
THE STOMPER

The Monthly Winemaking Newsletter of [grapestompers.com](http://www.grapestompers.com)
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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

#&# There is ONE hidden special in this issue

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FEATURE ARTICLE: Ten Summertime Winemaking Hints
By Brant Burgess, Editor

HOORAY! It's finally the time of the year when we start making fruit wines in earnest. I thought it would be a good idea to offer some helpful hints regarding making wine from fruits and berries, and provide links to wine making articles where appropriate.

Here's my top ten list of summertime winemaking hints:

1. Watch the temperature

If wine is allowed to get too hot, a number of bad things can happen, among them: Fermentation occurs too quickly, which makes your wine lose aroma and taste. Often, a garage is the worst place to make wine in the summer, because they typically have less insulation than the rest of your house and rarely have air conditioning available.

2. Wash fruit and keep processing area sanitized

The number one reason wines fail is due to a lack of proper sanitation. Don't let this happen to you! Be sure to wash fruit thoroughly before processing it, to remove any dirt, bugs, pesticides, etc. Learn proper techniques here: <http://www.grapestompers.com/articles/sanitation.htm>

3. Don't scrimp on the quantity of fruit

Bonnie says it best (see her accompanying article below): Use LOTS of fruit when making wine. This is especially true for wines made from berries. Don't be afraid to add

more than is called for in typical wine recipes.

4. Don't use rotten or molded fruit

You may be tempted to use as much fruit as you can to top up your bucket or carboy, even if it means using a bad looking piece of fruit. **DON'T DO IT!** Use only clean ripe fruit and avoid possible contamination.

5. Process fruit quickly

This is related to the first point above... Don't dawdle when it comes to prepping fruit to make juice. If you leave a container of fresh fruit or juice out overnight or for several hours, rot may set in (for fruit) - or worse - the juice may start to ferment with undesirable wild yeasts.

You can prevent premature fermentation by adding one crushed Campden tablet (or its equivalent with potassium metabisulfite powder) per gallon of must. You should do this anyway to weaken wild yeasts that are on the fruit, in preparation for pitching the yeast.

If you must delay the processing of fruit, we recommend refrigerating the fruit or juice to keep it as fresh as possible.

6. Use your hydrometer

Since fruit harvests vary from year to year, you can't always assume that this year's harvest of blackberries is as sweet as last year's. The only way to be sure is to measure the amount of sugar in your must (and adjust it if necessary) before you pitch the yeast. By measuring specific gravity, the hydrometer can help you determine the potential alcohol. Learn to use a hydrometer here: http://www.grapestompers.com/articles/hydrometer_use.htm

7. Feed your wine

Ensure your wine has enough nutrients to make it through fermentation by adding DAP or other yeast nutrient source. See our article on this important winemaking subject at: http://www.grapestompers.com/articles/yeast_nutrients.htm

8. Use a cultured wine yeast

Consistent results depend upon a consistent yeast strain. Don't leave your wine to chance - use a commercial wine yeast to ferment your wine. It costs less than a buck a pack and is easy to store, so there's no excuse! Learn how to properly rehydrate a packet of yeast here: http://www.grapestompers.com/articles/rehydrate_yeast.htm

9. Be patient

Assuming the wine is properly prepped, sanitation rules are followed, and the airlock is fitted tightly, time can cure most ills. Wine not clearing? Wait a while longer. Eager to bottle? Make sure fermentation is complete. Wine taste harsh or young? Let it age a bit more.

10. Document your winemaking efforts

If you keep accurate records of your batches of wine, it will be easier to duplicate the wine year after year. We recommend you record things such as type of yeast, starting specific gravity, amount of fruit used, fermentation temperature, ending specific gravity, bottling date, etc.

We hope this article has helped you get ready to make some fantastic homemade wines from fresh fruits. Let us know how your batch turns out!

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

You can write to Brant at webmaster@grapestompers.com

BONNIE'S BIN: Tips for Making Fruit Wines
By Bonnie Brown, Manager

Hi all! I hope your 4th was awesome! Remember why we have it!

Fruit is happening, so here are some suggestions:

1. Wait until the fruit is RIPE before picking
2. Freeze the fruit before making wine - this helps break down the membranes and helps you get more juice
3. Double the amount of fruit called for in a recipe (ensures a fuller flavor)

If you do these three things, I'll bet you will have a wonderful end product. Oh, and last but not least, HAVE PATIENCE!

The deer have been especially hard on my fruits this year. They seem to know what is good and what is not! I recently saw a squirrel eating my strawberries. I give up! They are fun to watch, so in my next garden I think I will have a section for animals to enjoy. Aren't they amazing creatures?

I am scurrying around trying to get all of my wines taken care of. Bottled is more like it! I think I am in pretty good shape. If I hadn't forgotten to get more bottles, I would just about be done. We are moving to a new house so my Bodega is getting cleared out. All but one will be done before moving day. That is pretty good, but it's also hard... It's hard not to start some new ones... like Cranberry Shiraz and Cranberry Chianti and Green Apple Riesling. I can see serving Cranberry Shiraz at our Thanksgiving gathering. It will be a nice added touch.

Enjoy the rest of July. Endure the heat by chillin' out with a cool glass of wine in a cozy shaded spot. Put those feet up and contemplate what your next batch will be!

Pull your chair a bit closer, pour a glass of wine and join me for a chat.

See you soon...
Bonnie

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

You can write to Bonnie at bonnie@grapestompers.com

TOM'S CELLAR: Pouring Wine Is Really Hard Work... Really!
by Tom Burgess, Owner

Experience teaches a lot... but just as important is observing others. Observation is a good teacher too. Recently our Little Mom and Pop Winery a.k.a. Thistle Meadow Winery participated in the 3rd Annual North Carolina Wine Festival. We took along our wines for all to taste and the results were outstanding. We were blushing at the end of the day from all the nice comments about our wines.

We served about 12 different wines... some reds, some whites, and some sweets. Red wine sales leaders were: Vieux Chateau du Roi and Malbec; for the whites: Verdicchio and Rousseau Blanc (Pouilly-Fuisse); and in the sweets:

Are you ready for this?? Grapefruit and Kiwi!

We also saw lots of our grapestompers customers checking out the other wineries present on a rainy day. All were pleased to know that the wines they are making at home measured up well! Now that really made them feel good!

Our local customers and vintner friends helped us pour the samples during the day of the wine festival. Some poured wine until their arms dropped off (well, not really - it's just a figure of speech. We are sort of like family helping out - and I have a very nice family.

Making wines at home is great, but when you share with friends, it makes wine a pleasure. So now is the time to share a nice glass of summer fruit wines served chilled on your deck or porch.

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

Want to sweeten your wine without running the risk of fermentation starting up again?

Try using Stevita (it is made from an herb called stevia), a natural sugar that's full of flavor without the carbohydrates.

But be careful - a little bit goes a long way!

Our thanks to Keith Wahlgren for providing this winemaking tip.

Hidden special:
Triple scale hydrometer, Item #2603 for only \$3.77

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

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

New subject... The telephone!

We receive many calls and really enjoy hearing your stories and helping you with any winemaking question you may have. If you're like me, the last thing you want to hear when you make a call is a recording... I much prefer - and I hope you'll agree - to speak with a real person instead of some electronic device!

That's why we recently changed the way our phone system works at grapestompers. Before, if our line was busy, you got to listen to a recording... and then after waiting a bit, you could finally leave your message.

But the reality is that we never get much of an opportunity to clear out our messages because we keep getting more phone calls... and before you know it, our message box gets filled and then you couldn't leave a message even after you heard our recording!

We here at grapestompers don't want you to suffer through all that. If you get a busy signal, just hang up and call again 2 or 3 minutes later. That way, you'll speak to a live person. Bonnie and I want to talk with you, so please excuse us if the line is busy.

When you call back we'll be there for you! Call us toll free at 1-800-233-1505.

We do prefer that you use the online order form to place your orders. Often the phone rings at my home and sometimes your order gets lost on the way back to the Bodega!

When you place your order online, you also get a printable copy of your order for your records... another benefit.

Our webmaster has promised our shopping pick-up is on its way, so hang in there!

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As much as we'd like to, we dare not brag on UPS or FedEx, because the minute we do, a package is damaged. So SHHHH! Don't tell UPS or FedEx about their excellent service...

But if a damaged package arrives at your doorstep (you know, after the obligatory 5 story drop or drop kick), here is what you should do:

1. Call the carrier (FedEx or UPS) and tell them they left a damaged package. Then call us and we will start to chase it from this end by filling out some paperwork with the carrier.
2. Better yet, if you happen to be home when the package arrives and you notice the package is damaged, mention it to the driver so he can start the reporting process. Then be sure to call us.
3. Meanwhile, take that messy package and put it in a new garbage bag and hold it for 5 days. The carrier requires that you do this as "evidence" the package was damaged. This gives their crew a chance to inspect the package and verify damage.
4. We will replace the busted item(s) if you do this... And I might add that grapestompers does not wait until it is all cleared up before we do. But please save the busted bag or box so we can turn it in.

Confused? Just call us... we'll guide you. Thanks!

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:

Hi Tom,

Just to let you know, once again I believe you saved the day for me. If you recall, I had bottled my Cellar Classic Merlot and the wine was clear when I had bottled it. Then it turned cloudy with haze and small particles.

Briefly, you asked me to uncork all bottles and put [the wine] back into the fermenter bucket. You had sent me two small packets to do more fining. I vigorously stirred the contents and racked into the carboy. I left it for two weeks then racked it again for another ten days.

In short, I have rebottled the wine and it looks clear, smells good, and even tastes pretty good. Hopefully it will get better with some age if it now stays stabilized.

Again, thanks for your personalized help and that's why I do business with you. I get personal customer treatment where I don't believe I could find it anywhere else.

-- Don Borja

Tom,
I always enjoy receiving your newsletter, so now that I have a new address I thought I'd send it to you so you can remove the old one.

-- Dan

[Editor comment: If your e-mail address changes, simply unsubscribe the old address, then re-subscribe using your new address. See the subscription links at the bottom of this newsletter.]

Bonnie,
Thanks so much for giving us the tour and also for sharing your wonderful wines with us! Scott and I had a great time!

Bonnie - you're the best! You made us feel instantly..... at home! The tour was great, the wines were outstanding, but the tour guide was the best! The Malbec didn't make it toooooo far. We enjoyed it sitting by a fire while camping! What a wonderful bottle of wine. Can we get more??? The other bottle..... we're saving.

I have attached a couple of photos for ya'll. Keep in touch! Again, thanks for making our visit so wonderful!

OH - just to let you know, we went to another winery in Gatlinburg, VA. The wines were OK, but the people were NOT. Because of THAT, we didn't buy any wine. Ya'll spoiled us! lol lol

Take care!
Many blessings!

-- Tracey & Scott Chauvin
Denham Springs, LA

Tom,
It was great doing business with you. I received my blue hock bottles yesterday in great condition.

Thanks again,

-- Renee
Sparta, TN

GUEST COLUMN - Homemade Wine Creates Enjoyment & New Hobby
by Erin Taulman

Homemade wine opened the "bottle" to enjoyment and a hobby!

If you would have asked me if I wanted wine 6 months ago, I would have said NO! I have never liked it until now. My cousin gave me a bottle of wine he had made for Christmas. Since I couldn't return it, I tried a little. I loved it!!

My family members are big wine drinkers, yet I never found a taste for it. Now that I learned to enjoy his wine, (made from frozen juice concentrate and store bought yeast) I can taste why my grandmother drives to Arkansas to get Post Family's Muscadine wine.

I have just started my own batch using my cousin's recipe

and we will see how it goes. I am planning to make some for another cousin for their wedding. I think I will label it with their married names and make up a story.

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

To help your wine clarify, put the carboy in a cooler place during the last stage.

The cooler temperature will help precipitate the flocculates more efficiently.

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

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

It will be a story of them, instead of the wine's story, how long they have been together, where they live, and since they are both over 35, I might add it has been aged for YEARS! What a great gift.

They are both very wealthy, and purchasing a gift that will make an impact will be hard and costly. I think this is the ticket. For my wedding they gave me crystal beer mugs with silver medallions on them and with engraving that says "Taulman's Bar, EST 09-08-01"

I might label one of the bottles to them "Taulman's Bar House Wine". I love this newsletter; keep up the great work!

Erin Taulman

You can contact Erin at: etaul@yahoo.com

Like 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

Flocculates

- A general term used to describe the visible particles that float in unfinished wine.

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

NEW PRODUCTS

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

- Item #4621 Wine Markers (set of 48), \$39.95

THIS MONTH'S SPECIALS

grapestompers' specials for the month of July 2003 are:

Save up to 12% on assorted winemaking kits

AND

Save over 24% on Montrachet wine yeast

AND

Save 12% on 4 pounds of potassium metabisulfite

AND

Save over 17% on our brass bottle washer

AND

Save over 12% on our 3-piece airlock

AND

Save nearly 14% on our Honey Blonde Ale kit

AND FINALLY

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
3133	CC Merlot	90.75	79.77
3118	VDV Pinot Noir	49.06	43.77
3280	OB Peach Chardonnay	38.41	33.77
3151	CSP Grenache Syrah Mourvedre	80.68	71.77
3702	BH Honey Blonde Ale	31.02	26.77
2701	Montrachet Yeast (3 packs)	1.02	0.77
2732B	Potassium Metabisulfite, 4 lbs.	13.39	11.77
2251	Brass Bottle Washer	10.63	8.77
2256	Air lock, 3 piece	0.88	0.77
3700	Complete Beermaking Kit	191.82	169.99
3200	Complete White Wine Starter Kit	246.68	175.00
3100	Complete Red Wine Starter Kit	259.79	185.00

The VDV and OB wine kits are designed to make about 30 750 ml bottles of great wine in as little as 28 days. The CC and the CSP kits come off in as few as 45 days, and also makes about 30 bottles. The Peach Chardonnay is refreshingly sweet with plenty of fruit flavor, with an alcohol content from 6.5% to 7%.

Wine and beer kit abbreviations explained:

BH = Brew House beer kit
CC = Cellar Classic wine kit
GC = Grand Cru wine kit
WA = Wine-Art wine kit
MM = Mosti Mondiale wine kit
CM = Cellar Master wine kit
OB = Orchard Breezin' wine kit (new name for CM)
VDV = Vino del Vida 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, 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 Airlock
6-Gallon Glass Carboy	Carboy Brush
Bung (stopper)	Bottle Filler
Five feet of vinyl tubing	C-Brite Sanitizer (8)
Portuguese Hand Corker	FermTech AutoSiphon
2 Cases of 750-ml Bottles	Long Handled Spoon
Bottle Washer Adapter	Brass Bottle Washer
Bottle Drainer, 45 station	Adhesive Thermometer

AND YOU GET THE FOLLOWING ITEMS FREE (\$16.79 value):

- Free Wine Labels (text of your choice)
- Free triple scale hydrometer
- 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 or her 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 credit card... 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 text you want on your free wine labels.

If you prefer, 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.

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 - Submit yours today!
- New Winemaking Products

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