



EDITION #8

DISCOVER OUR BEST-KEPT SECRETS

MAY 2018

★ 2016 BIN NO. 0 SHIRAZ IS UNVEILED ★

THE EVOLUTION OF BIN NO. 0 began more than 150 years ago when Henry Best planted vines at the Concongella Vineyard in 1868. From the first vintage, we believe Henry adopted the style of labelling of the day, hence the birth of Claret No. 0. The labelling of table wine with a number to denote quality was common in Australia as early as the late 1870s. For example, No. 0 was considered of the highest quality, No. 1 was of lesser quality, and so on. Best's stopped using European descriptors, such as Claret and Hermitage, in the 1980s and began labelling Bin No. 0 as Shiraz in the 1990s.

Best's No. 0 is an Australian classic. It's powerful yet elegant, complex yet harmonious, with many years of great vintages ahead of it yet. Bin No. 0 has been awarded "Excellent" by Andrew Caillard MW within the esteemed Langton's Classification.

So what makes this wine so special? From the very beginning, it's always been produced from a selection of our most premium vines, with fruit selected from the lower yielding blocks of the historic Concongella Vineyard at Great Western. This vineyard is home to 19th- and 20th-century Shiraz plantings, which result in low-yielding, intensely flavoured fruit.

The 2016 Bin No. 0 boasts the premium fruit that would have gone into the 2016 Thomson Family Shiraz,

which is not being made into a single vineyard wine for this vintage. So all the premium fruit that's usually ear-marked for the Thomson Family Shiraz was crafted into the Bin No. 0 Shiraz. The quick-ripening season with warmer weather resulted in a smaller quantity of this wine produced for the 2016 season, with a fuller palate weight and lots of complexity.



2016 BIN NO. 0 SHIRAZ

Retail	\$85	Magnum Club	\$72.25
Discovery Club	\$76.50	Imperial Club	\$68

2018

VINTAGE SUMMARY



BY JUSTIN PURSER, BEST'S WINEMAKER

VINTAGE 2018 saw lots of fruit come into the winery in a short period of time. The first pick was Riesling on 22 February and the rest of the varieties came in to the winery in quick succession until Easter. Managing such a big load of fruit was a strategic project in itself, a bit like fruit tetris, constantly shuffling containers to keep the grapes in optimal condition as they were being processed. (We processed more than 300 tonnes in a two-week window in our winery.)

The picking, sorting and general harvest work was managed by an eclectic mix of international workers and experienced Best's team members, including Hamish Thomson, as well as patriarch Viv Thomson, who embarked on his 58th consecutive vintage.

Yields were down this year, predominantly as a result of the unfortunate 4 November 2017 frost, which decimated the fruit in the vineyards surrounding the winery. Sadly this means Best's single

vineyard and icon wines will not be made from the 2018 vintage.

On the bright side, the quality of the fruit grown in other parts of Great Western is exceptional, with a particular focus on the Pinot Noir, Riesling and Shiraz. Good foliage in the vineyards and hard work from Ben Thomson and his vineyard team has seen great growth over the vintage period. Riesling from the Salvation Hills Vineyard is displaying beautiful aromatics and perfume with high natural acidity due to the cooler late-February weather, and the flavour is tasting far more intense compared to the fruit from the previous year.

This is also the case with the Shiraz and especially the Pinot Noir grown in the Salvation Hills Vineyard (and we just may see another 95-pointer for the Pinot Noir from James Halliday, see the tasting notes from James below).

All grapes made it safely into the winery, and to celebrate, we opened a great bottle to enjoy and toast the challenges that Mother Nature throws us from year to year.



Did you know? In 1907, the traditional Best's wine label, one of the oldest wine labels in Australia, was trademarked and is still in use today.



What's the best value Pinot Noir in Australia?

*** BEST'S 2017 GREAT WESTERN PINOT NOIR ***

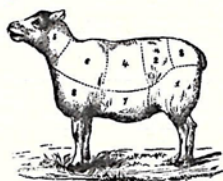
AUSTRALIA'S TOP WINE WRITER JAMES HALLIDAY certainly thinks so. James rated Best's 2017 Great Western Pinot Noir 95 points. His tasting notes state: "*Hand-picked, open-fermented with 50% whole bunches, matured for six months in French oak (10% new). This is a very impressive Pinot Noir. It's obvious the cool vintage wasn't too cool, although it also required a sure touch in the winery, letting the wine have its say and not over-extracting it. The spicy, savoury elements are balanced, and held in a sheath of red berry fruits.*"



2017 GREAT WESTERN PINOT NOIR

Retail\$25 Discovery Club.....\$22.50 Magnum Club.....\$21.75 Imperial Club.....\$20

BEST'S RECIPES



CHRIS THOMSON'S

Slow-Cooked Lamb Shanks

THIS LAMB SHANK RECIPE is winter comfort food at its best. Chris Thomson still uses an old Pyrex 250ml cup measure that belonged to Grandma Thomson. Chris's tips? Before adding the wine, bring it to the boil (the alcohol evaporates!) and it will impart a more mellow flavour. Cook and enjoy this dish with Best's Bin No. 1 Shiraz.

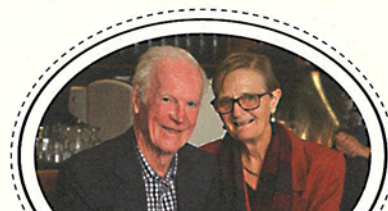
4 lamb shanks, trimmed	1-2 tbsp tomato paste
¼ cup plain flour, seasoned	1 sprig fresh rosemary
3-4 tbsp olive oil	2 sprigs fresh thyme
1 brown onion, roughly diced	1 fresh sage leaf or bay leaf
2 carrots, roughly diced	1 cup (250ml) red wine
1-2 small celery stalks, roughly diced	1 cup (250ml) chicken stock
4-8 garlic cloves, chopped	Finely chopped parsley and finely grated lemon rind
400g crushed tomatoes (or 400g fresh tomatoes)	Fluffy mashed potatoes or soft polenta, to serve

Preheat oven to 180°C. Dust shanks in seasoned flour. Heat 1 tbsp of olive oil in a heavy pan and cook shanks until brown all over, about 4-5 minutes (may need to be done in two batches). Remove shanks and set aside. In pan, heat remaining oil, then cook onion, carrot, celery and garlic, until they begin to caramelise slightly. Add tomatoes, tomato paste and herbs, then stir to combine. Remove from heat.

Place lamb shanks and vegetables together in a snug casserole pan, then pour over wine and stock. If shanks are not fully covered with liquid, add more stock. Cook in preheated oven for 2-2½ hours, until shanks are tender, with meat falling from bone. Stir occasionally, ensuring shanks are covered with liquid.

If juices need thickening, stir in cornflour mixed with a little water or stock. Season and sprinkle over parsley and lemon and serve with mashed potatoes or soft polenta.

Meet the BEST'S TEAM



VIV & CHRIS THOMSON

Best's esteemed Great Western legacy has been firmly established by Viv and Chris Thomson. Viv assumed responsibility for running Best's from his late father Eric in the 1960s and remained at the helm for more than 40 years before his son Ben took on the role of Managing Director. During Viv's tenure as patriarch of Best's, Viv was responsible for the management and expansion of both Great Western and the Lake Boga vineyards, as well as the financial management and sales, and together with his wife Chris, the marketing.

Viv is a graduate of the acclaimed Roseworthy College and is a fourth-generation vigneron at Best's with nearly 60 consecutive vintages under his belt. Viv has been working in the industry since the late 1950s, when his cellar work was done by candlelight, with limited electricity, no fermentation control, no new oak and horses carrying out the back-breaking work in the vineyard.

Viv has been recognised by the Melbourne Food and Wine Festival as a "Legend" for his services to the wine industry. He was also President of the Victorian Wine Industry Association for many years, and was recognised with a Distinguished Service Award. The icing on Viv's career cake came in the form of an Order of Australia Medal in the General Division as part of the 2014 Queen's Birthday Honours for his services to the wine industry. And in 2017, Viv was crowned Wine Communicators of Australia "Legend of the Vine".

Since 1974, Viv's wife Chris has played a critical role at Best's, helping in the cellar, picking grapes, driving tractors during vintage and hosting industry visitors from all over the world. Without Chris's commitment to making Best's vision come to life, it would not be considered one of Australia's greatest wineries.

Viv's Favourite Wine? Definitely Pinot Meunier for drinking and the Thomson Family Shiraz for those special occasions.

Chris' Favourite Wine? The Pinot Meunier is one of my all-time favourite wines.

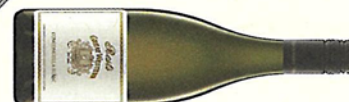
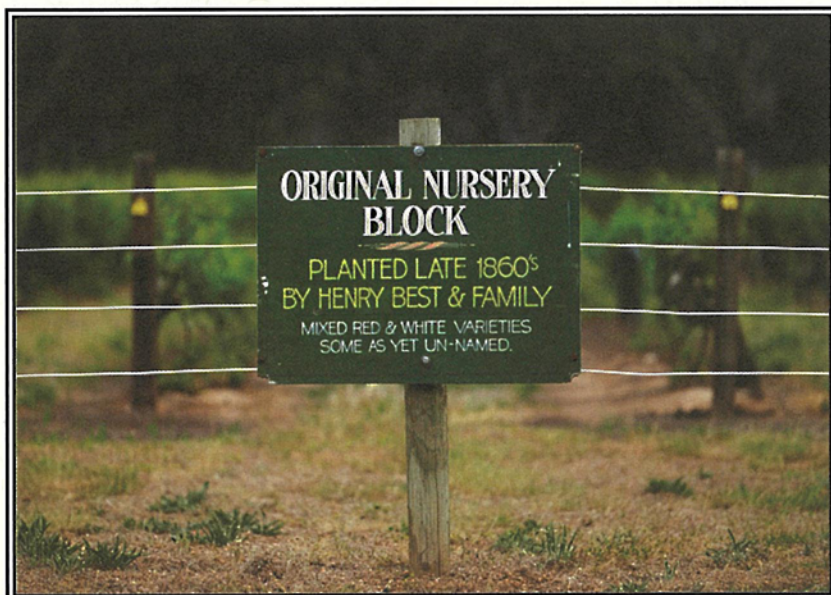
THE EXTRAORDINARY NURSERY BLOCK

THE NURSERY BLOCK planted within Best's Concongella Estate is undeniably one of the most significant patches of vines that exist in Australia. Established by Henry Best in the late 1860s, this block comprises a 1.2-hectare vineyard believed to feature the most extensive pre-phylloxera plantings in Australia, and possibly the world. International viticulturists visit often, looking to research and take cuttings. It's a living museum and a vital part of the industry's history – Best's takes seriously its role as the custodians of this piece of earth.

Today, the vines are handpicked, beginning with the white varietals, then followed by the red. The Nursery Block fruit is made into two wines, a dry white called Concongella Blanc and the Nursery Block Dry Red – these wines are only available at Best's Cellar Door. Nursery Block wines are not produced every year but when they're made, the resulting wine is incredibly unique, a classic field blend expressing an amazing sense of place and history.

Best's also produces a Dolcetto from recent plantings and our old vines grown from cuttings of Henry Best's original vines in the Nursery Block. In 1971, they were grafted

and planted in a new block in order to guarantee their survival. Now, in good vintage years, these vines produce amazingly flavoursome yet small parcels of fruit. When Best's does produce Dolcetto, it's always in limited quantities due to the small size of the plantings and dry-grown nature of the vines.



CONCONGELLA BLANC

Retail	\$35
Discovery Club.....	\$31.50
Magnum Club.....	\$29.75
Imperial Club	\$28



NURSERY BLOCK DRY RED

Retail	\$45
Discovery Club.....	\$40.50
Magnum Club.....	\$38.25
Imperial Club	\$36

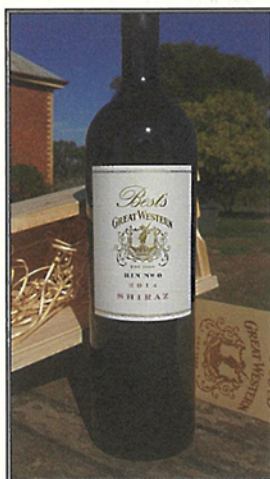


GREAT WESTERN DOLCETTO

Retail	\$25
Discovery Club.....	\$22.50
Magnum Club.....	\$21.25
Imperial Club	\$20



Best's Nursery Block vineyard is home to 40 different varieties, eight of which are yet to be identified, despite the CSIRO's best efforts.



Fancy a Bin No. 0 Magnum?

DON'T MISS YOUR OPPORTUNITY to purchase a magnum of Best's 2014 Bin No. 0 Shiraz (1.5L). We have produced a very limited amount of these magnums, so head to the order form included in this newsletter to secure your allocation or call the cellar door to purchase a magnum over the phone – 03 5356 2250.

BIN NO. 0 SHIRAZ MAGNUM

Retail	\$200	Magnum Club.....	\$170
Discovery Club.....	\$180	Imperial Club	\$160

"THE BEST PINOT MEUNIER I'VE MADE"

* NEW RELEASE * *2017 Old Vine Pinot Meunier* *



MOST BEST'S FANS will have experienced the joy of our Pinot Meunier. It's a variety used as a blending partner in Champagne but very few wineries around the world craft it into a single-variety wine. Best's is lucky enough to have access to its historic 1868 Pinot Meunier vines, as well as its "Young" Pinot Meunier vines that already boast 40 years of age.

The 2017 Old Vine Pinot Meunier is an incredibly unique wine that speaks of place and time. This wine is made in very limited quantities and sells out every year it's produced. What's more, the 2017 Old Vine Pinot Meunier is the 50th anniversary of Viv Thomson's inspired decision to produce his first single-variety expression of this variety in 1967.

How does it taste? *"The best Pinot Meunier I've made since I've been making wine at Best's,"* says Justin Purser. It's fragrant and complex, with lots of length, partly due to 2017 being an ideal growing season for Pinot Meunier. Given the vineyards are all dry grown, they were perfectly primed for the growing season after the 2016 rains, with super-healthy vines, good growth, balance and flavour, accompanied by lots of hang time for the fruit to ripen through the cooler vintage of 2017.

2017 OLD VINE PINOT MEUNIER

Retail	\$100	Magnum Club	\$85
Discovery Club	\$90	Imperial Club	\$80

NEWS FLASH!

BEST'S WINS GOURMET TRAVELLER WINE'S STAR CELLAR DOOR

Best's hard-working cellar door team was absolutely thrilled to receive the title of Star Cellar Door, Grampians/Henty, in the 2018 Gourmet Traveller WINE Best Cellar Door awards.

"Best's cellar door is drenched in history and is well worth a visit. Tastings are celebrated in Riedel Magnums and cheese platters are offered – what could be better than a post-tasting rest under shady trees on this beautiful property where picnics are encouraged?"



HOW TO OPEN OLD WINES SAFELY

AS RED WINE SEASON approaches, it's time to unearth a few aged wines from the cellar. But have you tried opening an old bottle lately? It's always tricky to ensure a safe opening, so take these common-sense tips from the team at Best's to ensure your old wine makes it into the glass as good as new.

- Carefully take the bottle from its cellar position and place it upright in a cool area, close to where it will be served, at least 12 hours before serving to allow sediment to settle to the base.
- Think about service temperature: 6-10°C for whites; 14-18°C for reds. Lighter styles are better at lower temperatures. You may need to place a bottle of red in the fridge for 30 minutes before serving, especially on hot days.
- If the wine is under cork, use a good corkscrew; the double-lever waiter's friend style is the best for removing soft old corks.
- Cut off the foil seal below the lip of the neck, rather than cutting above the lip. It's easier to cut and pours better once removed.
- Clean any mould, dust or muck from the lip of the bottle with a moist tea towel or dry brush.
- Keep the bottle upright and carefully place the tip of the corkscrew in the middle of the cork. With even pressure, gently turn the screw downwards until $\frac{3}{4}$ of the screw is in the cork.
- Gently lever the corkscrew up in stages – slow is the key when removing old corks. If the cork tears, you may need to re-screw in the corkscrew and start again. If the cork comes out in clumps, remove as much as possible then quickly pour a dash of wine into a glass, which should remove any loose bits of cork.



- Pour a sample into a glass and taste. Hopefully the Cork Gods have been kind and the wine is still attractive and vibrant. If the wine is closed (very little aroma) or reductive (smells like a struck match or rotten egg), it will benefit from decanting for one hour or so.
- When decanting, slowly pour the wine into a decanter, a clean empty bottle or a similar-style vessel. As you come to the final pour, look for sediment in a well-lit area. When sediment reaches the neck, that's your sign to stop pouring.

Did you know? Bin No. 0 Shiraz has been produced since the late 1800s, making it one of Australia's longest consecutively labelled varietals.

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