they are well-put-together and durable at the least and will age well with the wine. Earthy materials, such as natural wood and stone, lend themselves well to a cellar's climate.

MOOD

The enjoyment of wine can be enhanced by intrinsic qualities of a cellar. Being that dark entity of the house, the lighting should be adequate but low when in use by people, with accents where needed to highlight specific features and affect the mood.