



Columbarium FAQ

Frequently Asked Questions about Columbaria and Niche Spaces

What is a columbarium?

A columbarium is an above ground structure specifically designed to hold urns containing cremated remains.

What is a niche?

A niche is an individual compartment in a columbarium.

How many urns can go in a niche?

Two sets of ashes are permitted. However, it is the responsibility of the family and funeral director to ensure that the urns will fit within the niche.

What are inside dimensions of a niche?

The interior dimensions are 12” deep, 12” wide and 12” high.

Is there a special kind of urn or container that the cremated remains need to be in?

There is a risk of condensation entering the niche space. The SCRD strongly recommends the use of a non-biodegradable container for all cremated remains placed in the niches. Your local funeral provider will have a selection of cremation urns available for purchase.

How secure are the niches?

These niches are designed with a security system to discourage and prevent unauthorized entry.

How many niches may a person purchase?

The SCRD may limit sales to two niches per person. Niches cannot be resold privately, only transferred to family members. The transfer, plus a transfer fee, must be coordinated through the SCRD.

Can a niche be sold back to the SCRD?

Yes, however, the original price paid will be refunded less the Care Fund and tax portion.

Can a niche be traded for a burial plot or in ground cremation plot?

Yes, the original price of a niche can be applied towards the purchase of another space in the cemetery. The transfer, plus a transfer fee, must be coordinated through the SCRD.

What do we ‘own’ when we purchase a niche?

You are purchasing the "interment rights" for that space – the right to place cremated remains inside in perpetuity. You acquire no other interest or rights in the niche, columbaria or cemetery. The entire structure remains the sole property of the SCRD. This is a provincial law and applies to all grave space in all cemeteries in BC and in most provinces.

How long do I own the niche?

Provincial laws stipulates that you own the interment right in perpetuity (forever).

What type of memorial is used on the front of the niche?

Inscriptions will be sandblasted to the front of the niche spaces. They will all have a consistent design and must be ordered through the SCRD. Consistency in design for the columbarium is important. Contact the Parks Division at the SCRD for information and pricing.

May I decorate the front of the niche?

Bud vase or photo will not be an available option as these items are easily vandalized. Other forms of decoration, such as taping or gluing items to the niche front are not permitted. These items will be removed by parks staff.

Can items be placed at or near the columbaria?

Fresh flowers can be placed on the bottom ledge of the columbaria, however, the flowers will be removed by parks staff when they start to dry.

For more information

Contact the Parks Division at the SCRD by calling 604-885-6802 or email geri.gelineau@scrd.ca