

---

THE STOMPER

The Monthly Winemaking Newsletter of grapestompers.com  
November, 2001 Issue #16  
<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 - The Latest grapestompers News
- => New Products
- => Bonnie's Bin - We're Here... REALLY, We Are!
- => This Month's Specials
- => Tom's Cellar - Make My Palate Sing!
- => Feedback from Our Customers
- => New Mexico Offers Great Wines
- => Guest Column - Make Your Own Standard NaOH Solution
- => How to Be Featured as our Guest Columnist
- => Corky's Winemaking Definition
- => Subscribe/Unsubscribe Information

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

---

FEATURE ARTICLE: The Latest grapestompers.com News  
By Brant Burgiss, Editor

---

Lots of things have been happening at the mountaintop bodega lately...

In case you haven't heard, grapestompers.com has expanded its operations to serve you better. We've just completed construction of a new warehouse and shipping facility at our headquarters in Laurel Springs, NC.

This new building allows us to serve you better because all our winemaking supplies are in a central location.

In order to keep you abreast of these and other developments, we've created a "News" area on our web site.

You can read the latest news and announcements of grapestompers.com at this location:

<http://www.grapestompers.com/news/>

Stop by, and you'll also see pictures from last month's wine tasting!

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

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

---

NEW PRODUCTS

---

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

- Item #2114 Flute Wine Bottles, clear 375 ml \$20.63
- Item #2116 Ice Wine Bottles, antique green 375 ml \$21.95
- Item #2320 grapestompers.com cork, #9 X 1.75" \$0.12
- Item #2322 grapestompers.com cork, #9 X 1.5" \$0.11
- Item #222A Gum Stopper, drilled #11.5 \$2.00

The #9 X 1.5" grapestompers.com signature corks are on sale through the end of November 2001. Buy 50 or more and save!

And don't forget to order your FREE personalized wine labels anytime you purchase a wine concentrate kit. We are starting to get lots of requests for Christmas labels!

---

BONNIE'S BIN: We're Here... REALLY, We Are!  
By Bonnie Brown, Manager

---

There are a few things that I wanted to discuss with you this month as we are getting settled into our new warehouse and packing facility...

Number one - We are working on our bells and alarms to let us know when people are here. When we are in the warehouse we don't often hear cars drive in. We have a sign on the door of the Bodega to "gently" holler for us! Tom has purchased a door bell that should be installed soon. That should help! We WILL work this out. It is just part of the getting settled process.

Number two - When you call, sometimes we are already on another call that we cannot interrupt so that sends you to our voice mail system. Leaving a message is good, and it lets us do some checking into things. But if you've got a little extra time, you may find that you can reach us more quickly by calling us back until you get us "live" and in person. The extra calls won't cost you anything; we have the 800 number so you can call anytime you have a question!

Now that summer is over, I have my Blackberry Merlot ready to come off. I am convincing myself that it is a wonderful winter drink! And it will be. I so would have enjoyed sitting out on the deck with it but around the fireplace will do fine. It is as wonderful as I first thought it would be.

Not too sweet, no one flavor is overpowering. A very smooth light fruity Merlot. I am impressed by it. I think the group at our Thanksgiving Dinner will enjoy it!

The leaves are gone and I am thinking most of the fruits and veggies too. I hope you all had good crops and even have some put up in the freezer for a mid-winter batch. The pace of life settles down a bit now for some. Relax and enjoy the start of a new season.

May you and your loved ones be at peace. Be strong and be there for one another.

Many "cheers"!

GOD BLESS THE USA AND THOSE WHO DO THEIR PART!

'Tis a wonderful day in the mountains. . .

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

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

THIS MONTH'S SPECIALS

-----  
grapestompers' specials for the month of November 2001 are:

Save up to 12% on selected Wine Kits

AND

Save money when you buy as few as 50 corks

AND

Save 24% on the second box of bottle sealing wax

AND

Save up to 33% on selected capsules

AND

Save nearly 15% on carboy caps

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	Reg. Price	SPECIAL
3271	Pino Grigio Wine Kit	55.00	49.33
3230	CC Chamblaise Wine Kit	58.85	52.77
3278	CM Raspberry/White Zin Kit	45.37	39.66
2322	grapestompers.com corks (minimum 50 cork purchase)	0.11	0.10
2412 thru 2416	Bottle sealing wax (buy 1, get 2nd box for special price) - also item #2407 and #2408	6.58	5.00
2400 thru 2406	Selected capsules (when buying bag of 72)	0.15 / 0.14	0.10
2610	Carboy caps, universal fit	2.03	1.77
3200	Complete White Wine Starter Kit	246.68	175.00
3100	Complete Red Wine Starter Kit	259.79	185.00

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 Chardonnay VDV concentrate

If choosing the Complete RED Kit, your choice of either:  
Cabernet/Merlot, Shiraz, or Pinot Noir 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

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 "personalize" your Complete Kit - Let's say you don't need or want some of the items that normally come with the Complete Kit... just give us a call at 1-800-233-1505 and let us know which items you don't need, and we will adjust the price of the equipment kit accordingly. Likewise, if you'd like a different wine kit, just let us know and we can adjust the price.

---

TOM'S CELLAR: Make My Palate Sing!  
by Tom Burgiss, Owner

---

On our web site you can see few photos of our wine tasting held on October 7. If you ever have the opportunity to go to one of these events, I encourage you to attend. Wine tastings are a good way to introduce yourself to wines that you may like in the future.

I had one gentlemen to whisper in my ear, "Where is some of that good French Colombard that you had last year?" I had to explain that wine tastings are to help broaden horizons and provide an adventure for your palate! Whenever it's possible, we like to feature different wines each year.

Last year's darling was White Burgundy. This year, we introduced Jermillon, which really caught the fancy of most red wine enthusiasts.

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

If you must lubricate the iris of your floor corks, NEVER use petroleum jelly (Vaseline) because it will actually attract more dirt and can mess up your corks.

Most floor corks manufacturers recommend lubricating with a fine silicone spray.

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

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

Wine tastings are good places to meet friends whom you have previously only known by e-mail or the phone. This year we were really pleased to see and talk with Ed Csencsits and his wife, Jean, from Hellertown, Pennsylvania. Since Ed was the person who came the greatest distance, it was our

pleasure to award him with this favorite: a free grape concentrate of Cellar Classic Chianti!

It's not too early to plan for our 2002 wine tasting. Just mark your calendar to visit the mountains of NC the first Sunday of October each year.

An added feature was the great display of musical talent by Helen White and Wayne Henderson, enjoyed by a crowd of around 200. I know one thing was for certain: they loved Jimmy's cooking and the food served during the tasting.

See ya! Tom

You can write to Tom at [tom@grapestompers.com](mailto: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,  
I stumbled on your web site last night after looking through about 6 or 7 others, and found yours to be much more personal and informative. I was impressed with the level of knowledge, and yet the helpfulness of your company to assist novice wine makers as myself. I will be ordering my supplies from your company in the future.

-- Eric DeRose

Hello,  
I enjoy the grapestompers newsletter immensely. If I have not been ordering stuff from grapestompers lately, it's because I've been busy -- growing grapes in the nursery and purchasing a south-facing hillside.

Yours,

-- Michael Voth  
Las Altimas

Tom and Bonnie,  
Thanks, you are all GREAT!!! The service at Grapestompers is # 1. In the future, would you do an article on maturing wine in a carboy for 6 or more months, before bottling?

In the newsletter, a person wrote how they handled carboys when slippery, gosh I just love the carboy handles, no need to worry about it slipping out of my hands when I wash or just need to move those heavy carboys.

Thanks once again,

-- Deanna Truran  
Fairfield, IL

A NOTE TO OUR VALUED CUSTOMERS:

We always confirm receipt of your order AND let you know when shipping occurs via e-mail. Lately, we have had a lot of e-mails boomerang right back to us. There are a couple of reasons why this may be occurring:

1. The e-mail account doesn't exist or was misspelled
2. Your mailbox could be full; if this is the case, you cannot accept more messages until others are cleared out
3. An e-mail filter may have been set up on your e-mail software (like Outlook Express, Eudora, etc.) to refuse e-mails from unknown domains. If you have filters on your IN box, please ensure you can accept messages from tom@grapestompers.com or bonnie@grapestompers.com

Any action you can take to alleviate our "boomerang" problem will be appreciated. Thanks for helping us out on this one!

---

New Mexico Offers Great Wines  
by Tom Burgess

---

Recently Nancy and I had the pleasure going out west to New Mexico and visiting wineries there with our son, Brant, and his wife, Amy.

It is no surprise that with the hot arid country like Australia that New Mexico produces some excellent wines. Some of the wineries were sold out of their better stuff because the locals are now aware of the excellent wines and buy them up in hurry. So that is probably the reason you don't hear much of New Mexico wines throughout the US!

I guess it's sort of like our cured hams and locust honey in our part of the mountains. You just have to come and be here to catch it all before it gets gone!

In the southern part of New Mexico, different grapes are grown in comparison to the northern part of the state. And in the blending of wines, they purchase from each other the wines that do not grow in their neck of the woods. I was happy to observe that the wineries were all small, but professionally run and very friendly.

If you're planning a trip to New Mexico in the near future, you should definitely look forward to partaking of their wines. There's even a big wine festival held each year in Santa Fe... can you say "Let's saddle 'em up again?"

---

GUEST COLUMN - Making Your Own Standard NaOH Solution  
by Dave Burley, SC

---

Editor's Note: This column is a continuation of Dave's great article from last month, entitled: "Acidity and pH - Whys and Wherefores." If you missed part one, see: <http://www.grapestompers.com/newsletter/archives>

So how do you get a standard sodium hydroxide solution if you can't buy it or you need it in an emergency?

Crank in your chemistry mode. There is a basic relationship you need to know if you want to understand titrations. At the endpoint (permanent color change of the indicator) the amount of base you add is equal to the amount of acid you had in the sample vessel (that's why it is called the equivalence point or end point, e.p.). Chemists call a 1 liter solution which has an Avogadro's number of reactive units a 1 Normal solution, abbreviated 1N. So a 1N solution of base of volume V1 will react exactly with V1 volume of 1N acid. More generally,  $V1 \times N1 = V2 \times N2$  at the endpoint for various solution concentrations and volumes.

In the discussion that follows you also should know that Tartaric acid has a molecular weight of 150 and is treated

as a dibasic acid at the endpoint of this titration (i.e. tartaric acid has two replaceable acid hydrogens at the phenolphthalein endpoint). Saying it another way for those resident chemists, 150 grams of tartaric acid is two equivalents (i.e. Avogadro's number) of hydrogen ions in this titration. So a 1% solution is  $10/150 = 0.067$  molar or in this case of two reactive hydrogens/molecule  $2 \times 0.067 \text{ M} = 0.1333\text{N}$  in Tartaric acid.

Although a standard salt called potassium acid phthalate (KHP) is often used as the standard for titration, we will use tartaric acid as you will have it available. Tartaric acid often comes with a certain moisture content, so it is desirable to dry this overnight in the oven or other dry warm area at around 120F or so. Failure to do this will result in an error in your sodium hydroxide standard. Also record the moisture content of the acid by weighing before and after drying so you know how much to add to your wine.

In the case of making up your own sodium hydroxide standard, I use common household lye purchased in the supermarket under drain cleaners as it is pretty pure and we are going to standardize it anyway. Be sure to buy a new can each time you make up this solution if much time has passed since you made up the previous solution. Lye (sodium hydroxide) will pick up carbon dioxide and moisture from the air and smear out your endpoint and not be a precise number. Above all be EXTREMELY careful handling lye as it dissolves human tissue readily and is more dangerous in your eye than acid. ALWAYS wear safety glasses and rubber gloves and wash carefully after using lye or sodium hydroxide. Clean up your work area carefully as you don't want you or anyone else to contact it accidentally.

Sodium hydroxide (Na =23, O = 16, H =4 total = 40) has a molecular weight of 40, so 40 grams per liter would be 1 molar or in the case of a single reactive OH per molecule it would also be 1 Normal. So since we want 0.1 N for our work, just make up a solution of 4 grams of sodium hydroxide per liter. It is OK to be 4 grams +/- 0.1 g or so as we will be standardizing this solution.

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

If you're using bentonite as your fining agent, it's a good idea to let things "settle out" while the carboy is up on the countertop, instead of on the floor.

Bentonite, when it settles, forms a fluffy lees; even a slight movement of the carboy can stir things up a bit.

If the carboy is already elevated, you won't have to lift it to begin siphoning!

Our thanks to Pam and Eddie Hall from Laurel Springs, NC for this tip.

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

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

When making up the sodium hydroxide solution, I suggest you get distilled or RO water at the grocery store and boil and cool it to remove any dissolved carbon dioxide before you make up this solution. You can use a 1 liter plastic soda pop bottle as a storage vessel if you have no other. Soft glass is not good as it will react with the sodium hydroxide.

Once you have the sodium hydroxide made up, fill your burette or syringe (if that is the volumetric equipment you have) with sodium hydroxide solution and titrate a 5 ml sample of the standard tartaric acid solution using phenolphthalein or a pH meter (pH e.p. = 8.2) to indicate the endpoint. Since you know the tartaric acid solution concentration you can determine the NaOH concentration by this simple formula:

$$N1 \times V1 = N2 \times V2$$

which in this case V1 is the volume of sodium hydroxide you added, N1 is the unknown normality of the sodium hydroxide and N2 is 0.1333N, V2 is 5 mls.

Rearranging the equation:

$$N1 = N2 \times V2 / V1 \text{ and } N1 = 0.1333 \times 5 / V1$$

for the unknown.

To convert from N to %W/v use the formula:

$$TA = 7.5 \times Vb \times Nb / Vw$$

where Vb, Nb = vol and Normality of NaOH and Vw = volume of wine.

In the case where you made up an exact 0.1N NaOH, V1 = 6.65 mls of NaOH. To check the calculations:

$$\% \text{ W/V of acid} = 7.5 \times Vb \times Nb / Vw \text{ so:}$$

$$7.5 \times 6.65 \times 0.1 / 5 = 0.997 \text{ or } 1.0\% \text{ which checks}$$

Now what if your NaOH doesn't come out to be 0.1N?

Let's say the NaOH V1 is 6 mls -  
then N1 is  $0.1333 \times 5 / 6 = 0.111\text{N}$  NaOH

Just use the same formula:

$$\text{so } \% \text{ W/V of acid} = 7.5 \times 6 \times 0.111 / 5 = 0.999 \text{ or } 1\%$$

If you use 5 mls of wine for the titration and it takes 6 mls of 0.111 NaOH then normality of the wine is

$$6 \times 0.111 / 5 = 0.1332 \text{ or } 7.5 \times 0.1332 = 0.999 \text{ or } 1\%$$

$$TA \% = 1.5 \times Vb \times Nb, \text{ so } 1.5 \times 6 \times 0.111 = 0.999 \sim 1.0\%$$

You now have a standard NaOH solution to use in your work. NaOH doesn't keep all that long since it picks up CO2 from the air, so if a few months have gone by it is better to remake the solution or at least re-standardize the solution you have to be sure.

Good Winemaking!

Dave Burley

Copyright 2001 David R. Burley

ABOUT THE AUTHOR - Dave Burley has been making wine since 1960 when he started a gallon of "applejack" made from apple juice, brown sugar and raisins in his Grandpa's barn.

He's maintained his winemaking interest through college, although information was sparse and supplies non-existent and made beer in graduate school. He moved to Wales for post doctoral research in Physical Chemistry and found to his delight that making wine and beer was legal and supplies and literature abounded.

He has maintained an interest in both wine and beer making



over the decades by digging into the more technical aspects of professional literature but has not lost the fun of fermentation. He's won two national Gold medals and a Bronze from an American Wine Society contest for his reds, Petit Syrah, Pinot Noir and Cabernet Sauvignon.

Recently Dave moved to South Carolina and picked 2000 pounds of vinifera grapes from his new vineyard and made about 120 gallons of wine from the twenty European varieties he has planted there. Since Pierce's Disease is indigenous to this area, he is beginning a program of grape breeding for P.D. resistant grapes from local grapes.

You can contact Dave at [Dave\\_Burley@charter.net](mailto:Dave_Burley@charter.net)

---

#### 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](mailto: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](http://grapestompers.com) order, as well as our heartfelt thanks. So what are you waiting for??

---

#### CORKY'S WINEMAKING DEFINITION

---

##### Rehydration

- A term used to describe the method of adding water to active dry wine yeast before pitching. Rehydrating wine yeast increases the yeast's chances for survival, because the structure of the cellular walls returns to normal during water uptake.

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 Stories from Tom's Cellar
- Another Surprise from Brant
- More Specials
- The next article from Bonnie's Bin
- Our Next Guest Column
- More Customer Testimonials
- New Winemaking Products

---

#### LIST MAINTENANCE

---

To SUBSCRIBE to the STOMPER winemaking hints newsletter, send a blank e-mail to [newsletter@grapestompers.com](mailto:newsletter@grapestompers.com) with a subject line of: `subscribe stomper`

To UNSUBSCRIBE from STOMPER winemaking hints newsletter, send a blank e-mail to [newsletter@grapestompers.com](mailto:newsletter@grapestompers.com) with a subject line of: `unsubscribe stomper`

Past issues of the STOMPER can be found at <http://www.grapestompers.com/newsletter/archives>

---

Copyright (c) 2001 [grapestompers.com](http://grapestompers.com)

Boring Legal Stuff: Content is gathered from sources considered to be reliable, but the accuracy of this info cannot be guaranteed. Opinions expressed by guest

columnists and customer letters are those of the authors  
and not necessarily those of grapestompers.com

---