
THE STOMPER

The Monthly Winemaking Newsletter of 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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FEATURE ARTICLE: Looking for New Winemaking Gadgets
By Brant Burgess, Editor

Happy Valentine's month, everyone! The snow is still on the ground in the mountains of North Carolina, but we're already getting set for spring and our annual attendance at the Wineries Unlimited trade show and convention in Lancaster, PA on March 15-18.

The show is a ton of fun for grape growers and winemakers alike. They offer seminars and training in a variety of winemaking topics, and this year over 250 vendors will show off their latest lines of winemaking products and gadgets. Each year we always seem to find some neat products to share with you as our customers. Who knows what we'll find?

Learn more about this great event by visiting the home page of the convention:

<http://tinyurl.com/3csnz>

You'll be able to see the schedule of events and seminars, and you can even register online if the mood strikes.

We're always open to your suggestions regarding products to carry in our online catalog. If you have a favorite piece of winemaking equipment you think we should offer, please tell us about it!

GIFT CERTIFICATE UPDATE

Last month, you may remember that we mentioned the prize that awaited grapestompers' 10,000th customer who also happened to be a Stomper subscriber.

Well... to be honest, we miscounted the number of sales to date (we missed it by about 700), so we did not award the prize during January. Rest assured, we will still offer the \$100 gift certificate to the Stomper subscriber who makes a purchase as the 10,000th customer (or the soonest thereafter). We'll let you know who the lucky winner is when it happens.

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

You can write to Brant at webmaster@grapestompers.com

BONNIE'S BIN: Making Homemade Vinegar
By Bonnie Brown, Manager

We now carry White & Red Mother of Vinegar for starting your own herb and wine vinegars. We have two books on the subject also. This looks like a fun side hobby for the winemaker, BUT you must keep the two apart - like in another building! For if you spill the vinegar those little tiny spores will hop right into the wine and you will have gallons of ruined wine but gallons of a good vinegar! Remember that if you happen to have canned pickles on the shelf near your winemaking area the same thing will happen.

To repeat: You should NEVER make vinegar in the same location or proximity to where you make wine... and for certain, you should not share the same equipment. The bacteria used to create vinegar will ruin wine.

I was looking through the "Wine for Dummies 2nd edition" recently and came across some interesting facts in Chapter 8, entitled "How to Open a Bottle... and What to Do Next"

In this chapter, I found quite a bit of information we had already discovered here in our shop! On the subject of wine glasses, the book states:

"The good reason for using fine crystal is that the wine tastes better out of it. We're not sure whether the elegant crystal simply heightens the aesthetic experience of the wine drinking or whether there's some more scientific reason."

Wine tastes better out of the thin large crystal glasses. One of our customers, Robert Klaus of TX, let us in on this some time ago so we have been using that information here in our Bodega. We pour the same wine in a small everyday wine glass and then into the larger thin crystal glass, making sure the taster is watching of course! Nine out of 10 tasters will catch the difference in taste even before we tell them anything of what to expect. It is truly amazing! Try it at home with a red wine and see for yourself. Personally, I think it works best with red versus white wines. Then you can carry this a bit further. Try your red wine chilled, warm it a bit with time or hands, swirl and then try it again. The taste changes with the temperature. You will find what your taste buds prefer.

Have fun with your wines, experiment not only with the making but the tasting of them.

One last thing... There is a discussion about the effect of atmospheric pressure on the taste of red wine. Thin, light pressure is better; heavy pressure with heavy humidity is not so good. So the next time your favorite red wine is not as good as it usually is, check the air pressure!

VALENTINE'S SPECIALS: Buy your special someone a heart healthy red wine concentrate and a set of glasses!

We will special order a crystal Riedel Sommelier hand blown Bordeaux/Cabernet/Merlot, 30 oz, for \$79.00 or the crystal Riedel Wine-Line set of 4 Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot/Bordeaux, 28 oz, for \$49.95. Or, order a CASE (12) of our 18 oz Thistle Meadow Winery wine glasses (they have the TMW logo satin etched in white) for \$47.88. That is just \$3.95 per glass! The TMW glasses are wonderful, although they are not crystal.

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: Things My French Teacher Taught Me
by Tom Burgess, Owner

THE WORD BORDEAUX MEANS:

Bordeaux (which translates to "beside the water") is a region in France with 3 rivers which provides easy access for the transportation of wine. In fact, it is only an hour's drive from the Atlantic Ocean. This location certainly helped (and still helps) with the commercial success of that region in the shipping of wine to the United States, England, and northern Europe.

Lots of items are named after Bordeaux, including the bottle that today is called the Bordeaux Bottle. This type of bottle has a unique shape and contrasts sharply with the Burgundy Bottle. The Bordeaux bottle has high "shoulders" and thus provides more vertical surface area to apply your wine label. The Burgundy bottle, on the other hand, starts its more gentle taper about halfway up the bottle, which allows less space for the height of your label. For these and other reasons, we sell more Bordeaux bottles than Burgundy.

Bordeaux	Burgundy
#####	#####
## ##	## ##
## ##	## ##
## ##	## ##
## ##	:# #:
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## ##	:# #:
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## ##	## ##
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#####

Since our beginning, grapestompers.com has furnished free wine labels with each wine concentrate we sell. So whether you make your own labels, or we make them for you, please keep in mind your goal of a good label "facing"!

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

Ever accidentally scorch bottle wax while melting it? You can prevent burning of bottling wax by heating it in a double boiler.

Fill a saucepan part way with water, then melt the wax within an empty tin can set inside the pan.

Hidden special:

We are offering FREE SHIPPING on the following 4 Vi no del Vi da wine kits during February.

#3117F Merlot \$57.98
#3115F Cabernet Sauvignon \$57.98
#3225F Sauvignon Blanc \$46.98
#3229F White Zinfandel \$51.98

BE SURE to mention this hidden special when ordering, or you will not get the free shipping. Free shipping applies to contiguous 48 states.

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

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

COST OF WINE

Here's a question for you: Is a \$100 bottle of wine really ten times better than a \$10 bottle of wine?

Let me answer that question with another question: Is a \$1,000 jacket ten times warmer than one that costs \$100.00? Probably not. It may be more stylish or have more zippers, but that's just packaging.

It's thrilling and satisfying (not to mention easy on your wallet) when you can find an inexpensive wine that tastes as though it cost five or ten times as much. When you make your own wine from a kit purchased from grapestompers, you can make it for as little as \$1.20 per bottle and up, depending upon which wine you choose. Plus, you get all the bragging rights that go along with it... YOU made it! Winemaking is a great hobby; just look at all the friends you will pick up along the way! Remember, an apple farmer NEVER buys apples, and a winemaker should never have to buy wine!

Factoid: According to the Wine Institute, the estimated retail value of the wine sold in the United States each year is now more than 19 billion dollars. Now that's a lot of pleasure!

At the bottom of each issue of the Stomper, we list our

monthly specials. One of the items on sale this month is the Italian floor corker (Item # 2263). With its brass iris and one hand operation, it is certainly an item that is far superior to an ordinary hand corker. Hey, it's time to trade in or replace your tired and used equipment. Did you know that we allow you full trade-in value for your old hand corker that was purchased from us?

Tired of sucking on tubing in order to rack your wine? Now is your chance to stop that unsanitary habit and buy a nifty gizmo called the AutoSiphon. It can start a siphon in about 5 seconds, and it's on special this month. See the rest of our specials below.

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 Grapestompers -

I just wanted to thank you guys for the super fast service, from the first email about my order, to the three others confirming each step.

I really appreciate the effort you put forth on getting my order to me in what seemed like two days if I'm not imagining it. I'll be sure to pass along your URL to my beer and hopefully new wine making friends.

Thanks again -

-- Anthony Spadaro
New York, NY

Dear Tom,

Thanks for keeping me informed [via The Stomper]. I enjoy hearing from you and hope you had a wonderful holiday

Thanks again,

-- Bob Stewart

Bonnie/Tom,

Just to let you know that my order came in today (1/10/04), a mere 3 days after my order.

I also want you to know that I am very impressed with your customer service. I have ordered from you three times now, and each time you have handled my order in a very responsive, cost-effective and professional manner. This is all the more impressive since I am not a big customer. I have been in the home winemaking business for many years and as such, have accumulated most all the equipment I need, except for the consumables. Considering the way you conduct your customer service, I wish I was a big customer!

If there is any way that I can direct new customers to you, I will surely do so!

Regards,

-- Bruce Mulvaney
Glenwood, MN

Bonnie:
I placed my order on Wednesday. It arrived today. Thanks for the quick service.

Thank you.

-- Tony Petruso
St. Louis, MO

GUEST COLUMN - How to Remove and Preserve Wine Labels
by Tri Nguyen, Alexandria, VA

[Editor's Note: The following advice was offered on our Yahoo-sponsored winemaking discussion group when someone requested information on how to remove and preserve wine labels for collectors. You can join our discussion group by going to]

I have recently begun reviewing wines and saving wine labels as well. I would not bother buying these label removal kits that you see advertised. What has worked well for me thus far is the following procedure:

1. Preheat an oven to 220 degrees F.
2. Put a dry bottle inside for about 15 minutes.
3. Take it out with an oven mitt.
4. While it's still hot, use an Exacto knife and carefully scrape the label off.

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

If you have designed a wine label that is taller than it is wide, it will look better when placed on a Bordeaux bottle.

The higher shoulders of the Bordeaux bottle offer more vertical room for your label!

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

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

The heat seems to melt the glue to the point that it easily comes off. I've used this technique and it hasn't failed me yet, but I've used it only on American, Argentinian, Spanish and Australian wines.

I've heard that different countries use different types of glue, so I can't yet vouch for French wine bottles and other regions not yet named. But so far, it's worked like a charm.

I have also made a wine rating sheet that I think is very comprehensive and allows users to review a wine on a 100 point system using great detail and descriptions. Let me know if you want me to send it your way.

You can contact Tri at tri_nguyen1@yahoo.com.

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

- Tannin
A component of wine - found mostly in red wines - derived primarily from grape skins, seeds and stems, but also from oak barrels. Tannin acts as a natural preservative that helps wine age and develop and provides astringency that is part of a balanced wine. Excessive, unbalanced tannin can taste bitter and leaves the same drying or puckering sensation in the mouth as very strong tea.

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 #3113 VDV Barolo \$53.13
- Item #2698 White Mother of Vinegar \$7.92
- Item #2699 Red Mother of Vinegar \$7.92
- Item #2733A Fermax Yeast Nutrient, 1 lb. \$4.73
- Item #2659 8" Anti-Splash Funnel \$8.25
- Item #2263B Italian Bench Corker with brass Iris \$80.52
- Item #2263A Capper attachment for the Italian bench and floor corks (standard crown caps) \$12.00
- Item #2813 Great American Guide to Fine Wines \$8.47

THIS MONTH'S SPECIALS

grapestompers' specials for the month of February 2004 are:

Item #	Description	Reg. Price	SPECIAL
3156	GC Cabernet Franc	53.13	46.22
3164	OB Blackberry Merlot	48.59	42.27
3169	WA Cranberry Shiraz	45.60	39.67
3255	CSG Pinot Grigio	71.50	62.20
3235	CC Johannisberg Riesling	69.63	60.57
2605	Carboy Brush	4.68	3.99
2224	FermTech Auto Siphon 1/2" OD	11.82	9.99
2263	Italian floor corks w/brass iris	90.25	78.99
3200	Complete White Wine Starter Kit	246.68	175.00
3100	Complete Red Wine Starter Kit	259.79	185.00

Did you see this month's hidden special? It's located elsewhere in this newsletter.

The WA, OB, and GC wine kits are designed to make about thirty 750 ml bottles of great wine in as little as 28 days; the CC and CSG kits create 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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