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my shout DRINKS WITH KARA IRVING



Discover what lies beneath

There's nothing quite like a weekend lunch at a winery. Not only can you enjoy a glass or two over great food, but passing the cellar door on the way home for a quick tasting – and a take home bottle – caps off the experience.

Whether the cellar door is found inside a quaint cottage or an underground maze, Victorian wineries are riddled with history. Here's some underground cellars to visit this weekend.

SEPPELT

Seppelt in Great Western, about 220km northwest of Melbourne, has the largest underground cellars in the southern hemisphere. Known as "The Drives", they stretch 3km. Digging out the cellar began in 1868 and continued for more than 60 years. Out of work miners from the Gold Rush era were tasked with creating the space. Today Seppelt hosts daily guided tours, gourmet BBQs and private dinners underground.

36 Cemetery Rd, Great Western
seppelt.com.au



MITCHELTON

MITCHELTON WINES

The newly renovated winery hotel has an underground cellar spanning the length of the property. The underground L-shaped tunnel was built in the late 1960s and early 1970s when the winery was built.

Mitchelton celebrates its 50-year anniversary this month by hosting daily wine masterclasses in the underground cellar.
470 Mitchellstown Rd, Nagambie
mitchelton.com.au

BEST'S

This underground cellar is the region's best kept secret. Henry Best and his team hand-dug the cellar with bucket and spade in the late 1860s. The



BEST'S

property's old gum trees were used as the cellar's posts and floorboards. Take a self-guided tour underground to see more than 30, 2300-litre oak vats used to create the winery's premium drops, such as the Bin No. 1 shiraz and cabernet. The wines are stored underground due to the constant temperature.
111 Bests Rd, Great Western
bestswines.com

TAHBILK

Tahbilk's rustic cellar door is inside an old barn. Head down the wooden stairs into the original underground cellar, built in 1862. Take in the sights and smells of red wine before coming across what's known as the new cellar, hand dug in 1875 by James Escott Purbrick (third cousin to Tahbilk founder Reginald Purbrick).
254 O'Neils Rd, Tahbilk
tahbilk.com.au

CLEVELAND WINERY

Cleveland Winery boasts the only underground cellar in the Macedon Ranges. It was built in 1984 and used for riddling the estate-grown sparkling and storing barrels. Today its used as a

cellar door, bar and hosts wine tastings. The space is also used for private events.
55 Shannons Rd, Lancefield
clevelandwinery.com.au

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SEPPELT