
THE STOMPER

The Monthly Winemaking Newsletter of grapestompers.com
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<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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FEATURE ARTICLE: Enter to Win a \$100 Gift Certificate
By Brant Burgess, Editor

Happy New Year everyone! All of us from the mountaintop bodega hope you and your family celebrated a wonderful and safe holiday season.

Sometime during the month of January, we will serve our 10,000th customer... and we wanted to celebrate by offering you a chance to win a \$100 shopping spree at grapestompers!

To qualify for the prize, all you need to do is:

- be a subscriber of this newsletter (the STOMPER)
- place an order during January

The subscriber who places order #10,000 (or the soonest thereafter) will win the gift certificate.

You can help us identify you as a subscriber... simply enter the words "Stomper subscriber" in the comments section of the secure online order form. Once we verify you as a Stomper subscriber, your gift certificate will be awarded.

It's our small way of saying "Thank you" for shopping with us at grapestompers.com

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

You can write to Brant at webmaster@grapestompers.com

BONNIE'S BIN: Start With A Clean Slate to Avoid TCA Taint
By Bonnie Brown, Manager

Our motto for 2004 should start out with...
A clean slate, or winemaking area.

Tom was up this morning at 4:00 AM and stumbled upon an article from Wine Business Monthly discussing TCA (the chemical 2,4,6-Trichloroanisole). He came to work wound up so here I am...

A small winery learned it had an issue with "taint" in some wines, so they started gathering information and quickly got out in front of the issue. Because of all the moisture in wineries we have an ongoing issue with molds. In our eagerness to rid our space of mold we drag out the chlorine and mix it a bit strong. It is not conclusive, but we suspect that we use more chlorine than needed to scour spots off our tables, benches and floors. The reaction of chlorine with other substances can create TCA.

What it boils down to is us switching to non-chlorine based sanitizers such as B-Brite. That mixture should be used on all of our winemaking equipment and furnishings, being sure to use it on the walls and floors too.

I enjoyed the "Checklist for TCA" in that article too. We all need to pay attention to this, especially during the winter when we don't seem to have the ventilation we have during the summer. I personally want to thank Wine Business Monthly, December 2003, for publishing the wonderful article by Cyril Penn entitled "Hanzell Tells The Truth About TCA".

Here is the checklist she mentions:

- Clean really well and use a peroxide-based product (such as B-Brite). Avoid chlorine. Use hot water.
- Don't use chlorine anywhere where the liquid or vapors might contact wood, wine, or paper products. Don't use chlorinated TSP.
- No wood pallets in the winery.
- No cardboard near the wines. No wood pallets in any confined space; they may bring in either precursors or chloroanisoles. Don't bring anything with the precursors into the winery area and close the doors. It can change and then volatilize into the atmosphere. If you are topping or racking, you can, for example, have a pickup from storing your cardboard boxes next to your wines.
- Ventilate: Increase the ventilation of all confined spaces to prevent accumulation of chloroanisoles.
- TCA can be formed from any wood product. This includes open bags of corks!

With this new bit of information we can move on into our new year on a clean note. Take this little bit of information and expand on it. Share what you learn with others.

Here's to a CLEAN HAPPY NEW YEAR!

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

TOM'S CELLAR: Testing Reveals The Best Winemaking Stuff
by Tom Burgiss, Owner

Ever since we started this hobby that turned into a full time business, our primary goal was to provide good service and correct information to our customers. Providing correct information involves more than most would think. One major example where we go the "extra mile" for you is in the area of product research.

We test MANY different winemaking equipment gizmos, but to us the most important items we can test are the grape concentrates (also known as "wine kits"), because they contain the ingredients from which we make wine.

There's an old saying - The best ingredients and the most patience make the best wine - and I believe it is still true today.

We are always seeking more manufacturers of grape concentrates to try and find the best quality, the best pricing, and the kits that are the easiest to make at home. We will ONLY recommend concentrates that we physically make here in our mountaintop bodega... then and only then will we put our "stamp of approval" on the product.

This has been a very interesting and informative experience for us because some highly-touted concentrates actually turn out to be "duds", while others pleasantly surprise us.

We are constantly looking, testing, and searching for you - Our Customer!

If you wish to inquire about a particular manufacturer we have tested, we will be glad to share our personal thoughts and findings with you on a one-to-one basis. It may be that you have heard of a new manufacturer that you want us to try out for you and save you both time and money in trying it out. Robert Klause and Dr. Dan Strickland help us out tremendously in this area. Thanks for your helpful hints on new concepts and equipment, and a big THANKS to Robert and Dr. Dan!

Another good example of the success of our testing program involves corks - both the hand and floor models. There are several out there and some are impossible to operate. And while I'm thinking about it, we offer "trade ups" for better corks if you would like to upgrade. Our policy here allows us to offer you FULL value of your old corker (purchased through us) in exchange towards the price of the new corker. Call us at 800-233-1505 for details.

Hopefully this will drive home the point to everyone that we are here for you! Don't forget to check out our hidden special this month... it involves corks! You can see the hidden special if you look closely at this issue of the Stomper.

-----HOT TIP-----
Tempted to use a brewing belt on your carboy
to maintain warmer temperatures during winter?
DON'T.

Be sure to read this month's Guest Column to learn the proper use of the BrewBelt!

Hidden special:
Save nearly \$20 (or more!) when you order item #2263, an Italian floor corker with a brass iris. Now you'll be able to cork with only one hand! Fits all bottle sizes.

Regular price: \$90.75 - Special price: \$71.99
Trade in a hand corker purchased from us and save an additional \$15.13!

BE SURE to mention this hidden special when ordering, or you will not get this price.

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

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

OUR GOALS FOR 2004

Each year we have goals in mind, and this year our main one is to install a shopping pickup truck on our web site. What's that, you say? Well, a shopping pickup truck is merely grapestompers' answer to an online shopping cart!

We've been patiently waiting for some time now (Brant, are you listening??), but I'm sure the delay is due to an array of some great features that will help automate the process of shopping and checking out (on your end) and automate communications (shipping notifications, etc.) and web site updates on our end.

As we get closer to rollout, we'll be asking several of our customers to help us test the new shopping system. Stay tuned!

Another goal we have this year is to release the Stomper on time at the first of each month. We've never delivered the Stomper later than the 9th or 10th of the month, but we'd like to do better in the future.

You can help us reach this goal by submitting your input (guest column, recipes, and winemaking tips) by the 20th of the month for the following month's release. Thanks!

GOOD NEWS FOR OUR CUSTOMERS IN THE WESTERN U. S.

If you live in the western part of the United States and place an order that weighs at least 15 pounds, we can save you some freight costs by shipping your order out of our warehouse in Salt Lake City, Utah.

This is just another way we're trying to save you money and get the winemaking products to you faster.

SPAM

It seems like every time a law is passed on spamming, it gets worse! Let me share with you my thoughts on this - We get over 200 spam e-mails a day and don't take a lot of time to scrutinize subject lines before trashing the message. So if the e-mail only says "Hi" in the subject, we do not even open it.

All orders placed online through our secure shopping system

come with a particular subject line that we look for. However, may we request that when you have a winemaking question for us, please enter something like "question for grapestompers" in your subject line then we know it's worth opening. Please share your complete name so we can answer more intelligently. Thanks!

I read an article lately in the August 2003 issue of "Consumer Reports" (on pages 12-16) that speaks of some helpful hints for all of us. They recommend a spam-blocking software called Stata Labs SProxy, found at bloomba.com. You might want to check this out. On page 15 of that same article they make suggestions for keeping your e-mail address secure. One of them is to change online references to your e-mail address from the standard "janedoe@isp.com" to "janedoe at isp dot com" That may help to thwart spammers' harvesting software, according to the article.

E-mail is great if it is not abused; let's all make an effort to improve.

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:

Brant,
Perfect timing [regarding the release of the free wine labels with the December issue of The Stomper]. I misplaced my labels for my Cranberry Chianti. The labels are great and very easy to do, thank you very much. Be in touch soon.

Thank you, and happy holidays.

-- Ed Csencsi
Pennsylvania

Dear Tom,
The check is in the mail. Thank you very much for all your help this past year. You have made our new hobby a great experience and won yourself a return customer for the coming years with your outstanding customer service. I hope all of you have a wonderful holiday season.

-- Terry and Krystal
Southern Illinois

GUEST COLUMN - BrewBelt Instructions
by Michael Oxner, Winemaker Inc.

Electrical heating devices, such as brewbelts and heating pads/blankets, should never be affixed to a low temperature rated (i.e. non-"pyrex" type) glass container such as a carboy, demijohn, or glass jug/jar.

The reason for this is two-fold. Winemaker's glass carboys and demijohns, whether Italian or Mexican in origin, are produced in part from recycled glass and contain many imperfections and tiny air bubbles. They are relatively fragile vessels, and any excess heat (or cold), may cause

dangerous fractures to the glass. If electricity should come in contact with the wine (a liquid), electrical shock, and possible sparking or fire, could result. This in turn could cause severe property damage or even loss of life.

Our manufacturer's liability, and therefore our distributor's and retailer's liability, is limited to the safe and prudent use of The BrewBelt. Our brew belt safety instructions were mandatory as part of our stringent 2001 North American certification program by Entela (<http://www.entela.com>), something our Canadian and UK competitors were not required to do in the 1980's. These type of instructions were long overdue by the homebrewing industry.

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

Would you like to add some oak flavor to your homemade wines? Just follow your nose to this article for complete details:

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

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

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

The second reason a winemaker should avoid use of a heating device on a carboy is that such use may "cook" the wine. 90% of a wine (or beer's) fermentation takes place in a primary fermentor. For best results, the initial fermentation usually requires a constant heat between 70-80 F. Once primary fermentation has taken place, most wines and beers prefer a slightly cooler fermentation (62-70 F) to preserve the delicate bouquet of grape must (or hops).

By applying heat during this secondary fermentation, these volatile aromas are greatly reduced, which can result in a "feeble" wine. If a wine or beer is stored in a cool area during this time (i.e. below 62 F), there are protective heat-saving covers/shields (e.g. our CarboyShield) on the market to "trap" and maintain the slower, "bouquet-development", secondary fermentation heat.

Michael Oxner, Winemaker Inc.
operations@winemakeri.com / <http://www.winemakeri.com>
Manufacturers of High Alcohol Products & Essences,
BrewBelts, WineAgitators, Finings & Filtration Products

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](http://www.grapestompers.com) order, as well as our heartfelt thanks. So what are you waiting for??

CORKY'S WINEMAKING DEFINITION

- Residual Sugar
Unfermented grape sugar in a finished 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 #4222B Apron, "Wine a bit" design \$17.00

THIS MONTH'S SPECIALS

grapestompers' specials for the month of January 2004 are:

Item #	Description	Reg. Price	SPECIAL
3133	CC Merlot	86.13	68.99
3139	VDV Cabernet Shiraz	53.13	42.50
3219	VDV Chardonnay	44.88	35.90
3271	GC Pinot Grigio	45.76	36.40
2721	B-Brite 8 oz	1.93	1.54
5264	B-Brite 5 pounds	12.21	9.99
2605A	Carboy Scrubber (requires drill)	24.95	19.95
4305	Mouse Pad, "Wine a bit..."	9.00	6.99
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 WA, VDV, and GC wine kits are designed to make about thirty 750 ml bottles of great wine in as little as 28 days; the Cellar Classic kit creates wine in as few as 45 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 Rinser |
| 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.

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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