



'WE WANTED SOCIAL EATING HOUSE TO LOOK LIKE IT HAD BEEN THERE FOR YEARS, EVEN THOUGH THE BUILDING IS ONLY FIVE YEARS OLD'

Rough and ready  
Russell Sage at  
Social Eating House

## RUSSELL SAGE

Social Eating House, Soho

Russell Sage, 44, is the man behind the interiors of Dishoom in Shoreditch and Jason Atherton's Little Social and Social Eating House, as well as the Royal Suite at The Goring where Kate Middleton slept the night before the royal wedding. He lives in a Victorian flat in Stockwell and has a second home in Somerset.

'The game has changed in the restaurant scene over the past ten years. Where before you could spend £1 million on creating a new one, only to be disposed of a couple of years later, now we're investing at least £3-£4 million to create something authoritative with a real sense of history. The Wolseley is a good example.

'When we were doing up Social Eating House, we knew it had to look like it had been there for years (even though the building was only built five years ago), so we used sponge-painted walls, eclectic industrial fittings and unpolished tables

made from honest materials like oak.

'In a domestic environment, it's the opposite. You can't worry about what other people think. My first rule is always do what makes you feel comfortable. Why wouldn't you keep your nan's vase on display or ditch that trendy sofa for something enormous that you can't wait to jump on? It might not be fashionable, but a home should be 100 per cent comfortable.

'My most valuable piece of advice is to spend every penny on your bathroom. I haven't taken a proper holiday in 14 years so making the time to have a proper bath is the ultimate luxury. The key is not to have any technology in there – there should be no temptation to watch stuff on your laptop or check your phone. It's all about being able to fall asleep in the tub.

'The most inspiring interior I've been in is my parents' house in Dorset because it's full of all the things from my life, the things I care about. It's not a design statement, just a collection of things that matter.'

(russellsagestudio.co.uk)



## LITTLE BLACK BOOK

**Gainsborough Silk** has a royal warrant – I used its silks in the Royal Suite at The Goring. Bologna damask silk starts at £254 per metre (gainsborough.co.uk)

**Lots Road Auctions** every Sunday is great for buying stock from Chelsea house clearances. (lotsroad.com)

For decorative glass, go to **Anthony Stern** in Battersea. Clear glass goblets start at about £65. His work has been bought by Elton John and the

Beckhams. (anthonysternglass.com)

For something totally unique, I go to **Lassco** (see page 46). People should try to use reclaim more. I have about 5,000 pieces in my warehouse. (lassco.co.uk)

For inspiration I visit **Sir John Soane's Museum**. I've been working closely with it for my next project [Zetter Townhouse Marylebone]. The museum is a great homage to his very eclectic British style. (soane.org)