
THE STOMPER

The Monthly Winemaking Newsletter of grapestompers.com
June, 2002 Issue #23
<http://www.grapestompers.com> 1-800-233-1505
Hours: 10:00 AM - 6:00 PM Eastern Monday - Friday

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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FEATURE ARTICLE: Glass or Plastic Carboys - Which is Best?
By Brant Burgiss, Editor

Well, summer has finally arrived at our mountaintop bodega in the hills of North Carolina, and there's nothing like a small glass of Ice Wine served outside when the sun has just set beyond the lower meadow. Can't you just taste it?

Ah, but we digress! So grab a glass of your favorite vino, sit back and relax with another issue of The Stomper.

It's the age-old argument... which is better to use when making wine at home... glass or plastic carboys?

There are certainly advantages and disadvantages to each type of carboy... discover which one we recommend and why!

You can see this article on our latest web page:

http://www.grapestompers.com/articles/glass_carboys.htm

Whether you're an old hand at making wine or you're brand new to winemaking, it may prove to be enlightening!

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 #2712 SuperStart Distillers Yeast, 1 lb. \$6.38
- Item #5264 B-Brite Sanitizer/Cleaner, 5 lb. \$11.91
- Item #2608A Floating thermometer, 5" long \$4.84
with suction cup

BONNIE'S BIN: Moving to Basement Is a Good Thing
By Bonnie Brown, Manager

Here we are again kids... Time flies when you are having fun, eh?

My wine "space" now has a winemaking table. My husband got tired of seeing nothing but carboys and buckets in our (MY!) kitchen so he moved me to the basement. But out of the deal I have a wonderful new work area. Enough room to do several wines, high enough to be real easy to work, space underneath for storage and next to the utility sink. Wow, how good can it get? The only thing needed now is a high rise faucet. Now when I get time I can really go at it! Time... what's that?

This area was hit by hard freezing for 4 nights recently. I took a little road trip over the weekend and saw a lot of damage. Trees, vines... all brown. We are not the only area hit; we have heard similar news from most of our friends in the Midwest and Northeast. It is awful to actually see the damage or destruction.

I sampled a winemaker's product recently that made me change my thoughts on Cabernet Sauvignon. Now I am making some. ME! Who didn't initially like it! My friend even shared his "trick" with me, so I am giving it a try!

During second fermentation, add some oak chips. At Day 20, add MORE! Rack until clear after Day 28 and let it sit for 6 months. As you can tell, it was even the less expensive Vino Del Vida brand! It was so smooth and wonderful! I am starting with the VDV as he did. This will be our "gift" wine for Christmas 2002. In the fall I will try it with the Cellar Classic brand. I do like to compare.

Heard more about Ice Wine! Check your local Wine Cellar or grocery store for the cost and then compare it with the Spagnols Ice Wine kit! Of course I shared some of mine with family who took it back East. I get so excited when I hear that the wine we made tasted BETTER than the one we purchased from the store... Yup, THAT GOOD!

We're also excited that we are introducing our winemakers to the product before they hear about this wonderful "new" dessert wine from friends! Be on the breaking edge!

That's it folks! HAPPY WINEMAKING!

Bonnie

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 June 2002 are:

Save 15% on 5 different Wine Kits

AND

Save over 15% on assorted winemaking chemicals

AND

Save over 15% on selected test equipment,
including over 20% on our wine acid test kit

AND

Save over 15% on our most popular wine 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	Reg. Price	SPECIAL
3270	Grand Cru Riesling Wine Kit	45.84	38.96
3143	CC Rosso Grande Wine Kit	89.87	76.38
3269	CSP Melon de Bourgeron Wine Kit	66.00	56.10
3168	CSG Sangiovese Wine Kit	77.00	65.45
3172	CSP Shiraz (Australian) Wine Kit	80.66	68.56
2801	Winemakers' Recipes Handbook	3.03	2.57
2732	Potassium Metabisulfite, 4 oz.	1.82	1.54
2731	Campden Tablets (approx 100 tabs)	2.10	1.78
2734	Pectic Enzyme, 15 ml.	2.13	1.81
2606	Vinometer	4.79	4.07
2603	Triple Hydrometer	5.50	4.51
2716	Wine Acid Test Kit	5.61	4.48
3200	Complete White Wine Starter Kit	246.68	175.00
3100	Complete Red Wine Starter Kit	259.79	185.00

The five wine kits shown above will make about 30 - 750 ml bottles of great wine in as little as 28-45 days.

Wine kit abbreviations explained:

CC = Cellar Classic wine kit
CSP = Cru Select Platinum wine kit
CSG = Cru Select Gold wine kit

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	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, as well as the size T-shirt you need.

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: The Little Things Are Important
by Tom Burgiss, Owner

One of the many reasons for publishing the "Stomper" each month is to pass along helpful hints and information that can help make the hobby of home winemaking more enjoyable.

Most of these hints come from our customers asking us questions or having situations arise that they need some help from us!

Recently, we had a case of a customer asking about his FermTech auto siphon (Item #2224) that was not working properly. It seemed that he could not get it to pump the wine up inside the inner tube to start the flow. It turned out that he needed a new seal (Item #2224A) for his siphon! We sent him one immediately and his problem was solved.

This situation got me to thinking... I have been using an auto siphon like that for years and have had no problem; why did he have one? Here is my answer: I clean it after each use (which I am sure everyone does) and then I TAKE APART the two pieces of the siphon and store them separately. This allows the seal to decompress between uses and gives it time to dry thoroughly, thereby extending the life of the seal.

This incident reminded me that grapestompers.com tries to help our customers by stocking replacement parts for various equipment. I personally do not like the idea that every time something goes wrong, you have to buy the entire item again just to fix one piece! So here at grapestompers we stock extra pieces of equipment so you will not have to buy the entire item again!

Examples are:

Item #2219 - gaskets for fermenter bucket spigots
Item #2216 - rubber grommets for the bucket lid
Item #2607A - replacement fins for your Fizz-X Agitator
Item #2224A - replacement seal for FermTech auto siphon

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

If you find it difficult to keep wine from getting too hot during fermentation in the

summer months, try this inexpensive solution:

Drape your carboy with a wet piece of muslin or cheesecloth, and make sure that a corner of the material rests in a pan of water.

The cloth will soak up the water from the pan like a wick, and the resulting evaporation will have a cooling effect on your wine.

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

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

Another hint from Tom - When you first put your spigot on your fermenter bucket I recommend that you tighten it by hand (using no tools), both inside and out with the spout pointing in the 3 o'clock position. When you get ready to drain the wine from the bucket, simply turn it to the 6 o'clock position and open the valve! Upon completion of the task, return the spigot back to the 3 o'clock position (counter clockwise)!

This eliminates the loosening of the gaskets around the spigot and also prevents the over tightening of the gaskets and popping them out from under the spigots which will cause leaks.

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,
I have been meaning to contact you for some time. A while back you put out info on what to do for stuck fermentation.

I have been having problems every time (3 to 4 years) that I make my currant wine in not wanting to start working.

I followed your advice and it worked like a charm. It started working like gang busters. Currants make a very pleasant wine, sort of like a white zin. I have won best of show and two blue ribbons at the country fair with it out of perhaps 40 wines entered.

-- Richard Mitchell

Editor's note: You can see the web page Richard refers to by going to the following location on our web site:
http://www.grapestompers.com/articles/stuck_fermentation.htm

Bonnie and Tom:
Received my order yesterday. Your service just gets faster and faster. Many thanks!

-- Steve Kerchner
Highland, IL

Thanks Tom for the tutorial on winemaking. I have all these lovely pinot noir grapes begging to be made into wine.

-- Cherrie Stevens

Tom,
I will never doubt you again after using the stirring device [Fizz-X] in my drill.

I have learned that CO2 can be a problem if it's not properly agitated. With the drill it's no problem.

Thanks,

-- Bobby Williams
Duluth, GA

Thanks Bonnie,
We look forward to dealing with you folks again. It's always a pleasure.

-- Terese Gainer

BONNIE BROWN HONORED WITH CUSTOMER SERVICE AWARD
reprinted from news release by High Country Host

Laurel Springs - During National Tourism Week, May 6-13, High Country Host awarded 10 High Country Hospitality Awards to deserving Front Line workers throughout the six-county region.

Award recipients were nominated by employers or fellow staff members and were selected by the High Country Host to be recognized for excellence in customer service and hospitality.

Bonnie Brown of grapestompers.com and the Burgiss Barn was one of the 10 recipients. Tom Burgiss, owner of grapestompers.com and the Burgiss Barn nominated Brown.

Other recipients included Mary Herri ck, Yonahlossee Resort; Wendel Seaver, Valle Crucis Conference Center; Kathy Cleary, Hampton Inn Wilkesboro; Brandy Talley, Chetola Resort; Mike Shaw, Beech Alpen Inn; Peggy Coscia, Beech Mountain Chamber; Len Bauer, Sugar Mountain Resort; Gail Isaacs, Grandfather Mountain; and Marilyn Cozart, Tanger Shoppes on the Parkway.

Each recipient was surprised at their place of business and presented with a framed award, balloons, and a basket filled with gift certificates, coupons, and passes to area attractions.

In addition to the awards, the host staff became walking billboards during National Tourism Week. Each day the staff wore T-shirts from a different High Country Host member and featured a small display from that member at the center.

North Carolina High Country Host is a membership, marketing organization serving Alleghany, Ashe, Avery, Mitchell, Watauga, and Wilkes counties.

Editor's note:

This article also appears on our news page, at http://www.grapestompers.com/news/brown_award.htm and includes links to High Country Host and Burgiss Barn.

GUEST COLUMN - Summer Rhubarb Wine Recipe
by Don Schiller, Minnesota

This is an award-winning recipe making a wonderfully fruity
"rhubarb pie" - tasting wine.

INGREDIENTS

14.5 lbs. Canadian Red rhubarb
14.5 lbs. sugar
1 packet (5 gr.) Cote de Blancs yeast
1 1/4 tsp. yeast nutrient

METHOD

Slice rhubarb thinly and cover with sugar in stainless steel or glass pan. Cover pan with cheesecloth.

After two days, strain off juice and wash out sugar remaining in the pulp by stirring the pulp with cold water, then strain again. Add enough water to make six gallons plus one quart and pour into six-gallon carboy. Save one quart as "sweet reserve" by putting into a Ziplock bag and freezing (the use of the reserve juice will produce a significantly more "fruity" wine). Do not add Campden tablets/sulfite at this time as it will reduce the taste of rhubarb in the final wine.

Add yeast and yeast nutrient and ferment at a temperature of 60°F.

Transfer the wine after three months and top off by adding the one-quart "sweet reserve" juice. Add tartaric acid to raise the titratable acidity (TA) to 0.76, if needed.

After five months, check sulfite level and add Campden tablets/metabisulfite to bring SO₂ level to 50-60 ppm. TA of my wine was 0.81 at bottling. Bottle and enjoy!

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

If you start a new batch of wine in the summer when the weather is hot OUTSIDE, pay attention to the temperature INSIDE when you pitch your yeast.

If you keep your house cool with air conditioning, it may be too cool to kick off fermentation!

I sometimes put the wine in a warmer place to help get fermentation started.

Our thanks to Brenda from Indiana for this tip.

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

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

COMMENTS:

The rhubarb should be small stalk red rhubarb as that is better flavor. Young rhubarb is best.

Not adding sulfite at the beginning will help keep some additional flavor. The sweet reserve is taken out of the main batch, so no sulfite is added anywhere until after the fermentation is done.

From my experience, rhubarb is sometimes tough to start because the acid is often high. It often works best to make a good yeast starter before adding to the must.

Editor's Note:

This recipe is shown on grapestompers' wine recipe page.

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 order, as well as our heartfelt thanks. So what are you waiting for??

Yadkin Valley Wine Festival Huge Success By Tom Burgess, Owner

The first annual Yadkin Valley Wine Festival took place in Elkin, NC on Saturday, May 18, and in all respects it was a smashing (or should we say stomping?) success.

Over 2000 people flocked to the Municipal Park to learn more about the grapes being grown and the wine being produced by local vineyards.

Lots of wineries were present, and the folks we saw were really enjoying the complimentary tastings!

The grapestompers booth was really hopping - we saw several old friends and met a lot of new folks. The corking demo was a big hit with all the kids (and even those who are still young at heart). We had a drawing for a wine print, and it was given away to R. Pardue from State Road, NC.

Photos from this year's event can be seen here:
http://www.grapestompers.com/news/yv_wine_festival_2002.htm

To all of you who attended the wine festival, thanks! And a special thanks to Bonnie, Harry, Faye, Virginia Van, Amy, and Brant for helping run the booth.

Next year's event is already being planned for Saturday, May 17, 2003. It will always be held on the third Saturday in the month of May.

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

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.

AND...

There's another wine festival that will be held on the same weekend in Roanoke, VA.

The 10th Annual Roanoke Valley Wine Festival will take place on Saturday, June 8 and Sunday, June 9, 2002 (hours are 9 AM-6 PM and 11 AM-5 PM, respectively) at Virginia's Explore Park. It is sponsored by the Roanoke Jaycees.

Learn more here:

http://www.expl orepark.org/Special%20Events/sec_060702.htm
<http://www.roanokej aycees.com/winefestival.htm>

Burgiss Barn Suspends Saturday Night Dances

By Tom Burgiss, Owner

The Burgiss Barn, which has featured live bluegrass and old time music on weekends for the past 10 years, has suspended its traditional Saturday night dances.

The Burgiss Barn continues to offer Sunday buffet lunches, and is available for rental for private parties and celebrations. Full catering services by JIFF are also available, and feature entrees from Mountain Man BBQ and pork tenderloin to London Broil and slow-cooked ham.

If you'd like to book the Burgiss Barn for your next private party, wedding reception, or reunion, just call me at 800-233-1505.

Several grapestompers customers have attended and supported our dances over the years, and we would like to thank all of you who came to the barn and enjoyed our unique brand of good, clean mountain fun.

Learn more about the Burgiss Barn at:

<http://www.burgissbarn.com/>

CORKY'S WINEMAKING DEFINITION

Dry

- Having no perceptible taste of sugar. Most wine tasters begin to perceive sugar at levels of 0.5 percent to 0.7 percent.

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

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- 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

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