



EDITION #15

DISCOVER OUR BEST-KEPT SECRETS

OCTOBER 2021

SIMPLY THE BEST 10 YEARS FOR JUSTIN PURSER

IN THE LONG HISTORY OF BEST'S, only six non-family members have served as our winemaker. So it's a significant milestone for one of them, our current winemaker Justin Purser, to celebrate 10 years' tenure. Now, with a decade under his belt, Justin is a rich part of Best's tapestry and has contributed much to the evolution of our style. "Best's consistently makes high-quality wines, vintage after vintage, even though our Great Western volume has more than doubled in the past 10 years," Justin says. "Getting to know the idiosyncrasies of the vineyards and the cellar allows us to make good decisions in the winery, which result in good wines."

Before joining Best's in 2011, Justin honed his craft at several renowned wineries and vineyards in McLaren Vale, Central Otago, Barolo and Burgundy. "That experience taught me how to express regionality without relying on artefact, such as

overworked fruit and oak," he says. It's never been about the accolades for Justin; he's humble and prefers to let the wines speak for themselves. However, some of the notable awards that Best's has received during Justin's time include the Jimmy Watson Memorial Trophy in 2012 for the 2011 Bin No. 1 Shiraz and Halliday's Wine of the Year in 2016 for the 2014 Thomson Family Shiraz. His time also saw our Thomson Family Shiraz elevated to the highest and rarest status – exceptional – in the current Langton's Classification of Australian Wine VII.

So, what's next for Justin and his vision for Best's? "We have some new plantings planned of Chardonnay, Riesling and Pinot Noir at an elevated site in our Sugarloaf Creek vineyard," Justin says. "I love these varieties and I look forward to seeing these vines mature and making wine from them."



"A DECADE AT BEST'S SEEMS SO SHORT WHEN WE CAN MAKE WINE FROM VINES THAT ARE MORE THAN 150 YEARS OLD."



Best's operated for more than 100 years with only a Best or Thomson family member serving as winemaker. They were all either self-taught or taught by other family members.

HERALDING IN NEW 2022 HALLIDAY WINE COMPANION SCORES

THERE'S ALWAYS MUCH ANTICIPATION around the unveiling of the new Halliday scores, and the 2022 Halliday Wine Companion was no exception. With Tyson Stelzer now at the reins as tasting panel chair, we've started to see some changes to the wine scoring. Esteemed reviewers across Australia are now focusing on their specific regions and then coming together to decide on

annual winners. Having won Best Value Winery from Halliday last year, we were thrilled to follow up with quite a few high-scoring endorsements for our wines.

A number of Best's Wines continue to rate among Australia's finest, with our 2020 Great Western Riesling achieving Top Rated status. Seven of our wines also received a Special Value star from Halliday, a commendation for delivering

value for money in the context of their rating.

Although we still have many current vintages to enjoy, members can also look forward to our new icon releases in 2022. The 2019 Thomson Family Shiraz and 2019 Bin No. 0 Shiraz both scored 96 points! We can't wait for you to try these wines – your patience will be rewarded.

STAR PERFORMERS OF THE 2022 COMPANION



2020 Great Western
Riesling

"The vines are direct descendants of the 1866 plantings in the nursery block. A core of sweet lime-juice essence and spine-tingling acidity makes a wine that follows in the footsteps of its multi-gold-medal-winning predecessors. An indefinite lifespan." James Halliday

SOLD OUT
2021 Just Released



2019 Great Western
Cabernet Sauvignon

A blend of cabernet sauvignon with a small portion of merlot, cabernet franc and shiraz. Comes fully formed into the world in every respect, and ready to go. So composed and nicely poised with cassis, black olive, plum, well-measured oak and ripe, supple tannins. Hosts a serious density, too, which adds up to one stunning wine for the price." Jeni Port



2019 LSV Shiraz

"Co-fermented with a small amount of viognier, elevating this wine into deliberate Rhône-like territory, the maker admitting to be inspired by the wines of the Old World. This is one decadent, spiced-up, juicy, red-hearted shiraz, pulsing in energy. Bush mint, pepper, anise, red and black cherry, dried raspberry aromas. A light savouriness enhances what is one impressive wine." Jeni Port



2020 Foudré Ferment
Riesling

"One of those pure genius moments where the winemaker decides to break in a new foudré intended for red winemaking, with a riesling. The rest is history. Fermentation and maturation on lees in large-format oak broadens the reach of riesling. It's not oaky – it's textural, and fruit characters become way more concentrated: lime cordial, green apple, orange peel. You may never look at riesling in the same way again." Jeni Port



2020 Young Vine
Pinot Meunier

"Hand picked, fermented in open-top fermenters with 25% whole bunches. Basket pressed to French oak barriques for 8 months. Young is a relative term at Best's: Young Vine indicates vines planted in 1970! Vine age certainly plays a role in this gloriously expressive meunier with its wealth of dried flowers, cranberry, lavender, dried herbs, plum and cherry ... An earthy, fleshy wine with spicy tannins to contemplate on many levels." Jeni Port



2019 Thomson
Family Shiraz
(TO BE RELEASED 2022)

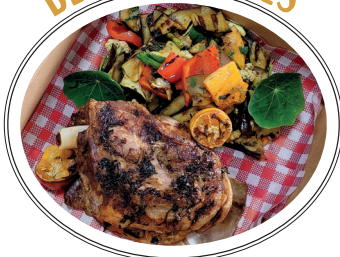
"Best's remains at the top of its game because of wines like this; wines that hold true to the Thomson family's winemaking philosophy, celebrating old vines and its distinguished sites. It all comes together beautifully, perfectly, in Thomson Family Shiraz. Tasted 1 year before release and it's already an elegant and noble wine. Dark berry fruit, hints of sage and cassia bark with gentle leafiness ... A complex life awaits." Jeni Port



2019 Bin
No. 0 Shiraz
(TO BE RELEASED 2022)

"Vines date back to as far as 1868, the youngest 1992. Right there you have an inkling of what is to come: a stunning concentration of fruit. Impressive, but the supple, savoury tannins are up to the task of meeting that deep intensity of black fruits, woody spice and violets. What a team for the future. Of course, this is not to forget the vanillin warm-oak component. A wine of history that still stands firm today." Jeni Port

BEST'S RECIPES



SLOW-ROASTED *Lamb Shoulder*

WITH ZAATAR, LEMON & GARDEN HERBS

This Middle Eastern-inspired spiced lamb recipe, kindly shared by one of our best local customers, the **Halls Gap Hotel**, is a delicious spring dish to pair with Best's 2019 LSV Shiraz.

INGREDIENTS

LAMB

1.5-1.8kg lamb shoulder,
on the bone
2 tbsp olive oil
1 tsp salt
2 tbsp zaatar spice blend
(see right column)
1 lemon, halved
2 tbsp of your favourite
garden herbs, chopped

ZAATAR

2 tsp dried thyme or oregano
2 tsp ground cumin
2 tsp ground coriander
2 tsp toasted sesame seeds
2 tsp sumac
½ tsp salt

METHOD

Preheat oven to 240°C (220°C fan forced). Using a sharp knife, score the lamb about 1cm deep. Combine zaatar ingredients in a small bowl. Rub lamb with olive oil, salt and zaatar.

Place lamb in a roasting dish with lemon halves and ½ cup of water. Sprinkle with herbs. Cover with lid or tightly with a double layer of foil. Roast in oven, reducing heat to 180°C (160°C fan forced) for 3 hours.

Remove cover and add another ½ cup of water. Return to oven and increase heat to 200°C (180°C fan forced) for another 20 minutes, or until skin is brown and crisp.

Remove from oven and let rest for 20 minutes. Serve with potato dauphinois and grilled vegetable salad.

**FIND THE COMPLETE RECIPE INCLUDING
ACCOMPANYING SIDES - POTATOES, SALAD AND
YOGHURT DRESSING AT - [BESTSWINES.COM/BLOG](https://bestswines.com/blog)**

Meet the BEST'S TEAM



PAUL BOAG
Vineyard Manager

Born and bred in Stawell, Paul has had only two jobs in his working life. He worked at international textile company AUNDE for 16 years. When that operation closed, we were fortunate enough to have him join Best's Wines as part of the vineyard team. The rest, as they say, is history, and he's now been with us for 21 years. As Vineyard Manager, Paul is responsible for many of our vineyards, often covering more than 150 hectares every day.

Paul is married, with three children. When he's not working, he loves fishing and watching his kids play sport – he was even the coach for the Stawell Swifts under 17s and under 14s football for 10 years.

Favourite Best's Wine? Best's Great Western Riesling and Late Harvest Muscat.



JADE KAHLE
Cellar Door Team Member

Jade was born and raised in Geelong. She graduated with a Bachelor of Visual Art from the University of Ballarat, following that with a Diploma of Textiles, Clothing and Footwear from The Gordon Institute of TAFE. Looking for a change, she came to Best's Wines cellar door in 2018. In 2020, Jade was shortlisted for a wearable-art competition: the Design Eye Creative 'Paper On Skin'. For her Esther Dress, constructed entirely from paper, an immortal jellyfish was the inspiration, but a crate of empty riesling bottles in the Best's warehouse also informed her design.

When Jade's not working in cellar door, she's mothering her two kids and knitting for her independent accessories label, Zooblast.

Favourite Best's Wine? Foudré Ferment Riesling.

BUBBLING OVER WITH EXCITEMENT ABOUT SPARKLING SHIRAZ

Sparkling shiraz is a unique part of the DNA of the Grampians wine region.

It's the wine that often signifies the beginning of the festive season – Christmas in a bottle. We typically release a new vintage every November, and it never lasts long! Best's Wines members snap it up to pair with Christmas turkey or enjoy at a BBQ with friends.

Best's has been a pioneer of sparkling shiraz in Great Western since the 1890s, helping put this special sparkler on the international wine map along

with other producers, such as Seppelt. After a long pause in production, 2006 saw Best's Sparkling Shiraz come bubbling back to life. While Viv and Chris Thomson were away on a winter holiday, the Best's team seized the opportunity to relaunch a small amount of the sparkling red. By the time the Thomsons returned from holiday, the bottles were moving out the door, and sparkling shiraz was here to stay!

The style continues to evolve, as we have been able to identify specific vineyards that truly lend themselves to this singular wine's style.



HEARD IT THROUGH THE GRAPEVINE



BEST'S MANAGING DIRECTOR is well aware of the significance of the historic vines over which his family is custodian. He has a strong drive to leverage technology to continually improve the quality of the fruit within our region. Some key viticultural projects that he and other regional Great Western producers are working on include:

- auto-steer technology for grape harvesters, which will not only help reduce driver fatigue, but also give them the hands-free opportunity to really look at what's going on in the vineyard
- a game-changing environmentally friendly and budget-friendly system for more effectively spraying fungicide – a first in Australia
- a vineyard filming system that takes continuous pictures to track grape maturity and help identify problems among the vines so grapegrowers can plan accordingly.

These exciting and groundbreaking advances will make a lasting impact on our vineyards, vines and wines.

NEW RELEASES



2021 GREAT WESTERN RIESLING

The 2021 Great Western Riesling will gather complex toasty aromas and flavours as the years pass. It boasts an enchanting nose of honeysuckle, muddled lime, wet stone and fresh beeswax. The finish is long and satiating.

Released.....	September 2021
Retail.....	\$25
Discovery Club.....	\$22.50
Magnum Club.....	\$21.25
Imperial Club.....	\$20



2021 GREAT WESTERN ROSÉ

A versatile wine year-round, this rosé is guaranteed to be a favourite as the temperature warms up. Enjoy it chilled with food or as an aperitif. You'll find grapefruit, white peach and strawberry on the nose, a savoury palate and dry finish. Utterly delicious!

Released.....	October 2021
Retail.....	\$25
Discovery Club.....	\$22.50
Magnum Club.....	\$21.50
Imperial Club.....	\$20



2018 SPARKLING SHIRAZ

This celebratory sparkling, which we disgorge in the traditional method, boasts plush aromas of blackberries, dried rose petals and festive fruit cake on the nose. Try it with roast turkey or ham or at a barbecue with family and friends.

Released.....	November 2021
Retail.....	\$35
Discovery Club.....	\$31.50
Magnum Club.....	\$29.75
Imperial Club.....	\$28



NEW-RELEASE WEBSITE IS COMING

We're working on the next vintage of our website, which will roll out in 2022. With this new iteration, you'll still enjoy the same wine club benefits, but you'll have a more seamless shopping experience and improved functionality! Stay tuned.



THE GREAT ANCIENT VINES OF BEST'S

THE FIRST VINES CAME TO Great Western from a French couple in the mid-1800s. Henry Best purchased some of these cuttings to become one of the region's grape growing pioneers. The original plantings of three of these varieties – to this day – are still alive and used to produce some of Best's finest wines. The dolcetto, pinot noir and pinot meunier are the oldest of their kind in the world. Let's look at the significance of these three special old vines.

PINOT MEUNIER

The pinot meunier was a 1.2-hectare planting in 1868, with 85% 'rough leaf' and 15% 'smooth leaf'. In 1971, Viv Thomson took cuttings from the rough leaf and planted less than 1 hectare next door. These old vines from 1868 are still used for a single-varietal pinot meunier labelled Old Vine Pinot Meunier.

PINOT NOIR

The pinot noir vines, also planted in 1868, were likely accidental plantings among the 1.2-hectare pinot meunier plantings. In 1971, cuttings were taken from the pinot noir, and three and a half rows were replanted. These were later

identified by viticulturist Danny Schuster as two different clones – one French and the other Swiss. Best's selected the French clone for a 1.8-hectare planting in 1987, as the winery was interested in increasing its pinot noir plantings. These grapes now go into Best's Old Clone Pinot Noir.

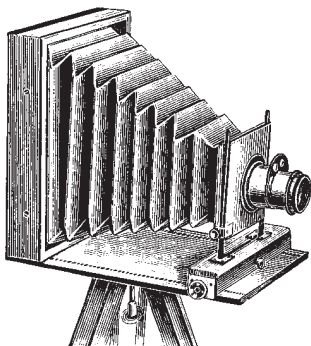
DOLCETTO

Dolcetto, a grape from Alba in Italy, translates to "sweet little one". It typically shows this sweetness with soft tannins, lush red fruit and purple flowers. Arriving at Best's in 1866 (and planted two years later) as [the French Bordeaux variety] malbeck, it is unrelated to the dark wines of Cahors. Even before wine's popularity began to rise in Australia, Best's Dolcetto sold well in the local Great Western and Grampians markets.

For history to be preserved, you need to care for it with loving hands. For old vines like these, and for the wines they provide for us, the labour of love is worth it. With most of this area dedicated to sheep and cattle farming, who would think to look here for these vines with such historical importance? There is so

much we can learn from the past, and to look to the future, we must take note from the Best's and the Thomsons: take your time – it will surely be worth it.

*The above is an edited excerpt from an essay by **Max Hollander**, a sommelier at The Royal Mail Hotel in Dunkeld, VIC. To read the rest of Max's essay, visit <https://www.jancisrobinson.com/articles/wwc21-great-ancients-bests-victoria>*



SHARE YOUR BEST WINE MOMENTS AND WIN!

Did you know that we're giving away up to \$85 of wine each month? Simply snap some great photos of you enjoying your Best's Wines, and tag us on social media using **@bestswines** or **#bestswines** for your chance to WIN!

GREAT WESTERN'S FORERUNNING FEMME



THE WOMEN OF GREAT WESTERN have always been pioneers. In fact, if it weren't for the example set by groundbreaking women such as Anne Marie Trouette (née Blampied), our exceptional wine region wouldn't be what it is today.

In 1852, the daring 20-year-old Anne Marie and her 15-year-old brother, Emile, arrived in

Australia from France, in search of gold. In 1856, Anne Marie met and married Jean Pierre Trouette, also from a French winegrowing region. Two years later, the couple and Emile moved to Great Western, still on the quest for gold. Instead, in 1863, recognising the adaptability of the soil and climate for vinegrowing, the Trouettes and Emile planted a half-acre of vines at a vineyard they named St Peters. A year later, they had increased the size of their vineyard to 4 acres. By 1867, they had 14 acres, 50,000 young vines and 2,000 fruit trees! Anne Marie became a local legend, cultivating the vines alongside her husband and brother on Concongella Creek. Without doubt, she was instrumental in laying the foundation for many of the local vineyards that now enjoy global acclaim.

For more information about the history of winemaking in Great Western, visit our website.

CHRISTMAS CUT-OFF DATES



Don't miss out on your wine deliveries for the festive season. With ongoing delivery delays across Australia due to the impact of COVID-19, you need to get in early so you avoid disappointment and don't get too thirsty. Be sure to place your order by:

Friday 3 December:
NSW, ACT, QLD, WA,
SA, TAS

Friday 10 December:
VIC

We will send your wine, and the delivery company will keep you up to date on estimated delivery times.



A TASTE OF WHAT'S TO COME

Our cellar door is the heart of the Best's operation. We look forward to welcoming you for our unique Great Western tasting experiences. Keep in mind that bookings are essential. Throughout the year, we also host a number of great events, not only for our Concongella Wine Club members, but also for friends and followers of Best's Great Western. Be sure to check our website regularly, as we're always adding new tasting experiences and events.



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CONTACT US

111 Bests Road, Great Western, Victoria, 3374, Australia
P: (03) 5356 2250 F: (03) 5356 2430 E: info@bestswines.com W: bestswines.com