



# The Stomper

The Free Monthly Winemaking Newsletter  
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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 welcome to pass along this newsletter to your winemaking friends; we only ask that it be sent in its entirety. HOT TIPS are sprinkled throughout the newsletter, and if you look carefully, you may even find a HIDDEN SPECIAL!

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### Feature Article

## Soaking Up Wine Knowledge

by Sam Wilder

Like a sponge, my mind has soaked up an unimaginable amount of information since I began my time here at Thistle Meadow Winery. I've had a wonderful crew of mentors teaching me basic methods of wine making, and through every day interaction, I've been able to pick up knowledge about more wines than I knew existed.

While I could write for days about the various regions of countless varieties of grape, why would I want to? Anyone could type "Carmenere" or "Sauvignon Blanc" into an internet search engine and instantly receive hundreds of web pages about the history, chemical makeup, or specific growing conditions of those grapes. The information that I've learned to appreciate the most is the information Tom Burgiss, the owner himself, shares on an individual, personal basis.

For example, within the first few days of my internship, during a tasting, I noticed Tom blending wines I had never seen blended together - Malbec and Cabernet Franc. As a retired pharmacist, I had no doubt that Tom knew exactly what he was doing, but nevertheless, I was curious. As I listened closer, I heard Tom explaining a few of Malbec's weak points. Malbec is a grape grown in soil rich with calcium carbonate (chalk), and it may have a very rash first taste, but as you drink, it becomes mellower. Malbec also has a very pleasant, clean finish.

Tom then went on to explain the qualities of Cabernet Franc. Cabernet Franc is a dryer red wine that is an exceptional blending wine, but only after, at least, two years of aging. That gives the very astringent Cab. Franc tannins time to mellow. Also, Cabernet Franc, on its own, has a very abrupt finish, and leaves a little something to be desired.

At first, Tom would pour the tasters a small taste of each wine separately, and I would watch the tasters' faces as they would attempt to palate the wine. I would then watch the tasters smile and nod as Tom blended the two wines, creating a wonderful concoction that highlighted the best qualities of each wine.

I've also learned the necessity of the removal of excess sulfites from the wine before bottling. One morning, as I prepared to bottle a batch of our Horse Stomp Red wine, Tom stopped and sniffed the wine. He recoiled and then had me take a whiff. I had no idea what was in store for me, and as I took in a nose full, I began to cough and my nose began to itch.

Sulfites are added to wine to keep the wine from becoming carbonated by killing off the excess yeast. If all of the sulfites are not then "fizzed" out, using a special drill attachment, they produce an offensive, pungent odor that does not affect the taste of the wine, but simply makes the wine aroma much less appetizing, and can still result in carbonation.

While I nearly had my nose burnt off while learning about sulfites, it was certainly a lesson worth learning, and a technique I've applied to every carboy I've bottled since. Needless to say, I've spent a good deal of time learning a lot about the unique market that is the wine industry. Whether I've been pouring a Valpolicella, or using a power drill to stir a wine to prep it for bottling, there is a lesson to be learned with every experience.



All of us wish you a Happy 4th of July!

## Hot Tip

### Wine and Cheese Pairings

Try these pairings to tempt your palate:

Zinfandel with asiago; Shiraz with gouda; Chardonnay with Camembert; Merlot with aged Monterey Jack; Cab Sauvignon with Carmody; and Riesling with emmental.

Source: *Wine Lover's Calendar*

Submit your hot winemaking tip here:

[www.grapestompers.com/submit\\_ideas.asp](http://www.grapestompers.com/submit_ideas.asp)

## New Winemaking DVD Available Soon

by Tom Burgiss

Well folks, we've been promising a new winemaking DVD, and it is about to roll off the presses! This will be the fifth version of the video, starring many of the friendly faces of the grapestompers.com staff.

The new version will offer an updated intro, followed by a menu of wine kit types. The idea is that you click a button to see the part of the instructional video that pertains to the type of kit you are making. For instance, if you have a crushed grape pack kit from Cellar Craft, you would select the "Cellar Craft" icon on the menu; if you are making an Orchard Breezin' kit or a Heron Bay Summer Mist kit, you would select the "Fruit Flavored Wines" button.

That way, you only see what you need to see, instead of having to watch the instructions for ALL types of kits. This will save you some time and make the video more customized for your situation. Here are the selections you will see:

- **Spagnols** (for all kits made by RJ Spagnols, i.e. Vino Del Vida, Grand Cru, Cellar Classic, Cru Select, etc.)
- **Heron Bay** (4 week Premium and 6 week Ultra Premium series)
- **Cellar Craft** (crushed grape pack kits)
- **Fruit Flavored Wines** (for Heron Bay Summer Mist and Orchard Breezin' kits)

We are REALLY EXCITED about the new 12 liter 5-week red wine kits with crushed California grape packs from Cellar Craft International. **Our first shipment of these kits arrived last week.** Each kit contains 10.5 liters of must plus 1.5 liters of virgin crushed grapes. There are no colorings, flavorings, or non-grape esters or botanicals used in these wine kits. They offer true varietal

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### Latest Wine Kit News

## RJ Spagnols Discontinues 7-Liter VDV Kits

During our visit to the 2006 HWBTA Convention last month, we learned that the 7-liter Vino Del Vida wine kits are being discontinued in favor of a 9-liter size. No more kits are being made in the 7-liter size, and the 9-liter sizes will start to appear in our online catalog as we sell out of the old style. grapestompers already stocks 3 kinds of the new 9-liter size; see the article entitled "New Products" on the next page.

Cellar Craft International unveiled 4 new 12-liter crushed grape pack wine kits at the same convention. Unfortunately, no wine was available for tasting, so we cannot give you our opinion of these kits. But if these "junior" crushed grape kits taste anything like their larger siblings, Cellar Craft will have a hit on their hands.

These five-week kits consist of 10.5 liters of juice and 1.5 liters of crushed grapes from California, hence the 12-liter product description. **We already have a limited supply of this new product line in stock, so look for them in our online catalog!** Here are the item numbers and prices:

**CF0154 Cab Sauvignon - \$85.43**

**CF0155 Syrah - \$85.43**

**CF0156 Merlot - \$85.43**

**CF0157 Amarone - \$98.89**

Heron Bay has delayed the initial shipment of the new Tangerine Viognier Summer Mist kit. We will let you know when it is in stock and available for purchase online. Thanks for your patience!

Due to the strength of the Canadian dollar vs. the US dollar, rumor has it that wine kit prices will go up as of August 1, 2006. This is because the vast majority of wine kits are produced in Canada. So if you were on the fence about ordering a wine kit, we recommend you do so in July before the prices go up.



## Customer Feedback

Dear grapestompers,

Recently my wife, Cindy Shaw, and I placed an order with grapestompers. The order was promptly shipped and we had our wine kit sooner than expected.

You can imagine my excitement upon waking up in the morning and finding the order neatly stacked next to our gate. I immediately took the boxes in and began ripping them apart to examine the contents. I guess I was careless and did not pay attention to much besides the new carboy and the Heron Bay wine kit, obviously thinking and imagining the thrill of creating a world class Liebfraumilch for my wife and I to enjoy.

Anyway once the thrill of receiving the goods from your company ebbed and I calmed down to put everything in its place I could not find some of the items. I asked my wife to call and report the shortage, which she did. She called after hours and spoke with the owner Tom, who expressed his concern and would look into it. The very next day, Tom called Cindy back and assured her that the shipment had been checked and rechecked and that all items were included.

Well to conclude this story, Cindy discovered where I hid the "missing" items this morning and called me with the embarrassing news. I owe everyone an apology and especially Tom. I am sorry for my carelessness and any problems I may have caused.

PLEASE do not ban me from future shipments!! I promise to only open the boxes under close supervision of Cindy or other competent persons who will watch me closely to ensure I will never do this again. Thank You for your great service and your great products!!

Very Sincerely Yours,

John Brown  
Dade City, FL

## New Products

Here is a list of new products we've added since last month:

2433M PVC Capsule, Blue, \$0.14  
 2432M PVC Capsule, Purple, \$0.14  
 2687 Ferrari Auto Bottle Filler, \$14.99  
 5039 Wine Bottle Caddy, \$9.99  
 5040 Wine Bottle Rack, Scroll, \$21.99  
 5041 Wine Bottle Tube, Chefs, \$6.50  
 5042 Wine Bottle Tube, Grapes, \$6.50  
 5043 Wine Bottle Holder, Chef, \$12.99

*New, larger sized VDV kits - 9 liters instead of the old style 7-liter size*

3139 VDV Cab/Shiraz, 9L size, \$56.36  
 3114 VDV Bergamais, 9L size, \$52.73  
 3222 VDV Riesling, 9L size, \$49.55

*The following products are whimsical stainless steel sculptures made to hold your favorite bottle of wine. 8" x 3" x 12"*

5173 Dentist, \$63.50  
 5174 Tennis Player (female), \$65.50  
 5176 Esquire (female), \$65.50  
 5177 Dog (standing), \$63.50  
 5178 Cat (standing), \$63.50

[See these products online now.](#)

*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.*

*Corky's Corner*

## Winemaking Definition

### Petiole

A part of a grape vine, the petiole is the stem that connects a leaf to the vine.

Look for other wine-related definitions by viewing our online Glossary at [www.grapestompers.com/glossary.asp](http://www.grapestompers.com/glossary.asp)

## Hot Tip

### Preventing Wine Headaches

Medical research has shown that the most likely cause of wine headaches are chemicals called histamines, and not sulfites as is commonly thought.

To prevent a wine headache, try taking an antihistamine tablet before drinking wine. Of course, you'll always get a headache if you drink too much!

*Have a tip to submit? Let us know your favorite winemaking tip by going to:*

[www.grapestompers.com/submit\\_ideas.asp](http://www.grapestompers.com/submit_ideas.asp)

*Monthly Specials*

## Specials for July 2006

Item #	Description	Reg. Price	Special
3140	Cellar Classic Bergamais, 15L	\$81.82	\$65.45
3130	Cellar Classic Cab/Shiraz, 15L	\$92.72	\$74.18
3233	Cellar Classic Chenin Blanc, 15L	\$77.27	\$61.82
3136	Cellar Classic Zinfandel, 15L	\$92.73	\$74.18
3156	Grand Cru Cabernet Franc, 10L	\$64.55	\$51.64
3159	Cellar Classic Grande Shiraz, 15L	\$93.64	\$74.91
3270	Grand Cru Riesling, 10L	\$56.36	\$45.08
3223	Vino Del Vida Liebfraumilch, 7L	\$44.88	\$35.90
3221	Vino Del Vida Fume Blanc, 7L	\$45.87	\$36.70
2254	Bottle Drainer, holds 81 bottles	\$30.82	\$19.95
4609	Wine Chill Bottle Cooler	\$7.27	\$5.82
5050	Flip Flop Wine Glass Holder	\$4.29	\$3.43
4459	"Got Wine?" Cap, Black	\$15.00	\$11.99
4459A	"Got Wine?" Cap, Burgundy	\$15.00	\$11.99
2744	Super Smoother	\$2.27	\$1.82
2608	Floating Thermometer	\$5.50	\$4.40
2253	Bottle Rinser, Vinator	\$13.79	\$10.99
2308	Corks, Agglomerated, #9 x 1.5"	\$0.12	\$0.09
2240	Plastic Stirring Paddle, 18"	\$2.71	\$2.16
3100	Complete Wine Kit - Red	\$241.42	\$199.00
3200	Complete Wine Kit - White	\$232.29	\$189.00

*Guest Column*

## Cool Climate Wines

The following article on cool climate wines was compiled from notes taken during a presentation and wine tasting at the 2006 HWBTA conference by Ken Chase, the winemaker of Heron Bay Wines.

Ken led a very interactive and entertaining group session, where hints were provided on how to better taste and judge wines. The topic of his discussion was the comparison of cool climate wines versus wines made from grapes that were grown in hotter regions, and the samples of wines we tasted illustrated the difference.

### HIDDEN SPECIAL

Item #2260 Portuguese Floor Corker (red), on sale during July 2006 (while supplies last) for only \$39.99. Save over \$18.00 when compared to the regular price. Be sure to ask for the hidden special in the "Comments" box when ordering online, or you will not get the special price.

First of all, just what determines whether a wine region is considered a "cool climate"? The basic definition of cool climate is that the mean temperature of the vineyard is below 15 degrees Celsius (59 degrees Fahrenheit) the month before harvest. This is often described as an Alpha climate. Other cool weather spots that are close to this temperature (16-20 degrees Celsius, or 61-68 F) are considered Beta climate.

A good example of a well-known region that is considered as cool climate is Bordeaux. Examples of regions that are not cool climate would be California or Australia.

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character with aroma, flavor, and body - at AFFORDABLE prices. The wines for this great new series of kits are **now on sale & in stock** in our warehouse:

- California Reserve **MERLOT** - Includes 30 grams American toasted oak
- California Reserve **CABERNET** - Includes 40 grams French oak
- California Reserve **SYRAH** - Includes 30 grams French oak
- Global Cuvee **AMARONE** style - Uses Italian Valpolicella concentrate; crushed grape pack made from California Cabernet Sauvignon and Barbera grapes and sun-dried red wine grapes. Includes 40 grams of untoasted American oak.

We hope everyone has a fun and safe Independence Day. Thanks, Tom

# Have a Happy Fourth of July!

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**Key indicators of a cool climate wine include:**

- Higher acidity
- Lower pH
- Lighter body (generally less sugar / less alcohol)
- A tendency towards more tannins in red wines
- Inconsistent harvest. On average, only 30% of cool climate harvests are considered good, compared to 80% or better for non cool climate wines
- Where allowed, wine is a good candidate for chaptalization (i.e. Alsace)
- Wetter / colder weather in these climates leads to more mold and rot in the field

**Advantages of cool climate wines:**

- Wines are more elegant and delicate
- Wines smell fruitier, and have a more concentrated flavor
- Canopy management is easier
- Reds tend to have much more rich color
- Wines will not tend to oxidize as much as a southern climate wine

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*The Stomper*

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## Wine Drops

*Wine Drops is a catch-all for various tidbits that we find interesting. It may be anything - a wine recipe, a wine joke, links to neat web sites, etc. This month, we offer a wine recipe from one of our customers.*

### Sangria

This wine recipe was furnished by Margie Jacky of Greensboro, NC. Thanks, Margie!

### Ingredients

- 3/4 cup brandy
- 1/2 cup Cointreau
- 4 cups red wine (you don't need the good stuff for this, an inexpensive Burgundy or Chianti works just great)
- Juice of 2 lemons
- Juice of 2 limes
- Juice of 2 oranges
- 2 thin sliced oranges
- 2 thin sliced lemons
- You can add any other fruit that you like, apples or peaches are good, if in season
- Sugar to taste

### Method

Mix everything together; start with a small amount of sugar and then add more to taste. Let it chill for several hours so the fruit flavors blend.

If you have added sweet fruit, hold off on adding too much sugar until the fruit has blended with the wine.

Stir occasionally and taste for sweetness – it's not intended to be a sweet drink, but make it to your taste.

Serve over ice.

This makes a very potent drink, especially if you eat the fruit, so for the lighter drinkers you can add club soda to their glass when you serve it for a great sparkling drink.