

# The Little Hong Kong Story

**W**ith a booming market, it's not a surprise that wine storage facilities have blossomed – with already 19 of them in our territory. Wine is, after all, a perishable good, in need of TLC.

Around the world the most prestigious cellars are associated with history, art and technology; Hong Kong is no exception. State-of-the-art facility, Crown Wine Cellars on Shouson Hill blends heritage with storage.

CWC, the first underground club in Hong Kong, is an ensemble of cellars, bunkers and a conservatory that offer ample space for cellaring and entertainment. The ex-military site, declared a UNESCO Asia Pacific Heritage Site in 2007, was known as Little Hong Kong.

“It was the last place to surrender to the Japanese in World War II. There were 23 troops here of all different nationalities: Punjabi, Canadian, Grenadiers, British and the only uniformed Chinese soldiers,” says Gregory De’Eb, General Manager of CWC about how the militia already reflected the roots of Hong Kong’s diversity 70 years ago. “The troops were given an honorable surrender which makes for a beautiful story and fantastic Feng Shui.”

And indeed CWC has enjoyed good fortune. Since opening its doors in 2003 cases of wine have flown in – particularly after the 2008 tax cut – pushing the company to expand via CWC2, CWC3, CWC4 and CWC5

in construction. Wine connoisseurs have entrusted their precious collections, lured by the optimal conditions of the climate controlled units and a guarantee by the Wine Storage Certification Program.

“We’re trying to reach that international perfection where there isn’t even a five degree change in temperature; it just stays at 13-14 degrees all year long,” says De’Eb noting how they’ve actually improved on the typical underground wine cellar from 100 years ago, possibly making wines last longer. The ideal conditions are a constant temperature of 12 degrees for white wine and 14-16 degrees for red. Humidity should hover at 65-75 percent and the bottles should stay away from UV light that emits heat and launches a series of chemical reactions in the wine.

While membership is in the hundreds, over 50,000 people have visited the club. CWC offers a Silver membership to people wishing to test the club for a day. And if you just want to visit the grounds that “outlasted Big Hong Kong by two days”, as De’Eb says, CWC organizes monthly guided tours.

