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THE STOMPER

The Monthly Winemaking Newsletter of grapestompers.com  
May, 2004 Issue #46  
<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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IN THIS ISSUE

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- => Feature Article - Good Food and Wine Go Together
- => Bonnie's Bin - Pick A Peck of Petals
- => Tom's Cellar - Women and Wine: Part Three
- => Feedback from Our Customers
- => How To Get the Most Must from Your Berries
- => Guest Column - Corking The Easy Way
- => How to Be Featured as a Guest Columnist
- => Wine Storage Hints: European Secret Shared
- => Corky's Winemaking Definition
- => New Products
- => This Month's Specials
- => Subscribe/Unsubscribe Information

\*^\* 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: When Good Food and Wine Go Together  
By Brant Burgess, Editor

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Happy May, everyone!

Lots of attention these days is being given to pairings of wine with food... that is to say, which wines go best with your favorite foods at the table?

It is said that a Cotes du Rhone goes fabulously with a rack of lamb, or that the right Chardonnay goes best with salmon... but less attention seems to be given to the topic of actually COOKING with wine.

You may not know it, but Jimmy Benge, one of the employees of grapestompers.com, is also the master chef of JIFF Catering. As our warehouse manager, Jimmy helps to make sure the winemaking supplies you order are delivered on time, but on the weekends he dons his other hat and starts cooking for special occasions such as weddings, family reunions and private parties.

Quite naturally, Jimmy loves cooking with wine!

On Sunday afternoon, October 3rd (when we celebrate our 7th annual wine tasting in Laurel Springs), Jimmy will feature a showcase of dishes that were prepared with wine.

He's got a few recipes that call for wine during the preparation or the cooking, but he'd love to have more... that's where you can help.

Do you have a favorite recipe that involves wine? If so, e-mail it to Jimmy. Send it to jimmy@grapestompers.com

He will try your recipe, and report back which ones are his favorites. If your recipe is selected for preparation at our annual wine tasting, we will post it in The Stomper and you will win a FREE dinner on Jimmy.

And, if enough people send in their recipes, we hope to offer a wine-based recipe each month in future issues of The Stomper. This should be fun - sharing great wine and good food! So pull out those recipes and send them in.

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Before my time is up, here are a couple of announcements:

We estimate that sometime during the month of May 2004, grapestompers will serve its 10,000th customer. To celebrate, we are giving away a \$100 gift certificate to the Stomper subscriber who submits his/her order via our online order form and is assigned invoice #10,000 (or the soonest thereafter).

Sorry, but this prize cannot be won by walk-in customers or phone orders. You must be a Stomper subscriber in order to win the prize.

Be sure and visit our booth at the NC Wine Festival, to be held on Saturday, June 12th at Tanglewood (near Clemmons, North Carolina). Tom and the gang at Thistle Meadow Winery will be pouring your favorites! Call us at 800-233-1505 to get your advance tickets, which will save you some money at the door. Learn more at: [www.ncwinefestival.com](http://www.ncwinefestival.com)

The Burgiss Barn opens for the season on Sunday, May 9th (Mother's Day) for Sunday lunch. Lunch is served buffet style each Sunday from 11:30 AM - 2:00 PM. Our live music schedule is in full swing too for many Saturday nights during the summer and early fall. See [www.burgissbarn.com](http://www.burgissbarn.com) for a band schedule and all the details.

We are working on hiring a winemaking intern from France for the summer. Once all his papers and visas are in place, you'll get to meet and speak with this young man who is currently enrolled in the Masters of Agriculture program at the Ecole Supérieure d'Agriculture - Purpan in Toulouse. If everything goes well, we anticipate the arrival of Hughes Baggió in mid-July.

That's it for now. 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: Pick A Peck of Petals  
By Bonnie Brown, Manager

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I just read a recipe for Dandelion Wine and it sounded SO good. It was in the About.com newsletter we got this morning. It came at just the right time, too. I have dandelions in my yard right now, so it's likely you do too! Get to pickin' 'em.

I am going to try something that I have not seen any feedback on: freezing the dandelion petals. It's almost impossible to pick 4 quarts, yes, FOUR QUARTS of just the yellow petals! See why I am going to freeze them? I try to make one "homemade" wine a year and I missed last year.

Another good wine to try at this time of year is Mead. Use the left over honey from last summer in a good way. It is generally a light, fruity drink. About.com suggests making it a part of your next traditional celebration, especially Irish or English.

Keep us informed on your wine making experiments. I have a feeling there are a lot of great things to be told that are not getting out.

Have a good time with your spring wine making.

We hope to see you soon.

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: Women and Wine: Part Three  
by Tom Burgess, Owner

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To continue our conversation from the previous 2 months, where we define Women's Wine Styles...

I am having fun because I get back e-mails stating things like... That's me! That's me! OK, here comes round #3:

The VERDICCHIO woman:  
Most are brunette or secretly wish they had darker hair. They allow their hair to hang in dangles or the other extreme - a Butch - go figure!

These ladies love to talk fast and are opposed to slow-talking folks. They do not like skinny models. Their favorite dress is lightweight (as in silk), flowing, colorful, and she likes to wear clothes that are appealing to the eye. Their favorite color is green (a dark green)

Their favorite food is chocolate (and sometimes MORE chocolate!).

General Disposition - Bossy and mischievous (but in a fun way)

CHENIN BLANC is considered the wine of the "Silver Foxes". These ladies are distinguished, proper, refined, polite, correct, and all have very thin ankles! Their taste in clothes - Expensive and tailored with high heels, these gals look great in a hat!

Their favorite flower: Orchids  
Favorite food: Hors d'oeuvres or small finger foods (these ladies tend to watch their weight closely)

General Disposition - Aristocratic; usually married to a rich gentleman with a pedigree.

Should we continue on in this series? If so, e-mail us (your identity will be protected) about your favorite wine.

And hang in there until the next Stomper to see if that fits you!

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

NEVER wash your wine bottles in a dishwasher using standard dishwashing detergent.

Even though the bottles appear squeaky clean, the taste of your wine will be severely affected. The soap will leave a fine residue on the glass, which makes your wine taste awful or just plain flat.

Wash and sanitize your bottles with approved chemicals instead. We recommend using B-Brite, Iodophor, and potassium metabisulfite.

Hidden special:

#2263B, Italian Bench Corker with Brass Iris

Reg. \$89.87, Now \$ 69.99

That's a 22 percent savings for a product that will cork most any size wine bottle with ease.

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

Have a tip you'd like to submit?

Send it to [tips@grapestompers.com](mailto:tips@grapestompers.com)

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

Here is an interesting item I saw on a daily wine calendar, which speaks to wine consumption in restaurants:

Here's something you almost never see: a restaurant with no wine in the tables (unless maybe it's a pancake house at 8:00 AM or a barbecue joint where beer is the preferred libation). But what do we really know about wine consumption in restaurants? From a 2002 survey carried out by Vinexpo Americas in collaboration with "Wine Spectator Magazine" come these findings.

Of regular wine drinkers (defined by the survey as people who drink twice a week):

- 82.4 percent often or always drink wine when they eat out
- 65.1 percent choose a wine they've never had. This percentage decreases with age. Of people in their 30's, 69 percent choose a new wine as opposed to 45.6 percent of the 60-plus crowd.
- 45.4 percent ask the sommelier for advice

Interesting stuff, huh? See you next month!

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:

Tom, Bonnie & Gang:

Just wanted you to know that I received a Red Ribbon for my 2002 Beaujolais and a White Ribbon for my 2002 Burgundy

in the 2004 Illinois Amateur Wine Competition!

I feel that you all should share in this award as everything I have learned about wine making has come from you.

I informed the Director of the competition about your website, what great products you have and most importantly, what outstanding folks you all are.

Many thanks.

-- Steve Kerchner  
Chalmers Winery  
Highland, IL

Dear grapestompers,  
[My] order arrived. Was waiting on me when I got home from work. Thanks for your promptness.

-- John Barilone

Dear grapestompers,  
I just wanted to let everyone know that I received all my equipment yesterday. I was amazed and excited about how quickly everything came.

You run a first class business. When I need to order more equipment you can be assured it will be from you.

Thanks again,

-- Jaime LeFlém

Jimmy,  
Thank you! You guys are great to do business with. =-)

-- Arra Oakenshield

Hey Tom,  
I just wanted to let you know that the Shiraz kit I purchased last year turned out very nicely. Thanks for taking the time to share your insights. It really was a fun experience. It inspired me to try fresh grapes as well. We are doing the final racking soon. Thanks again for your inspiration. I hope to see you [at the Cary wine festival] this weekend.

Sincerely,

-- Paul Waldruff

Hi folks,  
Got your newsletter. Thanks. I enjoy all of them and find they help me a lot.

Keep them coming.

-- Bob Stewart

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HOW TO: Get the Most Must from Your Berries  
By Tom Burgess, Owner

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We are heading into the berry season, so here are some helpful hints that may help you make a better wine each and every year. But first let's talk common sense:

a) The riper the fruit the better.

But when is it ripe? When the birds start eating!  
Remember, it takes 5 ripe berries to counteract just one unripe berry. So toss that one sour berry away!

- b) The berries that have the greatest aroma makes a better tasting wine. For example: if you have a choice between a red raspberry and a black raspberry.. then take the red raspberry!
- c) Now Ziploc the berries and FREEZE them! Why?? Because freezing breaks down the cellular membranes of the berries, therefore producing more juice and less waste. How long to freeze? From 3 days to 6 months is fine.
- d) Now place the berries (thawed) in a nylon bag before you squeeze the fruit to get the juice. This will help you to avoid a pulpy mess in your must.
- e) Using your hydrometer, get the specific gravity (SG) up to the desired reading.

Need a berry wine recipe? From our Links page, click on the link for Jack Keller's winemaking web site. He has tons of wine recipes listed there for you.

Side story here: It is really funny when you ask 5 people what color to paint your house, you will get a suggestion of five different colors! So if you ask 5 folks their berry wine recipe, you will get 5 DIFFERENT recipes; so my suggestion - Go to Jack's web site - he is the best!

By following Jack's guidelines you will make a better wine and year after year you will have consistency in your wine!

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GUEST COLUMN - Corking The Easy Way  
Jim Pirt, Asheboro NC

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I recently got a bottle of wine from a friend of mine. As he handed it to me, he explained his difficulty in getting the corks seated. So I shared this tip I learned from Lisa & Gary Ridley when we came to [the grapestompers] wine tasting last year.

I was just getting ready to bottle our first batch of homemade wine the following day. Gary, who already had a few batches under his belt, asked what type of corker I was going to use. And of course, I stated the hand corker.

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

If you make your own wine labels at home, did your last batch look fuzzy or out of focus?

If so, the graphics you used were probably displayed at too low a resolution.

For crisp printing, be sure all the graphics used in your labels are at a resolution of 300 dpi (dots per inch) or so. The more dots per inch, the sharper the images will print. Most modern household printers are capable of printing up to 600 dpi.

Using images off the web will generally not work well for wine labels, since these images are about 72 to 90 dpi.

If you use digital photos as a background for your labels, be sure to use the highest resolution setting and a good graphics program to get the best out of your photos.

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

He recommended boiling the corks for 15 minutes prior to bottling. He said it would be much easier then.

I did it and he was right - the corks all seated with very little effort.

Try it, I'm sure you'll like it.

Jim Pirt  
Pirts Pub & Winery  
Asheboro, NC

You can contact Jim at [jpiirt@technimark.com](mailto:jpiirt@technimark.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://grapestompers.com) order, as well as our heartfelt thanks. So what are you waiting for??

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Wine Storage Hints: European Secret Shared

The most popular wine storage system used in Europe is now available here at [grapestompers.com](http://grapestompers.com). Clay wine racks are widely used by wine collectors, vineyards, and restaurants alike. The natural coolness of the Terra Cotta offers the wine temperature stability in the kitchen, pantry and basement. The Terra Cotta modular assembled rack is decorative, economical to build, easy to assemble and expandable. The great advantage to this unique storage is the simple fact that it will not discolor, rot or require paint or varnish with age.

See a photo of these clay storage tiles in action here:  
<http://www.thislimestonewinery.com/visitwinery.asp>

This clay wine storage tile system definitely gives you, the proud owner, temperature stability and a lifetime of enjoyment. Best yet, no screws, nails, cement or glue are required; just stack the modular units on top of each other. And if you move into your dream house away from where you now live, then you can simply pick 'em up and carry them with you. Or if the prospective buyer of your home loves wine, he'll pay you more for the house!

The only disadvantage about these clay wine tiles is their shipping weight, so this will give you a good excuse to come and see us here in the mountains of North Carolina along the Blue Ridge Parkway! The more tiles you purchase, the more you can save.

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CORKY'S WINEMAKING DEFINITION

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- A French term which describes a dry wine.

Look for other wine-related definitions by clicking on the 'Glossary' button from our home page at

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NEW PRODUCTS

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

- Item #3282 OB Calypso Bianco, \$43.56
- Item #2201 V Vessel Fermentation System \$181.50
- Item #2783 Soda Pop Extract - Cream Soda, \$4.18
- Item #2782 Soda Pop Extract - Sarsaparilla Soda, \$3.96
- Item #2840 The Illustrated WineSpeak, by R. Searle, \$25

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THIS MONTH'S SPECIALS

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grapestompers' specials for the month of May 2004 are:

Item #	Description	Reg. Price	SPECIAL
3237	CC White Zinfandel	76.01	59.99
3236	CC Sauvignon Blanc	80.63	63.99
3224	VDV Piesporter	45.76	36.99
3252	VDV Gewurztraminer	47.63	37.99

CLOSE OUT special on the following Classic Liquors (CL) Liqueur Kits, until gone:

2797A	Classic Liquors kit - Mead	24.95	17.99
2799	CL kit - Mariner's Liquor	24.95	17.99
2798	CL kit - Coconut Rum	24.95	17.99
2795A	CL kit - White Licorice	24.95	17.99
2788	CL kit - Mexican Coffee	24.95	17.99

2730	Acid Blend, 3 oz	1.92	1.19
2731	Campden, tablets, 2 oz	2.42	1.89
2733	Fermax Yeast Nutrient, 4oz	2.23	1.79
2734	Pectic Enzyme, 15 ml	2.13	1.69
2736	Tannin, 1.5 oz	1.93	1.49
2239	Straining bag, Lg Coarse	2.20	1.79
2239A	Strn. bag, Lg Coarse, Elastic Top	2.53	1.99
2224	1/2" OD FermTech AutoSiphon	12.65	9.99
2240	18" Stirring Paddle	2.65	2.09
2662	5" Funnel	1.21	0.99
2223	Triple Ripple Air Lock	1.04	0.79
2256	3-Piece Air Lock	0.88	0.69

3200	Complete White Wine Starter Kit	232.29	180.00
3100	Complete Red Wine Starter Kit	241.42	190.00

See below for a description of the Complete Starter Kit.

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

The VDV (Vino del Vida) wine kits are designed to make about thirty 750 ml bottles of great wine in as little as 28 days; CC (Cellar Classic) 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, Pinot Noir, 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
Fast Flow Spigot	

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

- 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/newsletter/archives>

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