

# MANN'S

J E W E L E R S



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## ROCKS & ETERNITY

Chuck Eblacker on the the **spirituality** of stone. By Karen Alberg Grossman



**FOR THE SAME REASONS** we love wearing gemstones—their natural majesty, history, eternal aura—Chuck Eblacker loves building with stones. “I’ve always been drawn to stone,” he confides, “for its strength, permanence, peacefulness. But beyond that, there are daily lessons in patience and humility... It’s hard to describe but it’s a very spiritual experience...”

Eblacker is a 38-year-old upstate New York craftsman who travels around the country building stone walls, terraces, fireplaces, wine cellars; whatever you can conceive, he can build. (His most recent project was a pizza oven!) “People ask how I chose this profession but I prefer to say that it chose me,” he explains. “While I was not particularly artistic as a child, there was always this creative sensibility longing to come to the surface. It took me a few years, but I finally paid attention to that inner voice. I began working with stone in 1996 and started my own business in 2001.”

**Rock on:** At left, a wine cellar Eblacker recently completed

Technically more than a mason, Eblacker is a certified dry stone waller, an art form that dates back centuries to numerous ancient cultures. "Masonry is constructing with stone using mortar or cement. My works are held together by gravity and friction," he explains.



concept and gradually evolve over an average time frame of six to 10 weeks.

"I don't like to work off strict plans; ideas generally need to simmer a bit. It's a combination of the purpose, the personalities, and of course the pocketbook..."

Indeed. Eblacker admits he does not yet have a stone wall in his own home. "I'm not sure I can afford it," he confides.

For more info visit [eblackerstone.com](http://eblackerstone.com). ♦

And, some might say, by passion. Eblacker works alone (often accompanied by his dog Oliver), but insists his job is anything but lonely. He spends much time collecting stones (favoring fieldstone from New York's Finger Lakes region and antique stones from old buildings) that are then meticulously crafted with hammer, chisel and small grinders as opposed to heavy machinery. "While working as a landscaper, I read a book called *In the Company of Stone* by a master craftsman named Dan Snow, who ultimately became my mentor. He invited me to his home in Vermont where I met five other master craftsmen from around the world. I was totally inspired and moved forward from there to get certified in England. But it was mostly Dan Snow: not just what he taught me, but what he encouraged me to teach myself..."

According to Eblacker, his best projects start with a collective



**Rock Garden:**  
A lovely stone patio and firepit, perfect for year-round entertaining



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