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THE STOMPER

The Monthly Winemaking Newsletter of grapestompers.com  
November, 2003 Issue #40  
<http://www.grapestompers.com> 1-800-233-1505  
Hours: 10:00 AM - 6:00 PM Eastern Monday - Friday

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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

^#^ This month's specials and new products are found towards the bottom of this document

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FEATURE ARTICLE: New Restricted Quantity Wines Available  
By Brant Burgess, Editor

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Greetings from the land of the frosted pumpkins and Fraser fir Christmas trees! We hope the upcoming holiday season will be a great one for you and your family.

Each year, RJ Spagnols - the makers of fine grape concentrates - releases three or four special wines in small quantities. This year, the Cru Select 2004 Restricted Quantities Program will include the following wines during the coming months:

January: Pinot Noir (approx. launch - 12/8/2003)  
February: Cabernet Merlot Syrah (approx launch - 2/2/2004)  
March: Gewurztraminer (approx. launch - 3/1/2004)  
April: Pinotage Cabernet (approx. launch - 4/1/2004)

Learn more about these wines by visiting the RJ Spagnols official website:

[http://www.rjspagnols.com/wine\\_new\\_rq.asp](http://www.rjspagnols.com/wine_new_rq.asp)

or to see the PDF version, try this link:  
<http://www.rjspagnols.com/pdf/colour%2010084en.pdf>

Since these wines are only available in limited quantities, customers are requested to pre-order with grapestompers.com in order to assure delivery.

Each RO wine kit includes a set of free professional quality wine labels.

As a special bonus to those who pre-order and purchase all four wine kits, you will receive a set of four Pimpernel Wine Cellar Placemats as a free gift (\$59.99 retail value). These placemats are imported from the UK and are very classy looking. You can see a photo of a sample placemat here: [http://www.rjspanols.com/free\\_gift\\_eng.htm](http://www.rjspanols.com/free_gift_eng.htm)

Prices, item numbers, and order deadlines for each wine:

Pinot Noir #3180 - \$84.26 - order by 11/29/2003  
Cabernet Merlot Syrah #3182 - \$84.26 - order by 12/31/2003  
Gewurztraminer #3267 - \$82.50 - order by 1/31/2004  
Pinotage Cabernet #3183 - \$84.26 - order by 2/28/2004

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

You can write to Brant at [webmaster@grapestompers.com](mailto:webmaster@grapestompers.com)

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BONNIE'S BIN: Clear Wine Despite Muddled Mind  
By Bonnie Brown, Manager

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My mind is muddled but my wines are clear! I have things in the right order, eh?

Things are moving so fast I can't even get our wine bottles labeled and on their sides. Those corks should be bonded to the bottle all right!

This brings to mind a new item. SCREW TOP BOTTLES! Yes, we now have them in stock. Then you would not have to lay them on their side because there is no cork to keep moist! I think they are going to be great. Studies have shown that screw tops keep wine as good if not better than corked bottles. I am glad that we can offer you that option now. It will be good for those who only make a few bottles a year and do not want to invest in a corker yet.

I think it is time to make pumpkin wine for next Thanksgiving! It's too late to start a wine for this year but the pumpkins are prime right now. Freeze them now for making wine this winter and it will be just right for next season.

HAPPY THANKSGIVING YA' LL!

See you next time...  
Bonnie

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

You can write to Bonnie at [bonnie@grapestompers.com](mailto:bonnie@grapestompers.com)

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TOM'S CELLAR: Wasted Effort?  
by Tom Burgiss, Owner

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Using the proper equipment is very important in winemaking. This point was brought to my attention recently when a gentleman called into [grapestompers.com](http://grapestompers.com) with a problem.

He used a plastic type trash container to make some home-made wine from his blackberries. He was fermenting 100 gallons and every single gallon was affected with a very pungent aroma and taste.

Lesson Learned: He should have used FOOD GRADE poly bucket!

Think of all the hard work that went into picking the berries, freezing them, then working them up... all that ended up wasted. So remember, it does not pay to take the cheap or fast way out! A food grade bucket (item # 2210) could have saved his efforts.

## WINE TASTING

Our annual wine tasting this past October was the highlight of this past month. Bonnie and I are always amazed to see folks show up from all parts of the US and for that matter, even South Korea. Robert and Pat Klaus came from Houston, TX along with his sister and brother-in-law from Corpus Christi. A young couple from South Korea came by for a visit. They had to leave early in order to catch a plane back home!

\*-----HOT TIP-----\*

If you recycle wine bottles, consider rinsing your bottles a couple of times with water immediately after drinking the wine. This simple act can prevent bacterial growth and will probably save you from scrubbing and washing in the future.

When it comes time to bottle, all you have to do is sanitize your wine bottles.

Hidden special:

Save nearly \$200 when you order item #5118, the Essential Extractor distilling kit. Regular price: \$449.13 - Special price: \$275.00. Be sure to mention this hidden special when ordering.

Have a tip you'd like to submit?  
Send it to [tips@grapestompers.com](mailto:tips@grapestompers.com)

\*-----HOT TIP-----\*

Each year this event grows as we invite local vintners and other wineries to join us along with local craftsmen. Jimmy Bengé from JIFF Catering provided the food, and the entertainment was provided by Albert and Amy on the fiddle and guitar.

This year we again demonstrated the advantages of a large bowl tasting glass so the taste and aroma of the wine could be enjoyed to the max. Glasses were made available for \$5.00 on the day of the tasting, and several folks took home this terrific glass for future use!

Our friends, Monty and Brenda Combs, showed up with their ability to snap some great shots of the event. Monty takes the pics and Brenda organizes them and sends them on so we can share! Thanks, Monty and Brenda!

Also, we had a local vintner, Bob Edwards, to help with his magic touch of "tweaking" the wines to make them sweeter if need be for individual taste. Billy Brown and his wife shared their many different and unusual home wines (i.e. watermelon). Rex and Jane Dixon again shared their FAMOUS Blueberry Port and drew raves. Walt and Sarah McMillan from RagApple Lassie Winery were present to share samples of their wines. And our sons - Tim, Brant, and John showed up to help out, along with Candy Porter and Jeff Miller. Even Jason Fender came out of retirement (from his college work) to pitch in. Thanks to everyone who helped make

our sixth annual wine tasting a success!

Tom

You can write to Tom at [tom@grapestompers.com](mailto:tom@grapestompers.com)

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FROM OUR CUSTOMERS

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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,

I just wanted to let you know how much I appreciate your great customer service! Both times I have called with questions, they were answered patiently and in detail.

You guys are great! Thanks so much for your warm, personal style and generous advice. Love the kit by the way; I have been having a ball with all this stuff!

Have a great week,

-- Pati Faul  
Louisiana

Dear Tom & Bonnie,

I just wanted to take a moment and thank you both for your assistance in getting the Grape-Nuts labels to us for our bottling in October. We really had a great time and the bottles looked fantastic! I'll enclose a photo in the package with the [video] tape.

I also wanted to thank you for loaning us your tape. It was very informative and I will be recommending it to the other three wine tasting groups. Your wine making kit provides a much more condensed process than our year long project and it is probably a better approach for the other three groups.

You have some great products that sure would have made our bottling go a lot smoother. All in all, we were pleased with the results. Now we just need to figure out what to do with 22 cases of Cabernet Franc!

I will put the tape back in the mail to you today.

Thanks again for your help.

-- Sandy Freedman

Dear Jimmy,

Thank you so much for your quick responses, and timely info. I wish all online retailers were more like you!

I look forward to getting the package.

Thanks,

-- Cindy Cavallo

[Editor's note: For the benefit of our readers, we will re-post a sticky problem presented to us by one of our customers last month. One person's answer is shown below.]

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

[A Stomper reader replies]

Dean,  
I also am a wine maker who has used fresh elderberries and I got the same gooey mess in my primary, my stirring spoon, etc. I like you used every trick I could think of to remove this mess. I scrubbed with bleach, ammonia, SOS, 3M pads, etc. and was only greeted with a sticky gooey mess that would not come off.

After hours of work I finally got the goo off. That was my first 10 gals. and I still had fresh frozen elderberries for 30 gals. more and OH how I dreaded the next clean up chore (we harvested 122 pounds of de-stemmed berries this year). I have used dried elderberries and never had this problem.

Then one day my husband, Bob, did some roof repair and got roofing tar on his hands. After using hand cleaner, soap, etc. nothing would remove the tar. He finally sprayed his hands with non-stick cooking oil, let soak awhile and just wiped his hand with a paper towel and ALL THE TAR WAS GONE!

Well you can guess that when I made the next 10 gallons of elderberry wine I tried his trick. I just cleaned my primary as always, but the goo ring stayed as it did before. So I grabbed my can of non-stick cooking oil, sprayed the goo ring, let it sit awhile, then wet a cloth and put a little dish soap on the rag and started on the goo ring. IN A SHORT TIME IT WAS GONE!! I did the same for all other equipment I used and it works!!!

Some problem areas I had to spray the goo again. The great thing is that this is non-toxic and safe for the wine making. Just be sure to wash equipment well after cleaning with the non-stick cooking oil to remove the oil residue.

HOPE THIS WORKS FOR YOU!! HAPPY WINE MAKING.

-- Deanna Truran

Hi there,  
I bottled my New Zeal and Sauvignon Blanc this weekend... IT IS SPECTACULAR!!! [and] over my expectations.

I am looking for a great red now. Which premium kit would you recommend???

[What about] the Australian Shiraz? I don't have to worry about the tannins in a nice bold red [so it] sounds about

right -- but they are your kits; would love your opinion.

Thanks,

-- Jeff Gray

[Tom replies]

Dear Jeff,

Thanks for your comments on the NZ Sauvignon Blanc. The Australian Shiraz should be a pleasant surprise to you also. It is something isn't it? I am talking about the quality of the kits.

-- Tom

Tom,

Just a short note to thank you for the fast delivery of my wine order... also the corkscrew. At present, both are on standby as I have got greedy and started too many different carboys of vino.

With my glass on high I thank you... PROUST!

-- Jack Elliott

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GUEST COLUMN - Your Wine Stories: Lessons Learned (part II)  
by Scott Petrinec, Erie, PA

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[Editor's Note]

Several people responded to our request for funny and/or unusual winemaking stories... here is the second batch:

Hi. I haven't been making wine very long, so I am not embarrassed to tell you guys about my first winemaking experience.

I was making a basic pear wine, and had absolutely no idea how to do it. I started out this fiasco by putting my pears (20 lbs) in a blender and then putting the mess into a 5 gallon carboy (what a mess). Then I put 15 lbs of dry sugar into the carboy (it just about filled it to the top.. LOL).

By this time I was wondering why the carboy was so full, so I dumped the sugar from the carboy into a huge pot and added the bare minimum amount of hot water and proceeded to heat the water up on the stove until the sugar was dissolved. Then I used a small funnel and tried to pour the sugar water into the carboy (directly from the pot).

\*-----HOT TIP-----\*

If you're bulk aging in a carboy, you'll want to replace the water in your airlock every month or so. This keeps the water fresh and up to the proper level.

Have a tip you'd like to submit?  
Send it to [tips@grapestompers.com](mailto:tips@grapestompers.com)

\*-----HOT TIP-----\*

I had sugar water everywhere. I used White Labs liquid cider yeast, nutrients, pectic enzyme, and tannin. After the first week I noticed a HORRIBLE smell coming from my basement, and I couldn't figure out why, well... I FORGOT TO PUT WATER IN MY AIRLOCK (I was stupid enough to think that condensation would fill the airlock up with liquid all by itself). Anyway... I fixed that problem, and when

it came time to siphon it off of the mess from the bottom of the carboy I ended up with 3 gallons. I used my vinometer and it read 21.5% alcohol (wow...way too much for my taste). But I kept it that way, and used bentonite, and then ran it through the mini-jet with a #1 and then a #2 filter.

It turned out REAL GOOD, and everyone that I gave it to loved it and wants more. But... I never want to experience that mess again. I am now in the process of making pear again; so far it is going 200 times smoother. I might add some kiwi or paw-paw to this batch.

Thank you for letting me share my winemaking experience with all of you, and if you know anyone that is planning on making some wine for the first time... PLEASE give them some simple hints. Thanks.

Scott A. Petrinec  
Erie, PA  
crazycro2@yahoo.com

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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](mailto: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??

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CORKY'S WINEMAKING DEFINITION

Vinification

- The conversion of a fruit juice or other sweet solution into alcohol by fermentation. The term is sometimes used loosely, to include every step of winemaking from getting the fruit to fermentation and beyond.

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

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NEW PRODUCTS

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

- Item #3125 CC Barolo, \$82.50
- Item #3183 CC Harvest - Malbec \$102.63
- Item #3107 CC Port (12 l kit - need 3 gal carboy) \$62.15
- Item #2798A Coconut Rum (Classic Liquor kit) \$24.95
- Item #2797A Mead (Classic Liquor kit) \$24.95
- Item #2235A Stopper, small solid \$0.55
- Item #2110 Bottle, 750 ml clear screw top, case \$10.89
- Item #2110A Screw on cap, metal, \$0.10 (for 2110 bottle)
- Item #2660 8" funnel with screen \$4.51
- Item #2662 5" funnel without screen \$1.15
- Item #5118 Essential Extractor (distiller) \$449.13
- Item #2808 Lore of Still Building (196 pages) \$9.02
- Item #2809 Alaskan Bootlegger's Bible (198 pages) \$24.20

Be sure to see the feature article above about the four "restricted quantity" wines being released over the next four months.

THIS MONTH'S SPECIALS

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 grapestompers' specials for the month of November 2003 are:

Item #	Description	Reg. Price	SPECIAL
3173	WA Black Currant/Merlot	48.51	39.99
3174	WA Black Cherry/Pi not Noir	48.59	39.99
3164	OB Blackberry/Merlot	43.12	38.99
3210	WA Green Apple/Riesling	48.51	39.99
3280	OB Peach/Chardonnay	41.25	36.99
3288	WA Pink Grapefruit Blush	48.51	39.99
3289	OB Strawberry/Riesling	41.25	36.99
3287	WA Strawberry/White Zinfandel	48.59	39.99
3160	GC Bergamais (Beaujolais)	49.50	41.99
3229	VDV White Zinfandel	45.87	38.99
2260	Portuguese Floor Corker	57.75	49.99
2310	Corks Agglomerate # 9 x 1 3/4" 0.13 ea 100 for	11.00	
2308	All Cellar Classic concentrates get 30 FREE CORKS		
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 WA, VDV, OB, and GC wine kits are designed to make about thirty 750 ml bottles of great wine in as little as 28 days. The Orchard Breezin' and Wine-Art Country Mist 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 corks we stock by paying the difference.

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#### 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 - Submit yours today!
- New Winemaking Products

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#### LIST MAINTENANCE

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[http://www.grapestompers.com/quit\\_stomper.asp](http://www.grapestompers.com/quit_stomper.asp)

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