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"Inside these pages are our customers' stories.

They shine a light on the passion that underpins every wine cellar and wine room installation.

I hope you enjoy this first edition."

Tim Lewis, Sorrells



*“Wine can be a better teacher than ink,
and banter is often better than books.”*

Stephen Fry

The 10 Cases

LONDON | ENGLAND

Will Palmer and Ian Campbell first had the idea to set up a restaurant together whilst at university. Six years later, in 2011, they launched The 10 Cases in London's Covent Garden to a great reaction from customers and restaurant critics alike.

Two years after the launch they extended into the premises next door to accommodate a wine shop and bar. The 10 Cases then faced a challenge. They needed more wine storage to service the shop and wanted to create a new customer dining area that would help them stand out in the highly competitive West End restaurant market. The solution? The dramatic transformation of an underused basement into an impressive cellar and private dining room: a project delivered by Sorrells.

The 10 Cases' cellar is not only a practical and climate-controlled storage area, it is an attraction in its own right: a hireable space that accommodates a stunning private dining room. The intimate dining room is flanked on one side by a floor-to-ceiling glass wall that provides an impressive view of the wine storage area.



“I feel proud every time I come down here,” says Will Palmer. “It’s a real show-off piece. You usually think when you go downstairs in a restaurant, I’m being shoved down in the basement. Here it’s a pleasant surprise.” The room appeals to a wide range of clientele, and is hired privately for birthday parties, wine tastings, business meetings and wine industry gatherings. The 10 Cases also conducts staff interviews in the dining room, to emphasise the founders’ passion for wine.



“ Our cellar is essential, we wouldn’t be able to function without it.” ”

Whilst it was Will who had the dream of a combined dining room and wine cellar, it was Sorrells’ expertise and enthusiasm that made his vision a reality. “They were the only supplier up for the challenge. They were very can-do, highly flexible and worked superbly with the constraints of a small space. The result was better than I envisaged,” says Will.

Having the cellar on display demonstrates The 10 Cases’ passion for wine: they really know their wines and care about how it is stored. Ease of access is paramount, so too are the optimum conditions of the cellar; hundreds of bottles of wine are stored here, many of which are laid down to be enjoyed at their best in years to come.

Sorrells has totally revolutionised the former redundant basement, providing The 10 Cases with not only a practical cellar but also an area with a wow factor. “Our cellar is an essential space, we just wouldn’t be able to function without it,” says Will.





“ I feel proud every time I come down here. It’s a real show-off piece. ”





A photograph of a wine cellar with a piano in the foreground. The cellar is visible through a glass door, showing rows of wine bottles on wooden racks. The piano is dark and partially visible in the foreground. The lighting is warm and focused on the cellar.

A Passion for Collecting

KENT | ENGLAND

Andy Golding remembers Christmases as a child when the Liebfraumilch flowed. He doesn't therefore credit such times for igniting his love of wine. That passion came later. As Andy's career in financial services advanced, he found the dinners got better and better. So did the wine.

"It turned me on to a few things and I now have the opportunity to collect wine seriously," Andy says. "You can't have a serious collection stashed under the stairs," he adds.

Andy's cellar, approximately 15ft wide by 8ft deep, is situated within the basement. In addition to the cellar the 2,800 sq ft area includes a cinema, snooker room, entertainment room and gym. The set-up lends itself to a party vibe. The wine racks, which can store around 1,000 bottles, are glimpsed through the cellar's oak framed glass door. There is also room for a number of half bottles and cases.



“ It’s like having the best kept secret, but once you discover it you want to tell the world. ”

Too busy to spend much time down there during the week, it’s somewhere he likes to go at the weekend. Andy and his wife enjoy entertaining and he says it’s nice to suggest to friends to choose something. Inevitably he has to stop his friends picking out something ridiculously expensive! There is a bar stool for those who wish to stay and crack open a bottle.

Not only is it a social space, it also makes an impressive statement. An American white oak finish was chosen to complement the rest of the house and an added bonus is the smell: open the door and the scent of the wood wafts towards you. Of course it’s also a very functional space, keeping the wine in an optimum condition.

Since having the cellar Andy has spent some time down there arranging and sectioning the space. He has a number of favourites in the Italian and Californian sections. The wine he lays down is Bordeaux, particularly Margaux and Pauillac. Andy enjoys the whole experience whether he’s adding a bottle to the collection or taking one out. “A space like this is quite a rare thing to have. Not many have the luxury of a custom-built cellar.”

Wenge Wood Cellar

SURREY | ENGLAND





“ I’m selling this house, but I’ll be getting these guys to build my new cellar. ”





A Spectacular View

LONDON | ENGLAND

A Space Comes Alive

HERTFORDSHIRE | ENGLAND



When Gavin and Jenny moved into their new-build property in south east England, there was a room they were unsure what to do with. The developers had earmarked it as a library, but being 10ft square with an uninspiring view, the room didn't feel particularly library-like. Having collected wine for a few years, with a particular passion for Bordeaux, Gavin felt the space would be ideal as a wine cellar.

“ Timing was key - Jenny was heavily pregnant - it could have been disastrous. ”



Gavin approached several companies to see how the space could be enhanced. Sorrells came up with a vision and ideas to transform the space. It was very much a collaborative effort, with Gavin being shown the visualisations and making tweaks along the way. The process took about three to four weeks of planning and a further six weeks to complete the project.





The entire process went smoothly. Gavin was impressed with the workers on site who put up screens and made an effort to keep it all as tidy as possible. “Jenny was heavily pregnant at the time so if it had all gone wrong, it could have been disastrous!” says Gavin.

The cellar is in the hallway and is immediately noticeable as you enter the house. Situated between the sitting and dining rooms it makes a stunning feature of the hallway. Fronted by a glass door with two glass panels either side it’s an impressive sight often commented on by visitors.

To complete the experience, an enomatic (a gadget popular with wine bars and shops) was installed as an extra feature. An enomatic preserves the wine in opened bottles, preventing it becoming ruined by the oxidation process. Gavin admits the enomatic hasn’t been used as much as he’d envisaged: once a bottle is opened the wine is usually drunk before it needs preserving!

The cellar can accommodate 2,800 bottles and is a highly practical space, but it also looks fabulous. “I enjoy my wines, but looking good was as important as the practical considerations,” says Gavin. It was vital for Gavin and Jenny that the cellar fitted in with the existing decor of its surroundings and was consistent with the rest of the house.

“I’m very pleased with the cellar. It has really made the space come alive,” says Gavin.



A Fresh Twist to a Victorian Home

SUFFOLK | ENGLAND



“ I make new discoveries on my trips abroad, returning with cases of wine unheard of back home. ”

Whether it's throwing himself into renovating his Victorian home or the way he approaches wine collecting, for Ben Green it's about getting the most out of any experience. By day, Ben is a commodities trader working in the City. He also manages to find time for a side project: he has an interest in a company that helps musicians and bands get off the ground. He lives in London during the week and escapes to his country residence in the picturesque village of Dedham, on the Essex/Suffolk border, at weekends.

Ben's love of wine runs deep. Having explored some of Europe's finest wine producing regions over the years, he likes to immerse himself in the world of wine. A while ago he cycled through Burgundy's Montrachet villages and has also toured Champagne, visiting dozens of minor houses.

"I love the wines in my collection because I associate them with specific experiences. Often I make new discoveries on my trips abroad, returning with cases of wine unheard of back home."



As well as having a love of Old World wine, he also is drawn to some of the New World producers and particularly rates Californian Pinot Noir and Zinfandel. Ben loves the influence of the young 'upstart' approach to wine production, where sons or daughters of vineyard owners bring in their own way of doing things with interesting results.

Ben's love affair with wine began during his student days in London when he found himself experiencing a wide range of cuisines. "The more I discovered about food, the more it fuelled my passion for wine. I realised which dishes paired well with which wines. It went from there. I don't call myself an oenophile but I know what I enjoy."

It is at his Dedham home where he is able to really enjoy drinking and sampling wine with friends. The village of Dedham is a lovely spot to relax, close to the River Stour and 'Constable country'. His house had originally belonged to a wealthy seed merchant and it was important to Ben to honour the property's history. It took over two and a half years to restore this beautiful home to its former Victorian glory.

Ben likes that a fresh twist has been given to the idea of the traditional cellar. "The cellar is used for laying down wine but I wanted it to store other things too," says Ben. As well as wine racks there are store cupboards for items such as cheeses and meats. Details include bespoke cabinetry: some of the cupboards have zinc-coated, steel-mesh fronts for the cheese to breathe.

"Once guests arrive, they have everything they need, from the snooker room and games to the wine cellar and cheeses. Spending time at my country house is all about enjoyment. In my view it's no good having a cellar if you're scared to open up your bottles. I want it so everyone can partake in it."

The cellar renovation was complex. In its Victorian days, ice bins were used to keep the space cold. When the ice melted, water drained down the middle of the floor. "We had to do some serious ground work," Ben explains.

Other original features were enhanced. Slide one particular shelf and it reveals a secret passage. A gun cabinet is hidden behind another section.

The cellar has also transformed the way Ben collects wine. Previously he had a mismatched assortment of odd bottles. Now his system for consuming, storing and laying down wine is more organised. "I can plan better and store a wider variety of wines. I have the capacity to buy two or three cases of wine. There is less turnover."

When Ben bought the property, he was told it had a reputation for being scary. Now it's a light and airy space. As for ghostly sightings or unusual noises, Ben hasn't spotted anything. "The only strange movements I've seen are those of wine bottles when guests are staying!"



Staying In: the New Going Out

ESSEX | ENGLAND

For Graham and Lisa Hawkins wine is a shared interest and the couple's cellar complements both their lifestyles.

Graham, Lisa and their young daughter live in a 100-year-old house in Essex. Lisa particularly enjoys how the cellar enables her to enjoy a social life at home. "What's great for me is that when Graham's away, and it's difficult to get childcare, I can have my girlfriends round," she explains. "It gives me a 'going out' experience without having to leave my front door."

Entertaining is also high on Graham's list. In his younger days, he used to get together with friends to play cards. "We would all bring a different bottle of wine to try. The evenings were a catalyst not only for socialising but for developing our appreciation of wine." Their cellar is an extension of this early passion. Graham enjoys being able to introduce friends to new discoveries.

Having a dedicated cellar has enabled Graham to expand his knowledge of wine and grow his collection. "Now that I have the ability to store wine correctly I love getting into my hobby," he says. With a busy work-life and lots of travel, downtime is a rarity. "The cellar helps Graham relax, whether that's exploring his passion or sharing his collection with friends," says Lisa.

Graham's love of wine was sparked by his travels overseas. Graham is Chief Underwriting Officer for an insurance company specialising in high value items. "Being involved in the insurance of art, jewellery and so on means a lot of international travel. My job involves socialising and over the years I've enjoyed a good many business lunches. Experiencing different cultures and foods led to my love of wine." Prior to having her daughter, Lisa was in banking and also travelled a great deal, giving her a similar route into wine appreciation.

The couple had wanted a cellar for some time. When they bought their house in 2008 they had a vision to make substantial changes. One addition to the house was a swimming pool, a project which required extensive excavation. It made sense to identify a space for the cellar at the same time. The house is on a hill and after significant groundwork the pool and cellar are next to each other at ground level.

The house's renovations took the best part of four years. "I spent so much time project managing that it felt like a full time job," laughs Lisa. "We had the usual challenges when you have a build as extensive as ours. The house is 100 years old and we tried to maintain the character of the house whilst giving it some modern features as well."

The couple had their own plans for the wine cellar. Sorrells provided some additional ideas, making the room a more integral part of the house. "We weren't after anything ostentatious but it was important for us to have it looking nice," explains Lisa. Because of the Hawkins' love of entertaining it was vital that the space catered for this. "The room that's been created has enhanced our lifestyle and made the whole wine tasting experience an event," Graham adds.

“ It's beautiful, a wonderful space. It makes wine tasting a special event. ”



“ It gives me a ‘going out’ experience
without having to leave my front door. ”

In the planning stage, Sorrells’ visualisations gave Lisa and Graham a flavour of how the cellar was going to look. The finished cellar however is better than they imagined. “It’s beautiful, a really special space. We told friends we were doing a cellar, and they were interested. But when they see it in the flesh, they are blown away by it. The quality is superb.”

Adding to the sense of occasion is the adjoining dining room. A screen for watching key sporting events and a music system add to the social ambience. “We chose traditional French oak and added to it some contemporary elements. It hits the right design notes,” says Graham.

The cellar holds around 1,200 bottles and in the centre is a tasting area. The couple buy their wine based on recommendations and on personal preferences. Having a cellar means they have a more organised approach. “We take a couple of breaks a year to explore vineyards. Last spring Lisa and I went to Épernay and we are keen to explore some of the Majorcan vineyards. We’ll be dovetailing more of our holidays around wine to build our cellar,” says Graham.

There’s one more reason Lisa is so delighted with the cellar. “Graham is one of the most difficult people to buy for. Now I will always know what to get him!”



Kitchen Wine Room

LONDON | ENGLAND





Wine for Entertaining

ESSEX | ENGLAND

“ I like taking guests to the cellar to pick out three or four bottles to open up and enjoy. ”

Malcolm Cummings, his wife Emma and their young daughter moved into their 200-year-old farmhouse two years ago. Malcolm, who works for a US-based Fintech company, quickly identified an underutilised room ideal for storing wine.

The Cummings residence has four large cellars. “When we bought the house the cellars were earmarked variously as a teenage hangout, a snooker room, a garden store room and a room that housed an old piano. As soon as I walked into the piano room I knew it was going to be just right for our wine,” Malcolm says.



Whilst not serious collectors, Malcolm and Emma know what they like. They buy wine based on their personal preferences rather than on critics' reviews. Malcolm's passion for wine started when his wine-loving boss invited him to exclusive tasting events. "I'd go and cram into the back of a wine shop with around 20 other people for tastings that were more like social gatherings."

These intimate wine tastings remain Malcolm's preferred way of discovering new wines, as well as receiving recommendations of French vineyards and Champagne houses. He and Emma often drive to France to revisit the areas they love, inevitably returning with a boot full of their favourites.

Malcolm has broad tastes however and isn't attached to any one region. "Regardless of where wine comes from, if we like it we'll buy it. We've also followed a couple of winemakers from the start of their careers, such as Barossa Valley's Ben Glaetzer. He's a down-to-earth guy and we like his wines. As long as we have space we'll always buy Ben's Shiraz!"





The Cummings' collection is around 4,500 to 5,000 bottles strong, comprising wines for drinking and those for investment. The cellar even includes dedicated storage for Malcolm's collection of over 500 single malt whisky bottles.

"We've made the most of our cellar, getting so much in but ensuring it feels spacious," says Malcolm. It's become one of Malcolm's favourite rooms in the house. "I find it a relaxing environment. It's a great de-stresser. And the smell of the American white oak is to die for."



Entertaining is important to the Cummings. "I love hosting dinner parties. My favourite part is chatting to guests pre-dinner, finding out what kind of wine they like and then taking them to the cellar to pick out three or four bottles to open up and enjoy. It's a great moment!"

A Dining Experience Designed with Perfection

ESSEX | ENGLAND

“ I love what I do. It's my life. I go to bed thinking about it and wake up thinking about it. ”

You probably won't see many restaurant owners up on the roof of their restaurants cleaning the soffits, but Alec Smith is one such man.

From cutting the grass on the cricket green opposite to picking up litter, no detail is overlooked by the owner of the eponymous Alec's restaurant. A self-confessed perfectionist, Alec led a clean-up of the local area when he took over the then derelict Green Man pub in Essex's picturesque Navestock Side in 2009. The building had been on Alec's radar for years. Once a busy pub and wedding venue, it had fallen into neglect and stood empty for two years. Alec saw its potential and invested £2.5m to rebuild and refurbish it.

The result is stunning. From the well-laid out kitchens to the terrace with views over rolling fields, Alec's is a beautiful place to come for either lunch or dinner. It appeals to both regular diners, who eat there two or three times a week, to those who come to celebrate a special occasion. It's not short of celebrity guests, yet Alec is discreet about his clientele.

“It's remarkably successful. However I always knew it would be,” he says jovially. “I know the game. We're the best in the area.”





Restauranteering runs through Alec's blood, having been in the trade over 30 years. Alec had owned and run the successful Smith's restaurant in Ongar for fifteen years. Alec's is actually named after both his father and grandfather. His father was also a restaurateur; prior to that he'd been a porter at Billingsgate fish market, just like his father before him. Black and white photographs of his father and grandfather on the restaurant walls remind diners of this heritage.

The restaurant has been carefully designed to ensure the operation runs as smoothly as possible. Everything has been well thought out, from the natural light flooding into the kitchen to freshness of the fish on the menu.

Wine is a significant feature of the dining experience. Next to the bar a Sorrells display case showcases their wine selection. The bottom half is refrigerated and acts as an overflow storage area to a larger cellar downstairs. The top half allows the bottles' labels to be displayed which helps diners select their wines. "Sorrells are a wonderful firm," says Alec, explaining that they installed the display case just as he wanted it and were very accommodating.

Here at Alec's wine lists are offered to all members of a dining party: he believes it important to make everyone feel part of the experience. The wine list is also intentionally slimline so guests don't spend a long time studying the selection. Making the choice easy means guests have more time to enjoy themselves. There is an elegant and relaxed area upstairs to cater for pre-and after-dinner cocktails and champagne, which can be sipped whilst listening to the in-house pianist. The wine list is constantly evolving in line with trends and a quirky element is brought to the selection to keep it fresh. Favourites include Picpoul de Pinet, Albarino and Margaux. Guest wines are regularly rotated and the house wines are of a similarly high quality. It's a wine list that is constantly evolving and changing.

Alec says that in the five years the place has been open the response has been overwhelming. Now with 80 staff, it has the reputation for being one of the best restaurants in Essex and is often compared to Scott's of Mayfair.

"I love what I do. It's my life. I go to bed thinking about it and wake up thinking about it. We are all passionate about it."





“ Wine makes every meal an occasion, every table more elegant, every day more civilized. ”

Galvin La Chapelle

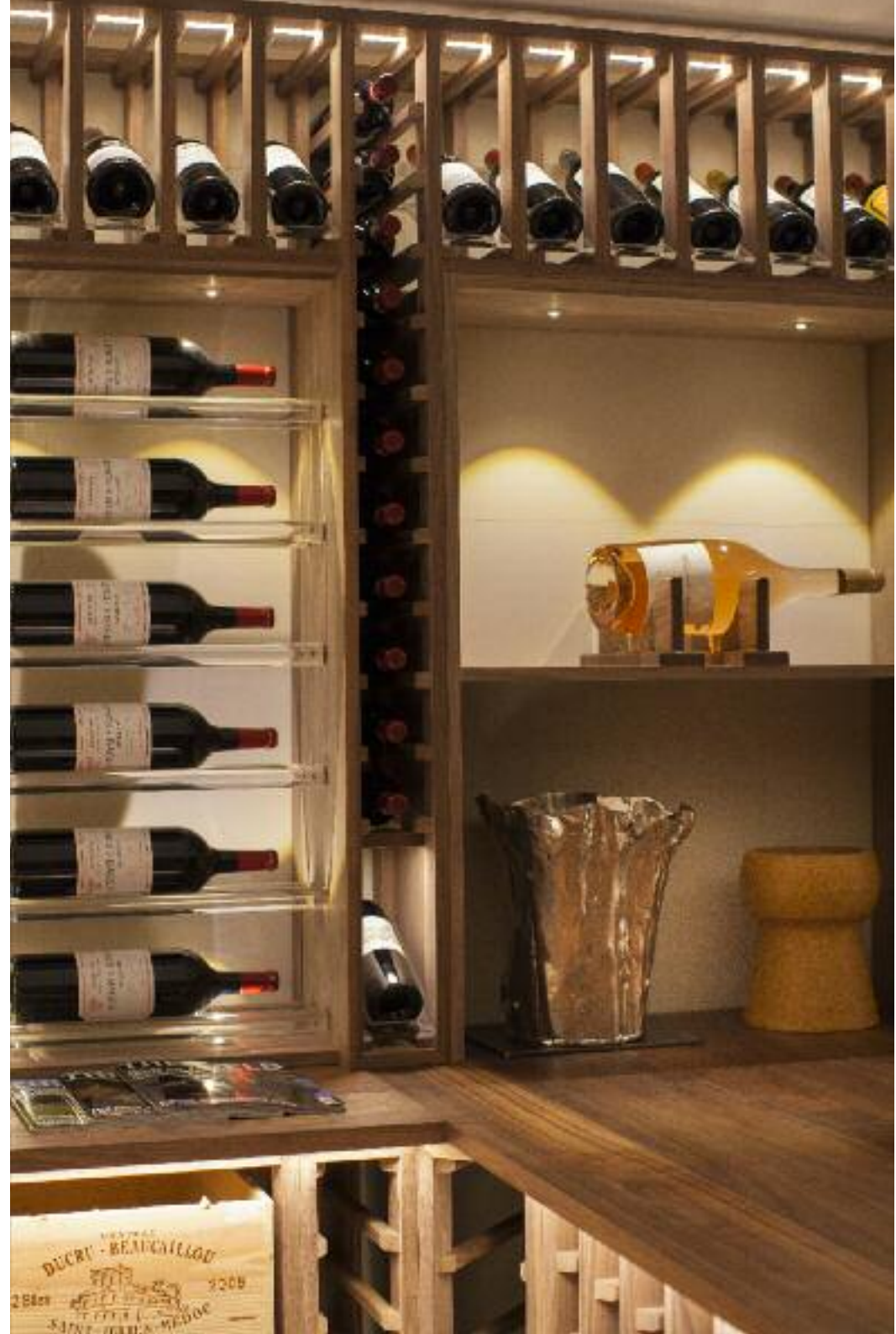
LONDON | ENGLAND





A Wine Lover's Paradise

CAMBRIDGESHIRE | ENGLAND



Alan Gaby and his family moved into their Cambridgeshire house in 2015. The Gabys were pleased to have more space than they'd had previously. Alan soon spotted an opportunity with one of their new rooms: the library.

“You can read a book anywhere,” says Alan who asked Sorrells to transform the library into a cellar. The stunning results have given Alan's wine a new lease of life. Much of his wine collection had been held in storage. Now it's within easy reach. “I've been able to find space for a lot of the wine I've kept over the years and treat it with the love and care it deserves.”

“ It's an everyday
kind of space. ”

Having a wine room has enhanced the Gaby residence. “It's created a centrepiece for the house,” says Alan. It's not only ideal for storing and displaying wine, it's a space where the Gabys can entertain over a glass of champagne. Visitors are always impressed, often remarking they'd like one too. “I've yet to find anyone who hasn't been wowed,” says Alan.

Whilst he wouldn't call himself a connoisseur, Alan appreciates good wine and has developed his own tastes. He started collecting wine in the early noughties. His memories of wine however stretch back to his childhood. Alan's father ran an off licence and he remembers fondly the Mateus Rosé and bottles of L'Hirondelle that sold for less than 60p. Alan's first experience of fine wines was in the late 80s and early 90s when he began regularly entertaining clients for work.





One of his favourite London haunts was Il Castelletto. Two Italian brothers ran the restaurant and they quickly saw the benefit of getting Alan, who spent a great deal of time there, interested in wine. They provided him with an unusual education: the brothers introduced Alan to wine importers and took him to trade fairs where he helped select the wine. “They recognised I was their best customer and realised the clients I took there were knowledgeable about wine,” says Alan. “They knew that if I selected wine for Il Castelletto, they could be sure my clients would buy what I’d suggested.”

It was a good introduction to the world of wine. Now CEO of a technology company, Alan can enjoy the lessons he learned back then in his own wine room.

Alan’s cellar accommodates just over 1,000 bottles, approximately two thirds of his entire collection. The remainder is stored by a professional broker or is still en primeur. The space is air conditioned and sealed, creating perfect conditions for maintaining quality. Three walls are for wine and one wall is dedicated to whisky and other spirits. “Everything stored here at home is for drinking,” he says.



Alan selected walnut wood which, he says, looks beautiful. In the middle of the room is an illuminated central bar which provides an eye-catching feature. “Tim from Sorrells came up with the design for the space which we then tweaked a little. I’m absolutely delighted with it,” he says.

Alan appointed Sorrells after seeing the cellar they had installed at Galvin La Chapelle, a restaurant in the City where he knows the two chefs. “After the designs were produced Sorrells came back and spotted a few improvements. Another good thing was that the whole Sorrells team really cared about the outcome.”

Which wines does Alan particularly favour? His tastes are broad and he enjoys wine from around the world including Romania, India and China. The majority of Alan’s collection is French. Bordeaux is a particular favourite. “I have some Château Lafite and Château Mouton Rothschild from 2003 and 2005. I’ve not yet drunk any as they’re not quite at an age but it is lovely to have the thought I can crack open a bottle for a special occasion.”

“ Everything stored here at home is for drinking. ”

Alan says he was drawn to another particular wine by dint of sharing the same name: Château Gaby in Bordeaux. “It’s a beautiful château that used to be owned by the chairman of Fortnum and Mason. I was holidaying in the area once and visited the château. I tried to stake a claim due to our sharing the same name! I have bought their Canon-Fronsac for many years.” Alan also rates English sparkling wine, noting that Hush Heath from Kent was served on the Orient Express when he and his wife took a trip to celebrate their 25th wedding anniversary.

Alan visits his wine room every day and admits he finds it hard to leave without a bottle, even if he initially goes in just to check on things. “It’s an everyday kind of space. Even if I go in to stroke the bottles, I rarely come out empty-handed,” Alan says. “But then I have no willpower!” he adds.

*“Passion is the thread that unites all we do here at Sorrells
- both ours and our customers.”*

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