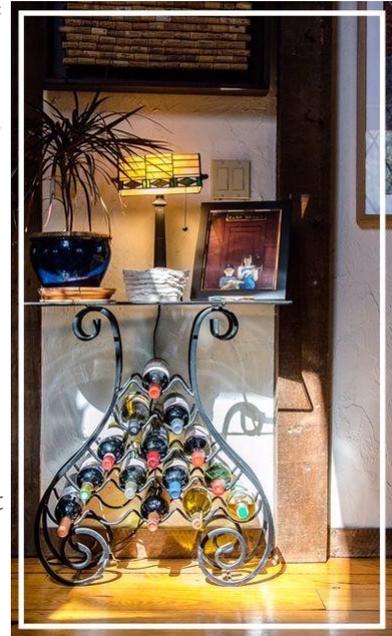


Wine Storage Tips

When weather changes from cold to warm or warm to cold, this is the perfect time to consider what you should do with your favorite beverage, wine, (OK, well it's our favorite) when the weather changes in and out of your homes. Wine, like food, is a perishable product and is affected by many things, like temperature, specifically variations in temperature. Although not everyone has the desire or funds to build a temperature, humidity-controlled cellar, it's still crucial to think about what to do with your wine (beer or spirits too) once you leave the store. No matter how attractive or cheeky the labels are the kitchen is no place for these beauties.

Most wine is meant to be consumed young within 1-3 years of the vintage on the bottle. So whether you're able to drink your wine the night you bring it home or five months from then, the key factors that you need to consider that affect its quality and taste are temperature, humidity, light and vibration, to ensure your wine doesn't taste more like vinegar than wine.



Temperature: The biggest factor to consider is dramatic temperature differences. If your home is subject to considerable changes between day/night and summer/winter temperatures then your wine will be affected. Wine should ideally be stored in an area where the daily temperature does not change by more than a few degrees. Kitchens are the worst area in which to store your wine because of heat put off by the oven or appliances. A kitchen can easily fluctuate 10+ degrees. And if you're like us and turn your heat down low at night, well then again, the temperature change can be significant.

Humidity: Some humidity is good to prevent a cork from drying out. But overly high humidity for a prolonged period of time can cause a host of issues, including mold problems, specifically along the cork. Also too dry of an area can cause the cork to dry out and disintegrate.

Light: Exposure to direct or strong light, including artificial and sunlight, is not good. Make sure you have a specific area in which to store your wine so that the 12 noon sun is not shining on it. Also make sure overhead lights are not beaming down on your collection

Vibration: Keeping wine "still" is important, but more so for wines that you are going to store for an extended period of time. A rack on top of a counter, over a dishwasher, or next to a furnace that goes on and off continually is not recommended.

To recap, if you don't have a wine refrigerator or cellar, don't worry; many people don't. But to ensure your wine maintains its level of quality, find an area in your home where the temperature is consistent (between 55-65 degrees), has a decent amount of humidity, is dark and free of vibration. Then you will be well on your way to enjoying your goodies!