



EDITION #18

DISCOVER OUR BEST-KEPT SECRETS

APRIL 2023

IS CABERNET STILL KING?

Cabernet Sauvignon has a reputation for its ability to age, often referred to as ‘the king’ of grapes. In fact, many of the finest wines in the world, whether straight varietals or blends have Cabernet Sauvignon at their core. Wine enthusiasts may know that Cabernet Sauvignon was genetically derived from Sauvignon Blanc and Cabernet Franc, which dates back to the 17th century. It soon became popular in France, planted prolifically in the Medoc. It’s a versatile grape, open to the elements due to its thicker skin, which is why it’s grown in so many wine regions across the world.

Our Great Western home is often best known for our distinctive Shiraz, but our Cabernet Sauvignon vines have equally as much pedigree. We house some of the oldest Cabernet Sauvignon vines in the world, with about half a row planted in the Nursery Block in the late 1860s. The 13 Acre Block of Cabernet Sauvignon, that sits at the entrance to the winery, also has a scattering of the classic Bordeaux varietals including Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Petit Verdot and Cabernet Franc. From time to time, we’ll create small-parcel wines in our Congongella Collection to give members a taste of this remarkable vineyard.

Recent vintages of our Great Western Cabernet Sauvignon have been well received by wine critics, consistently scoring over 95 points by Halliday Wine Companion, and being lauded for the distinctive

medium-bodied style. We’re still waiting for thoughts on the new release, but for the 2020 Great Western Cabernet Sauvignon Jeni Port noted:

“Delivers a nuanced interpretation of the grape, proving once again that cabernet is right at home in the Grampians. Briar, bush mint, bay leaf, bracken and earth here, a dollop of vanillin oak and concentrated black fruits there, with taut tannins laying the groundwork for a long, brilliant future.”



Image: 13 Acre Block at Best’s Great Western

While the older vineyards play a part in the structure, our Cabernet Sauvignon journey continues to evolve with new vineyards adding to the complexity of the wines. Our Sugarloaf Creek Vineyard has 30 hectares of Cabernet under vine with a slightly different soil profile. It adds to the vineyard diversity, protecting against frosts and allowing an expression of a distinctive regional style. The king of grapes reigns supreme!



Our 2021 Great Western Cabernet Sauvignon recently won a trophy for Best Bordeaux or Blend at the 2022 Ballarat Wine Show. Previous vintages of this wine have also received consistently high Halliday scores: 2020 - 95pts, 2019 - 95pts, 2018 - 95pts, 2017 - 94pts, 2016 - 95pts, 2015 - 95pts, 2014 - 95pts.

NEW RELEASES



**2022 FOUFRE FERMENT
RIESLING**

Immediate bright mouth filling acids with lemon rind flavours and a touch of perfume, white flowers, granite and the faintest hint of soft oak. The palate is long, full and lingers.

Released.....**February 2023**



**2022 GREAT WESTERN
PINOT NOIR**

Aromatic notes of cherry, earth and leaf continue onto a lingering palate, with just a suggestion of fairy floss. A great value wine, but scarce due to a low yielding vintage in 2022.

Released.....**March 2023**



**2022 GREAT WESTERN
CHARDONNAY**

A single vineyard wine, beautifully balanced thanks to a cooler vintage and mature fruit. White stone fruit, hazelnut and butter notes offset by gentle acidity. This expression will speak to fans of older styles of Best's Chardonnay.

To be released.....**May 2023**



**2022 YOUNG VINE
PINOT MEUNIER**

Near perfect growing conditions for this highly sought after wine. Intense crunchy red fruits of crushed strawberries and raspberries, underlined with orange peel and candy musk flavours.

Released.....**April 2023**

NEW: 2022 FOUFRE FERMENT RIESLING



FOLLOWING ON FROM a Halliday 'Wine of the Year' is a tall order for any wine, however we believe the 2022 vintage of our Foudre Ferment Riesling is up to the task.

Our Foudre Ferment Riesling is made from carefully selected grapes grown in Victoria's Great Western region, which is renowned for producing some of Australia's finest Rieslings. Once picked, the grapes are then fermented in large oak foudres, which give the wine its signature character and complexity. This practice came from winemaking techniques which were in place before refrigeration and stainless-steel storage were commonplace. Then, it was standard to mature and stabilise the wine in

large oak vats, as is still the practice in Germany and France today.

The 2022 vintage of this wine is a beautiful expression of the Great Western terroir. The nose is full of citrus and floral aromas, with hints of jasmine and peach, while the palate is vibrant and mouth filling with a long, mineral finish.

Best's Foudre Ferment Riesling reflects our passion for traditional winemaking techniques and our dedication to producing exceptional wines. It is a wine that can be enjoyed now, but also has the potential to age beautifully for many years to come. There's not a lot available, so don't delay adding some to your cellar.



FUN FACT: Riesling at Best's has an impressive history, planted as one of the first grapes in our Nursery Block in 1868. However, it wasn't until 1963 that we produced a straight Riesling wine. Our focus on this grape accelerated under the masterful guidance of Best's first Winemaker Trevor Mast from 1974 onwards. His expertise was honed from esteemed German tutelage and is still evident in the Riesling we produce today.



BEST'S RECIPES



Gluten Free Pasta

GLUTEN & DAIRY FREE

SERVES 3 PEOPLE

Nothing beats a bowl of freshly made pasta as the Autumn chill sets in. This recipe is one for our gluten free fans, a fool-proof pasta from Donna at our local Great Western Hotel. For a great wine match, we recommend serving this pasta with a simple tomato and basil passata, and a glass of Best's Bin No. 1 Shiraz.

INGREDIENTS

- 230g gluten free plain flour
- 50g chickpea flour
- 1 tsp xanthan gum
- 3 large eggs
- 6 tbsp water (plus extra if needed)

METHOD

1. Mix the dry ingredients together, add the eggs & mix with a fork, then add water. Start with six tablespoons, then keep adding until you get a sticky ball.
2. Flour your surface area well, then knead until your mixture forms a smooth ball (it shouldn't be sticky, if so put it back in bowl and add flour one tablespoon at a time).
3. Wrap in glad wrap, chill for 30-60 minutes.
4. Place on a floured, flat surface. Cut the pasta into quarters and roll out into a thin layer. Pull the top 1/3 down to middle, then the bottom 1/3 up to middle and roll again until about 5mm thick.
5. Flour lightly before running through a pasta machine to roll out and cut into pasta or cut by hand on a board. Avoid cutting the pasta too thick as it seems to thicken up when cooking.
Tip: Be sparing with the flour when putting it through pasta machine.
6. Cook in boiling water for 10-15 minutes, until cooked through.

Once ready, toss through your passata, add some gluten free meatballs if desired and top with freshly grated parmesan cheese

Meet the BEST'S TEAM



TRISTAN HILBIG
Cellar Hand

The pull of Great Western is strong for our Cellar Hand, Tristan, a Halls Gap local who has travelled the world and returned to the region many years later. Spending time in Malaysia with family, Tristan then had several stints in Germany - no doubt a great influence on his love of wine and beer. Turning a passion into a job, Tristan comes to Best's with a wealth of knowledge in brewing, bringing over seven years of experience across the beer industry. When he's not at the winery, Tristan loves to explore the region via dirt bike, hiking or four-wheel driving. Of course, he's still got a batch of homebrew on the go most of the time.

Favourite Best's wine? Young Vine Pinot Meunier



JACKSON PICKETT
Cellar Hand

Jackson is the son of Wine Club Manager Nicole Thomson. From earning a little pocket money to gearing up for his third vintage, it's been a pleasure to see Jackson become part of our Cellar Hand team. Great Western is a long way from the Gold Coast where he was born, but Jackson now calls it home. When he's not playing pool or indulging a love of footy, you'll find him making the most of the natural beauty in the area enjoying camping and fishing at any opportunity.

Favourite Best's Wine? 2019 Old Vine Pinot Meunier

 YOUR VOICE HAS BEEN HEARD 

We recently sent out our first ever survey to help us provide our members with the best possible experience. Thanks to everyone who shared their thoughts about what you'd love to see at Best's. It was humbling to read your stories and your feedback is invaluable to us!

Two lucky participants went in the draw to win a magnum of 2017 Bart's Block Shiraz, (worth \$375). Congratulations to our winners, Mike and Vic. Enjoy your magnum!



OUR NEW WINE CLUB:

HANDPICK YOUR SELECTIONS



Handpicked is our newest and most flexible wine club. Giving you the choice of wines you'd like to receive and when. Handpicked is perfect for those who know the 'Best' selection for them.

Simply select the dozen wines you love, twice or more a year and we'll do the rest. Plus, you'll have access to a limited selection of back vintage wines, a 15% discount, invites to exclusive events and more.

Keen to learn more? Contact our Wine Club Manager Nicole Thomson nicole.thomson@bestswines.com



FOLLOW US ON INSTAGRAM

Enjoy the behind the scenes action of vintage 2023. Follow us on Instagram for our updates.



 TALES FROM 
OUR CUSTOMERS

"We have enjoyed your wines for years and the price range is fantastic for the standard of wine that you get. The earliest wine we have had was a 1969 Claret Bin 0 and it was one of the best wines we have ever had. This goes to the quality and longevity of Best's wines."

"Exceptional wines, exceptionally well-priced! We have been purchasing for years and impressed with the consistent quality. And your staff express the Best's 'Family' ethos just so well. Thank you."

"Love the whole tradition around Best's, warmth of the welcome right through to the great wines. My favourites are the museum releases I get from time to time - like the Old Vine Pinot Meunier from late 80s - OMG."

"The Bin 1 Shiraz is the best value red in the country and I have to hide the Riesling from my wife."

"Whenever I give a 'gift' or provide a bottle of Best's as a token of 'sharing the love', it is nearly 100% acknowledged that my minor effort is of major significance. A credit to the notoriety of your 'brand' and a reflection of the passion and toil in every 'drop.'"

"I just love the quality of wines! The array of different grapes and different winemaking techniques used makes it so easy to get others to love it too. I already have 3 of my workmates on board and they all love different styles of wines".

BEN THOMSON UPDATE: SUGARLOAF CREEK

IT'S BEEN A SHORT TIME since we purchased Sugarloaf Creek Vineyard and since then we've been getting to know the site a little more. Recently, the team have planted Riesling and Dolcetto and we'll look to add Chardonnay and Pinot Noir this year. Looking longer term, the winemaking team are experimenting with 'bucket ferments' featuring parcels of some of the more unknown varieties from the Nursery Block. Besides making a range of interesting small batch wines, the aim is to identify the varieties that work well, and plant another 'Nursery Block' at Sugarloaf. We'd like to preserve the history of the block through re-planting in a more organised fashion – keep the lineage of these unknown varieties going. We believe it's an important act of preservation for the Australian wine industry.



There have been a number of sustainability initiatives. Three years ago, we invested in roughly 950 solar panels, split between the winery and Sugarloaf Creek. These have essentially paid for themselves after three years – with a massive \$40,000 power saving after one year alone. It also turns out that giving them a good clean aids in performance, with a recent (admittedly overdue) clean resulting in a 30% efficiency increase.

In the vineyard, we are also working on improved efficiency by using machine harvesters for a portion of our picking. New harvesters allow us to de-stem in the vineyard, saving precious time and resources in the winery given we can now move white and some red wine grapes straight from the bins to the press. The organic matter, or stems, can then be left in the vineyard to contribute to mulch. We are also experimenting with different canopy management techniques on some areas in the vineyard. For example, undertaking leaf plucking on the east side results in a dappled light effect on the canopy. This helps the fruit ripen consistently, while still providing protection from the afternoon sun.

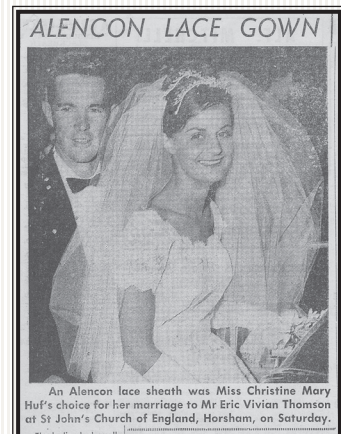
It's a gorgeous vineyard, and for those who follow us on social



media, you've no doubt seen what we refer to as our 'Champagne Log' on the top of the vineyard. The view is spectacular, and just about as good as any spot to enjoy a glass of wine. Who knows, there might just be a new cellar door there in the not too distant future...

VIV & CHRIS' DIAMOND ANNIVERSARY

Congratulations Viv and Chris Thomson – recently celebrating their 60th wedding anniversary.



BEST'S 2020 BIN NO.1 SHIRAZ MAKES JAMES SUCKLING'S TOP 100 VALUE WINES

If you missed it, Best's Great Western Bin No.1 Shiraz 2020 has been named in James Suckling's Top 100 Value Wines of 2022 (Under \$40). We are thrilled to be included in such prestigious company, and on a list incorporating examples of great value wine from around the world. Awarding the wine 95 points, Suckling described the Bin No.1 as *"a traditional Australian shiraz in the best sense, with a wealth of black, red and ripe orange fruit. Deep and rich, with a stunningly fine tannin structure and a lovely blood orange freshness at the long, structured and spicy finish. Excellent aging potential."*

GRAMPIANS GRAPE ESCAPE

Planning a trip to the Grampians? Come and join in the fun of the Grampians Grape Escape 5-7 May 2023. There'll be plenty of live music, entertainment, local produce and of course wines to discover. Don't miss the annual 'Winemakers Shiraz Barrique Auction', a much anticipated charity fundraiser which sees local winemakers donate some of their best Shiraz of the vintage to be blended in to one barrel, or barrique, and auctioned off. grampiansgrapeescape.com.au

The Best Fun For Your Entire Team



Did you know that we host in person and interactive online tastings for groups? As a fifth generation Thomson family member Hamish Thomson will take you on a journey through the history of Best's wines, our vineyards and an introduction to the regional characteristics of our wines.

From organisations looking to host a staff or client event, to groups of mates who live on opposite sides of the country, our virtual tasting masterclasses can provide a unique online experience for your group. Best's Wines can host the event or you can choose to host via your preferred online meet facility, it's our place or yours! The best part is that you can choose the wines for the event.

Contact Brand Manager Lucy Black for more information lucy.black@bestswines.com

Book in for a Tasting at our Cellar Door

Don't forget club members receive free Great Western and Premium tastings. With a range of different wine experiences to explore, there's never been a better time to come and visit.



SCAN TO BOOK

Book For Upcoming Events & Exclusive Member Tastings

From exclusive Zoom masterclasses online to a vertical tasting of Old Vine Pinot Meunier from 1967 to 2022, there's lots of member tastings coming up to book in for and add to your diary. Don't miss out. bestswines.com/events



SCAN FOR EVENTS

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