



# 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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## Are you "Oak"-ay? Adding Oak to your Wine

By Paul Kovacich

Winemaking, in its history, is a science of trial and error, as well as advances disguised as mistakes or luck. Centuries ago, our ancestors stored and transported their wine in a variety of different vessels. Sometime during the Roman Empire, oak became a popular wood for making wine barrels. Not only were oak barrels strong and relatively easy to make, somewhere along the line we discovered that as wine ages inside oak, the flavor softens and improves. Phenols present in the oak can impart themselves to the wine, creating complex flavors and aromas such as vanilla, cinnamon, tannins, smoke, and yes, even wood. Today, wine barrels are all made from oak, with French and American oaks as the most popular. American oak is typically characterized with high aromatics and low tannins, while French oak is known for low aromatics and higher tannins. These oaks will get light, medium, or dark toast so that they will give off the desired flavors for the style of wine.

As home winemakers, we're renowned for adding things to our wine to alter the flavor of our finished product, and oak is no exception. We may not have an oak cask lying around, but oak comes in a variety of shapes and sizes so that we can benefit from the use of oak as well. If you've made a few kits, you've probably seen oak chips, shavings, cubes, powder, or even a little oak spiral that fits down into the neck of your carboy. Whatever form you find, surface area is what we're interested in. Surface area equals exposure, which equals flavor.

If you want the oak to have a small effect on your wine, add it during primary fermentation. A lot of the oak will bind with the lees that falls out of the wine and is racked off later. If you're looking for a stronger oak influence, add your oak during secondary fermentation. Allow more time for the phenols to interact. If you are oaking a white wine, expect the color to darken from the exposure to oak. It's an experiment, and it takes patience to see the full effect that oak can have on your wine.

As always, good luck and happy winemaking!

### Important Announcement

## Have I got a Deal for You!

By Pam Wyatt

Practically everyone who purchased the Pre-ordered [Orange Chocolate Port #3171](#) and the [White Chocolate Port #3173](#) in the fall of 2009 has asked us where they can get another kit.

We certainly got a nice surprise from our supplier of Cru Select kits a few days ago when they said they had a limited quantity available for Grapestompers if we wanted it. IF WE WANTED IT!! As Tom would say "ARE YOU SERIOUS??" So being the super shopper that he is, Tom purchased these and this month we are offering as our Hidden Special the Orange Chocolate Port and White Chocolate Port on a first come, first served basis for only \$99.00, regularly \$105.76. When these are gone there will be no more until the Pre-orders are announced this fall in September.

So be sure and show Tom that you appreciate his offer and order yours today. Just mention the Hidden Special in the comments section of the order form.



Spend Valentine's day with the ONES you love.....Wine and Chocolate!

## Hot Tip

### Clear It Up!

If your wine does not completely clear after the first addition of clarifier, don't be afraid to rack and add a second dose. This will not affect the wine's flavor.

Submit your hot winemaking tip here:  
[www.grapestompers.com/submit\\_ideas.asp](http://www.grapestompers.com/submit_ideas.asp)

## Weather, Weather and more Weather

Since we all have suffered from changing atmospheric conditions lately, I have found myself watching "The Weather Channel" (often called "Old Folks MTV") more often. It calls to my attention the possibility of weather changes occurring all over the U.S. Please allow me to address some of these "weather oddities in winemaking".

We find that weather patterns and barometric changes can cause crazy magic here at our winery. When a low pressure system (indicating a storm i.e. hurricane or a twister) is around, you may observe the water in your air lock (especially the double bubble) being suddenly sucked into the carboy! Until the storm passes, it is best to loosen the air lock and let it be. Extremely cold weather can cause your nice clear red wine to throw down more lees. This will create more work for you...racking! Extreme hot temperatures, however, can "cook" your wine and before you realize it, that "fine wine" is no more.

I mention the information above to call your attention to this: Making good wine is one thing, THE STORAGE OF YOUR WINE IS JUST AS IMPORTANT !! For example, at last year's Winemaker Magazine Wine Conference in California, my son Brant's friend brought along some mighty fine Amarone to share, only to find upon opening the Amarone that the hot California sun beating down on the trunk of his car had "cooked" his fine wine.

We sometimes attend seminars on how to make good wine, but there is another ending to this story...STORAGE! PROPER STORAGE!! To avoid bad things happening, carefully store your wines in a cool place (55-65 degrees). Also, if you share wine with a friend in warm weather, remind them that in order to give that bottle a safe ride home, they may want to put it in the seat of their air conditioned car! Remember, most traffic moves very slowly so as lawyers say "I rest my case."

Hope to see you in May at the Winemaker Magazine Conference, located this year in Washington State.  
Later, Tom

### Wine Kit News

## Summer Mist Kits to be Discontinued

By Brant Burgiss

Heron Bay Wines has informed us that production of the Summer Mist line of fruit-flavored wine kits has ceased. Knowing how popular these kits are with our customers, our distributor has negotiated a deal to essentially buy out the remaining stock of the Summer Mist kits.

The bulk purchase should translate into special close-out pricing for these kits, so keep your eye on our web site for great deals coming soon!

For the time being, we were able to "rescue" most varieties of Summer Mist kits, namely:

- Blackberry Merlot      - Strawberry White Zinfandel      - Green Apple Riesling  
- Peach Chardonnay      - Black Cherry Pinot Noir      - Cranberry Shiraz

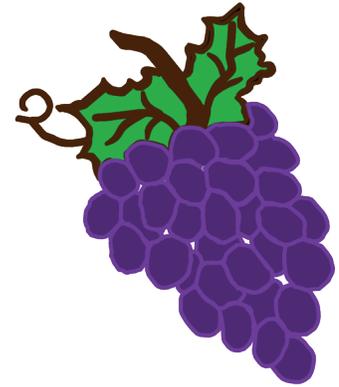
The above kits are available in limited quantities. Once they are sold out, there will be no more.

We are currently sold out of and are unable to get any more of the following kits:

- Raspberry White Zinfandel      - Black Currant Merlot      - Wild Blueberry Blush

Going forward, we will be replacing the Summer Mist brand of fruit-flavored wine kits with a brand called "Niagara Mist",

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## Customer Feedback

Hello, This message is for Tom. Thank-you so much for the valuable information regarding shelf life of the kit wines. You are always such a big help and it is a pleasure dealing with the whole staff at Grapestompers.

Karen DeHays  
Ft. Myers Beach, FL

Pam:  
As always I appreciate Grapestompers business and prompt attention. Have a great day

Dominick Muracco  
State College, PA

I will be ordering all of my supplies from you guys because you have been very prompt and thorough and real helpful.

Bill Gibson  
Katy, TX

You have a great site... Just starting wine making this year with my home wine kit.

Jim Anglum

I stumbled on your website a few years ago and have been buying all of my wine making supplies ever since.

Paul Vandermyde  
Morrison, IL

By the way - you guys have been extremely prompt on my orders - thanks again.

Steve Williams  
Jackson, MS

"Sometime you just have to stop and smell the corks"

## New Products

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

ITEM #	DESCRIPTION
2835	Bartender's Black Book, \$17.95
2833	Quotable Wine Lover, \$9.79
5262	Wine Bottle Tags w/Pen \$5.29
5263	Bouquet Wine Bottle Rack, \$29.81



Don't forget to order your Pre-Orders in the month of February



**CFLR410 Spanish Trio Tinto, \$145.00**

**Orders Must Be Received by February 15**



**RQ510 Cabernet Franc Merlot, \$121.58**

**Orders Must Be Received By February 28**



[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

### Cuvée:

A French term used to denote a wine of a specific blend or batch. Cuvée may also be used by a winemaker to denote a batch that he believes to be among his finest quality.

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



### Bad Weather is Good for Something

If possible, try to degas your wine on a cloudy, rainy day. Low barometric pressure will allow the wine to release the CO2 with less effort.

Let us add that if you live in the mountains of North Carolina, this will not be a problem for you!

Have a tip to submit? Just go to:

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

## Monthly Specials

## Specials for February, 2010

Item #	Description	Reg. Price	Special
3155	CSP La Rioja Nueva, 16L (1 Avail, Exp. 3/10)	\$120.38	\$83.06
WE3262	Italian Sangiovese, 16L (2 Avail., Exp. 2/10)	\$122.22	\$84.39
WE3123	Ger. Muller-Thurgau, 15L (1 Av., Exp. 12/09)	\$118.52	\$82.77
WE3122	Pinot Grigio, 15L (1 Avail., 2/10)	\$118.52	\$84.67
WE3108	Cabernet Sauvignon, 16L (1 Avail., Exp 2/10)	\$159.26	\$109.71
CF0155	Syrah, 12L w/CGP (3 Avail., Exp. 1/10)	\$75.98	\$57.49
3265	OB Mango Mint Chenin Blanc, 7.2KG	\$67.26	\$53.81
3262	OB Banana Pineapple Viognier, 7.2KG	\$62.03	\$49.62
3231	CC Chardonnay, 15L	\$102.78	\$82.22
3248	CCH German Riesling Auslese, 15l	\$114.81	\$91.85
HB330	Cranberry Shiraz, 6L	\$58.52	\$46.82
HB310	Shiraz, 16L	\$88.89	\$71.11
HB185	Merlot, 8L	\$63.56	\$50.85
HB135	Chardonnay, 8L	\$59.56	\$47.65
CF8957	Rosso Fortissimo, 18L	\$117.00	\$93.60
CF8912	Late Harvest Riesling, 16L	\$107.65	\$86.12
3138	VDV Cabernet Merlot, 9L	\$71.30	\$57.04
3220	VDV Chenin Blanc, 9L	\$57.41	\$45.93
3702	Honey Blonde Ale Beer	\$42.50	\$34.00
2737B	American Medium Oak Chips, 1#	\$4.49	\$3.59
2743	French Medium Oak Chips, 1#	\$4.49	\$3.59
5215	Tip Top Pourers, 3 pk.	\$9.99	\$7.99
2605	Carboy Brush	\$5.46	\$4.37
2242	Plastic Paddle, 28"	\$3.98	\$3.18
2735	Bentonite, 4oz.	\$1.52	\$1.22
2714	Citric Acid, 2 oz.	\$2.03	\$1.62
2254A	Bottle Drainer, 45 Bottles	\$27.13	\$21.70
2763	Tequila Liquor Essence	\$3.62	\$2.90
2820	Cordials From Your Kitchen Book	\$14.95	\$11.96
4459C	Wineaux Polo Cap, Black or Burgundy	\$15.00	\$12.00
5370	Wine Rack, Book End, Set of 2	\$35.00	\$28.00
5070	Vin Rouge Cutting Board	\$11.99	\$9.59
2906	Private Preserve	\$10.99	\$8.79
2263B	Italian Bench Corker	\$127.69	\$99.00
3100	Complete Wine Kit - Red	\$303.33	\$245.99
3200	Complete Wine Kit - White	\$297.16	\$236.99

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a product that is made by a company called Vineco (a sister company to Heron Bay Wines). Fortunately, many of the same flavors you have come to love are available in the new line of kits, plus some new exciting flavors. As Tom mentioned in his article last month, we are already making test batches of the [Niagara Mist kits](#) so we will be able to answer any questions about the new kits.

grapestompers apologizes for any inconvenience caused by the discontinuation of the Summer Mist brand of wine kits. In case you are wondering, the 8L Premium brand and the 16L Ultra Premium brand of wine kits will continue to be produced by Heron Bay and stocked by grapestompers.

## Home Winemaker Showcase Date Announced

By Pam Wyatt

We are excited to bring you this news and we hope you are excited as well. Our first Annual Home Winemaker Showcase that was held last May was a huge success and we can't wait for this one to get here.

Due to some conflicts with other wine festivals in our area, we have decided to hold our 2nd Annual event this year on **Sunday, May 30.**

As last year, the times for our Winemaker Showcase will be from 12 noon to 4 pm and there is **NO CHARGE** to participate.

You must **pre-register PRIOR TO Friday, May 28** in order to reserve your space. We need your name and the wines you are bringing otherwise you cannot enter your wines on the day of the Showcase.

We plan to have local craft vendors, food available for sale plus \$1,000 in grapestompers gift certificates and ribbons will be awarded..

You can enter as many different wines as you like, as long as you have someone to pour for each wine!

We will offer a 10% discount off all winemaking supplies to participants when you place your order in advance and pick up on Showcase day.

So mark your calendars for **Sunday, May 30** and plan to join us either as a winemaker or taster.

For more information or to register, please call us toll-free at 800-233-1505, Monday-Friday from 9am-5pm. You can also register by emailing [tom@grapestompers.com](mailto:tom@grapestompers.com).

Hope to see you there!

*The Stomper*

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If you have never purchased anything from us, and wish to change your email address, simply unsubscribe the old address using the link above, then subscribe with the new one.

Past issues of the Stomper can be found at this page on our web site:

<http://www.grapestompers.com/newsletter.asp>

*Boring stuff for lawyers: Content is gathered from sources considered to be reliable, but the accuracy of this info cannot be guaranteed. Opinions expressed by guest columnists and customer letters are those of the authors and not necessarily those of grapestompers.com*

## Wine Drops

*Wine Drops is a catch-all for various tidbits that we find interesting. This month we had a comment on a trivia entry from January, a link for a free issue of Winemaker Magazine and a chance to tell us what you would like to see next month.*

In last month's issue of *The Stomper* we noted some trivia we found about the phrase "rule of thumb". We received an email from **Peg Langen of New Braunfels, TX** with the following comment about this trivia; "In the last issue of *Stomper* you stated that "rule of thumb" comes from wine making lore from an era prior to the invention of thermometers. I believe that a more accurate source is that in biblical times a man was allowed to beat a slave or a wife with a stick no larger than his thumb, hence, "rule of thumb". Not very nice to hear but thank you, Peg and to the rest of you, we would LOVE to have your comments on any part of the newsletter.

From **Joe Sousa of Tolland, CT** we received "I discovered a great tasting mixture for all of my red wine this year. I make 4 types of red wine, this year I mixed 12 gallons of red juice from California with 2 gallons of white and 1 gallon of water. What a great taste and beautiful color."

There's not much time left to enter your wines in the **Winemaker International Amateur Wine Competition**. Download entry forms and get your wines on the way to them here; [www.winemakermag.com/competition](http://www.winemakermag.com/competition).

### WineMaker Magazine

[Get a free trial issue](#) to WineMaker Magazine, the leading magazine and reference guide for the hobby of home winemaking.

You'll be amazed at all the winemaking articles, including hints, recipes, stories, new products, and much, much more. Start your risk-free subscription today.

### 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.