



Discover our best kept secrets

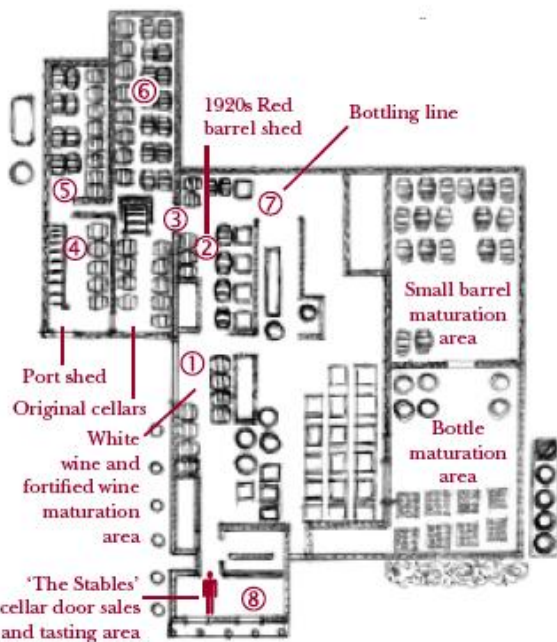
BEST'S GREAT WESTERN

Concongella Cellar Walk

Welcome to our historical Great Western cellars. For your safety, shoes are to be worn at all times and children 14 years & under are to be accompanied by an adult.

As you can appreciate, access to some areas is limited for safety reasons. Our historic cellar is also very old. Please feel free to take photographs and look around, but we ask where possible that you don't touch any bottles or wine barrels. Thank you.

The Concongella Estate was named by Henry Best after the local creek running through the property and surrounding areas. Concongella is an indigenous name meaning "Special Meeting Place".



Inside the Cellar

1 From the Stables Cellar Door, walk through the double glass doors into the 1974 bottled wine and carton storage area. The large (2200 litre) oak barrels are for fortified maturation.

2 Continue forward into the 1920s area built originally as a fermentation and red wine maturation area. Continue on until you come to the archway on your left which takes you into the original middle cellar, built by the Best family in the 1860s and 1870s.

3 The entrance into the middle cellar is a superb example of post and lintel construction. Note the thickness of the rammed earthen (pise) walls. Reeds from the Concongella creek were also used as a binder.

4 Go past the top of the stairs and into the fortified shed, where our fortified wines are matured. Turn left and continue to the end, then turn right and descend the ramp.

5 This underground section was renovated in the 1940s for white wine maturation and a bottling area. At the bottom of the ramp, immediately to your right you can see one of the original wine storage tanks hand excavated by the Best family.

6 Continue through the hand-dug tunnel into the original underground cellar. Hand-hewn red gum cleared from nearby paddocks was used for the uprights and rafters (note that there's not a nail in sight).

Near the stairs is part of our 'living diary' of previous vintages. Each year we keep records of the weather, all vineyard practices and winemaking processes used. Bottles from each vintage are laid down for appraisal at a later date.

Red wines are matured in the large barrels, a few of which were coopered by David Best in the 1870s. The life span of the larger barrels (2300 litres) is unlimited provided they are well looked after.

Previously, when the barrel was empty and the air inside tested clean, someone had the task of climbing through the bottom opening to scrub them clean, removing winestone build up. Today this is done with a removable cleaning system.

Once cleaned the barrels are filled with a sulphur and water solution (SOUS) to keep the barrels clean, free from mould and to prevent them from losing their shape throughout their various seasons.

The smaller barrels have a shorter life span of up to ten years. French oak barriques (225 litres) are used predominantly for Chardonnay, Cabernet Sauvignon and other red varieties fermentation and maturation.

7 Retrace your steps back up the ramp and back to the middle cellar. Go through the archway to the bottling line observation point straight ahead. Square covered concrete tanks frame the observation point.

Originally used for fermentation they now make excellent cool bottle storage. Above these are further Liqueur Muscat and Tokay maturation barrels. On your right is the bottling line where the bottles are filled, capped, labelled and packed. If Jamie our Warehouse Manager is around, he is happy to answer any questions you might have.

8 Retrace your steps back to the Stables Cellar Door. These original 1867 red gum slab stables, built by the Best family, took them a year of wet days to construct. Fine days were devoted exclusively to vineyard work and Sundays were faithfully kept as a day of rest.

View from Flinders Cottage (Outside)

Flinders Cottage, with its earth rammed (pise) walls, was the first at Concongella. From here, you can see the layout of the entire winery. Directly in front of the Cellar Door building, is an Oriental Sycamore tree (*Plantanus Orientalis*) planted by Henry Best in the 1800s.

1 Flinders Block has twelve rows of Dolcetto, while the Nursery Block is a living museum of some forty mixed red and white varieties. Some still remain unidentified to this day.

2 1982 Pinot Noir block & 1966 Bart's Shiraz block.

3 Fortified storage shed.



4 Original cellar built in the 1860s. Note the upper door – during vintage time in the 1800s, barrels of grapes were winched up to this door, crushed, and the must reticulated down to the middle cellar for fermentation. On completion the must was pressed, after which the wine was racked into large oak casks in the lower cellar for maturation.

5 'The Stables' Cellar Door sales and tasting area, was constructed in 1867 by Henry Best to house his vineyard horses. The stable was relocated in sections to become our cellar door in 1974.

6 Storage, bottling area and back vintage area.

7 Small oak barrel, Foudre and bottle maturation area.

8 Current vintage area, built in 2000. The grapes are weighed, crushed and de-stemmed here before entering the winery.

Thank you for visiting Best's Great Western. We hope you enjoyed your tour & tasting, and visit us again sometime in the near future.

THE BEST OF THE BEST