

PURCHASING A COLUMBARIUM



Purchasing a Columbarium

Here are a few things to consider for installing a columbarium.

These points are a reference, and the order may change slightly depending on your need or organization. Doric will help guide you through all the steps to make sure you have all your concerns and questions answered before proceeding. Each location will have different needs, but these items should be a good start to that conversation.

- ✓ **Need** Determine if there is a want in your area.
- ✓ **Committee** Depending on your organization you may want to form a small committee to oversee the columbarium selection etc.
- ✓ **Location** Find a few spaces within your location that may be suitable for a columbarium.
- ✓ **Design** You will want a design that fits within your budget and aesthetic.
- ✓ **Budget** Need to know what is to budget for
- ✓ **Presentation** A presentation may help to show the plan moving forward.
- ✓ **Financing** Are you able to pay for the columbarium straight out or will you require financing.
- ✓ **Return on investment** The return on investment for any project is something to consider.
- ✓ **Construction** What is required and how will this be done.
- ✓ **Maintenance** What needs to be looked after moving forward.

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Need

With cremation rates increasing, the need for alternatives for the final resting place of cremated remains is growing. Your community is looking for options and you need to be aware of how you can better serve and lead them. Columbaria are a great option for those families looking for a choice besides in ground burial.

Committee

Depending on your organization you may want to form a committee to oversee the selection of a columbarium. This group may have several members or as few as 1 or 2. A few voices is helpful to get a better understanding of what your community may desire. If you can obtain members that have some technical knowledge it may be of a great help as well. We recommend having fewer members on the committee as some times too many voices is counterproductive.

Location

Whether you are looking for large scale or small, location is always a determining factor in the success of any columbarium placement. While a columbarium or cremation garden can be placed in almost any area, you do still want to ensure it can be in a accessible location that offers a serene environment. The ability to have enough space to provide further columbaria to complete an area is good consideration as well.

Financing

Whether financing will be required is something that will depend on the state of your operation. Your business may be in the position to cover all costs, or you may require some type of financing. Whatever your circumstance may be, having the projected return on investment will be an important process to go through to see the viability of this development.

ROI (Return Of Investment)

- The return on investment for any project is something to consider.
- The pricing for a columbarium niche should be at minimum 3 times the full per niche costs.
 - The per niche costs would be the price of the columbarium and foundation work divided by the number of niches.
 - $\$ (\text{columbarium}) + \$ (\text{foundation and landscaping estimate}) = \text{total investment}$
 $\# \text{ niches}$
 $= \$\text{per niche}$
 - Multiply $\times 3 = \$$ (the minimum to price to clients)
- Total investment of \$.
- Per niche price to clients \$
- Potential revenue at todays price \$
- Return on investment - \$
- The ROI shown above does not include add on revenue such as engraving, flower vases and opening & closing the niche.

Budget

Always a huge part to any project, you will need to determine the \$ available for this endeavor. Costs to be considered will be design, marketing and construction. The price per niche for you and then the price per niche you will charge have a great bearing on budget. You may be looking to only cover costs and have the niches as more of a service to your community. Your thoughts may be to generate revenue that will help the whole site into the future. Whatever your need, the budget needs to be realistic and consider the ongoing costs associated with this project.

Presentation

Once you have, locations, design and budget ideas it is a good idea to put together a presentation to your community. A presentation will help you with buy in for the project before moving too far along. It will also help gauge interest or at the very least get people talking and considering the option. This may simply be a design layout showing what you propose or may have most if not all the details to be considered. Depending on who the presentation is for will dictate how much detail you will require.

Design

Selecting the design or style of the units is paramount to its success. You want to have a columbarium that suits the site and feel of the location. Perhaps the design can tie it in with nearby buildings or local architecture. Size and number of niches is very important as well. This will depend on your community and the need. Phasing in a columbarium garden is a great way to lessen the initial financial impact while giving you the flexibility to grow as demand dictates. Options are a huge part of the design success as well. You want to have different selections within the area so that people can see the value of what they choose. The selected columbarium supplier must be able to offer you unique and personalized designs that fit within your community, not simply offering you designs from a catalogue.

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Marketing

Important to the overall success, marketing will once again vary depending on circumstance. Many businesses choose to market and pre-sell in advance of commencing construction, while others will use the construction as one of their marketing tools. Key to this is making people aware of what is happening, what the options will be and what the final appearance will be. Whether phasing in or doing it all at once a visual layout of the completed area will pay dividends.

Construction

The day is finally here, all the work of selecting, budgeting and design has come together, and shovels are going in the ground. Depending on the scale this may include starting the foundations and other flat work or simply clearing the site so the columbarium can be placed. It may be quick or take several months to complete. Whatever the requirement your columbarium supplier should be coordinating with you and the contractor.

Maintenance

This will be one of the considerations for ongoing costs. The columbarium should have no maintenance except for the occasional cleaning of the dust etc. from the outside of it. The real maintenance will be for the site, clearing snow (if required), lawn trimming, weeding and planting the gardens or flower beds. Ensuring the area looks clean and tidy and the foundation and walkways are clear and in a good state of repair. Appearance will affect the marketability and enjoyment of the site. Your community will certainly notice and normally advise you if they are displeased.

Why Doric niches?

- Doric aluminum niches are built to last and can be relocated with minimal effort if required.
- Doric is the manufacturer so we have full control on the columbarium quality
- Doric has over 100 distributors throughout North America, so you can deal with someone local that you can trust to be there.
- The aluminum superstructure is much less weight which allows for less foundation work, which saves time and money.
- The 1/8" thick aluminum walls allow for more niches on a footprint.
- The fasteners are part of the aluminum, no need for extra hardware that will break down over time.
- Held together with stainless steel fasteners, no glues and or pins to deteriorate over time.
- The engineering behind our aluminum allows it to hold over 1650lbs per square foot. This means it can be used as a structural component for any weight or other type of veneer required i.e., masonry, limestone, river rock and wood etc.
- Our niches are easy to open and close in all climates yet have a secure security system to deter unauthorized access.
- All niches have a powder coated aluminum inner security door to protect not only the niche but support the granite outer door. No sealants are required.
- Our columbaria niches can be built to any size or configuration. This allows for maximum use of any space.
- We provide extra niche doors for every project. All our doors are calibrated to the exact same size and thickness. All niche doors are interchangeable throughout the structure.
- Doric niches are dust and insect proof but also allow for internal air movement to deter moisture and condensation build up.
- All our aluminum columbaria are non-deteriorating along with the use of stainless-steel fasteners.
- The aluminum used for our niches will stand up to any climate and will not breakdown over time like some products.

(50-52-H32 aluminum alloy)

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FAQ

What is a columbarium?

- A columbarium is an above ground structure for placement of cremated remains

What is a niche?

- A niche is single unit within a columbarium. The niche may hold 1 or several cremated remains.

Where can I place a columbarium?

- A columbarium can basically be placed almost anywhere as it is a relocatable structure. There may be different government regulations as to where it can be placed, and we can help you in determining that.

What size are niches in a columbarium?

- The industry standard niche is 12" x 12" x 12". At Doric we do them at 13" x 13" x 13" deep to allow for more space and larger urn placement. While this is our standard, niches can be made in any size or shape depending on the location and wishes of the client.

What materials are used to construct a columbarium?

- The interior of a columbarium is made from many different materials depending on the company. There is concrete, granite, metal, and polymers. At Doric we use aluminum interiors because of their strength, design flexibility and their ability to handle all conditions.
- The exterior of a columbarium can also be made of many different products. Granite would be used the most extensively with other types of stone such as limestone and masonry becoming more popular.

Why do I need a columbarium?

- A columbarium is a great option for families who have chosen cremation. It gives them and the deceased friends a place to go for remembrance. It allows for memorialization along with being able to select a space that suits the individual.
- It allows for greater use of available land that may not be suitable for anything else.
- It can enhance a site by adding a feature that benefits the whole area

How many urns can fit in a niche?

- A columbarium is an above ground structure for placement of cremated remains
- Niche can be designed for any size depending on the needs or how many urns would require placement.

How many niches should I start with?

- This will depend on your area and how many inurnments you think you may have. A member of our team can go over this and ask questions to give you a better idea of your needs. A columbarium garden can be just one columbarium or several. All of this can be phased in over time to best fit the requirements of your site.

What can I do for memorializing the niche?

- There are many options for memorialization. You may engrave directly on to niche front. You may place a bronze or other type of plaque. You may also have a colored design on the niche front.

How do I purchase a columbarium?

- A columbarium can be purchased outright from a manufacturer. They will discuss with you the options and pricing for a unit that fits your needs. Depending on your situation we can discuss payment plan or financing. We can also help with setting up a business case to show the merits of a columbarium.

What is the weight of a columbarium

- The weight will depend on the stone chosen and the thickness. An average would be 110lbs per niche. This would be greatly lessened for indoor applications

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Common Columbarium Terms

- **Columbarium** – an above ground structure for the placement and safe keeping of cremated remains
- **Cremation Garden** – normally a group of columbaria along with benches and planters.
- **Side or end wall** – the end panel of the structure with no niches
- **Cap, roof or coping** – top panel covering the structure. Will normally have a rain drip line
- **Peaked** – the roof comes to a peak in the center
- **Gabled** – the roof has different matching sections forming a triangle
- **Rain drip** – a line cut into the underside of the roof to ensure rain falls away from the niche front
- **Base** – bottom panel that the columbarium rests on
- **Doors/shutters or fronts** – the panel that covers the niche on the outside
- **Security door** – the inner powder coated aluminum door that secures the niche behind the outer door. This will fully supply the stone of other material used for the outer niche front
- **Security tool** – the tool that contains the bits required to access the niche
- **Fluting** – engraved lines in the stone used as an aesthetic feature. Can be highlighted to be more visible
- **Highlighted** – paint done in engraved areas so it will stand out and be easier to see
- **Matting** – rubberized mats that are placed in each niche. This adds padding and also a barrier for different metals
- **Rock pitched** – rough rock like looking edges on stone
- **Polished** – polished so that it shines
- **Honed** – a finish that is not rough but not polished. Done by sandblasting the stone
- **Flamed** – similar to honed but done by using a flame on the stone
- **Sawn** – finish that may show blade marks
- **Sawn smooth** – finish with saw marks removed
- **Foundation or footing** – usually a poured concrete base for the columbarium to sit on
- **Flatwork** – concrete or pavers used for people to access the area. Will not hold the columbarium
- **Ossuary** – a place for the comingling of cremated remains
- **Memorial Wall** – a place for additional names to be placed. This is sometimes done on a separate panel or the end wall of a columbarium.

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