

It is a well-documented fact that man and cave have a symbiotic relationship dating back thousands of years. Practical science will not dispute that, when the 21st-century male species is free from outside influences, such as mothers-in-law, kids, furrowed brows and wagging fingers, it still thrives in its indigenous habitat ... the cave. ■

To date, only one species has been known to threaten a man in his self-contained ecosystem. It is the cave owner's child, who wields cuteness like a ninja with throwing stars. The offspring can easily prey upon the paternal compassion of the man and lure him out into the open. If the man is not vigilant, both the cave and its occupant can easily fall prey to Barbie dolls and Disney toys. Before he realizes it, the pool table will have a Thomas the Train set running on top of it.

But, regardless of how elaborately a man cave is decked out, unarguably its four food groups are beer, cigars, pizza and wings.

As for cave edibles, there's no limit to the type of beverages and food that can be consumed in these private reaches. Chips and salsa is a staple and complements almost any guest grouping and broadcast event. The well-equipped man cave now might sport an all-in-one beer tap and refrigerator or "kegerator" (keg/-erator).

Photos courtesy of ourmancave.ning.com



The next generation of sound technology includes items like the SenseSurround pads that allow you to experience gaming at a whole new level. The system melds games with light, sound, color, vibration and air effects to give players a virtual reality experience. Feel a breeze as an onscreen helicopter flies by, courtesy of dual fans linked into the system. Watch lightning flash across the room as you race a car through a canyon during a digital thunderstorm.

FUN AND GAMES

There is a reason Hollywood movies are not doing as well as they used to. Why go to the movies when you can sit at home in your comfy cave, turn on your Blu-ray DVD player connected via high-end HDMI cable to your flat screen and surround-sound speakers and watch a movie with better quality video and sound than you would find in a theater? All the while, you avoid lines, can remain in your pajamas and have the food of your choice.

Another technology that men are apt to "geek out" on is audio systems. Gone is the era when only the A-V club student could figure out how to link his stereo system through the VCR and television via intricate cabling, boosters and amplifiers. The industry caught on and now produces HTIBs (Home Theater in a Box). These are all-in-one home theater systems for consumers who may not have the knowledge to put together a complex stereo system. These packages come with a DVD player, a surround-sound amplifier/radio tuner, all the speaker and television wires and usually five surround speakers. All of which is perfectly calibrated to work together and surprisingly easy to assemble.

Once men pull a permit (from their wives) to start construction on their caves, their stress level may spike as they come face to face with a myriad of life-altering decisions. For instance, based on lighting, do you go with an LCD, plasma or projection television? Does one embrace the Xbox, Playstation or Wii? There are almost too many choices for one man to ponder.

LIFE-ALTERING DECISIONS