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## THE STOMPER

The Monthly Winemaking Newsletter of [grapestompers.com](http://www.grapestompers.com)  
November, 2000 Issue #4  
<http://www.grapestompers.com> 1-800-233-1505

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Welcome to the latest issue of "THE STOMPER", a newsletter of winemaking hints and other wine-related articles.

You are receiving this newsletter because you requested a subscription and have an interest in home winemaking. Unsubscribe instructions are at the end of this newsletter.

Feel free to pass along this newsletter to your winemaking friends; we only ask that it be sent in its entirety.

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\*^^ Hot Tips are sprinkled throughout the newsletter

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FEATURE ARTICLE: Take Our Home Winemaking Quiz!  
By Brant Burgess, Editor

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This month, [grapestompers.com](http://www.grapestompers.com) would like to test your wine making know-how... by taking our snazzy home winemaking quiz!

It's fun for everyone to try, regardless of your experience level. You're sure to learn a thing or two. Better yet, it's FREE!

You can find our quiz at:

<http://www.grapestompers.com/quiz/index.asp>

We think you'll enjoy it! We hope to have lots more quizzes in the future. If you'd like to submit a question to be in a future quiz, please send them (as well as the answers!) to me at the e-mail address listed below.

Here's to you... and Happy Winemaking!

You can write to Brant at [webmaster@grapestompers.com](mailto:webmaster@grapestompers.com)

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### NEW PRODUCTS

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Here is a list of products recently added to our catalog:

- Item # 1010 Complete Winemaking Equipment Kit \$50.53
- Item # 2230 Wine Thief/Test Jar Combo, FermTech \$6.08
- Item # 2904 Pocket Corkscrew, burgundy \$0.99
- Item # 2905 Pocket Corkscrew, black \$0.99

- Item # 2906 Waiters Corkscrew, red, Wine Enthusiast \$4.99
- Item # 2900 Cork Puller, Wine Enth. Twin Blade, \$4.99
- Item # 2713 Clarifier for red wines, \$1.69
- Item # 2908 Vacuum Wine Saver with 2 stoppers \$14.15
- Item # 2910 Vacu-Stoppers for Vacu Vin, set of 2, \$4.99

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## RESULTS OF LAST MONTH'S SURVEY ANNOUNCED

By Bonnie Brown, Manager

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If you recall from last month's newsletter, grapestompers conducted its first online survey during the month of October 2000.

Everyone who completed a survey got free wine tuits (we nearly exceeded our download limits!), and since lots of folks took the time to complete our survey, we thought we'd share some of the highlights:

When asked if they could change ONE THING about our site, 40% suggested we add more recipes, 23% suggested adding a "shopping cart" system, and 15% wanted us to add more products.

We'd love to post more recipes, and you can help! Just send your winemaking recipes to [recipes@grapestompers.com](mailto:recipes@grapestompers.com) and we'll be glad to post it on our site. We'll even list your name and give you all the credit.

Regarding a shopping cart - we are in the design phase and will be back in touch with you soon!

As for adding more products, we are constantly looking for great items to add to our line of winemaking products. The previous article, entitled "New Products", shows you some new items we've added to our catalog in recent days. If you are aware of a particular item we should stock, please let us know and we'll try our best to get it for you.

Should we change the color scheme of the grapestompers site? The overwhelming majority - 91% - told us to keep our current coloration... hey, why change a good thing?

Seventy-four percent of survey takers have recommended our web site to their friends. The way we figure it, what better way to let your buddies know what you want for Christmas?!

In the battle of RED vs. WHITE - most folks (60%) prefer to make and drink red wine over white wine (40%).

Most of us have learned winemaking from a friend or relative (51%), but lots of folks are also learning how to make wine by surfing the web.

And finally, the last bit of data to share... was the question: What's the hardest thing to do when making wine at home?

26% said it was difficult to wait for the wine to age properly before drinking it. We can certainly sympathize, especially since we know how good homemade wine can be!

23% said it was hard to get those consarned labels off a recycled wine bottle, and

18% told us they wanted more space in their homes for their winemaking hobby.

If you'll remember, we also promised that each survey taker would be entered in a random drawing for a free wine kit.

And now, we'd like to tell you who won.

The lucky winner of a free VDV Chenin Blanc wine kit was...  
Marcus McQueen of North Olmsted, OH. Congratulations!

grapestompers would like to thank everyone for  
participating in our survey. Look for more surveys - and  
more chances to win - soon!

You can write to Bonnie at [bonnie@grapestompers.com](mailto:bonnie@grapestompers.com)

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#### THIS MONTH'S SPECIAL

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grapestompers' specials for the month of November are:

SAVE 10% on two great wine kits from Spagnol's

AND

Save 10% on the Bronze Estate Lever-action wine opener

Item #	Description	Regular Price	SPECIAL Price
5104	Estate Wine Opener-Bronze	\$99.95	89.96
3119	VDV Red Bordeaux	49.08	44.18
3237	CC White Zinfandel	58.25	52.43

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TOM'S CELLAR: That Crazy Campden Tablet  
by Tom Burgess, Owner

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This month, Tom continues his series about the chemistry of  
winemaking with an article about campden tablets...

Whoever invented campden tablets deserves a tip of the cap  
in my book... Now that may sound like a lofty description  
for such an unassuming little tablet, but it's true!

I guess I like them because they're so versatile... but  
before we discuss all the things you can do with campden  
tablets, let's take a closer look at the chemistry behind  
them.

A campden tablet is nothing more than a little pill that  
contains a pre-measured amount of sulfites (potassium  
metabisulfite, to be exact). The tablets actually contain  
a lot of inert material, but this makes it easier to  
precisely control the amount of free molecular sulfur you  
are adding in the form of sulfur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>).

Campden tablets can also be made of sodium metabisulfite  
- sodium has the same electrical charge as potassium -  
but tablets based on the potassium model are thought to be  
more soluble as well as easier on your blood pressure...  
Remember the doctors are always warning you about your  
sodium intake?

Each campden tablet contains:

- 65 mg/L (PPM) of SO<sub>2</sub> (sulfur dioxide) per gallon of must
- OR
- 13 mg/L (PPM) of SO<sub>2</sub> per five gallons.

Winemakers use campden tablets in a variety of ways:

- To inhibit growth of harmful bacteria
- To create an environment where wild yeasts can't survive  
(creates a "clean" must before pitching wine yeast)
- Sanitizing equipment

- As a preservative to increase shelf life of wine
- Rinsing bottles

So you can readily see just how versatile campden is!

Generally speaking, it is not necessary to add campden tablets to wine kits in order to "clean" the must (these pre-packaged kits contain pasteurized juice and are chemically balanced before they are packaged), but we have heard of some vintners who recommend adding 1 crushed tablet during every other racking to prevent wine from becoming too oxidized.

To add sulfites at racking time, crush one tablet (a mortar and pestle works best), then mix it with a little hot water to help it dissolve. Stir well until all lumps disappear. Next, add a little bit of wine (with the aid of a wine thief) and mix the resulting liquid together. If more lumps appear, keep stirring until the campden powder is completely dissolved. Finally, pour this solution into the receiving bucket or carboy, then rack your wine on top of the sulfited mixture.

\*-----HOT TIP-----\*

If your wine is still not clear after using your fining agent, place the carboy in a cool place (30-35 degrees F) and watch it clear up in a few days!

\*-----HOT TIP-----\*

If you are making wine from scratch, you DEFINITELY need to add campden to "clean" your must. Most folks recommend crushing one tablet for every gallon of must you have. By doing this, you will create an environment that will kill the natural wild yeasts that could harm your wine. After thoroughly mixing the powder in the must, wait at least 24 hours before pitching your "good" yeast.

To sterilize your equipment or make a final rinse for your bottles, mix 1 teaspoon of potassium metabisulfite powder (Item # 2732) in 1 quart of water. You can place this solution in your bottle rinser (Vinator# 2530); allow the bottles to drain without flushing, and it will add shelf life to your wine and make it a bit "tangy".

If you're into formulas: 1/4 teaspoon of powder provides 195 mg/L SO<sub>2</sub> per gallon or 39 mg/L per 5 gallons.. as you can see, the powder form is stronger than the tablet form. It's harder to measure the exact amount of SO<sub>2</sub> needed for small batches of wine unless you have a fractional gram scale... and that's why folks prefer to use the tablets!

You can order campden tablets by asking for Item # 2731. It's a great bargain at only \$1.91 per 100-tablet bottle.

You can write to Tom at [tom@grapestompers.com](mailto:tom@grapestompers.com)

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PRODUCT SPOTLIGHT: Estate Wine Opener (Bronze)

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Every once in a while somebody finds a way to "build a better mousetrap" - so when we discovered this particular gizmo, we knew we had found this month's feature product.

We're sure you've seen all types of wine openers, but this one really takes the cake!

With the Estate Wine Opener, opening a bottle of wine is fast and foolproof. Simply position the bottle in the

appropriate place, squeeze the handle to secure the neck, and rotate the wooden handle in a half circle. In the blink of an eye, the cork pops out!

Since the corkscrew is properly aligned with the neck of the bottle, the cork is skewered in the middle every time. That means no more broken corks, and no more floating cork crumbs! We wanted to see if the Estate Wine Opener could open a bottle of wine without removing the foil or plastic capsule. Even with a capsule in place, the wine opener performed beautifully.

How does it do it? The secret is in the interior gear works - during the first 90 degrees of handle rotation, the corkscrew bores its way into the cork. In the last 90 degrees, the cork is pulled out of the bottle. To remove the cork, just rotate the handle to its original position.

If you'd like to see the Estate Wine Opener in action, Tom demonstrates this model in his latest winemaking video. We highly recommend this product, and think it will make a great Christmas present for the wine enthusiast in your family.

Item # 5104  
Manufacturer: Estate  
Finish: Bronze  
Regular Price: \$99.95  
This Month: \$89.96

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#### FROM OUR CUSTOMERS

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As you might imagine, our office receives quite a bit of correspondence - mostly through e-mail - here are some comments we've recently received:

Dear Sir,  
I read many newsletters from many companies to get more information of the products I buy. I can easily state that your newsletter is the most friendly and informative. As I am somewhat a newcomer to wine making (at least after immigrating to US), I find your newsletter very informative and useful and help me in deciding what I can buy with confidence.

I live in Blackwood, New Jersey. Is there an amateur winemaker's association or club in this area? If anyone knows, I will be thankful for the information.

-- Raman Kolluri  
Blackwood, NJ

Got the Piesporter bottled - couldn't resist a taste - outrageous !!

Will be bottling the Shiraz in 2 weeks, the Riesling is in secondary fermentation still, and the Chenin Blanc gets started this weekend. So I have a little production line going here. I am very impressed with the quality - even tasting right after bottling (tasting was 2 bottles by the way !!).

But your tutorial said the wine could be "swung" to your personal taste, and my wife has a sweeter tooth than I, so I will split future batches as necessary.

Appreciate your help as always. Best regards,

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GUEST COLUMN - You Know You're A Wine Nut If...  
by our friends at Village Winery, Canada

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YOU KNOW

you're a wine nut if...

- ... you think that a serial port is a red wine you drink with breakfast;
- ... your house is on fire and you dash back in to save your favorite bottle of Merlot;
- ... you have grapestompers on speed dial;
- ... your only provision for retirement is your wine collection;
- ... you know that a Bergamais goes with blueberry pancakes;

\*-----HOT TIP-----\*

When a waiter presents you with the cork in a restaurant, he doesn't want you to smell it; rather, it is being shown so you can check its condition. A moist cork is a good sign, whereas a dry cork suggests there may have been storage problems. If a cork is dried out, air may have entered the bottle and oxidized the wine, or it could mean the wine had been stored upright rather than on its side.

\*-----HOT TIP-----\*

- ... you didn't know that burgundy is also a color;
- ... you think raisins are a waste of good grapes;
- ... you have wine as a budget item in your financial planning;
- ... you remember your bottling time and date but forget your partner's birthday;
- ... your kids are named after your favorite wines;
- ... you think the opposite of white is red.

AUTHOR BIO--Our thanks go to David at the Village Winery in Victoria, British Columbia.

You can contact the author at his e-mail address:  
viliw@pic.com

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How To Be A Guest Columnist For STOMPERS Newsletter

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If you'd like to be our next guest columnist, simply send your article to [articles@grapestompers.com](mailto:articles@grapestompers.com). If your article is selected for use in a future newsletter, you'll receive a coupon good for 10% OFF your next grapestompers order.

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CORKY'S WINEMAKING DEFINITION

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Body

- The impression of weight or fullness on the palate; usually the result of a combination of glycerin, alcohol and sugar.  
Body is commonly expressed as full-bodied, medium-bodied or medium-weight, or light-bodied.

Look for other wine-related definitions by clicking on the 'Glossary' button from our home page at <http://www.grapestompers.com>

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## NEXT MONTH'S HIGHLIGHTS

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- Tom's Cellar - Conditioning Your Wine
- Use the grapestompers Online Winemaking Calculators
- More Specials
- How to Remove Stubborn Wine Labels
- Another Guest Column - We'd Love YOUR input!
- Customer Testimonials
- New Products

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## LIST MAINTENANCE

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<http://www.grapestompers.com/newsletter/archives>

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