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THE STOMPER

The Monthly Winemaking Newsletter of grapestompers.com  
January, 2001 Issue #6  
<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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IN THIS ISSUE

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- => Feature Article - Send a Winemaking Greeting
- => New Products
- => Bonnie's Bin - Whew!
- => This Month's Special
- => Tom's Cellar - Stabilizing Your Wine
- => Feedback from Our Customers
- => Guest Column - New Twist for Used Wine Yeast
- => How to Be Featured as our Guest Columnist
- => Winter Shipping Update
- => Corky's Winemaking Definition
- => Subscribe/Unsubscribe Information

\*^\* Hot Tips are sprinkled throughout the newsletter

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FEATURE ARTICLE: Send a Winemaking Greeting  
By Brant Burgess, Editor

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Happy New Year from grapestompers.com! We hope you and yours have enjoyed a safe and joyous holiday season.

This month, grapestompers.com has created a new web page that will enable you to send a virtual postcard to your friends and fellow winemakers.

It's easy to send a postcard - and it's free!

You can find our virtual postcard center at:

<http://www.grapestompers.com/postcards/postcard.html>

Just pick your favorite wine photo, enter your friend's e-mail address, and type in your message. It's as simple as that!

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 # 2108 Wine Bottles - Olive, 1 doz, 750 ml \$8.99
  - Item # 2907 Wing Cork Screw, Wine Enthusiast, \$4.95
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BONNIE'S BIN: Whew!  
By Bonnie Brown, Manager

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Thanks to your patronage, we've enjoyed a busy Christmas season at grapestompers.com. We hope Santa was good to you and you got all the winemaking goodies you requested.

We certainly appreciate your business, but more importantly we appreciate your trust in us to help you learn the great hobby of home winemaking.

We've been so busy, I haven't been able to write this month's article yet... and rather than hold up the delivery of this newsletter, I thought I'd ask for forgiveness instead!

I look forward to speaking with you again next month.

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 January are:

Save over \$60 on the purchase of a  
Complete Winemaking Starter Kit  
which includes a RED or WHITE Concentrate  
(see wine kit selection below)

AND

Save 10% off all Vinodel Vidakits when you order 4

Item #	Description	Regular Price	SPECIAL Price
3200	Complete White Kit	228.80	164.61
3100	Complete Red Kit	240.72	176.11

This is not a typo... we've extended our Christmas special for another month. Please take advantage of this great bargain before Tom comes to his senses!

Here's what you get with the COMPLETE Starter Kit:

If choosing the Complete WHITE Kit, your choice of either:  
Fume Blanc, Pinot Noir, or Chenin Blanc VDV concentrate

If choosing the Complete RED Kit, your choice of either:  
Valpolicella, Shiraz, or Cabernet/Merlot VDV concentrate

PLUS ALL THESE GOODIES:

Tom's Winemaking Video	Bottle Rinsers
Fermenter Bucket with Lid	Three-Piece Airlock
6-Gallon Glass Carboy	Carboy Brush
Bung (stopper)	Bottle Filler
Five feet of vinyl tubing	B-Brite Sanitizer
Portuguese Hand Corker	FermTech AutoSiphon
2 Cases of 750-ml Bottles	Spoon or Paddle (our choice)
Bottle Washer Adapter	Brass Bottle Washer
Bottle Drainer, 45 station	Corkscrew

AND YOU GET THE FOLLOWING ITEMS FREE (\$15.59 value):

- Free Wine Labels (text of your choice)
- Free \$5 coupon towards your next concentrate purchase
- Free Corks (30 corks, enough for one batch)

Just think: This complete kit offers EVERYTHING a brand-new hobbyist would need to begin making his own wine. All you need to decide is which wine kit you want!

And don't forget... you can always return your winemaking video and receive a credit for \$19.95 on your next purchase... that's like getting the video for free! All we ask is that you return it in good condition.

This is the best deal we've ever offered on a complete kit, so don't miss out... order one for yourself or a friend today. Ask for RED Complete Kit # 3100 or WHITE Kit # 3200 and be sure to let us know which wine concentrate you want.

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TOM'S CELLAR: Stabilizing Your Wine  
by Tom Burgiss, Owner

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This month, Tom concludes his series about the chemistry of winemaking with an article about stabilizing your wine...

If you've ever experienced popping corks, bursting bottles or a "spritzzy" tasting wine, chances are your wine was not properly stabilized before it was bottled.

These are three common symptoms of wines that have been bottled too soon - before the wine has had a chance to completely ferment. And if you are adding additional sugar prior to bottling in order to make a really sweet wine, you'll run the risk of renewing the fermentation you thought you'd stopped!

So when winemakers speak of "stabilization", they're merely referring to the process of completing fermentation, whether it's done naturally or via other means.

There are two primary ways that home winemakers can stabilize their wine:

1. Time
2. Adding chemical stabilizers

The first method - Time - requires a little patience on your part. You've heard us say it before... time heals practically everything where wine is concerned. Given enough time, the yeast will eventually run out of nutrients and die a slow death.

Unless you've got sophisticated test equipment, it can be difficult to determine if your wine is stable - more so if your wine is made from scratch - if you depend upon time alone to stabilize your wine.

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

A neat way to identify bottled wine in a wine rack is to use strung tags (price tags) size 1-3/4 x 1-3/32 inch. I print the name of wine, date made, and date bottled. Then I make a loop from the attached string and place it over the neck of bottle. The tag hangs down and the wine is easy to identify without having to remove the bottle. These tags come in different colors, so you can even color code different wines!

Thank you to Deanna Truran for this tip.

Have a tip you'd like to submit?  
Send it to [tips@grapestompers.com](mailto:tips@grapestompers.com)

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

To ensure your wine is stable before bottling, we recommend using the second method to stabilize - adding chemicals - to make certain fermentation is stopped. Each juice concentrate purchased from grapestompers.com contains a packet of potassium sorbate (usually a blue packet), a stabilizing agent. The packet contains enough sorbate to treat one wine kit.

For those of you who make wine from scratch (or have lost the blue packet), you can stop fermentation by adding 1/2 teaspoon of potassium sorbate per gallon of wine. And, since this chemical tends to work better in the presence of sulfites, it's a good idea to add one crushed Campden tablet per gallon at the same time. Be sure to stir well, and allow the dead yeast cells time to settle out before your final racking prior to bottling!

Sorbate isn't the only chemical used to stabilize wine. Many makers of fruit wines prefer to use sodium benzoate, which comes in the form of tablets. If using this chemical to stabilize your wine, add one crushed tablet per gallon of wine along with the Campden tablets we've already mentioned.

Experienced winemakers suggest using sorbate for wines that will be consumed within two or three years from bottling. After that, you may detect a slight "off" taste. So, if you plan on keeping wines a longer time than that, you should consider stabilizing using time alone or in concert with sodium benzoate.

You can order 1.5 oz. of potassium sorbate for \$1.65 by asking for Item # 2742. Sodium benzoate (Item # 2728) is available in bottles of about 235 tablets for \$6.30.

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

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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:

Tom,  
We had a Wine and Cheese party Saturday night. I really didn't think people would drink that much wine. They loved it and drank 23 bottles, wiping me out. They preferred the Merlot over the Cabernet Merlot, but loved it all.

You may have some people coming your way as 5-10 people expressed serious interest in contacting you.

I would also like your recommendation. In looking at something other than the Merlot, I see you have a Pinot Noir. How long will that take to age and how critical is the temperature over that time period? Also, do you have any 30 day white wine kits?

Thanks for your help.

-- Bob Erwin  
Spartanburg, SC

Tom,

You all have a 5 STAR shipping team. I received the corks in Saturday's mail, approximately at 12:30 PM.

-- Robert Klaus

Bonnie,  
This is just a little thing I do when removing labels from used bottles.

Whenever I put them in to soak, I fill them with hot water and then poke a used cork back into the bottle. This keeps the floating label junk from getting into the bottle.

It's kind of embarrassing to give someone a bottle of wine that has a piece of paper stuck to the inside. And they will stick there no matter how carefully the bottle is washed/rinsed. In Florida they call it a "hanging chad".

Thanks for the newsletter, I always pick up something I can use or pass [it] along to other winemakers that are internet impaired.

Regards of the seasons,

-- Norman Anderson  
Missouri

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GUEST COLUMN - New Twist for Used Wine Yeast  
by David Markle, Japan

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After our first attempt at winemaking I was about to throw out the residue from the bottom of the jug when my wife said, "Wait! I think I can make bread out of that!" which she did and came up with a delicious tasting "wine bread" that all our family praised. It had a sort of delicate taste, but was definitely "winey".

After some experimenting, she came up with this basic process for a pretty good wine bread using both a bread machine and the traditional hand-made method.

#### BREAD MACHINE METHOD

This method takes three days and involves reactivating the leftover yeast. It is best to use wine/yeast residue after the first racking.

#### Day one

Take one part residue, one part sugar, and four parts all purpose flour (1:1:4 ratio) and mix in a clean glass canning jar. Mix with a non-metallic spoon. Add water little by little until mixture becomes the consistency of cream. Put lid on the jar and let stand one day in a cool place (about 15 degrees centigrade).

#### Day two

When the mixture starts to bubble and the flour rises to the top, move the jar to a warmer location (about 20 deg. centigrade). In an hour or two the mixture should become more active. If it doesn't, add about a third of the amount of sugar that was originally added. If the mixture is active enough, go to the next step; if it's not active enough, shake it like crazy and wait another day or two. If the mixture doesn't become active after four or five days, give up or start over with a fresh yeast residue.

#### Day three

The wine yeast is definitely alive, but at this point the wine yeast should not be so active and the flour, yeast and liquid should settle and separate. Before using, shake the mixture again or mix with a non-metallic spoon or stick.

1/4 cup of this yeast-starter mixture  
2-1/4 cup of all purpose flour  
3/4 cup warm water  
2 Tbls brown sugar  
1 tsp salt  
20 grams of margarine  
1 Tbls skim milk

Put all these ingredients in bread maker.  
Turn it on without the timer which means the baking should start immediately.

#### Hints

- Don't put the reactivating yeast in a location warmer than 25 degrees C. This will cause a sour flavor in the bread and the yeast will die.
- Adding flour, sugar, and water to the reactivated yeast will let you reuse the mixture indefinitely by breeding the yeast. You have to raise it, but it is easier than breeding guppies; just feed it and it thrives.
- If not using regularly, store in the refrigerator. If used at least twice a week the yeast will remain active, but it is a living thing and needs some attention, but really very little. Uncooked oatmeal can be added for long term storage. (1/4 Tbls oatmeal per cup of yeast).

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

Want to build up your wine cellar? Make it a goal to save back 12 bottles from each wine kit you make. Before long, you will have the envy of your fellow wine lovers!

Have a tip you'd like to submit?  
Send it to [tips@grapestompers.com](mailto:tips@grapestompers.com)

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

#### HAND MADE METHOD

Reactivating the yeast is not necessary. Just use residue from first fermentation.

Note: This makes a heavier tasting bread and using whole wheat flour or mixing 3/4 white and 1/4 whole wheat makes a more flavorful bread.

3/4 cup of wine/yeast residue  
2 to 3 cups of all purpose flour (add flour until mixture becomes the right consistency)  
3 Tbls brown or white sugar  
0.8 to 1 tsp of salt

Knead for 10 minutes

Place in greased bowl, cover and place in a warm place (20 degrees C or about 60 degrees F). A warmer place is not beneficial. In our home 60 degrees is a warm place in winter, but for some people 60 may be a cooler location like a garage or cellar.

This should rise to double the volume in two to two and a half hours. Punch this down and reshape the ball, and repeat benching in warm place.

When this has risen to twice the size, punch down again,

place it in a baking pan and bake in the oven for 45 min. to one hour or until done.

We made bread from left-over wine/yeast residue from a very dry white wine. Our next wine/bread will be made from a heavier-bodied red wine. We think this bread will be even better. We hope you will have other inspirations!

As you can imagine, the possible number of combinations of wine yeast and ingredients are infinite. Wine/yeast mixtures could be blended to come up with some very interesting tasting blends for breads or other things. Fruit wine/yeast leftovers are other possibilities which I hope to explore soon. We still have a couple of pounds of blackberries left over in the freezer which I will make wine from over the holidays. How does a blackberry wine/Pumpkinle dessert-bread sound?

Happy holidays and good wine!

AUTHOR BIO--David and Yuko Markle reside in Yamanashi Prefecture in rural Japan near Mt. Fuji. They raise a wide variety of fruits, vegetables, and livestock. They are keenly interested in non-chemical and alternative methods of raising all the products they produce. While still novices at winemaking, Yuko has been making and selling a wide variety of home-made breads for about 5 years which she uses natural yeast to raise. They both are nature advocates and spend time hiking and camping in the nearby mountains. They would love reader feedback.

You can contact the author at his e-mail address:  
markle@j-gate.net

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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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Winter Shipping Update  
by Tom Burgess, Owner

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As you know we ship year around all over the USA. Some of those spots get mighty cold and you might be concerned about your concentrate arriving in satisfactory condition.

We understand your concern, so here's what we do to protect your order:

We ship all juice concentrates in double boxes, with insulation, in the first days of the week so it will arrive at your doorstep before a weekend or holiday. That way, it's protected against the cold, and chances are better your package won't sit on some frigid loading dock over a long weekend.

When you receive your wine kit, the liquid may look cloudy - but don't be alarmed - this is due to the naturally high sugar content of the grapes. By adding some very warm water to the concentrate at winemaking time (bringing the must back to its original volume), the cloudiness will disappear after a bit of stirring. Once your must reaches 70-75 degrees, you're back in business!

If your concentrate should accidentally become frozen, don't despair... After all, the manufacturers sometimes do this on purpose to ensure a steady supply of concentrate through the lean off-season months when fresh grapes aren't as readily available.

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#### CORKY'S WINEMAKING DEFINITION

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##### Acid

- A compound present in all grapes and an essential component of wine that preserves it, enlivens and shapes its flavors and helps prolong its aftertaste. There are four major kinds of acids -- tartaric, malic, lactic and citric--found in wine. Acid is identifiable by the crisp, sharp character it imparts to a wine.

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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- More Winemaking Tips from Tom's Cellar
- Blending for Success
- More Specials
- The next article from Bonnie's Bin
- Another Guest Column - We'd Love YOUR input!
- More Customer Testimonials
- New Products

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#### LIST MAINTENANCE

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