
THE STOMPER

The Monthly Winemaking Newsletter of grapestompers.com
May, 2001 Issue #10
<http://www.grapestompers.com> 1-800-233-1505

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.

IN THIS ISSUE

- => Feature Article - Sanitation Hints for Winemakers
- => New Products
- => Product Spotlight - B-Brite: The Versatile Chemical
- => Bonnie's Bin - Happy Mother's Day!
- => This Month's Specials
- => Tom's Cellar - Of Onion Wines and Sage Advice
- => Feedback from Our Customers
- => Wine Kit Shipping Update
- => Guest Column - Please, Be Our Guest!
- => How to Be Featured as our Guest Columnist
- => Corky's Winemaking Definition
- => Subscribe/Unsubscribe Information

*** Hot Tips are sprinkled throughout the newsletter

FEATURE ARTICLE: Sanitation Hints for Winemakers
By Brant Burgess, Editor

We were surprised with a recent snowfall in the North Carolina mountains, but hey - at least it was good weather for cold stabilization!

This month, grapestompers.com would like to share some information that's critical to successful winemaking - the ins and outs of sanitation.

Using clean and properly sanitized winemaking equipment is essential to your wine's success, so it won't hurt to bone up if you haven't visited this topic in a while!

You can find our sanitation hints page at:

<http://www.grapestompers.com/articles/sanitation.htm>

We'll cover the basics and show you different ways to sanitize your equipment, plus offer the advantages and disadvantages of each sanitation method described.

So keep it clean out there... Your wine deserves the best!

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

You can write to Brant at webmaster@grapestompers.com

NEW PRODUCTS

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

Spagnols Cellar Master series of light summer wines
Produces 6 gallons (30 bottles) of 6 to 7% alcohol

- Item # 3164 Spagnols Mist Blackberry Merlot \$45.37
- Item # 3278 Spagnols Mist Raspberry White Zin \$45.37
- Item # 3280 Spagnols Mist Peach Chardonnay \$38.41
- Item # 3282 Spagnols Mist Kiwi Gewurtztraminer \$38.41

Other New Items Include:

- Item # 2768 Amaretto LIQUOR QUIK extract \$3.64
- Item # 2771 Irish Cream LIQUOR QUIK extract \$3.64
- Item # 2426 Capsules, Silver PVC (shiny) \$0.14 each
- Item # 2424 Capsules, Red PVC (shiny) \$0.14 each
- Item # 2428 Capsules, Black PVC w/silver stripe \$0.14
- Item # 4211 T-shirt, Vintage 60, Natural, XL \$15.00
The shirt says "Vintage Person / Perfectly Aged / Over 60 Years / Still Improving / Reserved But Not Subdued"
- Item # 4214 T-shirt, Wine A Bit, Natural, XL \$15.00
The shirt says "Wine A Bit"
- Item # 4217 T-shirt, Got Wine, Natural, XL \$15.00
The shirt says "Got Wine?"
- Item # 4205 T-shirt, Vintage 40, Natural, XL \$15.00
The shirt says "Vintage Person / Perfectly Aged / Over 40 Years / Still Improving / Reserved But Not Subdued"
- Item # 4208 T-shirt, Vintage 50, Natural, XL \$15.00
The shirt says "Vintage Person / Perfectly Aged / Over 50 Years / Still Improving / Reserved But Not Subdued"
- Item # 4300 Mulberry Bark wine bags w/purp grapes \$5.00
- Item # 4303 Mulberry Bark wine bags w/green grapes \$5.00
- Item # 4400 Doormat, 27" x 18", Natural \$15.00
"We serve only the finest vintage wine...
Did you bring any?"

Summer time is here... and as you see, we have some interesting combinations of fruit flavored grape extracts which produce light, fruity-tasting, low-alcohol (6-7%) wines perfect for warm weather quaffing! Each kit produces 6 gallons of wine (30 bottles, each 750 ml). The types we stock are Kiwi Gewurtztraminer, Peach Chardonnay, Raspberry White Zin, and Blackberry Merlot.

We've got some new T-shirts - just in time for the hot days ahead! They're light tan (we call it Natural) and are made of 100% pre-shrunk cotton. The message on each shirt varies, but everyone will know you're a vintner when you wear one!

We've had lots of requests for more capsules with a matte finish (for dressing your bottles) but at the moment we are only able to get those in a solid green and a solid burgundy. Everything else comes SHINY! As a matter of fact, we just got in three new colors of shiny PVC capsules this week: solid silver, solid red, and a black with a narrow silver stripe.

PRODUCT SPOTLIGHT: B-Brite - The Versatile Chemical
by Tom Burgiss, Owner

Here at grapestompers.com, we are always interested in hearing and learning from our customers. This next story is a doozy... It is not about wine, but a winemaking chemical we use all the time in sanitizing our equipment: B-BRITE !

It seems one night D. Howell was sitting in his favorite rocking chair looking down on his rug at a big black spot that refused to go away - despite using every rug cleaner he could find! He told me the story about his wondering if B-Brite could do anything for this spot...

Well sir, he tried it and it WORKED! He could not believe his eyes. Following his hint, I decided to try it on some wine spots on our cement floor here in the Bodega. After letting it soak for awhile, it took about half of it away (now mind you, the stain had been there for some time), and after 3 tries at separate times, I was able to have a much better-looking floor!

What's the secret? B-Brite cleans with oxygen power - there's no chlorine in it, so it's safe to use on most any surface or fabric.

To carry this a bit further, I had some old "Easy Spirit" tennis shoes that were really dirty (they used to be white) so I made up some B-Brite Solution and I tried it on them. It WORKED... and now my tennis shoes gleam!

Do you have a similar experience to share? If so, we'll gladly pass it along. Meanwhile, get out there with the B-Brite and tell us your cleaning story!

BONNIE'S BIN: Happy Mother's Day!
By Bonnie Brown, Manager

May is here already. We were a bit slow closing out April and getting on to May. It came too fast this time!

Let's get to the important stuff first. May 13th is Mother's Day! HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY to all our Moms.

A Kitchen Cordials book (item # 2821) to go along with her favorite Liquor Quik essences (# 2760 to 2780), makes a wonderful gift... and so does a wine kit such as Fume Blanc (# 3221) or French Colombard (# 3242) - the perfect summer wines. Or better yet, how about a Champion Pewter or Brass cork opener by Wine Enthusiast (# 5100 & # 5104) that clamps right on the bar? That would make it so easy for Mom to open that next bottle of wine! The Wine Saver pump (# 2908) with a package of extra stoppers (# 2910) would help her keep her opened bottle fresh for up to 3 weeks!

We've got lots of interesting books on making wine and growing grapes. These are nice to have in your home library. I refer to the books often, both at the Bodega and at home!

If ever you don't see what you are after, pick up the phone and call us or drop an e-mail. We may have it in our store and not in the online catalog. If not, we will do some research and see what we can find!

For good conversation and laughs, join with me anytime to clean bottles! Wonderful friends have kept me quite busy by bringing by cases of bottles at a time! I may have to make paper out of all the labels I have scraped off! You know, the kind where you mix scraps of paper with water in a blender and then pour onto a screen, press to form and let dry? Have any of you ever done that? Yet another by-product of winemaking!

Have a productive and fun May. Until next month!

Life is too short.. to drink bad wine. . so make your own!

You can write to Bonnie at bonnie@grapestompers.com

THIS MONTH'S SPECIALS

grapestompers' specials for the month of May 2001 are:

Save up to 11% on selected wine kits

AND

Save 15% on Montrachet yeast

AND

Save over 17% on Kitchen Cordials Recipe Book

AND

Save over \$70 on the purchase of a
Complete Winemaking Starter Kit
which includes a RED or WHITE Concentrate
(see wine kit selection below)

Item #	Description	Regular Price	SPECIAL Price
3222	VDV Johannisberg Riesling	39.55	35.96
3130	CC Cabernet/Shiraz	89.74	79.77
2821	Kitchen Cordials Recipes	2.04	1.69
2701	Montrachet Yeast	.34	.29
3200	Complete White Starter Kit	251.68	179.00
3200A	Nearly Complete White Kit	204.55	141.65
3100	Complete Red Starter Kit	264.79	189.00
3100A	Nearly Complete Red Kit	217.66	151.65

We've had such a huge response from our Complete Wine Kit special, that we've decided to not only extend this special for another month but ALSO offer you a less expensive alternative. Please take advantage of this great summertime 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 (\$16.59 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.

New! Now you can order a somewhat scaled-down version of the Complete wine kit mentioned above... We call it the "Nearly Complete" wine kit. After removing three items (the bottle drainer, the bottles, and corkscrew) the price is a little more affordable and you save on shipping costs. The stock number is similar - just put the letter "A" after the item when you order. Combine this lower cost with the video rebate, and you've got yourself a whale of a deal!

TOM'S CELLAR: Of Onion Wines and Sage Advice
by Tom Burgess, Owner

I have a lot of fun offering samples of onion wine to our walk-in customers here at our mountaintop Bodega.

"Onion Wine?" you say?

Yes, good old onion wine - made from either Vidalia or Texas Sweets. It's perfect for that person who loves onions but wakes up at 2:00 in the morning wondering, "Why did I eat onions last night?"

Well, with a little salt and pepper dashed in (an idea from James Taylor's mom), it gives you a taste that's hard to beat. Mix with a little vinegar and salad oil and you have a real treat in a dressing. Onion wine also works well for marinating, especially wild game meats!

When first introducing onion wine to the uninitiated, the secret is not to tell your friends what they are about to taste, and watch their facial expression... It's a hoot! One in 50 will love it straight up, and more will like it with salt and pepper.

Have a little fun in your life; make (& share) onion wine!

From time to time, we have customers to call in about their wines not clearing up by the 28th day. Several factors come into play that may explain this phenomenon:

1. It might have come from not stirring long enough (or vigorously enough) on day 20, or it could be
2. A warmer temperature in that final stage after day 20.

To correct problem #1, we suggest that you stir harder and longer, then wait 15 minutes and do it again. The Fizz-X Wine Agitator (item # 2607) is a great time and energy saver when stirring time comes!

To help combat problem #2, we suggest placing the glass carboy in a cooler place (low 60's) and give it more time!

If all that fails, there is a clarifier for both white (item # 2711) and red wines (item # 2713) that will do the job for you. In our experience, we have found that Piesporter and Riesling are two white wines that take more time to clear, so be aware of this if you are making these types of wine. Certainly a filter could be used, but before you go that far, just give us a call (toll free) at 800-233-1505.

-----HOT TIP-----

I have found it hard to fit the spoon or paddle into the neck of the carboy when I have to stir the must to rid it of the gases that naturally build up in the wine while fermenting.

From my days as a house painter, I have adapted a technique we used to stir the paint. My solution to this was to take a nice shiny "clean" coat hanger, straighten it, bend a small loop, small enough to fit into the bottle neck, and attach the other end (straight one) to a drill.

I usually stir it on a slow speed for about 10 to 15 minutes, or until all the bubbles have stopped. I have found it takes a lot less effort also. The best drill I've found is a cordless one, since a cord weighs more and the drill can be awkward to handle. Without a cord, you are not restricted to a certain place to do this.

Thanks to John Barilone for this tip.

Have a tip you'd like to submit?
Send it to tips@grapestompers.com

-----HOT TIP-----

Most of our readers are aware that we are happy to act as a consumer's guide on kit wines. We try all of them out here in our Bodega. We do not recommend a wine kit to you until we have tried them out... so here's our latest report on a wine kit by RJ Grape Products - a 10 liter Grand Cru kit of Pinot Gris.

To be honest, we found the Pinot Gris did not come off in 28 days to our satisfaction, so we kept it longer in the carboy, racking until clear... but it still needed more time. After adding some more oak beans, we waited a while longer, then finally bottled it. EXCELLENT!

So allowing for a little extra aging time, we officially recommend the Grand Cru line of wine kits shown in our online catalog under grape concentrates.

Presently, we have an ice wine going and we will report on it soon.

You can write to Tom at tom@grapestompers.com

FROM OUR CUSTOMERS

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,
You and Bonnie are doing a nice job with your web site.

I have made a few batches of wine mostly from concentrate; I did crush my own once with very good results. I am by no means an expert - in fact I pray for every batch I make. My family and friends are impressed and I guess that's my motivation.

Just sent in an order. Keep up the good work, I love your newsletter.

See u later,

-- Ed (Dick) Cercone
Rensselaer, IN

Bonnie,
Thanks, Bonnie! By the way, the last batch of wine came out great.. Everybody loves it..

Amazing it tastes that good already and it's not even aged.

Thanks!

-- Dominic Vaccaro
Spring Lake Heights, NJ

Hi Tom,
I just had to let you know how excited we are about making our own wine. You have a wonderful place there and we have already told several people about it. I can't wait for our first brew to be ready. It was so nice to meet you, and may we please come by again soon?

-- Bobby & Lois Brantley
Rocky Mount, NC

Tom,
I did receive the replacement. Thank you, your prompt response was very refreshing!

-- Gail Williams

WINE KIT SHIPPING UPDATE
by Bonnie

Recently we have been noticing a few things about our wine kits. We're finding things such as:

- Juice between the layers of the bag, and
- Drips on the outside of the bag and in the box

We have notified the manufacturers about these issues, but so far we haven't seen much improvement. Rest assured, we check each kit before sending them out to be sure the items are all there and the juice bag is not leaking!

If you happen to get a wine kit that has juice on the outside of the bag or inside the box, more than likely it is due to some juice being spilled during the filling process. If there is juice in between the layers of the bag (all the bags have 2 layers) don't fret - it is usually a very small amount and will not take away from a great end result.

We apologize for this inconvenience (that juice is sure sticky!), but we just wanted to let you know we are doing everything we can to ensure you get your money's worth and a complete product. Sometimes it seems there is no end to

what we have to check, but we're happy to do it!!

Please let us know if anything isn't right with your order and we'll work with you to take care of the problem. Thanks for allowing us to serve you... we really appreciate your input.

GUEST COLUMN - Please, Be Our Guest!
by Brant Burgess, Editor

No one has offered to write a guest column this month, so we thought we'd take this opportunity to thank our past guest contributors (again!) and to let you know of some recent web page updates we've made.

First, here is a list of The Stomper's contributors:

- Harry Bradley, Canada
- W. Bruce Cameron, Colorado
- David (Village Winery), Victoria BC
- Lum Eisenman, Del Mar
- David Markle, Japan
- Daniel Rogov, Israel
- Paul Wagner, California
- Jack Keller, Texas

As you can see, winemaking enthusiasts come from all over the world! We'd really love to feature your article in next month's issue of The Stomper.

If you think you don't write well enough to publish an article that thousands will see, don't let that worry you... People read for CONTENT, not STYLE (or else I might be out of a job!), so as long as you have a point to make, folks will read your article - especially if it conveys a meaningful story to fellow winemakers.

And if you don't think you know enough about winemaking to contribute an article, think again... even the most novice winemaker can write a short article about a lesson learned or a tidbit he or she picked up in the winemaking newsgroup or local wine shop.

-----HOT TIP-----

Regarding fermentation in the garage during cold winter months:

I made a plywood box that would accommodate 4 carboys and an electric hot plate (cost \$12 at ACE). Set it at the lowest setting and throw a comforter over it - works like a charm! I have a small batch working in the garage now!

Thanks to Dick Cercone for this tip.

Have a tip you'd like to submit?
Send it to tips@grapestompers.com

-----HOT TIP-----

Now, on to the web page updates... we've added some more material to the following pages:

- Links Page: Added 2 new links for online winemaking books, 2 additional wine references, and updated some old links whose filenames had changed. Just go to our home page, and click on the "Links" button in the left navigational area.
- Calculations Page: Added a couple links to other wine

making calculators, one of which offers a free software download for a winemaking calculator. You can see it at: <http://www.grapestompers.com/calculations.htm>

And in case you've missed the last couple issues of The Stomper, here are some new pages we've recently added:

- Learn how to use a hydrometer. See: http://www.grapestompers.com/articles/hydrometer_use.htm
- Send a free wine postcard. Just go to: <http://www.grapestompers.com/postcards/postcard.html>
- Discover the secrets of blending wine http://www.grapestompers.com/articles/blending_wine.htm
- Take our free home winemaking quiz. Jump over to: <http://www.grapestompers.com/quiz/index.asp>

How To Be A Guest Columnist For STOMPERS Newsletter

If you'd like to be our next guest columnist, simply send your three- or four-paragraph article to articles@grapestompers.com. If your article is selected for use in a future STOMPER newsletter, you'll receive the attention of thousands, a coupon good for a discount on your next grapestompers.com order, as well as our heartfelt thanks. So what are you waiting for??

CORKY'S WINEMAKING DEFINITION

Tartrates

- Harmless crystals of potassium bitartrate that may form in cask or bottle (often on the cork) from the tartaric acid naturally present in wine.

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

NEXT MONTH'S HIGHLIGHTS

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

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