
THE STOMPER

The Monthly Winemaking Newsletter of grapestompers.com
September, 2004 Issue #50
<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 welcome 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: Even Lucille Ball Needs Her Vitamins
By Brant Burgiss, Editor

I don't know about the rest of you, but do you remember those hilarious episodes of "I Love Lucy"? There was one show in particular where Lucy was so desperate to become a movie star she decided to star in a commercial touting a product called Vitameatavegamin.

The commercial called for her to say the line "And it's so tasty, too," whereupon she would take a big swig of the nutrient-laden vitamin drink. But no one told Lucy that the stuff tasted wretched, and when she made an awful face, the director made her do the whole commercial over again. The problem was... the vitamin drink also contained alcohol, and soon (after several more takes) Lucy was "lit".

This funny episode reminds me that like humans, your wine also needs nutrients to ensure complete fermentation.

Learn how to add nutrients to your raw must - so your wine yeast can do its job - by reading this winemaking article:

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

On another note, RJ Spagnols has just released a new line of wine kits, called Vinodelvida World Tour. These kits contain 9 liters of premium grape juice and concentrates,

versus 7 liters of concentrate alone for the normal VDV kits, and the grapes for these kits come from around the world. Take a look at their new line:

- Chilean Sauvignon Blanc
- Italian Pinot Grigio (in stock, Item #3259)
- Washington Riesling
- Australian Shiraz
- Chilean Cabernet/Merlot
- Italian Valpolicella (in stock, Item #3148)

Read the official press release from Spagnols here:

http://www.rj-spagnols.com/wine_vinodelvi da.asp

We'll let you know when the other 4 VDV World Tour kits are in stock.

And finally...

We're presently updating our online winemaking tutorial, so that it more closely resembles the new procedures for the wine kits made by RJ Spagnols. We'll let you know when the upgrade is complete.

That wraps up my part for this month. Here's to you... and Happy Winemaking!

You can write to Brant at webmaster@grapestompers.com

BONNIE'S BIN: Order Pick Up During Annual Wine Tasting
By Bonnie Brown, Manager

One quick important reminder now because the October STOMPER won't be issued until after grapestompers' Annual Wine Tasting, scheduled for October 3rd. You need to know before you arrive:

- If you want to place orders for pick up on the 3rd of October, please do so by September 27th so we have adequate time to assemble, charge out, and have ready for you. The day of the tasting is so busy we will not be putting orders together. We will have your names on the boxes near the loading dock. We ask that you pick them up on your way out so nothing gets damaged while sitting in a warm vehicle. You will be asked to sign for your packages to lessen any potential confusion.

With that bit of business completed, let's move over to fun!

Do you do woodcrafting, candle making or any other mountain art and plan to attend the annual tasting? If so, please call Tom at 1-800-233-1505 so we can set up some space and let you display your wares and/or demonstrate your craft.

There will be several craftsmen here for the day selling their items. It is looking like a great day of amusements.

Jimmy Bengé will be cooking a few things using wine in all recipes. Finger foods will be provided. Bring cameras, friends, wine glasses, good wine stories, and lots of pleasant weather! We are looking forward to seeing each of you on the mountaintop.

I saw the following on my daily wine calendar:

Did you know...

In the U.S., wines made from sauvignon blanc grapes can legally be called either sauvignon blanc or fumé blanc.

It's not necessarily true (as many people suppose) that the ones labeled fumé blanc have a smoky character (fumé means "smoked" in French).

Here's to a good harvest and HAPPY WINEING!

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: Parlez-Vous Southernese?
by Tom Burgiss, Owner

The month of September promises to be action-packed for us here at grapestompers.com. We have enjoyed the company of our French winemaking intern, Hughes Baggio, who hails from Brest, France and attends school in Toulouse. Since he is only in the 4th week of his 12-week internship, we look forward to more fun around the Bodega as we try to speak Southern English to a Frenchman! Thanks to 'Hugo', we have finally learned the correct pronunciation of Pouilly-Fuisse, which of course is made from the Chardonnay grape and the skins have been allowed to stay in the must for 2 to 3 days to give more flavor and body. To us home winemakers, we call it our concentrated wine kit - #3245 Ruisseau Blanc! It's the fullest bodied white wine that we carry, and it will save you some money when compared to a commercially purchased wine.

In my taking folks through the steps of making wine, I always mention the 3 enemies of wine: Oxygen, bacteria, and mold. I shock them when I ask that they stay away from Clorox (chlorine) as a guard against bacteria. Chlorine does some funky things to wine that are not desirable, and that also includes the corks!

Prior to bottling, we scrub our floors in the bodega with B-T-F (Sanitizer, #2745 Iodophor type) instead of Clorox.

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

Make it a habit to thoroughly clean and dry each piece of winemaking equipment before putting it away in storage.

When the time comes to break out your gear for the next batch, you won't be slowed down by the extra scrubbing required to clean up all the old gunk and bacteria from the last use.

Hidden special:
#2597A Refractometer 0-32 Brix, with ATC
Reg. \$69.99, this month only \$50.00

That's a 28 percent savings for a product whose suggested retail price is actually \$99.00. This sturdily built refractometer measures Brix accurately (+/- 0.2% Brix) in the field so you can select the best time for harvesting. No batteries required. All you have to do is calibrate it before use with distilled water. It's easy to read results. Automatically compensates for temperature. Includes pipette, calibration screwdriver, carrying case, and complete instructions.

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

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

Furthermore, I need to emphasize that we NEVER recommend you make your homemade wines with "city water". A lot of cities tend to add too much chlorine in the system (you can even smell as well as taste) because they are afraid of reporting any bacteria in their supply to their consumers.

Last but certainly not least, please mark your calendar for October 3rd. We want you to bring your homemade wines for all to taste and enjoy at our 7th Annual Wine Festival.

See you there! Tom

P. S. To the Taylors of Minnesota who spent a week at our B & B enjoying winemaking, winery tours, biking, canoeing, and eating: Nancy, Bonnie, Jimmy and I enjoyed your company. We hope you have a great winter!

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:

Tom,
Thanks for the tour and the wonderful visit last Thursday. We are safely back in Wisconsin and are still talking about some of the ideas we shared during our visit. We have signed up for the newsletter and look forward to continued contact.

-- Dave King & Linda Kuhn
New Lisbon, WI

Send us your comments about your experience with grapestompers... we may just make you famous next month!

UPCOMING EVENTS
By Tom Burgiss, Owner

Take a look at the upcoming events for grapestompers.com, the Burgiss Barn, and Thistle Meadow Winery:

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Each Sunday through mid-October, the Burgiss Barn offers a lip-smacking lunch buffet from 11:30 AM to 2:00 PM.

You'll love the food prepared by Chef Jimmy and the gang at JIFF Catering. We'll even throw a hot yeast roll to you when you sit down... so bring your catcher's mitt. Lunch costs \$8.00 for adults, which includes everything... meats, veggies, rolls, dessert, drink, and the tip.

See the Burgiss Barn's web site for information on live bluegrass and mountain music, with dances held on several Saturday nights this season:

<http://www.burgissbarn.com>

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Make your plans to attend grapestompers' 7th Annual Wine Festival on Sunday, October 3rd at our location in Laurel Springs, NC. Please call or e-mail to register for this event 800-233-1505. Admission is only \$5.00 per person, and includes wine tasting, heavy hors d'oeuvres, live music, and local artisans showing off their handmade crafts.

Customers of grapestompers.com are invited to come and show off the wines they've made during the previous year. If this interests you, please call Tom at the number above.

Other local wineries from the Yadkin Valley have been invited to participate, so be sure and mark your calendar.

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Folks who live in the area near Charlotte, NC should mark their calendars for the second annual Great Grapes! Wine and Music Festival, to be held Saturday and Sunday on October 9th-10th at Symphony Park beside SouthPark Mall.

Tickets are \$15 in advance; \$20 at the door. Check out <http://www.greatgrapesfest.com/ggchar.htm> for details.

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Regardless of your location, you can always find a local wine event at this great web site:

<http://www.localwineevents.com/>

GUEST COLUMN - Best-Laid Plans Foiled By A Cork
By Ed Williams, Greensboro News & Record (NC)

For the faint of heart, turn back now from this cautionary tale I call "The Taming of the Screw."

My story begins at a farewell party for a newspaper colleague, and as host, it falls to me to lay in suitable libations. With a crowd of journalists, I've learned it's better to have too much than not enough.

It's 20 minutes before the guests will arrive, and I giddily pull from my collection a Double Magnum of 1996 McDowell Syrah. Five years earlier, on a night when I should have had enough but instead had too much, I was the accidental high-bidder on this bottle at a wine tasting/arts charity auction.

A Double Magnum is equal to four regular bottles of wine. Although it's an interesting conversation piece, it's about as practical as mounting a sperm whale over the fireplace mantle.

Except on a night like this.

I plan to pull the cork on this hefty brute, decant it into something suitably pretentious and finally, finally get shed of it.

Ah, the best-laid plans of cellar rats and men.

I rumble through my impressive collection of artifacts that cut, peel, extract, strain and pull anything associated with a wine bottle. That collection, just ask my wife, puts

to shame the power tools in my garage.

I reach for my prize opener, a medieval-looking lever that could probably change a tire. It's then that I discover that a Double Magnum equal to four bottles is corked by a cork roughly the size of four corks. I discover, too, that my prized corkscrew is no match for the tree limb stuffed into the mouth of the Double Magnum.

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

Here's a new twist on labeling bottles:
Instead of trying to get the label wet and then stick it to a dry bottle, I wipe the bottle with a wet sponge and then stick the dry label to the wet bottle.

You don't have to worry about using too much water because only so much will stick to the bottle. And when you are finished there is no glue water or mess to clean up afterwards.

Our thanks to Jesse Brew for providing this great winemaking tip.

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

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

My prized corkscrew is simply shredding that cork, burrowing a groove through the middle - and stopping tantalizingly short of the nectar inside. I again plunder my collection of wine artifacts but can find no alternative weapon.

It's 10 minutes before the guests will arrive, so I do what any red-blooded, red-wine drinker might do: I take to the garage, grab the biggest power drill I can find and start hollowing the center of that cork. If I can just punch through to the liquid inside, I reason, I can release that nectar into my pretentious decanter and no one will be the wiser.

Now, if you've ever tried to strain wine through a little bitty hole in a cork, you know what happened next: nothing.

Well, next to nothing.

Not until I went whaling away at that big old cork again with my big old drill, spitting cork bits across the kitchen and showering the chips, the chip dip and my wife - my wife who was startled at the sight of a grown man, long past giddy, whaling away at a wine bottle with Black & Decker.

And that's right about the time the first guests manage to arrive early, startled to find me juggling a huge wine bottle, an even bigger Black & Decker drill, a strainer for cork bits and a suitably pretentious decanter.

But my tale grows darker. Flash forward three weeks later.

[Ed's tale will be continued next month]

Ed Williams is the High Point City Editor for the Greensboro News and Record, one of the largest daily newspapers in North Carolina. He frequently writes articles about the wine industry in the Tar Heel state and enjoys sharing good wine with friends.

You may write to Ed at EdWilliams@news-record.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 order, as well as our heartfelt thanks. So what are you waiting for??

COOKING WITH WINE: Italian Peasant Chicken

Editor's Note: In May, we asked for your input regarding your favorite recipes made with wine. We've had some great responses so far, and Chef Jimmy can't wait to see more!

The following is the fourth installment of our customers' favorite recipes made with wine. If you would like to submit your recipe, send it to jimmy@grapestompers.com.

This recipe was submitted by Dave Rolczynski (aka "Rosy") from Enumclaw, Washington.

Rosy's Kitchen
Italian Peasant Chicken

INGREDIENTS

8-12 chicken thighs (breasts and other parts work also, but the thighs look and taste the best)
¼-½ cup olive oil
½-1 med. size head garlic, cloves finely sliced
1 large onion (white or yellow), chopped into medium size pieces
½ cup all-purpose flour
½ gal. inexpensive red wine (white can be used, and works best when using chicken breasts only. Avoid sweet wine, unless that's all you have)
Salt
Coarsely ground Pepper

DIRECTIONS

Trim excess fat from chicken thighs. Remove skins if you want lower fat content.

In a large sauté pan, sauté onion in olive oil over medium high heat, until lightly browned, adding garlic a couple of minutes before the onions are done (garlic should be tender only).

Remove garlic and onion to another container.

Flour your chicken, and then sauté it in the same pan, with remaining oil until it is well browned. Pour off fat.

Disperse your garlic and onion over top of chicken, and fill pan with wine to cover chicken. Simmer until wine is ½ reduced. Move chicken in pan often to ensure that it doesn't stick to the bottom.

Cover chicken with wine again, and simmer until the liquid is approximately ½ to ¾ reduced. Add salt and coarsely ground pepper to taste.

Enjoy!

CORKY' S WINEMAKING DEFINITION

Breathe

- Describes the process of allowing wine to have prolonged contact with air in order to reach full flavor. This is usually done through decanting a wine, but this can also be accomplished by simply uncorking a bottle and pouring wine into a glass and letting it sit for a while.

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

NEW PRODUCTS

These are products that were recently added to our catalog:

- Item #2214A Bucket Opening Tool, on special this month
- Item #3269 GC Pinot Blanc, 10 lt, \$49.39
- Item #3259 VDVWT Pinot Grigio, 9 lt, \$54.12
- Item #3148 VDVWT Valpolicella, 9 lt. \$59.62
- Item #2606B 24" Plastic Degasser/Mixer, \$15.62
- Item #2107 Beer Bottle, 500 ml Blue Flipper, \$21.01 case
- Item #2107A Flipper top (replacement for above), \$0.40 ea
- Item #2124 Bottle, 750 ml Champagne, 12 per case, \$16.94
- Item #2743T Oak Tea Bag, Med Toast American, 1.3 oz \$0.99
- Item #2730A Tartaric Acid, 3 oz, \$2.93
- Item #2597A Refractometer with ATC, 0-32 Brix, \$69.99
- Item #2597 Refractometer, 45-82 Brix, \$69.99
- Item #4326 Wine Breather (SS aerating funnel), \$19.25

If you have a suggestion for a new product, please call us at 1-800-233-1505. Special orders welcomed for unique winemaking items or supplies.

THIS MONTH' S SPECIALS

grapestompers' specials for the month of September 2004:

Item #	Description	Reg. Price	Special
3122	VDV Valpolicella	53.13	45.16
3120	VDV Bourgeron (Burgundy)	51.26	43.57
3146	CC Spanish Tempranillo	95.26	80.97
3173	WA Black Currant Merlot	50.36	*****
	Buy one at regular price, get the second one for half price (\$25.18). Only while supplies last.		
2254D	Bottle Drainer Wheels (ea)	3.52	2.99
2214A	Bucket Opening Tool (New Item)	5.17	4.39
2599	Adhesive Thermometer	2.08	1.77
2735	Bentonite, 4 oz.	1.32	1.12
2730	Acid Blend, 3 oz.	1.92	1.63
2701	Red Star Montrachet Wine Yeast	0.44	0.29
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, WA, and OB wine kits are designed to make about thirty 750 ml bottles of great wine in as little as 28 days;

CC (Cellar Classic) and CSG (Cru Select Gold) 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
CCH = Cellar Classic Harvest 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
VDVWT = Vino del Vida - World Tour Series 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
Fast Flow Spi got	

And you get the following items free (\$16.79 value):

- 30 Customized Wine Labels (text of your choice)
- Triple scale hydrometer
- 1.5" 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 refund of \$19.95 on your credit card... that's like getting the video at no cost! 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 also save on shipping if you can locate 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 offer 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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