

Dan Gomez and Dan Townsend, architects and partners in Capitola-based Fuse Architecture designed what they call the "auto barn" in the Santa Cruz Mountains. Their client, a vineyard owner, had several requirements. "First," says Townsend, "he wanted a space to accommodate his motor home along with a trailer." The barn is 64 by 80 feet with doors at each end so the bus/trailer combo can be driven straight through. This mega-garage is much more than vehicle storage: "He wanted the option of converting it into a wine-making facility," says Dan Gomez. There's also a commercial-sized gourmet kitchen for caterers to use during charity events held in the barn; a machine shop and other work spaces; and a loft with conference room, full bath and sitting area.

Grand Garages

To many of us, the garage is merely an afterthought; a place to keep vehicles protected from the elements; a catch-all for bikes, yard tools and stuff that doesn't fit anywhere else.

But to some guys—and yes, some women—the garage is a shrine. A place to not only store cars, but polish, display and bathe them in a cool neon glow, surrounded by treasured memorabilia. A place to hang out with pals, have a couple of adult beverages, tell a few lies, maybe shoot a little pool...revel in all that horsepower under the hood, waiting to be unleashed on a straight, deserted country road.

Others take the original purpose of the garage and add elements of luxury, elegance and fun. To some car aficionados, their love of large toys taxes the space allotted. The four standouts featured here are exceptional examples.



By Michael Chatfield
Photography Kodiak Greenwood
Frank Tapia Photography



"I've been in love with cars since I was five," Frank says. Now retired, he's been collecting what he calls "icons of American culture" for about ten years. Nearly everything in this two-car garage relates to some aspect of his life. Take his gas pump for instance: "I worked in a Sinclair gas station as a kid," he recalls. He and a buddy restored, painted and decaled it to match one from that defunct oil company. His collection focuses on the 1950s through the early '70s, "back when chrome was thick and life was good," he says. While vintage music blares from the stereo, "friends gather here, have a couple of beers and reminisce."



With his brother Mike, Larry built this addition to his Carmel Valley home. It's not only an homage to his lifelong love affair with American rolling iron, but also a comfortable spot to hang out with buddies (and their wives and girlfriends). Evenings go by with talk about cars, the sounds of friendly pool games and of good friends relaxing together. Larry's collection of automotive memorabilia got its start with items from an Arizona uncle who owned a salvage yard—and gave both he and his brother their first cars in exchange for a high school summer's work there.

Garage space was limited at the Carmel Highlands home that adorns the cover of this issue of HomeStyle. So Eddy had to find a way to efficiently store his two classic Jaguars and his '57 Chevy in addition to the family's daily drivers. "A friend of mine told me about these hydraulic racks made by Rotary Lifts," Eddy says. "They were the perfect solution. They're very simple and work like an elevator. Up and down takes about two minutes." The racks fit perfectly in the space with hardly an inch to spare. "These things are a Godsend," he adds, "but they definitely impact what kind of cars I can buy."



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