

# MIDLAND *Room by Room*

FINE CABINETRY & MILLWORK

## The Wine Cellar

### *The Home Wine Cellar Takes on a New Persona*

*With nearly 3,000 registered wineries in California, it's no surprise that creating fine home wine cellars is one of Midland Cabinet Company's most sought-after services.*

We've been designing wine cellars for years, and for most of that time, the design has remained basically



*The curved crown molding in this wine cellar is one of its defining details.*

the same: a handsome, functional space for storing the homeowner's prized collection.

Lately, however, some wine cellars have taken on a new persona, that of a "destination room." Here, the wine cellar is not only for storage, it is a place where homeowners can take guests for an intimate, authentic wine-tasting experience.

### The Basic Elements

The wine cellar as a destination room doesn't change the nature of the space. It's still about the wine and how it's stored. The difference is in the amenities and the materials used to craft it.

While traditional wine cellars relied primarily on redwood for walls, cabinets, racks and paneling, at Midland we use a wide range of attractive wood, including alder, cherry, walnut, teak and maple.

We can do so — and give homeowners the opportunity to also select wood for its aesthetic value — because the controls installed in a modern wine cellar automatically regulate variables, such as temperature and humidity, that were once thought to have detrimental affects on wood other than redwood and cedar.

Wood is also used as flooring for a wine cellar, though most rely on concrete or stone tiles, both of which, by their nature, help to maintain the room's cooler temperature.

As far as lighting is concerned, the first thing we can debunk is the notion that light will raise the temperature of the wine cellar. It won't; we use low-wattage, cooler-burning LED bulbs.

ATMOSPHERE CAN BE AS  
IMPORTANT AS THE WINE.

Lighting, for the most part, is indirect and atmospheric. Popular lighting scenarios include indirect lighting built into the wine racks, which provides a hint of candlelight, and sensor lights that turn on and off when someone enters or leaves the room.

## Wine on Display

A wine cellar isn't just about storing wine; it's also about displaying it and having the bottles readily available for tasting or serving.

In many ways, a personal wine cellar resembles a fine wine shop, with three primary storage designs: full display, open case and bulk storage.

In full display, individual bottles of wine rest on a slightly raised surface with labels facing up. This display space is normally located in the midsection of the wine cellar's cabinetry — the optimal level for what this storage design is all about: viewing the wines and reading the labels.

Open case storage is a vertical column of "cubby holes" for individual bottle storage, most often located above the full-display section.

Bulk storage is just that: storage for multiple bottles and cases of wine.

We also build storage space to accommodate variations in bottle size, magnums and champagne, for instance. And in more upscale wine cellars — here in terms of the quantity of wine needing to be stored — we can deepen the cabinets to provide increased storage.

## A Vintage Atmosphere

Atmosphere can be as important as the wine. We've created den and cave-like effects, such as adding stone to the walls. Stone gives the room atmosphere but also, by the nature of the rock, helps keep the space cool.

We've integrated old wine casks into the room itself, cutting them in half to install on the wall, which adds rustic charm.



*Bulk storage space for multiple bottles and cases of wine is as elegant as the wine cellar itself.*

Always on the lookout for elements that can bring extra-special touches to a room, in one instance the spigots we installed on the half-barrel wall hangings were replicas made in our onsite shop — a re-creation of the “real thing” found in a Sierra foothills antique store by Midland founder Rob Boynton.

And because a wine cellar is a special place, we believe the entry to it should be of equal importance. Among the entryways we’ve crafted: arched doors with leaded glass and doors stained in old English oak to duplicate the weathered look of vintage cellar doors.



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## Anatomy of a Wine Cellar

Simply stated, the secret to creating a winning wine cellar is communication.

“We work closely with the homeowner,” says Monty Boyd, a trained architect who heads up project management and design development at Midland Cabinet Company. The reasoning is straightforward, and it’s all about customer satisfaction. “We want to find out what kind of wine cellar they want us to build.”

What the homeowner wanted — as shown in the photo above — was a new, larger wine cellar based on the layout and functionality of what he already had, but which was now too small to contain his burgeoning collection.

Monty was in charge of the project and came up with a novel and appealing approach: a professional wine cellar with an adjacent tasting room, the best of both home wine-cellar worlds.

### The Wine Cellar

The cellar itself is based solidly on the homeowner’s needs, from the variety of storage racks to the built-in table that Monty designed specifically to address what is also required by the serious collector: a convenient place to do inventory and cataloging.

The custom-made racks lining the walls feature a narrow countertop along the radius, where the bottles can be placed during inventory or before stacking and storing.

Where the racks meet in the corner Monty chose curved crown molding, and it’s one of the room’s defining details. Creating the curve requires more craftsmanship; it’s more labor intensive.

“But it looks softer and nicer,” says Monty. “It looks finished, and that’s the point.”

### The Tasting Room

Like the wine cellar, the tasting room is crafted in cherry — in a natural finish that contains no harsh chemicals — and all the detailing is the same. It also includes built-in seating and storage for wine glasses and other tasting-room accessories.

Monty created the two rooms to spare wine tasters from standing in the often-chilly air that a temperature-regulated wine cellar requires. A specially designed glass door separates the two, and allows guests to look into the well-stocked room where the fine wine they are sipping is stored, safe, sound and elegantly.