



The Stomper

The Free Monthly Winemaking Newsletter
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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. 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

Tall Tales and Rumors Abound In Summertime

by Brant Burgiss

This issue of *The Stomper* is dedicated to all the mothers out there... especially those with grape-stained feet. Happy Mother's Day from all of us at grapestompers.com!

Anyone can make great tasting wine from the kits sold by [grapestompers](http://grapestompers.com) - even busy moms with hectic schedules. Although in the case of my mother (Nancy, seen in the photo at left), why make wine when your husband will do it for you? That's even better.

One of my favorite comic strips is "Snuffy Smith". Artists Fred Lasswell and John Rose have done a good job of introducing the ways of mountain folk to the rest of the world. Ever notice that when the weather is nice Aunt Loweezy is at the "gossip fence" with her neighbor Elviney? Guess that's what happens in the summertime... you drink good wine, talk and share rumors about anybody and anything.

Hidden special: Save over \$13 when you buy our red floor corker (Item #2260) during May 2007 (while supplies last) for only \$45.00. Be sure to ask for the hidden special in the "Comments" box when ordering online, or you will not get the special deal.

And speaking of rumors... may I share some choice tidbits* from the homebrew industry that I've overheard recently?

- Wine kit prices may increase in the near future due to increased transportation costs and the strengthening Canadian dollar. Buy your kits now before it's too late!
- The Holiday Wine Series will be announced next month by Heron Bay.
- Due to popular response to their limited release, Cellar Craft is considering offering Cabernet Quartet as part of their regular wine kit line-up. We hope this is true, because this kit was awesome, even at 4 months!
- Heron Bay is thinking about converting one of their Premium wine kits to an EDW (Easy Drinking Wine) format, making it easier to drink sooner. Pass the bottle!
- A fabulous new product will be introduced at the HWBTA Conference in Reno, NV.

*DISCLAIMER: Some rumors come true, some don't. It's a risk we're willing to take.



Happy Mother's Day from [grapestompers](http://grapestompers.com)

Important Announcement

Status of Winery Grade Wine Kits

Not long ago, we announced the launch of Heron Bay's Micro-Winery Series wine kits featuring winery grade concentrates with higher levels of pure varietal content. These Heron Bay branded kits have been released and are currently being sold in Canada by homebrew retailers. In the US, however, these kits are being marketed under the US Elite Winery Supplies brand name and sold by US Elite. This means the Heron Bay brand name is not attached to the winery grade products being sold in the United States. Because of this, we are not able to buy these kits from Heron Bay.

Unfortunately, negotiations between our distributor and US Elite have fallen through, which means that grapestompers.com will not be selling these winery grade kits. We apologize for any inconvenience this may have caused.

Hot Tip

Save Your Salad!

Having wine with your salad? Vinegar in salad dressings usually kills the flavor in wine, so try to dress the salad with wine or a little lemon juice instead of vinegar.

This tip provided courtesy of WineZap.com

Submit your hot winemaking tip here:

www.grapestompers.com/submit_ideas.asp

Three Questions For You

by Tom Burgiss

Do you commute? I wish that everyone could come to our little spot in the mountains in North Carolina. I must admit that none of the GPS maps even carry our little paved road linking NC 18 and the Blue Ridge Parkway. Let's put it another way, we never will be classified as one of "America's Worst Commutes" as featured on May 7th issue of U.S. News and World Reports' front cover. Many of our customers live in those areas. To those of you who do have a commute, just remember, if you had a bad day, have a glass of wine, you need it; if you had a good day, you deserve it!

As for myself, my commute involves walking over a mountain stream on a foot bridge to work! So that is reason enough to visit us on your summer vacation.

Enjoying your port? Right about now, those of you who ordered the Orange/Chocolate Port (Restricted Quality - AKA as RQ's) should be enjoying a great port! Here at grapestompers we could not stop talking about the great taste. You may remember that all of our suppliers offer RQ's or similar types once a year. Each year you have to order 3 to 4 months ahead and the sad thing is they will be no longer available. It's sort of like ordering a pair of shoes from a mail order catalog... will they fit? I must say that we have never had a bad experience yet! So here at grapestompers, when our fine port was just bottled, it reminded me to share with you our pleasant surprises throughout these 10 years. Each manufacturer backs their products 100%.

How secure is secure? Recently, in order to preserve the integrity of your credit card, we are asking you to call us with your credit card number. Pam is here to take it 9 AM to 5 PM Eastern Monday-Friday at 1-800-233-1505. Individual computers are being violated by criminals and by both of our efforts, we can succeed. Since this change we've had positive responses from our customers knowing that full effort is being made to protect you. In fact, it is really ironic; most call us with the credit card numbers and then remember to add a forgotten item or two to their order! So it works many ways!

What prompted this change was a TV program called "DATELINE", showing just how easily a criminal could obtain your Social Security number, your bank account number, your drivers license number, your date of birth, your credit card number and believe it or not, your Mother's maiden name! All for a small fee!

So thanks for your cooperation in helping all of us to eliminate these criminal acts. Pam is well pleased with your prompt reply to her, which speeds up the processing of your order... helping us provide prompt service to you! Thanks, Tom

Latest Wine Kit News

New 12L Wine Kits Available from Cellar Craft

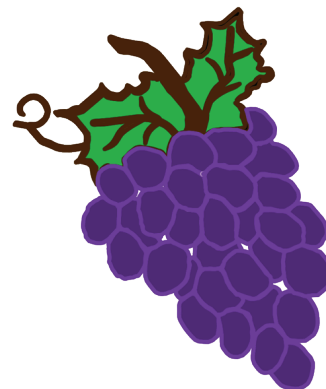
Five new varieties of 12L wine kits are now being made in Cellar Craft's five week series, three of which have been ordered and will be available for shipping from grapestompers.com on May 15!

The first kit is California Reserve **Pinot Noir** with a crushed grape pack. Cellar Craft uses 10.5 liters of California Pinot Noir must (and an accent of Pinotage) fermented on a 1.5 liter virgin California Pinot Noir crushed grape pack and French oak for this bright and fruity wine. Look for item #CF0486 - \$74.20.

Next up is Global Cuvée **Barbera** with a crushed grape pack. This kit contains 10.5 liters of California and Italian Barbera must fermented on a 1.5 liter virgin California Barbera crushed grape pack and untoasted American oak to deliver a medium-bodied wine with unique complexity and character. Look for item #CF0487 - get yours today for \$72.79.

The California Reserve **White Shiraz** comes with a 230 ml flavor reserve which features Viognier. This kit contains 12 liters of California Shiraz must, with just enough skin contact to offer a beautiful light salmon color. The wine is smooth and round, and reminiscent of strawberry, apricot, honeysuckle and tropical fruits. Ask for item #CF0485, which sells for \$61.25.

The two remaining 12L kits in this series (California Reserve **Pinot Grigio** and California Reserve **Chardonnay**) are available via special order. All of the kits in the 5-week 12L series make 30 bottles (750 ml) of wine.



Customer Feedback

Hello,

We are regular customers of yours and order all of our wine kits from you exclusively. While I have attempted to keep very exact records of each batch of wine, my husband (we'll call him "knucklehead") has deferred from my plan and has failed to follow the record keeping system I set up for him. We ordered a Chardonnay from you last fall. We have had so many compliments - such as "best Chardonnay I ever tasted", and "may I buy some from you?" (illegal) - that we wish to order the same brand again as our bottled supply is dangerously low. I am sincerely hoping that you have kept a record of our past orders. If so, would you please send us the information so that we can reorder this wonderful Chardonnay and you can bail Knucklehead out of the doghouse.

Thank you, as always, for the tremendous customer service we have received from you over the years! We wouldn't buy our kits anywhere else!

Vicky Warry
Goddard, KS

Dear Vicky,

We certainly want to get knucklehead out of a pinch, so the Chardonnay was #3249 VDV Chardonnay/Semillion!

Pam at grapestompers

Pam,

Thank you so much for sending me the wine info. We will be getting an order in shortly. You have saved Knucklehead from further nagging regarding this issue. Yes, you'd think these men would learn to defer to our wisdom after all these years, but you know how THEY are. I don't think I have the energy to try to train a new one, so I'm resigned to keeping him!

Although we could buy our wine kits locally, and probably save the shipping charges, we know we couldn't get the wonderful customer service we have received from you since we first started making our own wine. You've always promptly answered emails and helped us out over the phone. We've happily referred many people to Grapestompers! In this day and age when customer service is almost nonexistent, you, Tom and "the gang" shine through! Thanks again! Vicky Warry

New Products

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

- 4120 Door mat, \$15.00
"A Wine Snob and a normal person live here"
- 4121 Apron, burgundy, \$15.99
"Due to intense wine fog..."
- 4122 Apron, Harvest Design, \$15.99
- 4123 Oven glove / hot pad set, \$9.99
- 4459C "Wineaux" ball cap, black, \$15.00
- 4307 Socks, grape design \$5.50
- 4306 Socks, wine glass design \$5.50
- 2826 Wine Maker's Answer Book \$14.95
- 4404B Travel Mug, Burgundy \$4.29
"Due to intense wine fog..."
- 4404 Travel Mug, Burgundy \$4.29
"had wine... got coffee?"

New T-Shirts

* = Decorated with dazzling "rhinestones"

- * "How Merlot Can You Go?" \$19.99
- "Drinks Well With Others" \$15.00
- * "Group Therapy" \$19.99
- "Seven Days Without Wine Makes One Weak" \$15.00
- "Wineaux", \$15.00

[See all these new 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

Plonk

A wine of inferior quality.

Plonk is best consumed from a plastic cup at a boring party.

Look for other wine-related definitions by viewing our online Glossary at www.grapestompers.com/glossary.asp

Hot Tip

Patience, Grasshopper

Excited about making your first batch of wine at home? Aside from a lack of sanitation, a very common mistake made by novice winemakers is a lack of patience. Don't try and rush the fermentation process; let it happen naturally. Don't take any shortcuts from the prescribed instructions, and don't drink the wine before it's had a chance to age. Your patience will be rewarded!

Have a tip to submit? Just go to:

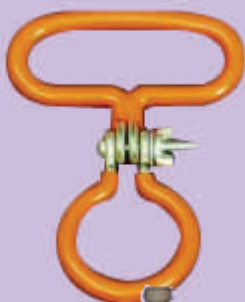
www.grapestompers.com/submit_ideas.asp

Monthly Specials

Specials for May 2007

Item #	Description	Reg. Price	Special
3131	Cellar Classic Chianti, 15L	\$87.73	\$69.99
3232	Cellar Classic Chard/Semillon, 15L	\$89.00	\$71.99
3284	CSP Australian Chardonnay, 16L	\$96.82	\$77.99
3115	VDV Cabernet Sauvignon, 9L	\$58.64	\$46.99
3211	OB Green Apple Gewurz, 7.2L	\$52.27	\$41.99
3275	Grand Cru Gewurztraminer, 10L	\$56.27	\$49.99
3163	CC Grand Vieux Chateau du Roi, 15L	\$93.64	\$74.99
3186	CSP French L'Collage, 16L	\$105.37	\$83.99
5116	Oak Barrel, 46L (holds 2 kits)	\$299.00	\$225.00
2202	Carboy Handle	\$5.90	\$4.99
2399	Fast Seal Tool	\$4.64	\$2.99
2729	Acid Blend, 1 lb.	\$4.99	\$3.99
2733A	Fermax, 1 lb.	\$5.36	\$4.29
2901	Waiter's Corkscrew	\$4.95	\$3.95
Various	All PVC Capsules	\$0.14	\$0.10
5044	9-Bottle Wine Rack, Pewter	\$28.99	\$22.99
5039	2-Bottle Wine Caddy	\$9.99	\$7.99
5055	3-Bottle Wine Rack	\$14.99	\$11.99
4610	Bottle Candle	\$4.00	\$2.99
3100	Complete Wine Kit - Red	\$241.42	\$199.00
3200	Complete Wine Kit - White	\$232.29	\$189.00

#2202



#5116

#3115



#2901



#2733A



Racking - How Much Is Enough?

When asked my concerns about racking, I replied that I am less concerned that I rack too much than that I rack too often. These are not the same thing.

There are several reasons to rack. First and foremost, one racks to remove the wine from lees that might otherwise cause off-flavors in the wine. One or two months on gross lees is never too long, and even four months on yeast lees is a reasonable period. Secondly, and almost as important as the first, one racks to help the wine achieve a clarity it cannot achieve without racking. Clarity extends from the inner surface of the closure to the bottom surface of the container, and a fine dusting of dead yeast on the bottom of a brilliantly clean secondary will give lie to the wine's clarity as soon as the wine is drawn off for bottling. Thirdly, one racks to test the stability of a wine. Racking helps a wine release captured CO₂, redistributes live yeast cells, and offers an opportunity for adjusting SO₂ and sorbic acid levels. Fourthly, racking ends transitional states (such as lifting the wine off of fining lees, or moving it from bulk aging containers to bottles).

I once made a wine that threw very fine lees -- dustings, really -- for almost two years. I racked it every 60 days for a total of 11 rackings. I don't think I racked it too much. The resulting wine was very good and improved for about four years.

I generally rack every 30-60 days, depending on the base ingredient, the amount and type of lees thrown (I rack off of gross lees [fruit pulp] sooner than I rack off of yeast lees), and the character of the wine (I rack wines with delicate nose less frequently than others). I very rarely rack less than 30 days after the previous racking. How many times do I rack? I rack until the wine clears and goes 30 days without throwing any more sediment -- a fine dusting is still sediment. On average, that is 4 rackings, but sometimes it is 6 or even 8. The wine dictates the schedule, not recipes or rules.

It is extremely important to keep the sulfite level up to an aseptic value. That is usually 30-50 ppm of SO₂, but the precise number is pH-specific. For low-pH wines (high acid), lower levels of SO₂ are acceptable. For example, a pH 3.4 wine requires twice as much SO₂ as a pH 3.1 wine to achieve the same level of antimicrobial protection. To maintain this protection, one has to add sulfites periodically until the wine is bottled. I usually add sulfites at every other racking, but only an SO₂ test kit, used in conjunction with a pH meter, can tell you precisely how much to add. But that is really another topic altogether.

I wouldn't worry about how many times a wine needs racking, but I would worry about racking too frequently. Exception number one: I like to pull my wine off of fining lees as soon as the wine becomes brilliant or within 3 weeks, whichever arrives first. Exception number two: I usually rack into bottles 30 days after stabilizing a wine. But none of the preferences I've mentioned here are regimen. In the final analysis, the wine dictates the schedule.

Jack Keller - Pleasanton, Texas
[The Winemaking Home Page](#)

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Wine Drops

Wine Drops is a catch-all for various tidbits that we find interesting. This month, we offer some web links and tips about Summer Mist wine kits.

Stretch Your Wine - Make A Spritzer!

Hey Brant hope all is well, Just wanted to share some tricks with wine kits we've purchased.

Most people who say they aren't wine drinkers will actually like a sweet wine. So this is what started us on the Heron Bay Summer Mist kits.

I use one of the HB Summer Mist kits and at initial kick off (Day 1) I add 1/2 of the sweetener bag. What this does is kick up the specific gravity (sugar content) as well as the alcohol at completion. I estimate them to finish at 9% - 10%.

Then at the final clearing stage I add the remaining sweetener. What you end up with is a pleasantly sweet wine, but not overly sweet as you would with the standard process. Black Cherry & Black Currant Merlot work great for these.

Also for a nice deck or pool side spritzer we use a plastic wine glass (which are good insulators) and fill it 1/2 with ice. Then take a Summer Mist wine & fill 1/2 full, then top it off with 7-Up or any white soda. They're very good and it makes the bottle go a lot further.

Enjoy!
Jim & Kathy Pirt, Asheboro, NC

Just ZAP Your Wine

<http://www.winezap.com>

This neat web site helps you find, price and compare wines. You can search wines by region, food pairing, type, price, and rating. It will even help you find a retailer who sells your favorite type of wine, including the year / vintage.

Homebrew Competitions and Festivals

<http://www.brewdad.com>

This new web site claims to be the number one source for an up-to-date list of homebrew festivals and competitions. For the moment, the site seems to focus more on beer than wine. Submit your event free!

WineMaker Magazine

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