
THE STOMPER

The Monthly Winemaking Newsletter of grapestompers.com
October, 2003 Issue #39
<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: Notes From 6th Annual Wine Tasting
By Brant Burgiss, Editor

grapestompers.com recently celebrated its 6th Annual Wine Tasting at the Burgiss Barn on Sunday, October 5, 2003. The event was well attended, and several new wines were introduced.

After enjoying wine, catered snacks, live music, and craft vendors, several folks sauntered over to our retail store and purchased wine kits and supplies, as well as wines from Thistle Meadow Winery. What a great time!

Here are some photos from this year's wine tasting event:
http://www.grapestompers.com/news/wine_tasting_2003.htm

All photos are courtesy of Monty Combs, grapestompers' official photographer. Thanks again for the photographs, Monty and Brenda!

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

You can write to Brant at webmaster@grapestompers.com

MAILING LIST UPDATE: Computer Crash Causes Problems
By Brant Burgiss, Editor

After all the computer advice I've given over the years, you would think I had a disaster plan in case of a severe computer crash...

I did... but I didn't implement it with any consistency.

In my case, I lost nearly six months' worth of data when my computer's hard drive gave out. At the time, I was designing new labels for Thistle Meadow Winery, so at least I guess you could say my computer died in the service of wine!

The loss of data has directly affected the accurate distribution of this month's issue of The Stomper. I had no other choice but to use my most recent list of subscribers, knowing full well that some folks would receive this issue even though they might have recently unsubscribed.

Likewise, we would not be able to send out a copy of this newsletter to folks who have signed up between the months of March and September, since we no longer had their e-mail addresses.

Please accept my apologies if this message was sent to you even though you've already unsubscribed, or if you miss an issue or two until you sign up again.

Instructions to re-subscribe or cancel are at the bottom of this newsletter.

Sorry!

BONNIE'S BIN: Frost On The Vine
By Bonnie Brown, Manager

I am betting someone is making Ice Wine, right here in North Carolina, right now! Grapes are at a good point of ripeness for the frost we have been getting.

We are not getting the color expected here but that doesn't seem to stop the tourists. People just need to get away this time of year. It is still beautiful, with the deep blue sky and warmth of the sun coming through the car windows. You can see the fog down in the valley highlighted by the sun; it makes everything stick out in detail. It is too bad we can't paint it as beautiful as God makes it!

I do hope you have started your pumpkin wine by now for the Holidays. If you haven't, get it going now for next year. You will not miss a year of making it once you have tried it.

I hear a lot going on right now about cider and apple wine. It sounds like it would be the first homemade wine you should try making. Sounds like it has a high success rate and they are plentiful in most areas. I have not sampled a bad one yet! Beginner or pro, it is good.

With that, I had better get back to work. I wish you all a bountiful fall!

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: Winemaking: A Family Tradition
by Tom Burgiss, Owner

It just never ceases to amaze me just how many of the fine folks who visit with us on the property have had someone in their family who has made wine. It must be in their blood to make wine! Just like some of the musicians who play at the Burgiss Barn... Those folks can play at least three different instruments and never read a sheet of music! So keep up the family tradition and pass it on to your kin.

We appreciate the nice remarks about our service. There are times when we send a package and somewhere along the way it takes even longer than we ever thought it should take to arrive at your doorstep. We never ship over the weekends and therefore our Mondays are full of activity around here.

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

Looking to curb fermentation with potassium sorbate? Be sure to add some potassium metabisulfite at the same time, in the form of powder or Campden tablets.

Assuming malolactic bacteria is present, adding potassium sorbate alone to arrest fermentation may result in an aroma that smells like geraniums.

Our thanks to Terry Rayner for providing this tip.

Hidden special:

Get 10% off when you order a case of 1.5 l bottles (either #2118 or #2119). New price is \$10.29 for the case of six bottles, but you must mention this hidden special when ordering.

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

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

If you suspect a shipping problem, please keep us informed by calling toll free at 1-800-233-1505. We can chase down the problem with the accurate records kept here on our computer. At night however, we don't have the computer with us, so calling in the morning and afternoons is best for us.

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,

It was great to finally meet you. I now know who makes Grapestompers a great place to order my winemaking kits. It is obvious that you care about the quality of the products that you supply. Grapestompers is sure off of the beaten path in the mountains, but it was a beautiful drive

getting there.

I have a lot of thanks so please bear with me. I especially appreciated Bonnie searching out the bottles of wine made from the two wine kits that I was trying to decide on for my next kit. I started the Gewürztraminer Cellar Classic today and can't wait to start enjoying it. I am also glad that Mary convinced me to get another Valpolicella Cellar Classic kit to save the freight from having it shipped.

One of the joys in my life is visiting wineries and trying different wines. I guess I should have been a winemaker when I grew up. Well it just took me longer than most to grow up. Our visit to Thistle Meadow Winery was a gem of a highlight from a long list of wineries that we have visited from New York state to Washington state. Thank you for the great wine tasting glasses. I used mine today and it did make a big difference in enjoying my daily healthy heart wine. We really enjoyed tasting the great wines that you are producing.

When I start my next wine kit, I plan on using water from the spring at Hot Springs, NC. This water is wonderful and has absolutely no taste to it. It should allow the wine kit to produce a superior bottle of wine. My only concern is that if it produces a superior wine, I will have to visit the spring to get additional water. Oh well, I guess I will just appreciate what I have and enjoy it and pass along the information if it works well.

I didn't have much of an opportunity to talk to Jimmy but was glad to meet him. Please pass along my appreciation for the great job that he does in getting the orders packed and shipped.

Have rambled enough so I will let you get back to producing a great wine. Thanks again.

-- Frank & Mary Joseph
On the Road

Jimmy,
Just a short note to thank you... I received the carboy in time to start a new batch. I have been making several gallons of "Peach" from my grandfather's old recipe, for several years (very simple - nothing but fruit, sugar, and yeast!). But now I am going to try several different recipes on a larger scale. Grapestompers has been very helpful. Thanks.

-- Dusty Bridges
Ringgold, GA

Brant,
When I squeeze my elderberry must in the nylon bag, I use rubber gloves to keep from staining my hands. After 3 or 4 bags, I notice a brown sticky goo on my gloves, my bucket, sink, faucet, everything I've touched.

Some friends thought it was from the stems, last time. This time, I took the berries off the stems with a kitchen fork, there are no stems. The goo won't wash off with soap and water, alcohol, paint thinner, lacquer thinner, nothing I've found will remove it. The bag must be run through the washing machine 4 - 5 times to come clean of the stickiness.

Can you offer any suggestions? Thanks.

-- Dean Percival

[Brant's reply]

Aside from using the normal list of household solvents and cleaners, I am as stumped as you...

I have not experienced what you describe - having never done the procedure with fresh elderberries - but I can certainly sympathize.

[Editor's note]

HOW ABOUT IT, FOLKS? Does anyone have an answer to the sticky, gooey elderberry problem? Please send your suggestions to Dean Percival at: deanp33@hotmail.com

Tom,

Just wanted to let you know that I uncorked my first bottle of Sangiovese (Cru Select GOLD) last night and it was very special. My wife and I were out to dinner at a favorite restaurant. Although the food was great as usual, the wine was the highlight of the evening. The best I have made to date. I am tempted to put all 29 remaining bottles away, but I know I am too weak.

Thanks for the recommendation. Best regards.

-- Dave Bridge

Hi Bonnie,

Grapestompers is the GREATEST. After all the years I have been ordering, I just say THANKS FOR YOUR SERVICE - you are #1 in my book.

-- Deanna Truran

GUEST COLUMN - Your Wine Stories: Lessons Learned
by Stewart and Townsley

[Editor's Note]

Several people responded to our request for funny and/or unusual winemaking stories... here is the first batch (more to come next month!):

This is a funny little event that happened to my brother and myself years ago near Cleveland, TN; some of your readers might have had similar experiences.

About 40 years ago my dad used to make wine in our basement and my brother and I wanted to try our hand at it; only we didn't know the process. We got a large quart soft drink bottle and filled it with mashed pokeberries and pushed a green corn cob into the end of the bottle. We then hid the bottle behind my aunt's house (partly in the sun).

Several days later, when my brother and I went to check on it, what we found was a mostly empty bottle that had blown open and spewed the contents all over the back of my aunt's house. She never told on us, but I know that pokeberry juice stayed there a long time before wearing off and I didn't try making wine for quite a few more years.

Wayne Stewart
Myrtle Beach, SC
WS522@aol.com

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

When filling wine bottles, I place them in the primary fermenter to hold them in place while filling and also to catch any drips or spills that will happen during this process.

Our thanks to Frank Joseph for this tip.

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

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

This is my third year trying to make homemade wine. If you are a beginner like me I suggest you purchase a handle for your carboy. They are inexpensive. The first year I was making wine I was going to lift my carboy on to a table without using a carboy handle. BIG MISTAKE!

The bottle slipped right out of my hands and broke. I lost all my wine but I was very lucky that I did not cut myself. This year my husband was cleaning out a carboy with out a handle and the bottle slipped. Please be careful when handling wet bottles.

Be safe and have fun.
Mrs. Townsley

Like To Be A Guest Columnist For The STOMPER 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??

CORKY' S WINEMAKING DEFINITION

Glycerin

- A common food additive that enhances body and mouth feel in wine, it also adds a bit of sweetness. A little bit goes a long way, so use it in moderation. Glycerin can be obtained from your local drug store or online at grapestompers.com (ask for Item # 2749, 4 fluid oz).

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 #2791A Cranberry Flavoring for wine/beer 4 oz, \$3.85
- Item #2118 Clear 1.5 l Bordeaux bottle, 6/case \$11.44
- Item #2119 Green 1.5 l Bordeaux bottle, 6/case \$11.44
- Item #2315 Altec Tasting Cork, \$0.25 each

THIS MONTH' S SPECIALS

grapestompers' specials for the month of October 2003 are:

Item #	Description	Reg. Price	SPECIAL
3232	CC Chardonnay/Semiillon	75.13	63.88

3218	VDV Chamblaise (Chablis)	41.25	34.88
3275	GC Gewurztraminer	45.76	39.99
3278	OB Raspberry/White Zinfandel	41.25	35.99
3263	Chardonnay (Sonoma)	99.00	130.16
3719	BH Octoberfest Beer Kit	31.02	26.77
2720A	C-Brite sanitizer, 1 lb	3.94	3.49
2732	Potassium Metabisulfite, 4 oz	1.82	1.59
2732A	Potassium Metabisulfite, 1 lb	4.04	3.49
2733	Yeast Nutrient, 4 oz	2.23	1.99
2730	Acid Blend, 3 oz	1.92	1.69
2729	Acid Blend, 1 lb	4.60	3.99
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, OB, and GC wine kits are designed to make about 30 750 ml bottles of great wine in as little as 28 days. The Cellar Classic wine kits come off in as few as 45 days, and also make about 30 bottles. The Orchard Breezin' wine kits are refreshingly sweet with plenty of fruit flavor, with an alcohol content from 7% to 9%.

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
 OB = Orchard Breezin' wine kit
 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 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	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 - You can save some money on shipping if you can find your own wine bottles... if you don't need wine bottles, just be sure and let us know when you place your order, and we will adjust the price of the equipment kit accordingly. You can also upgrade your wine kit and get any other type of wine you desire, by paying the difference for the upgrade from the standard concentrate to the upgraded one. Likewise, you can upgrade from the hand corker to either of the floor corkers we stock by paying the difference.

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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