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Go Underground to Discover the Wine Caves of Napa and Sonoma

BY MATT VILLANO ON 08/30/16

Winding deep into the cold earth, caves are nature's refrigerators. In California, natural cellars store wine (and prosciutto, and just about anything else) at a consistent temperature, usually somewhere right around 58 degrees. Safe from the heat of the summer sun, the caves provide the perfect environment for wine to age. They've done so for literally hundreds of years.

Wineries in Napa and Sonoma counties have their fair share of wine caves these days, and many of the underground spaces are accessible on certain tastings and tours. Here, then, in no particular order, are eight caves worth visiting the next time you're out and about. Our advice: Be sure to pick a hot day to go.



Buena Vista Winery

Most tours of the caves at [Buena Vista Winery](#) are led by Count Agoston Haraszthy— or, at least, a character actor dressed up like him. Haraszthy (the real one) founded the place in 1857 and used the caves as quarries to build the stone winery building. On tours today, George Webber, who portrays Haraszthy, emphasizes the engineering accomplishment. “It took laborers three months to carve each cave out of stone,” he notes. “When you think about it, that’s pretty incredible.”