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## Create the perfect wine cellar for your home, tastes

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By Stephanie Trotter

CONTRIBUTING WRITER



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Ben and Nancy Ladner added their wine cellar to the existing home structure.

Some are luxurious and grand. Some are quaint and cozy. But, just like the wine within, cellars are to suit the palate of the owners and create a practical storage facility to delight in.

The building blocks of a good cellar are fairly straightforward, but the excitement and unexpected joy from opening properly aged Bordeaux will last for years.



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A nice collection of wines preserved properly will pour beautifully when the time comes to pop the cork and enjoy.

### A perfect 64 degrees for every glass



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Robert Bass, owner of Kessick Wine Cellars, provides a picture-perfect display of beautifully designed, temperature controlled cellar tucked away in the owner's garage.

Robert Bass, owner of Kessick Wine Cellars, has been constructing cellars for his clients since 2004. In that time, he has watched Greenville residents embrace wine and become more and more interested in preserving collectible wines. "It is not necessary to be a collector of fine wine to have a wine cellar," says Bass. In fact, most of his clients start with very little wine but big curiosity and a thirst to sample more.

### Basics from Bass

There are two types of cellars:

- A *climate-controlled* wine cellar has mechanical equipment that regulates the temperature and humidity in a properly constructed room. The right vapor barrier, insulation, interior room finishes, lighting, doors, etc. together play a critical role in the wine cellar construction.

- A *passive* wine cellar is a room that has constant temperature, is away from any heat sources and is often in a cool, below-grade basement.

There are pros and cons for both, but the most important thing is to try to maintain the ideal conditions for storing and aging wine.

Just so you know:

Ideal storage temperatures are between 54 and 64 degrees, but the most important factor in preserving wine is consistency. Fluctuations of temperature are what accelerate the maturing rate of wine and can limit the life and damage the quality. Constant temperatures in the low 70s are better than winter and summer temperature fluctuations.

Humidity of 50-80 percent keeps the cork from drying out and allowing air in the bottle, which can damage the wine.

It is very important to keep wine out of direct sunlight at all times.

Wine storage should be away from mechanical room vibrations, slamming doors and other sources of vibration that stir sediment and disrupt the maturing process of the wine.

Storage temperatures and serving temperatures are very different. Wines may be stored at 55 degrees but whites serve best at 48 degrees and Champagnes even cooler. Most reds are best at 64 degrees, Pinot Noir a little cooler and vintage ports a little warmer.

## **Time to chill**

Ben and Nancy Ladner moved here four years ago from Washington, D.C. Their home, built in 1921 with abundant charm and character, provides plenty of space for the grandchildren to spread out and enjoy. Because the house needed a few updates, the Ladners took advantage of the opportunity to add a wine cellar to the existing structure. Just off the back, they added an updated kitchen and created the perfect niche for a quaint staircase leading down to a cozy room to store wine, enjoy music and relax. A couple of perfectly worn leather club chairs, a fabulous Turkmenistan rug gifted to the couple from the ambassador of Turkmenistan, a couple of Cuban cigars that Ben humbly received from Fidel Castro a few years ago and a woodcarving the couple commissioned an artist in Alaska to create all make the space unique. The Ladners do not consider themselves wine collectors; nonetheless,

they know that relaxing in a comfortable space with a beautiful glass of wine completes just about any day perfectly.

### **More Shiraz, please**

Creating a collection of something that you enjoy is fun at any stage of life. Drs. Scott and Denise Brodrick have found themselves collectors of wine after developing an appreciation for Australian Shiraz around six years ago. Having more wine than a place to store it became a problem early on in their story. Denise's dad, Ed Evering, is handy with a hammer, and with the help of a book, he formulated a plan to build a climate-controlled cellar guaranteed to get the bottles off the floor. "Scott picked up a book for me, and we ordered precut wood in a kit for the actual storage racks," says Evering. "I would do the project over again, and use the precut materials just like the first time," he adds.

After four months of removing concrete columns, hammering in new boards, laying flagstone over concrete floor and walls, the masterpiece is finally complete. Now all that's left to do is fill the space with bottles of the wine of choice and share with family and friends, which the Brodricks thoroughly enjoy doing.

With references and resources to aid in the process, a cellar can be only be a few months and then a few steps away.



In their wine cellar, Ben and Nancy Ladner sip their favorite wines, relax and enjoy retirement. *Photos by JOSH NORRIS/Staff*