

Seven Wine Caves Where You Can Beat the Indian Summer Heat

Ian White | Photo: Courtesy of Wineries | August 30, 2017

Stop roasting in that tasting tent and head underground.

With temperatures spiking to 100 and above in the wine country, even the shade is unbearable, and the most avid of red wine drinkers are begrudgingly turning to chilled whites, rosé, and beer. Sure, you could just hunker down at home in front of a fan and binge-watch the *Great British Baking Show* with your favorite bottle of sauvignon blanc. But then you'd be missing one of the best parts of wine country in summer: the glorious, cool wine caves, where vineyards store barrels of wine and host tours and tastings, all at the glorious temperature of around 55 degrees. From the cathedral-like caves at Far Niente in Napa to the laid-back cave tasting room at Deerfield Ranch, here are six spots where you can sip and still stay cool.

Far Niente is better known for the expansive lawns and gardens that surround the historic three-level winery than for its underground digs. But it was the first winery to build caves after Prohibition, and all the white stone and chandeliers create an impressive cathedral-like vibe. The 90-minute tour (\$75) includes a trip around the estate for up to eight people, a dip into the cool caves, a seated tasting of the current vintage, and a splash of Dolce, the winery's celebrated late-harvest white dessert wine. The wines here are tasty (and pricey) no matter what you choose. If you spend a bit more on something from the cave collection, you'll get a taste of the complexity and subtlety that come with age.

Top summer sipper: 2010 Cave Collection Chardonnay, \$75