



EDITION #16

DISCOVER OUR BEST-KEPT SECRETS

MAY 2022

## HISTORY IN A GLASS: 2019 FLAGSHIPS UNVEILED



OR THE WINE LOVERS AMONG us, there's something romantic about drinking wine sourced from gnarly old vines. Thoughts are conjured of vintages gone by as you swirl the wine in the glass.

Old vines are part of the DNA here at Best's, with our historic vineyards making small parcels of wine that speak loudly of our Great Western home. Few wineries in Australia can lay claim to vines that are more than 150 years old, but our Concongella vineyards possess so many stories, like our prized Thomson Family Shiraz.

First made in 1992 as Thomson Centenary Shiraz, 100 years after the Thomson family settled in the area, this iconic wine is made predominantly from the 15 rows of Shiraz planted by Henry Best in 1868. Only available in exceptional years, this wine is a special part of Australian viticultural history and deserves its acclaimed 'Exceptional' status in the prestigious Langton's Classification. It's now time for you to enjoy the 2019 release of this flagship, only the 17th time this wine has been made.

Equally significant is our Bin No. 0 Great Western Shiraz. Produced from four low-yielding blocks of our Concongella vineyard, this wine is also internationally recognised as one of Victoria's finest.



Both new wines hail from the exceptional 2019 vintage; a warm, dry growing season where the vines ripened quickly, despite crops being lower than average. Some early rain in February gave the vines a well-deserved drink and refreshed them before harvest. Slightly lower yields resulted in more concentrated wines, and their perfume and persistence will last for years to come.

Stop and savour every sip now, or test your patience by putting some of these remarkable wines down in your cellar – they will need a little time to reveal their true characters. We hope you enjoy the 2019 release of our flagship wines.



**Did you know?** The 15 rows of Shiraz vines were planted by Henry Best, who recorded them as 'Hermitage' in his daily journal. Today, the clone is referred to by the CSIRO as the Concongella clone, or the Best's Old Block clone. It is the mother clone of all subsequent Shiraz plantings at Best's Great Western.



👉 NEW RELEASES 👈



**2019 THOMSON FAMILY SHIRAZ**

This wine is given the royal treatment, named among Australia's finest wines and rated as 'Exceptional' in the Langton's Classification of Australian Wine VII. Made from the original 1868 Shiraz plantings, and only produced in exceptional years, it was meticulously hand-harvested, hand plunged and then fermented in small, open fermenters. This 2019 vintage will take some time to reveal its true character, but displays a rich tapestry of deeply scented aromas with dark fruits, rose petals and grilled nuts. Medium bodied, with a first-class line and length.

Available from May 2022

- Retail.....\$250
- Discovery Club .....\$225
- Magnum Club .....\$212.50
- Imperial Club .....\$200



**2019 BIN NO 0. SHIRAZ**

This is a clear collector's favourite, particularly among our wine club members. Sourced from four low-yielding blocks of the historic Congella Vineyard in Great Western, this wine is an undisputed icon and will reward short-term cellaring. The 2019 vintage is pure and intense, with a palate dancing full of plush black and blue fruits, drawn in with a long, poised tannin structure and aftertaste.

Available from May 2022

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

# A FRUITFUL HARVEST: — VINTAGE 2022 —



There's always something of a challenge thrown to the winemaking and viticultural team as they respond to the calls of Mother Nature each harvest. While we can meticulously prune the vines and sustainably nurture our historic vineyards, so many elements remain outside our control.

The 2022 vintage will go down in the history books as particularly memorable. It was shaping up to be quite fruitful, but last December, just as the vines were looking pristine during budburst, we were struck by a freak hailstorm of a magnitude never before seen in the region. Sadly, it caused damage to the fruit and vines, including the Congella vineyards surrounding the winery, which typically produce the Thomson Family Shiraz and Pinot Meunier. As a result, we'll see half as much Riesling this year than in 2021, with much lower yields across the board.

Our Sugarloaf Creek vineyard, however, is paying dividends by

helping to diversify our choice of vineyard sites. We think of it like an insurance policy, and this year it was beneficial because the hail did not pass through that section of Great Western. Nonetheless, the quality of the 2022 fruit, particularly the reds, is looking superb and the team is working together to make the best of the crop.

We started picking in February, with many hands on deck to make some exceptional wines. This year Jacob Parton, our Assistant Winemaker is leading the charge although vintage remains a family affair, with the whole team chipping in to play a part. Ben and Hamish Thomson remain hands on, with sixth-generation Isabelle Brady working her second vintage along with Ben's stepson, Jackson. Pete, our resident cellar hand has some help from Tristan and Annie from Cellar Door is proving handy in the vineyards and the lab. Plus we have some additional guidance and experience from Steve Flamsteed, former Gourmet Traveller WINE Winemaker of the Year.

 Follow us on Instagram @bestswines to see some behind the scenes footage as Isabelle and Annie give you a glimpse into the life of the winery at harvest time.

**BEST'S RECIPES**



## Red Wine Braised Short Ribs

**WITH CREAMY POLENTA & STUFFED ASPARAGUS**

Who doesn't love the culinary genius that is Thomas Keller? His famed French Laundry restaurant in California's Napa Valley has long been a bucket list experience for sixth generation James Thomson, Hamish's son.

This delicious recipe is an adaptation from an original Thomas Keller recipe, one that James Thomson has refined over the years. It takes a little time to prepare this red wine braised short ribs meal, but if you're looking for the perfect accompaniment for a Best's Bin No. 0 Shiraz, this is the dish!

Visit our website for the full recipe. Simply scan the QR code below and begin your own fine dining experience!



**DAY ONE**

Prepare the meat and marinade. Place the meat and marinade together in the fridge for 12 to 16 hours.

**DAY TWO**

Cook the meat in a pan then transfer to the oven. Let the meat cool and then refrigerate overnight.

**DAY THREE**

Cook the meat in a saucepot and transfer to a sauté pan. Prepare the creamy polenta and sauteed asparagus.

You're now ready to entertain. Pull out your favourite Best's wine, welcome your guests and enjoy!

### Meet the BEST'S TEAM



**JACOB PARTON**  
*Assistant Winemaker*

Hailing from the NSW cool-climate wine region of Orange, Jacob began working in vineyards from the age of 14. He moved to Sydney to begin an electrical apprenticeship before returning home, where he was offered a maintenance position at Philip Shaw Wines. After a few months, he joined the vintage team for the 2016 harvest and instantly fell in love with the industry. He worked a further five vintages with Philip Shaw Wines under the tutelage of Nadja Wallington and the Shaw family. Completing his degree in Oenology, Jacob spent a vintage in California's Sonoma Coast, before joining Best's Great Western late last year. He has a love for all things outdoors, is an avid basketball fan and player, and can often be found cooking, drinking good wine and cheering on his beloved Saints – the St Kilda AFL team.

**Favourite Best's wine?** Great Western Chardonnay



**BENJAMIN SCHREUDER**  
*Cellar Door Manager*

Born in Mildura, the eighth child out of ten, Benjamin moved to Halls Gap with his family in 2010. With a family of classmates, he was home-schooled, and at the age of 18 he received a scholarship to study nursing at university. It was not for him. When his family moved, he stayed based in Halls Gap and began working in hospitality. The perfect setting to enjoy the trails of the Grampians National Park either for a run or on his mountain bike. Best's Wines was introduced to Benj via his housemate Chelsea, who used to work at our Cellar Door. She'd often bring home wines after work, with his first taste, a bottle of 1988 Old Vine Pinot Meunier making quite the statement. He was hooked on the wine industry and started working in our Cellar Door. Benj has recently been promoted to our Cellar Door Manager, with a bright future ahead.

**Favourite Best's Wine?** 2017 Barts Block Shiraz



# OUR MEMBERS PEN THEIR REVIEWS



The Best's Tasting Panel gives many wine lovers the chance to explore wines across the broader Best's collection, tasting new products they may not have previously discovered. While we love the commentary from industry professionals, we also love reading highlights from our loyal customers.

Our latest Panel shares their verdict with some fabulous commentary on what they discovered when sent the 2021 Great Western Riesling, 2021 Great Western Rosé and 2019 LSV Shiraz. Here's just some of what they had to say:

## BREAKING NEWS

Best's Wines is proud to be named as the Official Wine Sponsor of the 2022 Powercor Stawell Gift. Marking its 140th year in 2022, the Stawell Gift is widely recognised as Australia's richest footrace, held over the Easter long weekend.

It's a great opportunity to showcase local talent, both on and off the track!

### 2021 GREAT WESTERN ROSÉ

"This is a superbly dry Rosé, great nose and a pale pink hue. We no longer need to go to Provence for Rosé. With the cup coming up, I feel I have already won the trifecta! It was a perfect drink without food. Then I tried it with crusty bread, butter, king prawns and a homemade seafood sauce. Fantastic! Finally, a soft ripe cheese and bread are a great way to finish. Give it a go. Buy a case – have a bottle on Cup day and the last bottle on New Year's Eve. Cheers. Rating 5/5"

Mal – October 2021

### 2021 GREAT WESTERN RIESLING

"This is a ripping 'rizza'. It's light straw in colour with flashes of pale gold. A solid swirl reveals aromas of lemon curd and lime zest with the florally fragrant lift of lemon blossom and honeysuckle. There's also a beguiling summer sniff of rain on a hot slate stone path. In the mouth there's a full-frontal flush of citrus flavours with a lively line of acid leading to a lingering and satisfying finish. We enjoyed our bottle with a Thai yellow curry a fantastic combination. Top stuff this!"

Brent – November 2021

### 2019 LSV SHIRAZ

"Beautiful Shiraz, medium to full bodied full mouthfeel. Dark fruits, plums and blackberry. There is such a harmonious balance to this wine, seductive smooth and moreish. Not a hair out of place! Amazing value at the price and should develop some interesting secondary characteristics over time. Highly recommend. 5 stars"

Stuart – November 2021

## Great Memories from Great Western



Call us a little old-school, but we love it when our Wine Club Members put pen to paper to tell us their stories. This special letter from Roger and Margaret expressed some special memories of days gone by when they visited us for our recent Icon Tasting in March.

*"It was a special treat to share our memories as young newlyweds in 1971, when we visited Viv at the Lake Boga winery. We were looking for some wine to drink and use in cooking. Viv quietly pointed out that a "cheap" wine would not add flavour to cooking. We bought a 1968 Best's Claret No. O, "Hermitage and Malbeck P-9". We loved it and have supported Best's ever since. Today we learned that 1968 was especially important to Viv, being the year his daughter was born."*



### TROPHY WINNING RIESLING

Did you know that our 2021 Great Western Riesling recently won trophies for Best Riesling and Best White Wine of Show at the 2021 Victorian Wine Show? These awards followed gold medals for the same wine at the 2021 Royal Hobart Wine Show and 2021 Ballarat Wine Show.

# THE WORLD'S OLDEST - PINOT VINES? -



Pinot Noir was first planted in our Nursery Block in 1868, believed to have come from the James Busby collection, Australia's first vines. These Pinot Noir cuttings were sourced from some of the finest vineyards in Burgundy, which were subsequently wiped out due to phylloxera. The original Best's plantings are now thought to be the oldest Pinot Noir vines in the world.

Read more on our blog about the history of Pinot Noir at Best's.  
[www.bestswines.com/blog/The-Worlds-Oldest-Pinot-Noir-Vines](http://www.bestswines.com/blog/The-Worlds-Oldest-Pinot-Noir-Vines)



## What's the difference between Noir & Meunier?

Pinot Meunier is wine's version of the third member of that 1980s pop band whose name no one can remember. Closely related to Pinot Noir – it's a mutation from cloning – the red grape's main claim to fame is that it's the third grape variety allowed in Champagne, alongside Chardonnay and Pinot Noir. It's also one of the oldest grape varieties growing at Best's Wines, with a 1.2-hectare vineyard first planted in 1868.

Pinot Meunier can boldly grow where no vine has gone before! Its superpower is that it suits sites where it's too cold for Chardonnay and Pinot Noir, and because it ripens sooner, it can be an insurance policy grape during hard vintages. Perhaps that's what Henry Best had in mind when he planted the vines along the Concongella Creek just a year before Best's began producing its first vintage.

For a long time, the team at Best's called it Miller's Burgundy. Blended with other grapes, it helps soften the palate, but Pinot Meunier also has its own distinct flavours. It shows a lot of similar flavours and aromas to its sibling, Pinot Noir, but has higher acidity with more citrus characters and a lighter, less earthy profile. It can also display slightly cigar-smoky flavours. But the surprising thing for such a prevalent grape is how rarely it's bottled as a single varietal.

### NEW RELEASES



#### 2021 YOUNG VINE PINOT MEUNIER

This unique wine comes from our 'Young Vine' plantings of Pinot Meunier, which were established in 1970 – a century after our "old vine" plantings, and grown from cuttings of those original vines. It has expressive aromas of fresh cherries, blood orange, toasted sourdough and warm spices, with crunchy red fruits, and a smooth and slippery finish.

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



#### 2021 OLD VINE PINOT MEUNIER

The Millers Burgundy vineyard, first planted in 1868, is made up of mostly Pinot Meunier and a little Pinot Noir. This unique vineyard block is treated with meticulous care and, in good vintages, this block is made into a 'single vineyard' wine. Intense, brooding and focused, it has plush red fruits with savoury and silky tannins. The core remains for a long finish. It's still very young and needs time to express its full potential.

Retail.....	\$125
Discovery Club .....	\$112.50
Magnum Club .....	\$106.25
Imperial Club .....	\$100



#### 2021 GREAT WESTERN PINOT NOIR

Guaranteed to please any lover of Pinot Noir! It was sourced from 1980 and 1987 Pinot Noir plantings in the Concongella vineyards at Best's Great Western and the 1997 plantings at our elevated Salvation Hills vineyard at Rhymney. A slightly more fragrant and upfront wine than the previous vintage, it is savoury with a lovely roundness on the palate. It's harmonious and just so drinkable.

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

# AgTech Field Day

## Showcases our Game-Changing Vineyard Technology

**I**T MAY BE ONE OF AUSTRALIA'S MOST HISTORIC WINE regions, but Great Western in Victoria is also home to a tech revolution emerging in its vineyards. Fifth-generation and Managing Director of Best's Ben Thomson is leading the charge, pioneering new viticultural and harvesting methods that combine the old world with the new.

Best's has been one of the driving forces behind innovative vineyard technology that enables a focus on precision viticulture. Keen to share their experience and insights with the broader wine community, the team at Best's recently hosted more than 30 growers at their Sugarloaf Creek Vineyard for Wine Australia's inaugural AgTech and Innovation Day.

The team spent the day demonstrating the new methods they use across their vineyards, including auto-steering for harvesters, variable rate spray technology, chemical-free under-vine options, and technologies for soil health management.

It cements Best's Wines' place as one of Australia's most innovative wineries, while also being one of its oldest and continuously family-owned operations. Sustainability has long been a core focus at the winery, and these new technologies add to the many measures they are implementing to give back to their special sites. By improving the quality of their vines as efficiently as possible, and with a minimal impact, the Best's team is nurturing them for many years to come.

Read the full story at [www.bestwines.com/blog](http://www.bestwines.com/blog)

### UPCOMING EVENTS

Whether you're keen to visit in person or want to join in one of our virtual tastings, there's lots happening over the next few months. Discover all the details and book on our website

**BOOK ONLINE**  
[bestwines.com/events](http://bestwines.com/events)



### New Experiences at our Great Western Cellar Door

Planning to visit our Great Western Cellar Door? There's lots to enjoy, including some new additions to our spaces to enjoy an intimate tasting experience. Take a self-guided tour of our underground cellars, book in for a tasting, and enjoy a platter overlooking our historic vineyards. Remember that wine club members have a complimentary concierge service where we'll help organise your stay and ensure your trip to our hometown is memorable.

Please call us on (03) 5356 2250 to make a booking.

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### CONTACT US

111 Bests Road, Great Western, Victoria, 3374, Australia  
P: (03) 5356 2250 F: (03) 5356 2430 E: [info@bestwines.com](mailto:info@bestwines.com) W: [bestwines.com](http://bestwines.com)