
THE STOMPER

The Monthly Winemaking Newsletter of grapestompers.com
December, 2001 Issue #17
<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.

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^ Hot Tips are sprinkled throughout the newsletter

FEATURE ARTICLE: grapestompers.com Selects FedEx
By Brant Burgiss, Editor

Greetings from the mountains of North Carolina... we've got two HUGE announcements to share with you that speak to our commitment of providing great customer service!

First:
grapestompers.com is pleased to announce a new relationship with Federal Express. FedEx replaces UPS as our shipper of choice for large parcels.

Second:
We've upgraded our computer system at the mountaintop bodega... the new computers, servers, and network means each order can be processed more quickly!

Learn the details of these and other late-breaking stories at our news and announcements portion of our web site:

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

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:

- Item #2784 Sake (Rice Wine) Kit, \$8.99 (includes yeast)
- Item #2714 Citric Acid, 3 oz. \$1.82

- Item #2419 Bottle Sealing Wax, Blue, 1 lb. \$6.58

Enjoy the real traditional taste of Japanese Sake made in your own home. This packet makes approximately 22 liters of Sake (14% - 18% alc/vol). Ready to drink in 2 weeks. This kit contains 10 grams of Koji-Kin, the essential ingredient in Sake making. This product comes with very detailed instructions on the making of homebrew Sake. Homebrew Sake is easily made in the kitchen and no specialized equipment is required. The yeast is included! All you need to do is add some citric acid and rice.

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

BONNIE'S BIN: 'Tis The Season!
By Bonnie Brown, Manager

The turkey is gone, and shopping has begun. 'Tis the season you know!

We have been sending out a lot of gifts already and I am really glad to see the ordering being done a bit ahead of time. I'm also very glad to hear, "No rush, it is for Christmas!" At this time of year those are wonderful words to our ears!

Lots of things are still happening at our place. I am sure Brant has already told you about the new computers and what that does for productivity! It is GREAT! We are getting so good, Tom said we may only have to come in in the morning to turn the systems on! All kidding aside, we are really enjoying our new building, computers and storage areas. It is making it so we can get to your orders on a more timely fashion.

I hope all of you are doing well with your fall harvest! We hear some very interesting stories that should be put on paper for all of us to enjoy. I will work on that one of these days. We could have our own grapestompers tales published!

From our family to you and yours, HAPPY HOLIDAYS and HAPPY NEW YEAR! May all of you be safe and may God Bless the U. S. A. and get our military home safely!

See you again in 2002

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

THIS MONTH'S SPECIALS

grapestompers' specials for the month of December 2001 are:

Save over 10% on selected Wine Kits

AND

Get 30 FREE corks with each grape concentrate purchased

AND

Buy a 6 gallon carboy (#2201) and get a FREE carboy handle

AND

Buy two cases of bottles (any size) and get a
FREE tub of B-Brite sanitizer (8 oz. size)

AND

Get a FREE recipe book (#2801) or spoon (#2243) when
you buy a Deluxe Wine Equipment Kit (#1010)

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
3142	VDV Jermillon Wine Kit	51.27	45.88
3228	VDV White Burgundy Wine Kit	37.68	33.77
2202	FREE Carboy Handle (with each 6 gallon carboy #2201)	4.95	0.00
2322	30 FREE Corks (with the purchase of each grape concentrate)	0.11	0.00
2801	FREE Recipe Book or (when you buy Deluxe Kit #1010)	3.03	0.00
2243	FREE Spoon	2.65	0.00
2721	FREE B-Brite Sanitizer (when you buy 2 cases of wine bottles)	1.82	0.00
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	Long Handled Spoon
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: Corks By The "Pound"
by Tom Burgiss, Owner

You know, I always assumed that you needed a corker to cork your bottles... so I will relate to you some stories I have heard along the way:

One lady called after she received her shipment of corks to inform me that I had sent the wrong sized corks. I asked how she was attempting to cork, she simply stated that she intended to drive them in with a hammer!

A gentlemen called to order for the first time and wanted the #1010 Equipment Kit and a Cellar Classic White Zinfandel. When I asked about corks for his corker, I was informed he did not have a corker!

"How do you get them in?" I asked.

"With a rubber mallet!" was the proud reply.

So the story goes on! Well we do have size 9 corks, size 8 corks and also some tapered corks. Folks often ask if the capsules can be used without using the corks! Others inquire, can I reuse the corks?

It is frightening to imagine folks taking their time making good wine, only to lose it because they smashed a bottle with a hammer or had their wine turn to vinegar. Sorta like pennies saved and dollars lost!

So, if you have a different way of corking, let us in on the secret and we will share your knowledge with the readers of the "Stomper".

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

After corking your wine bottles, keep them standing for one or two days before laying them on their side for storage.

This gives the cork time to adjust to the neck of the bottle, and will prevent leaks from occurring.

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

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

Why all this talk about corks?

While in Australia I was shocked to see wineries use plastic closures (mind you, they did not call them corks, just simply closures) in some of their best wines. The reason? Good corks are hard to find. We get most of ours directly from Portugal and we must order weeks ahead of time in order to keep our inventory at the right level so we can serve you.

The day may come when all of us may be using plastic closures. I sure hope not...

I guess you can just call me old fashioned.

See ya! Tom

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,
One of the finest wine sites I've been on so far. I'm thinking about wine making for the first time. Your site is very helpful, I feel like a kid in a candy store.

You have one of the most complete kits I've seen yet. I like the Cabernet wines, oh, how much is the shipping and handling cost for the red wine complete kits?

-- Terry Betz
Latrobe, PA

Thanks for the update and tracking information. And again, thanks for the good customer service!

Happy Holidays!

-- Bob Rook
Reston, VA

Bonnie,
Thank you so much for your prompt response! The package arrived but Jake got home too late to grab it from the office.

Now we can be on our way to a wonderful wine making experience! Also, I will be doing all future orders with your company. I appreciate a company that cares about its customers and fixes their mistake - [a] very respectable practice!

-- Cai ley McCuiston

Hello,
I've told everyone how great you've been and your quick responses to my e-mails. It's been fun!

-- Brooke Moretz
Idaho Falls, ID

Tom,
I'll make sure my brother, who's receiving the kit as a gift, is aware of the speedy service I received from Grapestompers. Thanks for the quick turn around.

-- Jon Di Renzi
Collegeville, PA

Christmas Delivery Schedule and New Wine Labels
by Tom Burgiss

In order to ensure delivery of winemaking supplies in time for Christmas, here's our recommendation for ordering:

For deliveries to NC, VA, or SC, please ensure your order is placed (received by us) by December 18th.

For deliveries to OH, PA, CT, RI, NJ, MD, DE, WV, KY, TN, GA, FL, AL, MS, LA, AR, IL, or IN please ensure your order is placed (received by us) by December 17th.

For deliveries to ME, VT, NH, MA, NY, WI, MN, IA, MO, MI Eastern NE, OK, KS, or TX please ensure your order is placed (received by us) by December 16th.

For deliveries to ND, SD, Western NE, Eastern CO, NM, and AZ please ensure your order is placed (received by us) by December 15th.

For deliveries to all other states on the west coast, (CA, OR, WA, UT, NV, MT, WY, Western CO, ID) please ensure your order is placed (received by us) by December 14th.

This schedule is based on deliveries made NLT 22 December, and allows one extra day to compensate for possible bad weather.

* * * * *

To help get you in the holiday mood - we've added a couple new wine labels for the Christmas season. When you order a grape concentrate, don't forget... you get 30 wine labels FREE with your purchase.

Just let us know the text you want on your label when you place your secure online order.

The two new designs are the "Holiday Border" and the "Wreath" labels.

Check them out at:
<http://www.grapestompers.com/cat104.htm>

And... lest we forget...

HAPPY HOLIDAYS from the grapestompers gang!

Tom, Bonnie, Brant, Lucky, and Clyde
(the last two are our trusted guard dogs... don't trip over them or you might get hurt!)

GUEST COLUMN - Last Minute Holiday Suggestions
by Don Schiller, Minnesota

Sometimes that winemaker or wine drinker can be hard to shop for their holiday presents. Many times, they have everything they could need or want, well, almost everything. Here are a few suggestions of wine accessories they

may not have. Costs vary from just a few dollars to prices that may be more than my last car. The list is more or less alphabetical.

Backpack or Wine Carrier

Handy carriers to bring a bottle (or several) to the next outing, tasting or competition. There are picnic backpacks and wine carrier units that come with full table settings starting with two settings.

Bottle Storage Unit and Cooler

Refrigerators for your wine. Specially designed to correctly chill and control humidity, these units come in a variety of sizes to hold nearly any size collection.

Corkscrews/removers

Corkscrews and cork removing devices come in a wide variety from the simple two pronged Ah-so, the common winged corkscrews to the upper end Rabbit and Screwpull models. I have a model similar to one of the Screwpull styles and think it is great. One nice thing about this type is the quickness in which it pulls out a cork, then ejects the cork from the corkscrew. It takes just seconds to open wine bottles. Another type opener (that we also have) uses a quick blast of a compressed gas that is injected through a needle. The needle is inserted into and through the cork. The blast of gas will push the cork out of the bottle. It is a neat cork remover, but we don't use it on a regular basis because it doesn't work on all corks. You can get real fancy with the corkscrews that are secured to the bar or table.

Floor Corker

Corking several cases of wine has never been easier. There are a couple models of floor corkers, Italian and Portugal as examples. They are similar in operation, but a little different in size. Well worth the money.

Foil Cutters

Those commercial bottles of wine seem to have that annoying covering over the cork. You need to get rid of it before you can remove the cork. Foil cutters come in styles from the very simplistic to the collector styles. I have seen some on Ebay that are very unique.

Wineglass Charms

Many wine drinkers have wineglasses similar in style. Set the glass down and you may not be able to identify your glass from the others. I have seen several methods of glass identification. A simple method is to place a wine glass charm on your glass stem. Handy, effective, low cost and a great stocking stuffer.

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

Need help removing those stubborn wine labels? Try a product called Oxy Clean.

Just add two scoops to a five gallon bucket half full of hot water. Sink about eight full bottles filled with water, then top off the bucket allowing only the tops to show. Most labels will float to the top.

Use a heavy duty scrubber like those used on charcoal grills. Sam's Club has the best price on Oxy Clean.

Our thanks to Robert Klaus of Houston, TX for this tip.

Have a tip you'd like to submit?

Wine Glasses

I can honestly say there is little better to drink wine from than a good Riedel glass. A wine glass can make the wine drinking experience so much better. The glasses are "tuned" to the type of wine being served enhancing the wine drinking experience. Riedel glasses start with the basic Overture and go up from there. The Overture are good wine glasses to bring to wine tastings as they are a little stronger than some other models. Breakage isn't as painful to the expense account with these as with some of the others. A better glass for the wine drinker is the Vinum series.

Wine Kit

For those winemakers who can't get quality grapes, wine kits are a great way to make wine. If you are giving a kit, here is a hint: bigger is better. The higher percentage of juice in a kit, the less water that is added and the better the finished wine should taste. Selection and Grand Cru are two good kits that come to mind. Boxed kits are better than canned juices. I have seen some 5-gallon pails with stabilized grape juice that is ready to make wine.

Wine Racks

With all that good wine that is being made or purchased, the bottles need to be stored somewhere. Racks range from the simple type to fit in the basement to the more elegant style that will hold the wine bottles and your stemware in a nice oak cabinet.

Wine Tasting Kit

If you want to learn more about the components in wine, there are a few good wine tasting kits. These have containers of the aromas and several of the tastes that are found in wine. These are a great training session for a wine drinker, or even better when done as a game with a few friends. I have one called Bacchanales Tasting Kit. It contains about 44 taste and scent containers that really help tune up your senses. It also has guides to help with the kit and how to use it as a game. Note: don't smell the container marked "Cat Wee Wee" or you won't be able to smell anything else for a long time. Awful!!

Wine Stain Remover

Sooner or later, the wine in the glass ends up on the floor or the furniture. There is at least one commercial product designed to remove red wine stains from carpet. A method that we have found at our house is to use Oxi Clean. Okay, so a bucket of Oxi Clean doesn't sound like the perfect Holiday gift, but it is something to keep in mind for your own home and future wine spills.

Wine

If you are still puzzled about a gift, you can always give the gift of wine. If you don't know which wine to give, many wine stores will be happy to provide a gift certificate.

As for me, I have become fond of good Pinot Noir or a GSM (Grenache, Syrah, and Mourvedre). I have found this blend in a few wines in different percentages, and really like it. But, since this isn't about my list, offer a suggestion or a hint based on this list or on your own.

Happy Holiday shopping or receiving!

ABOUT THE AUTHOR - Don Schiller is the vice president and newsletter editor for the Purple Foot Wine Club in the Twin Cities in Minnesota. He has been making wine for about 15 years and has been writing articles for the Purple Foot Wine Club newsletter for many of those years.

You can contact Don at vintner@prodigy.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. 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://www.grapestompers.com) order, as well as our heartfelt thanks. So what are you waiting for??

CORKY'S WINEMAKING DEFINITION

Capsule

- The protective metal or plastic sheath over the cork and neck of a wine bottle. The capsule keeps the cork from drying out and admitting air into the bottle; it also helps prevent dirt from lodging in the crevice where the cork meets the glass.

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

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