

## **Wine storage taken seriously at Goleta and San Luis Obispo Facilities**

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To do business with Trudi Carey, a visitor has to provide a thumb print, credit card and government issued ID. Then they will be under the watchful eye of surveillance cameras -after using their personal security code - as they enter the climate, light and humidity controlled building.

That's how it's done at Goleta based Santa Barbara Cellars, where customers can store four to 400 cases of wine in a single locker. Carey, the building's architect and the managing member of Santa Barbara Cellars, opened the 1000 square foot wine storage facility in February. Her customers at Patterson 101 self storage requested a wine friendly environment, and she delivered.

In San Luis Obispo County, Daniel and Corrine Appelbaum were looking for good wine storage when they moved back to the area from Northern California. When they didn't find much, they decided to open their own.

The Appelbaums visited wine storage facilities throughout California to design their business model, and in July they opened Safe Haven Wine Services in Paso Robles.

Both Santa Barbara Cellars and Safe Haven Wine Services target wine collectors who want to reduce the risk of their wine going bad. Carey said that for some collectors, wine is an investment they want to protect. People buy bottles that they hope to resell for a profit later.

Some people store wine in home cellars, but space may be limited. There are also times when having a valuable wine collection is not ideal.

When the Gap Fire knocked out power along the South Coast, it was a reminder that electricity can't be taken for granted. A prolonged power outage means that even advanced home wine cellars may not protect thousands of dollars worth of wine. For a serious collector, that simply won't do.

Santa Barbara Cellars has backup power generators and a full-time maintenance staff. "We're the one worrying on your behalf," Carey said.

The other emergency advantage of wine storage is that if wine collectors need to evacuate their home, they won't have to worry about saving the wine -especially when "saving" it means putting it in a car for a few days without temperature control.

Suddenly \$25 or \$33 per month, the starting prices at Safe Haven and Santa Barbara Cellars, respectively, sounds pretty reasonable.

For those willing to pay a little more, these new businesses offer more than a cool climate for your chardonnay or space for your syrah. At Safe Haven, Premium and Deluxe rental agreements include use of the private tasting lounge, which has a 50 inch plasma TV, wet bar, poker table, XM radio and more.

The Appelbaums said that boutique winemakers can use the lounge to host a wine

tasting, non profits can use it for a fund-raising event and wine enthusiasts can have a gathering of friends.

With the luxurious lounge and cherry red lockers, it's not what most people expect from a storage building. "The response is generally, "Oh my gosh, this is a storage facility?" Corrine Appelbaum said.

Both businesses will also accept wine deliveries on behalf of their customers. This save the recipients from waiting at home to sign for the delivery or having their work day interrupted by a UPS person. It also ensure that the wine is stored in controlled conditions until it's owner has a chance to retrieve it. Corrine Appelbaum said it's just another part of her job as a "concierge service of storage."

Safe Haven Wine Services will also ship wine. Since there are limits on how much wine can go into a suitcase, out of town wine lovers may choose to store a collection on the Central Coast and have bottles shipped to them. Safe Haven can also handle the shipping needs for small wine clubs.

It's a natural fit for Daniel Appelbaum, who had a long career in the logistics business for transportation companies.

Unlike baseball cards, you can't keep a wine collection in protective sheets in a binder or in a shoebox under your bed. To help, Safe Haven offers an inventory service. Daniel Appelbaum said he can create a detailed database of a collector's wine.

"You can easily see all the wine that you have," Daniel Appelbaum said. "This can be e-mailed to the client on a monthly basis, and it can be updated any time there is a change in inventory...It's also good for a collector's insurance policy."

The database not only has the names and quantities of the wine, it also has tasting notes, ratings, the current average cost, the best drinking time, each bottle's location in the locker and the option of photos of the labels. The service costs \$1.50 per bottle or \$2.50 for a case of wine in which all the bottles are the same.