



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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12th Annual Wine Festival is Here

By Glenn Graves

Don't forget to join us at Thistle Meadow Winery for our **12th Annual Wine Festival** on Saturday, **October 3rd** – from **noon until 5 p.m.** There will be artisans displaying and selling their creative wares, live music from **Naomi's Fancy**, and wine tasting from Thistle Meadow Winery.

The cost for this fun-filled fall day is only **\$5.00** and that is the price of your souvenir tasting glass. If you have already have a souvenir glass and do not wish to add to your collection, you can simply turn in your glass as you leave the party and get a refund. Now that's something you cannot beat anywhere around... a free wine festival! Parking is free for all visitors on the grounds of Thistle Meadow Winery in Laurel Springs, North Carolina.

You can call us for [directions](#) (800-233-1505) or simply follow Hwy. 18 North from Hwy. 421. Highway 421 is accessed by taking I-77 North out of Charlotte or taking Hwy. 421 North out of Winston-Salem. On Hwy. 18 continue north to Laurel Springs until you see the barn roof sign which says simply "winery." Turn right onto Elk Knob Road just after the barn. Then turn right again at the first driveway at the large sign. If you are coming along the Blue Ridge Parkway, simply turn onto Elk Knob Road at MP 246. We will be on the left side, in the valley, approximately 2.5 miles from the parkway.

Don't forget, if you do not want to eat lunch before you arrive, hotdogs and hamburgers and all the fixin's will be available for purchase.

Come join us for a great day of fun.

Feature Article

"Fuhgeddaboudit": Bulk Aging

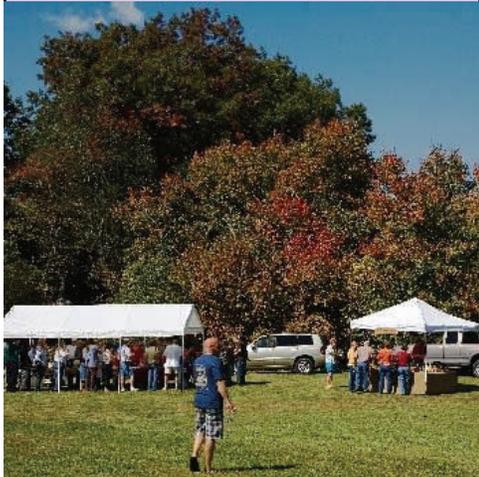
By Paul Kovacich

We have received a lot of questions concerning aging wine this month. You may have noticed that kit instructions say very little about what to do with your wine post-fermentation. As wine drinkers, we know that many wines get better with age. Many of you have asked what to do with your wine between 3-4, 8-6, even 10-12 months between the time you make it and the time you drink it. So in response, I thought I would explain some pros and cons for different methods of aging wine.

First off, if you are making an Island Mist, Summer Mist, or Orchard Breezin' type kit, this article is not for you. These kits come with a flavor pack that gives them their sweet character and flavor. They do not rely on aging to enhance their flavor. Once they are made, they can be bottled and enjoyed right away. Secondly, as a rule of thumb, I like to age dry white wines for 3-4 months and red wines 6-8 months or longer depending on the varietal.

The most asked question about aging is, "Bottle or carboy?" Where should you keep your wine during the all important aging process? I like to do my aging in the carboy. It has the distinct advantages of having a smaller footprint (takes up less space), and being more resistant to temperature change. If your temperature control goes out for some reason, a full carboy will keep its core temperature better than

Continued on page 4



Scene from the 2008 Wine Festival in Laurel Springs



Find your line

The best way to hit the right volume in your primary fermenter is by filling the carboy up to the neck with cool water. Rack or pour the water into the primary and draw a line with permanent marker at the water level. This will be the fill level.

Submit your hot winemaking tip here:

www.grapestompers.com/submit_ideas.asp

Which Wine to Order?

This is a question often asked of us... which wine should I order? As many of you are aware, we also have a sister company of grapestompers.com called Thistle Meadow Winery. As a result, many customers come into our winery to "taste" wines in order to pick out their favorite one to make at home! I will list our most popular requests for you. Because we are in the South, sweet wine sales are 56% of our business - the order of preference would be:

- [3278 - Orchard Breezin' Raspberry White Zinfandel](#)
- [3164 - Orchard Breezin' Blackberry Merlot](#)
- [3280 - Orchard Breezin' Peach Chardonnay](#)
- [3204 - Orchard Breezin' Pomegranite Wildberry Zinfandel](#)
- [3168 - Orchard Breezin' Cranberry Chianti](#)
- [3211 - Orchard Breezin' Green Apple Gewurztraminer](#)
- [3251 - Orchard Breezin' Kiwi Melon Pinot Grigio](#)

Sweet wines offer aroma and flavor immediately; however, after 1 year their decline starts. These sweeter wines are made to be served after bottling and are best served chilled. Now for the whites:

- [HB245 - Heron Bay Pinot Grigio](#)
- [HB160 - Heron Bay Gewurztraminer](#)
- [3248 - Cellar Classic German Riesling Auslese](#)

White wines are best made during the winter for summertime enjoyment. Next let's look at reds:

- [CF1515 - Amarone ***](#)
- [3117 - VDV Merlot 9 Liters](#)
- [HB185 - Merlot](#)
- [CF1245 - Old Vine Zinfandel***](#)
- [HB100 - Cabernet Merlot](#)
- [HB145 - Chianti](#)

Red wines take longer to mature; therefore, the longer you keep a red wine in storage, the better it will be. The wines marked *** will take longer than the others to reach their full maturity and flavor. Last but not least, if you are in the area, please come by and taste for yourself. This will help you decide which wine you want to try at home. Hope to see you at our wine festival Saturday, Oct. 3. Later, Tom

Wine Kit News

Heron Bay Announces Limited Release Kits

By Brant Burgiss

Heron Bay recently announced their limited release Appellation Series for 2010. The Appellation Series kits typically contain more varietal-specific juice and concentrate than the normal product line-up, so that explains their popularity. These kits are only available as a pre-order; the manufacturer typically makes just enough to cover demand. Unlike previous years, the App Series kits for 2010 are available in 8L (Blue Label) format only. There are NO 16L kits being made. Here's the list:

January release: [Austrian Grüner Veltliner](#) from Traisental (Lower Austria) – arriving in mid-January 2010 - 8L HB Blue Label - Stock Code HB080 - Your price: \$71.00.

February release: [French Mourvèdre](#) from Languedoc region (near Carcassonne) – arriving mid-February 2010 - 8L HB Blue Label - Stock Code HB085 - Price: \$71.00.

The pre-order deadline is the same for BOTH of these outstanding styles. Please **reserve these wine kits by Dec. 10, 2009. We cannot take any orders after this date.**

Information and ordering details on the 2010 Cellar Craft Limited Release wine kits will be added to our web site soon.

You have now found our Hidden Special for the month of October 2009 and we think you will really like this one. We are offering our #2260 Portuguese Floor Corker, regular \$66.57, this month only \$49.88. Be sure to mention the Hidden Special price in the comments section of the online order form to receive this deal.



Customer Feedback

Thank you for your outstanding value and customer service!

Paul Moore
Lamar, MO

Tom,
Thanks for pulling my order together today when I visited. It was 'crazy busy'. I appreciate the time you took to get it right.

David Pate
Mebane, NC

Pam,
As always, it's a pleasure doing business with grapestompers.com.

Steve Balducci
Framingham, MA

I selected these kits ([Heron Bay Cabernet Merlot](#) and [Heron Bay Pinot Grigio](#)) because of the \$7.95 shipping special in the September Stomper. Thanks so much. Love the deal.

Nela Spanke
Clarksville, AR

Thanks Pam, I received my order today (very fast) and I did find the 30 corks that I added. Thanks for your fast service and efficiency!

Jeff Graves
Staunton, VA

Pam, We received our order and wanted to thank you for choosing the labels. They look great!!! I started to ask you to pick them out if you wanted to but I figured you were busy enough without my add-ons. Thanks again.

Dempsey Fritts
Thomasville, NC

New Products

Here is a list of new products we've recently added to our online catalog:

ITEM #	DESCRIPTION
5411	Cork Cage Bottle Design, \$24.95
5419	Cork Cage Purse Design, \$24.95
5418	Cork Cage Barrel Design, \$24.95
5408	Bear Bottle Holder, \$30.00
4316	Poker Dogs Bottle Holder, \$28.00
4298	Bottle Holder, Frog, \$32.00

Be sure to place your pre-order now for the RJ Spagnols Restricted Quantity 16L Kits

[RQ110 Ehrenfelser, \\$104.91](#)
[RQ210 Malbec Syrah, \\$108.24](#)
[RQ310 Torrontes, \\$104.91](#)
[RQ410 Trio do Vinho Tinto, \\$121.58](#)
[RQ510 Cabernet Franc Merlot, \\$121.58](#)

These special kits are **PRE-ORDER ONLY!** Please check grapestompers.com product listings for closing order dates as orders cannot be taken after ending date.

[See all these new products online now.](#)

If you have a suggestion for a new product, please call us at 1-800-233-1505.

Corky's Corner

Winemaking Definition

Cloying:

Wine that is excessively sweet and lacks acidity. When sweetness and acid are in the right balance the result is the natural fresh sweetness of fruit juice.

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



Move your carboy, save your back

To make those full carboys easier to store and move around, place them on a large house plant dolly - a tray with rollers. These are available at any hardware, home supply, or plant store and are very reasonable. Save your back and avoid spilling wine all for around \$10.

Submitted by David Pater, Mebane, NC

Have a tip to submit? Just go to:

www.grapestompers.com/submit_ideas.asp

Monthly Specials

Specials for October, 2009

Item #	Description	Reg. Price	Special
***** \$7.95 SHIPPING ON EACH OF THE 2 KITS BELOW			
HB1110	CABERNET SAUVIGNON, 8L	\$63.56	\$63.56
HB045	RIESLING, 8L	\$59.56	\$59.56
***** NO LABELS OR OTHER DISCOUNTS WILL BE GIVEN ON ABOVE KITS—EACH ONE WILL SHIP IN A SEPARATE BOX			
3302	CS White Ice Wine, 10L (Exp. 10/09, 1 avail.)	\$100.93	\$75.00
3155	CSP La Rioja Neuva, 16L (Exp. 10/09, 1 avail)	\$120.38	\$85.00
3235	CC Johann. Riesling, 15L (Exp. 11/09, 1 avail)	\$72.88	\$58.30
3146	CC Tempranillo, 15L (Exp. 11/09, 1 avail.)	\$114.81	\$80.00
WE3592	Zinfandel Shiraz, 10L (Exp. 11/09, 4 avail.)	\$85.19	\$66.00
WE3281	SA Chenin Blanc, 15L (Exp. 11/09, 2 avail.)	\$120.37	\$85.00
WE010	Kiwi Pear Sauv. Blanc, 7.5L (Exp. 11/09, 6 av)	\$69.44	\$53.00
CF0485	White Shiraz, 12L (Exp. 9/09, 5 avail.)	\$71.33	\$52.00
3128	CC Cabernet Merlot, 15L	\$111.11	\$88.89
3255	CSP Pinot Grigio, 16L	\$116.67	\$93.34
3122	VDV Valpolicella, 9L	\$69.44	\$55.55
3220	VDV Chenin Blanc, 9L	\$57.41	\$45.93
3260	OB Orange Pass. Fruit Grenache, 7.2L	\$62.03	\$49.62
CF1245	Old Vine Zinfandel, 18L	\$117.00	\$93.60
HB025	Cabernet Shiraz, 16L	\$88.89	\$71.11
HB245	Pinot Grigio, 16L	\$86.67	\$69.34
2730	Acid Blend, 3 oz.	\$2.22	\$1.78
2240	Plastic Paddle, 18"	\$3.05	\$2.44
2609A	Bottle Brush	\$2.78	\$2.22
2714	Citric Acid, 3 oz.	\$2.03	\$1.62
2399	Fast Seal Tool	\$6.20	\$4.96
2648	Dried Elderberries, 8 oz.	\$9.25	\$7.40
2239A	Straining Bag, Large Elastic Top	\$2.78	\$2.22
6105	Guide To Winemaking DVD	\$19.95	\$15.96
2704	Red Star Cote Des Blanc Yeast (LIMIT 20)	\$0.44	\$0.35
2254A	Bottle Drainer, 45 Bottle	\$27.13	\$21.70
5217	Wine Away Stain Remover, 8 oz.	\$9.59	\$7.67
5369	Sorrento 10 Bottle Wine Rack	\$25.00	\$20.00
3100	Complete Wine Kit - Red	\$301.33	\$240.99
3200	Complete Wine Kit - White	\$294.16	\$230.99

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thirty bottles would.

As for aging in the bottle, not all of you have an army of carboys like me. So if you're ready to start another batch of wine, you'll need to free up your equipment by bottling. Don't worry, bottle aging is what the kit manufacturers suggest, and will produce just as fine a wine.

One more thing before you go and leave your wine alone for six months: be sure to rinse a sulfite solution on the inside of your bottle or carboy before you fill it with wine. This will create a protective barrier for the wine to prevent oxidation and spoilage. If you are planning on an extended aging process, I also suggest an extra addition of sulfite (1/8 teaspoon per 6 gallon batch) to prevent discoloration and microbial growth.

So practice patience, have a glass of wine, and let the aging process do all the work!

Hope to see you at the festival on Oct. 3!

Happy Winemaking, Paul

Winemaking has a Funny Side

By Pam Wyatt

I can honestly say something that not too many people can say today and that is I love my job! The people I work with as well as the folks that come into our shop in Laurel Springs and the folks I talk to every day on the phone are the best.

We encounter all kinds of 'characters' (Tom being "chief") and sometimes we have to chuckle at comments we receive by phone and email so I wanted to share some of them with you in hopes that they will bring a smile to your face.

A customer in Connecticut commented on the fact that we call for credit card information wrote "Well...this is different! I am at work during your hours so you may call my cell phone ONCE!" Normally if you answer, that's all it takes.

Another prospective buyer writes for advice..."I need directions of how to get grapes from off the vine into a wine recipe so I can brew it so later I can put it in my belly!" WHAT???

Short and sweet email from Mississippi, "You're so very complete." OK!

A caller last week told Tom "I have not received my email order confirmation yet." Tom asked "Have you checked your email?" and to this the caller replied, "I can't, my computer is broken." Tom just rolled his eyes at this one.

Mitchell in our warehouse received a cute email from a very excited female customer (he seems to attract those) when he sent an email that her order had been shipped. She wrote, "OK, now I can't finish work. Must go home. Must prepare for winemaking ceremony. So important to be in the right state of mind you know." If you are out there, you know who you are!

And my personal favorite to date has to be this one. The lady did not give her town and it is probably for the best. The email says "In jail I heard they use bread as a starter and they call it 'Hooch'. Is there a way to make good wine cheaply?" Wow, winemaking gets into your blood no matter where your (current) location happens to be!

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Wine Drops

Wine Drops is a catch-all for various tidbits that we find interesting. This month we offer a customer 'praise' for Tom's winemaking advice, a link for a free issue of Winemaker Magazine and a chance to tell us what you would like to see next month.

Hi Tom,

Just wanted to follow-up with you following our conversations from 2 weeks ago. I wrote you about our Pinot Grigio kit which tasted like sour-apple sulfur. We followed your directions and decanted from the carboy back to the bucket and re-stirred 3 times over about a 12 hour period. Then we took a small sample and chilled it. You were right! That helped quite a bit - sulfur gone!

Kathy McAlee
Belews Creek, NC

I saw your [Ropak Can-Am Ltd article](#) referenced by user "varmint" on Winepress. It concerned me since I had a WE Estate kit fermenting in one of these buckets and I thought I remembered seeing those stress marks. So I transferred the fermenting batch into a 10 gal bucket and, sure enough, I did have stress cracks in my 7.8 gal bucket. The date stamp is 12/07 on my bucket and I bought it from my local supplier, Austin Homebrew. Hope they are as professional as you and will replace it! Thanks for pointing out this possibly disastrous flaw!!!!

James Wilbur
Austin, TX

WineMaker Magazine

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Your Turn!

Have some input as to what you'd like to see in a future issue of *The Stomper*?

We'd love to hear your idea! Just call us at 800-233-1505 or complete and [submit our contact form](#) to let us know.