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winecellars , prefab refrigerator , showcase , flower-case / designing & manufacturing

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## Cellaring

A few bottles on display in the dining room; a few cases under the bed, stairs or house; a specially built temperature-controlled, underground room; all of these are wine cellars. Red wine will develop and improve in the bottle for the short, medium, or long term depending on the style of the wine and the quality of the particular vintage. Although some white wines will also benefit from (usually short-term) cellaring, most are best enjoyed when relatively young.

Wine is best stored somewhere cool, dark, airy, and free from major vibrations and dampness. A cellar need not be under the house.

### 1. Temperature

If you intend to mature wines for 5, 10, 15 years or more, temperature is the single most important factor of wine cellaring. Constant temperature is crucially important. Temperature changes (especially rapid change in temperature) cause corks to expand and contract, allowing air to enter the bottle. There is no surer way to create oxidization of the wine and thus render the wine undrinkable. Suitable temperatures for storing wine are between 11°C to 17°C but several degrees either side of this are safe.

### 2. Maturation

Accelerating the maturation of the wine may seem desirable however; wines aged more slowly at say 15°C will have greater complexity. Wine stored at high temperature even for a short time will negatively affect the wine. It is strange therefore that that this is the typical temperature inside most licensed restaurants and specialist wine shops. Older, more fragile wines are most likely to suffer by hot or fluctuating temperatures. The higher the temperature, the less time is required

to damage the wine. Just a short exposure to a temperature of say 30°C or above will almost certainly destroy any wine.

The ideal cellar temperature is 15°C (58-60 degrees Fahrenheit). Although from the evidence that wines can be stored successfully at different temperatures, it is now evident that the single most important factor is temperature stability. Therefore the ideal cellar is kept at a temperature that doesn't vary too much during the day, or even from season to season. More than 1 degree Celsius per day is cause for concern as is more than 3-4 degrees Celsius between the high and low point of the year.

### **3. Humidity**

It is crucially important to monitor humidity within the cellar. The ideal humidity level for wine is between 62.5% and 72.5%. Most wine cellars suffer from lack of humidity (especially air conditioned cellars), which leads to corks drying out, shrinking and eventual wine leakage and oxidization. Placing some warm water in a large tray on the cellar floor can help treat lack of humidity. A very high level of humidity (say too long a time at above 75%) will cause labels to fall off and; if there is no/low level of air movement, will cause mould to grow on corks and labels. Mould is devastating for wine. Therefore, an ideal environment for wine not only pays attention to temperature control but also ensures air flow and humidity control.

### **4. Light**

A cellar should be as dark as possible as wine is badly affected by light. Light can cause undesirable chemical reactions within the bottle and often spoil the wine. UV light can cause hydrogen sulphide compounds to develop in wine. Therefore, the ideal lighting conditions for a cellar is no sunlight and all lighting (globes and tubes) to be UV FREE.

All Lighting at MW wines cellars is kept to an absolute minimum and is provided by special UV FREE light globes that are turned off when not in use.

### **5. Vibration**

Much is said by many about vibration and the negative effect it has on wine however, we are not aware of any study that has been done anywhere in the world

documenting any data on this subject. Suffice to say that minor vibrations are not likely to be a problem and major vibrations should be avoided (just in case).

## **6. Water**

Cellars that are flooded out (especially underground cellars) are an all too common occurrence causing substantial damage to the wines. A good wine cellar will be designed to protect against flooding. Cellars that are well above ground level are safest as water will simply drain away immediately.

## **7. Air Flow**

Adequate airflow in wine cellars will prevent almost all unwanted vermin and mould. Whilst extreme amounts of dry air movement could logically dry out corks, very cold air (say below 5°C) will likely chill the wine and prevent a slow balanced maturation. A climate control system is specifically designed to ensure gentle but present humidity controlled air movement, at the appropriate – not too much – not too little, level.

## **8. Cellar Size**

It is remarkable how much wine can fit into a relatively small space, especially if you use a simple wooden or metal racking system, which will keep wines well ventilated, and provide easy single-bottle access. Bottles should be stored on their sides so that the cork remains wet with the label facing up so that you need not disturb a wine to identify it.

## **9. How to get the best from your fine wine...**

The enjoyment of sharing good wine is never greater than when the wines that you chose and purchased years ago turn out to have matured magnificently in your cellar. Decanted and served in fine glasses with good food, such wines epitomize the rewards of patience.

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