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STORAGE

July 7, 2006- The key to perfect storage

Doug Noble, Democrat correspondent

A lot of us have closets, garages, dens and back yards full of things that need to be stored elsewhere. Some of it is just extra lawn furniture, clothes that used to fit, or maybe even tax records. But no matter what they are, they are taking up space that is needed for other purposes.

Places to store things are everywhere, but how many do you know that can store just about everything you have, including your fine wine, something that you should protect.

Being smack-dab in the middle of one of the best wine regions of California

and near many others, the opportunity to buy fine wine is everywhere. Sure, we know from the pollsters that most wine is consumed within 48 hours of its purchase, but there are some wines out there that will become quite spectacular with a few years aging. Because of this, most households have a number of bottles of wine they have purchased to set down for later consumption. Wine needs a constant temperature around 55 degrees and humidity to keep and age best, but, where do most of us keep it? You might be surprised.

Some of the older homes actually have a cellar that is an excellent place to keep wine. But, most homes don't. Unless your home is built on a slab, there is space under the house where you can store your wine, if you don't mind the guessing game when you find the rodents have dined on the labels and you have a number of bottles of unknown varietals (thank goodness for winery names on the corks).

On the floor of a closet that is not on an outside wall is where many people keep their wine. The temperature there is fairly steady, although a bit high. But closet space in new homes is at a premium and wine takes up quite a bit of space.

Well, there is always some space under the beds, but the temperature variation there is not good for the wine. How about the bathroom? There is always a bit of humidity there, but again, the temperature variation is significant. And, people who store wine high in their kitchen cabinets on a rack in their living room are asking for vinegar.

You can invest in a wine storage cabinet, if you have a place for one. But then, power failures and equipment failures are a consideration. Why not just break down and store those bottles of fine wine - or any wine that you want to enjoy later - in a wine storage facility, such as the one recently opened by Gold Key Storage in El Dorado Hills.



GOLD KEY STORAGE, 4980 Golden Foothill Parkway in El Dorado Hills, houses a 4,800 square foot wine storage facility that has 280 private wine lockers in a temperature and humidity controlled environment. See story "The ..." Democrat photo by Dan Burkhart

Gold Key Storage can store just about anything you have at one of their three storage facilities in El Dorado County: 4980 Golden Foothill Parkway (Business Park 1) in El Dorado Hills; 5110 Hilldale Circle (Business Park 3) in El Dorado Hills; and 4040 Stage Court off Missouri Flat Road in Placerville. They have indoor, climate controlled storage for your personal goods and business records. They will pick up and deliver your business records and can even schedule your records for destruction. In addition, they can store your car or RV and have a multi-level boat storage structure in El Dorado Hills. The boat-lifter there is something worth watching in action.

They also have supplies for your office, along with boxes for storage and a truck you can use to move in. And, being a full service facility, they have rental mail boxes and pick-up by all of the major parcel shipping services and the U. S. Postal Service. But, let's take a look my favorite part of their facility, their full-service wine cellar.

Wine cellar

Along with Tracy Campbell, from Southfork Management Company, we took a tour of the 4,800 square foot wine storage facility a few weeks ago and it was impressive.

Located underground at the Golden Foothill Parkway facility in El Dorado Hills are more that 280 private wine lockers in a clean, temperature and humidity controlled facility with wooden wine lockers. And, it is even decorated with original paintings of wine and vineyard settings.

The goal is to allow wine buyers to store private wine collections with the same special care that went into making them in a nice facility, and at a cost that is only about the price of a good bottle of wine per month.

Individually locked and alarmed, each locker holds eight to 12 cases of wine. The entire room is temperature controlled to stay between 55 and 60 degrees F. and held between 65 and 70 percent humidity. Even though the facility is very secure and continually monitored with video surveillance, locker renters still have 24 hours a day, seven days a week access to their wine and an elevator to help them get it in and out.

To save the time of having to run back and forth with wine club shipments, renters can have them shipped directly to the facility and they will be put into the locker. And, if a locker renter is having a special event, for a nominal charge the Gold Key staff will deliver the wine within a 10 mile radius.

Barrel Room

Sounds great, right? Well, there is also the Barrel Room, a private meeting room designed for the ultimate tasting experience, private gathering or business meeting.

It is fully equipped with a full-service kitchen for catering and food preparation, a large screen plasma TV, state of the art video conferencing and video/audio technology and a fireplace for ambiance. Although also underground, it is not apparent, because this 1,100 square foot space has large windows looking into the storage area.

Some people have rented as many as six lockers for their fine wine inventory, but you don't have to be a collector of fine wines to benefit from this kind of wine storage. If you have just a few cases of good wine at home it would be to your advantage to look into something like this. Losing a case or even just a few bottles of good wine because of poor storage practices is something any wine buyer doesn't want to and shouldn't have to do.

Gold Key Cellars is located at 4980 Golden Foothill Parkway in El Dorado Hills Business Park and can be reached at (916) 933-8989.