
THE STOMPER

The Monthly Winemaking Newsletter of grapestompers.com
May, 2002 Issue #22
<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 it. Instructions to cancel 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: Bung Sizing Chart Now Online
By Brant Burgess, Editor

Happy May everyone! Hope you're ready for a summer full of winemaking fun. Have you started your summertime wines yet? If not, there's still time to do so!

A customer of ours wrote to suggest we provide an easy way to help you decide which size bung (stopper) to order for your carboy or demijohn - and we thought - HEY! What a great idea for a new page on our web site...

So we took all the bungs we could find, measured the tops and bottoms of each one, and created an easy to read chart with the results. Now you'll be able to find the right sized bung like a pro!

You can see this sizing chart on our latest web page:

http://www.grapestompers.com/bung_sizing_chart.asp

This page also provides an example so you can see how the chart works.

We hope you'll enjoy this new page on our web site... and will refer to it whenever you have the occasion to order your next rubber stopper.

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 #2108 Green "Dead-Leaf" Bordeaux-style wine bottles, 750 ml, tapered body with punted bottom, per case of 12.... \$8.99
-

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

'Tis the season to reflect on Mothers. The be all and do all core of most families. Wow, what a load that is! Give us a break that day kids!

When I think of the program 'Frontier Homes' seen on PBS, I am so thankful to be living in the 21st century! We do NOT have it all so rough. Each generation of mothers has it a bit easier than the last. I take this opportunity to wish all of you mothers "HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY"!

We have a great selection of T-Shirts in stock for that special day and would love to ship one to your mom! You might even recall something really meaningful that you could remind her of. I bet she would love to hear what memories YOU have! Share them with the family. Then sit back with a wonderful glass of wine and reflect on what you want to leave in a memory box for others.

There are some great white wines to start so they will be ready for the 4th of July weekend. I am looking forward to an ice cold Fume Blanc poured over fresh strawberries, blueberries, and raspberries! With that, I will go water my berries and rack off the wine! It pays to plan ahead when it comes to our wines!

Enjoy... another glass and keep remembering!

Bonnie

May wisdom be with our Leaders today...
May we all help to raise wise Leaders for tomorrow...

'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 May 2002 are:

Save over 10% on 2 different Wine Kits

AND

Save over 12% on our Automatic Bottle Filler

AND

Get a FREE airlock and bung with the purchase of any carboy in stock

AND

Save over 17% on Montrachet Wine Yeast

AND

Save over 20% on Sambuca Li quor-Qui k Ki t
(Italian liqueur that tastes like licorice)

AND

Save over \$70 on the purchase of a
Complete Winemaking Starter Ki t
whi ch i ncl udes a RED or WHITE Concentrate
(see wi ne ki t sel ecti on bel ow)

Item #	Description	Reg. Price	SPECIAL
3229	VDV White Zinfandel Wine Kit	43.95	38.88
3271	Grand Cru Pinot Gris Wine Kit	55.00	48.88
2688	Super Automatic Bottle Filler	16.94	14.88
2701	Red Star Montrachet Yeast, 5 gm	0.34	0.28
2758	Sambuca (Licorice) Li quor-Qui k	3.64	2.88
2201	Carboy Special -		
2204	Buy any carboy (6, 5, or 3 gallon size) from us		
2205	this month and get a FREE airtlock and bung!		
3200	Complete White Wine Starter Kit	246.68	175.00
3100	Complete Red Wine Starter Kit	259.79	185.00

The two wine kits shown above will make about 30 - 750 ml bottles of great wine in as little as 28 days. These wine kits are OUR MOST POPULAR SELLERS among all wine kits!

The automatic bottle filler is a life-saver... it's like having a third hand! It stops automatically when the bottle is full. Neat, huh?

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

If choosing the Complete WHITE Kit, your choice of either:
Fume Blanc, Piesporter, 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 Rinser
Fermenter Bucket with lid	Three-Piece Airtlock
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 (\$26.59 value):

- Free Wine Labels (text of your choice)
- Free T-shirt (sizes available: M, L, or XL)
- 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: Safe and Secure at grapestompers.com
by Tom Burgiss, Owner

Each month, I look forward to the opportunity to "chat" with all of you in our newsletter.

Seems like time flies, and before I know it, I am at the computer typing out another article for you to gaze upon. So here we are in May already!

This month I wish to talk to you about security. Your security. When I started grapestompers.com, I pledged to never to sell our customer's names to a third party. We have this policy in place, it has been followed and will continue to be followed in the future. Personally, I despise ordering something via the Internet and immediately start getting unrelated pitches from companies that I have never heard of (or for that matter, were aware that they even existed)!

We have a secure site because we want you to feel confident that your information is protected whenever you order from us. When we get an online order from you, we will always acknowledge receipt via e-mail within 24 hours (except on weekends and holidays) to let you know your order reached us successfully. If you ever place an order and do not hear from us within the timeframe just described, please call us immediately so we can get your order on its way.

Why do we care about your security? The reason is simple: We do not want your personal information (especially your credit card information) to be vulnerable to unauthorized persons. Believe it or not - Sometimes we receive regular (plain, non-secure) e-mails telling us the winemaking products you wish to order, along with the credit card number and expiration date. Please DO NOT EXPOSE your credit card information in this manner. I realize that it may take more time to fill out the secure order form; however, it does protect you.

You may also wonder... why do we want to know your e-mail address and phone number?

Well, for a couple of reasons... when we fill your order, we want to be able to e-mail you the tracking (shipping) and invoice information so you will know when to expect delivery; also, if we have a question about your order, we can straighten out any issues before your order is packed and shipped. For instance, sometimes the item #'s our customers provide do not match the description of the item in question, so we would like the opportunity to call or e-mail you for clarification.

One note here - please check your e-mail address twice for any possible typographic errors whenever you order... and remember that some businesses, while they may allow out-

going e-mails to most any place, may block incoming e-mails if they do not match a company-defined list of "accepted" domains. For this reason, we always recommend that our customers provide their personal (not business) e-mail addresses whenever possible.

-----HOT TIP-----
When you buy a floor corker from us, send us your old hand corker and save money...

We'll deduct the value of your hand corker from the price of your new floor corker!

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

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

Some folks call and wish to provide their personal info over the phone. That's fine... besides, we love to talk with you! Lots of folks call our toll-free number to ask questions about winemaking... and that's OK too... just be aware that when I take your call, I may not be in the bodega itself - I may be in my house across the creek having a bite to eat. Often, when I get a call while at the house I grab up any piece of scratch paper (sound familiar, anyone?) and start to take notes. The only problem with this "system" is that just this past month, I misplaced one order and cannot find it anywhere! So somewhere, someone did NOT get his order from us. If you are that person, please let me know!

I realize that all I have written above is "mouthful", but just remember - here at grapestompers.com we make an effort to treat you like we like to be treated. ALWAYS!

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:

Bonnie,
Thank you so much for really explaining that to me! Now I understand the whole 7 day thing... and appreciate you not making me feel stupid!

I wonder if all your first time customers get this child-like excitement that I am having... I will let you know how it all goes.

Wow, that truly is service! Thank you!

-- Edith Smith

Wow! You replied so promptly! I'm impressed! Most companies take a week or longer to get back to me!

Thanks you so much for the advice! It worked! There was a bit of an air leak but it worked enough to get the liquid going so I'm happy!

I'll be sure to tell everybody what a great company you guys have!

Thanks again for such prompt attention to my problems!

I remain a happy customer!

-- Carolyn Brunoe
Warm Springs, OR

Tom,
Our order arrived sometime this morning before 10 am.
That's FAST.

Thank you,

-- Richard Grant
Conover, NC

Dear Tom and Bonnie,
Must tell you, dealing with you is like the "old family
business". You folks are so conscientious and personable.

-- Marie El dred
Cambri dge Spri ngs, PA

Dear Tom and Bonnie,
Just wanted to say thanks for sending out my husband's
carboy last week and for the updated wine labels.

We both appreciate the "LUCAS CELLARS" labels.

I just really wanted to say thanks for all that you have
done with our orders - it feels very personal and welcoming
to both my husband and to myself :0)

Thanks again.

-- Diane & Dan Lucas
Del aware, OH

Hi Tom,
Does anyone on this list have a good design for a crusher
for small quantities of grapes?

Sincerel y,

-- Tony Baker
New Zealand
tony.baker@xtra.co.nz

TOM'S REPLY:

Tony, I've never built a grape crusher myself, but I've
heard of folks doing so... in fact, have heard of some
pretty ingenious designs!

What about it, folks? Anyone out there able to point Tony
in the right direction so he can build his own crusher?
Please send your replies to him at tony.baker@xtra.co.nz

And Tony - let us know how everything works out!

Thanks, Tom

Tom,
I've been making wine for over 5 years. In fact, we're
about to bottle our 38th batch. Some have been 23L must
"kits", some have been concentrate plus juice.

I noticed you list something called "ice wine" kits.
What the heck is ice wine?

-- Bob Stevens
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TOM'S REPLY:

Bob, I am willing to bet that you have made many friends through the past 5 years!

Ice wine comes from a type of grape is allowed to FREEZE on the vine, picked immediately and made into juice. Generally speaking, it has been said when you squeeze 5 of the frozen grapes it produces the same amount that one normal grape will produce. By freezing it concentrates and runs the brix higher than others. It finishes very sweet and is used as a cordial after dinner, a sipping wine and is not a wine you would normally consume while having dinner.

The kits we have in stock makes 30- 375 ml bottles. You make it in a 3 gallon (US) carboy. Next time, when in a wine store, look for it. It will retail for around \$25 to 35 dollars a bottle!

Thanks for stopping by grapestompers.com,
Tom

GUEST COLUMN - Start a Winemaking Club
by Don Schiller, Minnesota

Like winemaking?
Share it with others. Start a club!

Winemaking is a great hobby, but it is a continual learning experience. The best way to enjoy wine and winemaking is to share with others. If there isn't a winemaking club in your area, start a club and share your winemaking information with others and learn from them.

Wine clubs can be structured with a board of directors and follow Robert's Rules of Order, or more loosely with just a place to meet and something to do once you get there.

How to start

You need to find others with the same hobby. Start with your local winemaking supply stores. Talk with the management. Often they will let you post ads and maybe will let you hold the meetings there. They may even help with some programs.

I have been a member of the Purple Foot Wine Club in the Twin Cities for over 15 years. This year, I had the honor of Vice President (as well as newsletter editor). In our club, the VP schedules the meetings for the year. Our club year is from Sept. through May. Our club was started 30 years ago and has about 90 members.

What should you do at meetings?

Always have a topic; something to do at the meeting. Make sure your members know your topic so they can participate. Some suggestions for meeting topics may include:

Technical - The leader gives demonstrations or helpful hints on everything from using hydrometers, testing acid, how to use fining and clarifying agents, how to blend wines.

Technical Tasting - Tasting wines to learn about the wine and what makes the wines flavors. These include how the yeast affect fermentation and flavor, identifying wine components (acids, tannins, oak), problem wines - identify off flavors and how to correct them.

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

If you print your own wine labels on an inkjet printer, you can make them smudge-proof by spraying them with a clear enamel or clear poly or clear plastic spray before applying your label to the bottle.

It will dry quickly and your label won't smear or run if it gets wet.

Our thanks to Bill Coble of Gulfport, MS for this tip.

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

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

Commercial Wine Tasting - Why do this? You can buy Kendall Jackson Chardonnay and always get a good consistent wine. In tasting the wine, you can see how that type of wine should taste. You can compare winemaking styles and learn how you can use them in your winemaking, or, maybe you will just find a wine that you would like to have in your cellar.

Wine Competition - You have had your technical session and have learned the tricks to make better wines, now compare and compete against other winemakers. Use the Davis judging form or the form from Los Angeles Home Winemaking Club "Cellarmasters", at:

<http://www.lafn.org/community/cellarmasters/score.pdf>

I like this sheet, but there are other score sheets on the web. Award ribbons or certificates if you like. If you want to learn more on judging wines, send email and I will send you an article I wrote for our club.

Guest hosts - If you get a good size group, you may find wine representatives and wine supply stores that will come to you and show you what they have to offer. Our club recently had a wine blending seminar put on by one winery and a sensory identification session put on by another. Each session was followed by a wine tasting from the wineries to tie it all together.

Social Events - A club shouldn't be all work, there should be some fun too. If you have an opportunity to get fresh fruit or apple juice, schedule a trip. Make it a social event, include spouse and friends, and have a potluck dinner in the vineyard or the orchard. A summer picnic is a great time to get together and share some good food and good wine.

There is just too much to put into this article. If you want more information on any of these items and what we have done in past meetings, just send email to vintner@prodigy.net and I will provide more detail on our club and past events.

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

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??

Yadkin Valley Wine Festival Set for May 18 in Elkin, NC
By Tom Burgiss, Owner

The first annual Yadkin Valley Wine Festival will take place in Elkin, NC on Saturday, May 18 from 11:00 AM to 6:00 PM at Elkin Municipal Park.

Lots of wineries will be present, offering samples of their wines - and [grapestompers.com](http://www.grapestompers.com) will also be there, with a booth full of winemaking supplies and other wine goodies!

Learn more about this inaugural event online at:

<http://www.ejachamber.com/winepage.asp>

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While we're on the subject of NC wine festivals, the 2nd Annual North Carolina Wine Festival will be held on Saturday June 8, 2002 in Tanglewood Park, Clemmons, North Carolina from 11:30 AM to 7:30 PM.

The North Carolina Wine Festival is sponsored by The North Carolina Grape Council. Last year's Festival drew over 5000 people for a day of wine tasting.

You'll be able to meet the winemakers and taste the offerings from over 14 wineries that will be in attendance. The wineries will be located in four to five tasting tents and a large selection of food will be available.

The Festival will include a variety of live music from Classical to Light Rock to Blues... even some Americana.

Tickets will be on sale at area Lowe's Foods and at other retail locations beginning May 7, 2002. You can read more about this wine festival online at:

<http://www.wsjs.com/WineFest/WF-index.html>

CORKY'S WINEMAKING DEFINITION

Bung

- The rubber stopper placed in the neck of the carboy or demijohn that holds the airtight seal in place with an airtight seal.

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
- More Customer Testimonials
- Another Guest Article

- New Winemaking Products

LIST MAINTENANCE

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