

HOME

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If collecting wine is an art, then you could say an 800-bottle cellar designed and built by Gabriel McKeagney is the frame. Teak racking and cabinets finished with an amber glaze beckon behind glass and black metal doors in the lower level of a Mediterranean-style home in Corona del Mar.

To achieve the right aesthetic, McKeagney used the existing ironwork in the adjacent tasting room as inspiration. He borrowed a small finial design engraved on the wood trim from a hand-forged light fixture in the room and incorporated arches on top of the racks, a pattern typically used on iron gates.

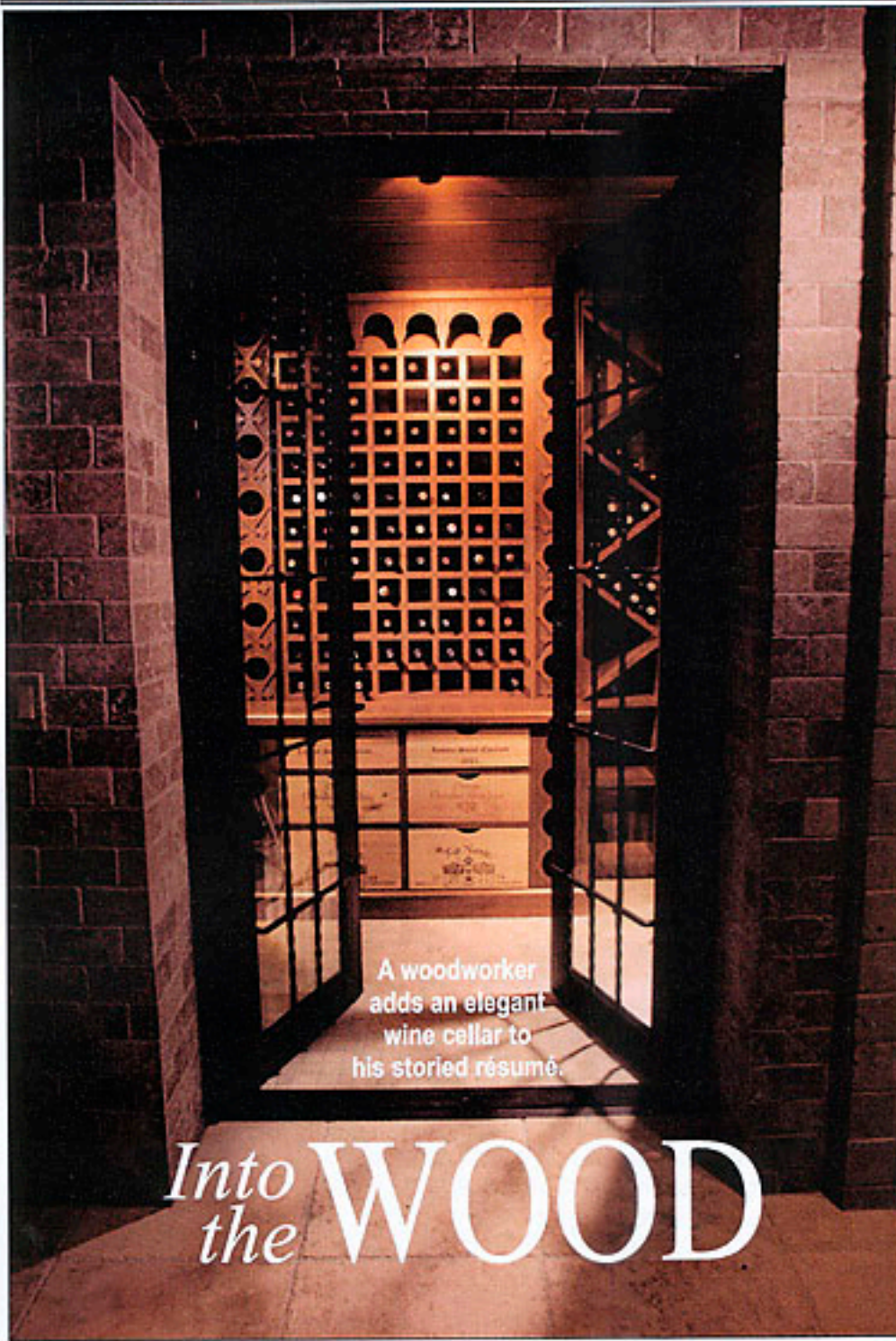
"I consulted old ironworks books to get into the aesthetic theme," he says. "I took an old art form and merged it with the design of the wood."

But McKeagney didn't stop there. He framed the printed ends of authentic wine crates as drawer fronts and engraved numbers in a traditional font resembling those on old post office boxes under each bottle. The numbers allow the homeowners to inventory their collection using a computerized system.

The cellar's tight space presented the challenge of corner dead space. To ensure all areas of the 700-square-foot cellar were utilized, he designed curved corner shelving.

"I can create; that's my strength," says McKeagney, 39.

The Corona del Mar homeowners spent years researching craftsmen before they chose



A woodworker adds an elegant wine cellar to his storied résumé.

Into the WOOD