

# Exploring a Custom Wine Cellar

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Photo Doug Kohen

Vickie focuses her attention on their property in Sonoma that's planted with chardonnay grapes, "I oversee the Vineyard Manager," she explains. Their grapes are sold to the Schug Carneros Estate Winery and end up in Carneros Chardonnay. Oddly enough her favorite wines are Sonoma County chardonnays.

The Martin's are on a number of winery and retailer mailing lists, so the wine keeps accumulating. "It's a buyers market, some limited releases just aren't selling like they used to," he said. Two favorites are Shafer Vineyards Hillside Select and Saxum Vineyards – known for their Rhone blends.

His goal for the new year – get more organized, "It's the bane of anybody who collects – most don't have a good grasp on their inventory." While the cellar is organized by type of wine, chardonnays here, cabernets there, then arranged alphabetically by producer within those categories, it's difficult to determine which vintages are ready to drink and which should age longer.

Some folks enjoy collecting stamps, snow globes or Pez dispensers – perhaps it's the lure of finding something rare and unique. For the Martin family, collecting and sharing their delicious drinkable bounty with friends and family is its own reward.

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