



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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Guest Article: Container Storage for Aging Wine

By Cynthia Cosco, San Francisco, CA

Aging wine is one of the most worthwhile parts of when you make wine at home. Patience is the key. Firstly, because you end up with some absolutely beautiful wine. Secondly, because choosing the containers in which to age your wine can be immensely satisfying, and should be part of your winemaking plan.

Out of all of the containers you can purchase for your winemaking (fermentation vessels, wine tasting glasses, wine drinking glasses, racking containers, wine bottles, etc.), aging containers are probably the most important. The aging vessel is the one which gives your wine its final flavor as well as the amount of wine you should drink at once.

So, when you make wine at home, why should you consider aging it? Aging your wine should be done for the following reasons:

- Style of wine dictates the type of aging vessel
- Breaking down the tannins in the wine

I know that this may seem like it is an unnecessary part of the process, but the improvement in the flavor of the wine will be worth it (especially in a full-bodied red wine). When you make wine at home, especially reds, and you age it, the tannins soften and those strong flavors (you know the ones – they make you pucker up) are gone.

What you are left with is a beautifully subtle, tannic flavor which, in turn, emphasizes the berries and fruit which went into making that wine.

Make sure that you consider the type of container you are going to use to age your wine. Your options are wide and varied and your container could be made of stainless steel, French oak, American oak or even glass. However, to make wine at home, you could find that obtaining some of these types of aging barrels is extremely difficult.

To that end, I will try to detail some of the best options for you in choosing a container in which to age your wine. Your best options fall within the following three categories:

- Plastic
- Glass
- Wood

Plastic

This type of material is great when used for primary fermentation vessels because of its durability and it is easily sanitized. Be careful when choosing this type of material for an aging vessel as it can sometimes impart a plastic-type odor to your wine. Make sure you use food grade plastic.

Yes, it is lightweight. Yes, it's affordable. Yes, it can be easy to clean. However, you need to be aware that it can break down when exposed to certain types of alcohol and wine is no exception.

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Visit [grapestompers](http://grapestompers.com) and Thistle Meadow where you can "try it before you make it" to sample the newest wine kits on the market.

Hot Tip

Wet T-Shirt Trick

Need to cool down the temperature of your fermenter? Simply place your carboy in a tray of water and drape it with a wet T-shirt. The T-shirt pulls the water up like a wick and evaporation cools the fermenter.

Submit your hot winemaking tip here:
grapestompers.com/submit_ideas.aspx

Latest and Greatest Wine Kits

Here at Thistle Meadow Winery we have the pleasure of making the latest concentrate kits from grapestompers and trying them out in our tasting room. This summer we have had the privilege of tasting two wonderful kits that have been an instant hit with our customers.

The first one is a [Vineco Niagara Mist White Pear Pinot Grigio, #VC1746](#). This wine is light in body and aroma, fruity and perfect for summer sipping. It pairs well with all types of salad, chicken and pork loin.

Next we made the [RJ Spagnols Tangerine Lemon Sauvignon Blanc, #3261](#). If you are into citrus wines, then this is the kit for you. It covers the entire spectrum of flavor; it is sweet tangy, fruity and refreshing. Perfect for enjoying on the hottest of summer evenings while relaxing on your front porch.

So if you live within driving distance of grapestompers and Thistle Meadow Winery, come in and try the new wines. We also have all the traditional flavors to try as well, such as blackberry, peach, watermelon, and strawberry, just to name a few.

If you just want to make something different, try one of these kits. We do not believe you will be disappointed.

Later, Tom

Continued from page 1 Guest Article

When you make wine at home, try different types of plastic aging vessels and see what works for you – you may just find a great one at a practical price.

Glass

For winemaking amateurs, glass has always been the material of choice. It's easy to sanitize, it's durable and it is usually provided with airtight seals – this seal helps to ensure that your wine cannot be contaminated or be subject to oxidation. For small amounts (such as wine amounts of less than five gallons), it makes a perfect choice for bottles or carboys.

Its downside is that it can be very heavy as well as fragile. Make sure you have it in an area where light cannot penetrate through the glass. Light can cause degradation of the wine inside. So, when you make wine at home, you now have the choice of either plastic or wine when selecting your next aging container.

Wood

Lastly, you can look at the wooden aging containers available. They have been around for thousands of years and are fantastic for giving some lovely wood flavors (such as oak) to wine. The most popular is French Oak. Funnily enough, they can also impart nice toasty, smoky, vanilla and even nutty aromas and flavors.

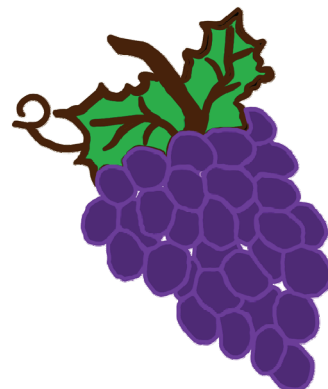
The downside is that they can be very difficult to find and are exorbitantly expensive. Because of their porous nature, they are also very difficult to sanitize and maintain, unless you have the proper equipment. It can also be very difficult to monitor how much oak flavor they will bring to your wine and, at times, this flavor could become too overbearing. The final con to purchasing wooden barrels is their size – they can be extremely large and difficult to find room for.

Conclusion

With the choices available for when you make wine at home (plastic, glass and wood), glass aging containers work out to be the average winemaker's favorite – for cost, maintenance and sanitation, durability and size.

Just remember, wine, like many things, gets better with age. That aging gets better when the best container for the job is being used.

Cynthia Cosco is the founder of Passaggio Wines in San Francisco, CA and is an award-winning winemaker educated in Napa.



Customer Feedback

So excited to receive the newsletter, love the hidden special!

Barb Lohrke
Loveland, OH

Tom, thank you so much for your help with my stuck fermentation. The wine turned out fine.

Carolyn Manns
Yantis, TX

Hi Tom, Marion & I would like to THANK YOU and your staff at Grapestompers for the GREAT time we had at your Home Winemaker Showcase on May 26th! Everyone was very helpful with setup and showing our wines. Tom you must have talked to God... because the weather was perfect. THANK YOU AGAIN!

Walter and Marion
Schade
Ft. Lauderdale, FL

The last liebfraumilch I made was excellent. ([VDV Liebfraumilch #3229](#))

Patrick Muscarella
Penfield, NY

Thanks again for hosting the annual winemaker's festival. Your website has a great picture of my daughter eating a cupcake on the lawn. Thank you Tom for taking time out of a very busy day to help me with my wine questions and for trying to troubleshoot my problems.

Les Merrell
Rockwell, NC

New Products

Here is a list of new products we've recently added to our online catalog. Our Hidden Special for the month of August: Receive 30 free capsules, #2435D, with every concentrate kit purchase if you mention the Hidden Special deal.

ITEM #	DESCRIPTION
5775	Wine Wraps, \$2.50
5768	Glass Measuring Spoons, \$17.00
5554	Shabby/Chic Candelabra, \$17.99

Limited Release Kit Available

RQ513 New Zealand Style Pinot Gris 16L, Regular \$148.92

SPECIAL SALE PRICE \$128.00

ONLY 1 AVAILABLE, FIRST COME, FIRST SERVED

[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

Volatile Acidity

A wine fault describing a wine with an unpleasant, vinegar-like nose, caused by **acetic acid**, a volatile acid that is a result of the oxidation of alcohol. Known in the trade as simply VA. All wines have a tiny bit, but too much and the wine is vile.



Hot Tip

Oak Without the Barrel

Oak barrels aren't practical for home winemakers because of the cost, and because of sanitation issues. When you add [oak chips](#) to your fermenter, you are adding oak chips that are made from the same wood that is used to make wine barrels, thus giving your wine the oaky flavor without using the barrel.

Have a winemaking tip to submit?

grapestompers.com/submit_ideas.aspx

Monthly Specials

Specials for August, 2013

**BUY 2 OR MORE CONCENTRATE KITS
AND RECEIVE
FREE SHIPPING ON THE KITS
CONTINENTAL U.S. SHIPPING ONLY**

Item #	Description	Reg. Price	Special Price
2730	Acid Blend, 3 oz.	\$2.31	\$1.85
2735	Bentonite, 4 oz.	\$1.58	\$1.26
2731	Campden Tablets, 2 oz.	\$3.63	\$2.90
2732	Potassium Metabisulfite, 4 oz.	\$2.12	\$1.70
2742	Potassium Sorbate, 1.5 oz.	\$2.16	\$1.73
2736	Tannin, 1.5 oz.	\$2.40	\$1.92
2727	Yeast Energizer, 1 oz.	\$2.30	\$1.84
2733	Fermax Yeast Nutrient, 4 oz.	\$2.87	\$2.30
2711A	Grapestompers Clarifier	\$1.29	\$0.99
2721	B-Brite Cleaner, 8 oz.	\$2.60	\$2.08
2241	28" Plastic Spoon	\$4.51	\$3.61
2600A	14" Plastic Test Jar	\$4.79	\$3.83
2603	Triple Scale Hydrometer	\$6.06	\$4.85
2707	Lalvin EC-1118 Yeast	\$0.89	\$0.71
2708	Lalvin 71B-1122 Yeast	\$0.89	\$0.71
2703	Red Star Champagne Yeast	\$0.51	\$0.41
2706	Red Star Premier Cuvee Yeast	\$0.51	\$0.41
2237	Straining Bag, Small Coarse, 12" x 19"	\$1.90	\$1.52
2239	Straining Bag, Large Coarse, 20" x 22"	\$2.98	\$2.38
2237A	Straining Bag, X-Large Coarse, 2' x 3'	\$6.29	\$5.03
2320	Grapestompers Logo Corks, 9" x 1.75"	\$0.16	\$0.13
3234	CC Gewurztraminer, 15L (Exp. 8/13, 1 Avail.)	\$129.12	\$116.21
3237	CC White Zinfandel, 15L (Exp. 8.13, 2 Avail.)	\$121.27	\$109.14
3258	CSP Sauvignon Blanc, 16L (Exp. 8/13 1 Av.)	\$138.24	\$124.42
3107	CS Premium Port, 11.5L (Exp. 7/13, 1 Avail.)	\$106.37	\$95.73
CF3564	GSM, 12L w/CGP (Exp. 8/13, 2 Available)	\$95.54	\$85.99
VC814	ES Merlot, 7.5L (Exp. 7/13, 1 Available)	\$83.63	\$75.27
VC769	CC Cab. Sauv., 7.5L (Exp. 8/13, 1 Available)	\$77.62	\$69.86
VC809	ES Cab. Sauv., 7.5L (Exp. 8/13, 2 Available)	\$83.63	\$75.27
3200	Complete Wine Kit - White	\$297.16	\$236.99
3100	Complete Wine Kit—Red	\$303.33	\$245.99

Wine on the Beach

By Pam Wyatt



Picture the scene in your mind: you've had a wonderful day at the beach with family and friends. It is now 5pm and the waves are lapping the shore, the breeze is light and most of your fellow beach bums have retired for the day. To quote a famous country hit "you've got your toes in the water, a— in the sand, not a worry in the world...." so it is now time to crack open that bottle of wine you have been thinking about for hours as you treasure the last, best hours of your beach day.

We may not be able to make this day possible but grapestompers has some items that would surely make it a more enjoyable trip.

First of all you need one of our Designer Wine Themed bags to carry all of your essentials to the beach - such as towel, book, WINE...they are items [#4840](#) and [#4902](#) and they are only \$29.00 each. The 13.5" x 18.5" x 7.5" size makes plenty of room to carry everything you will need for the trip and wipes clean with a damp cloth.

Pop this freezable sleeve into your cooler and keep your favorite white or fruit wine cool even in the heat. This antique corkscrew design chiller ([#4682](#)) is also a great conversation piece and only \$9.95.

You could also use our Chiller Bags [#5460](#) and [#5461](#) for \$8.99. These bags are completely watertight. Just drop your chilled wine in and add ice and water to keep it chilled for hours.

You don't want those pesky sand bugs or sea gulls sipping your wine straight from the glass so be sure and take along our Glass Seal Shield, [#5727](#). A pack of 4 assorted colors is only \$12.00. Press down firmly in the center for a spill proof seal. The lovely colors also can mark your glass so you will know which Chardonnay is yours.

So when you are planning that last trip for the summer, protect and enjoy your wine with the latest items from grapestompers. You will be glad you did.

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Wine Drops

Wine Drops is a catch-all for various tidbits that we find interesting. This month we have info on Thistle Meadow's annual fall festival and another festival we will be attending. Also we want to give you a chance to tell us what you would like to see next month.

Join Thistle Meadow Winery at the SugarBrew Wine and Beer Festival on Saturday, August 3. This festival is located at Sugar Mountain Resort in Banner Elk, NC. For more information or tickets point your browser to <http://www.sugarbrew.com>.

It is not too soon to begin planning to attend the Annual Thistle Meadow Wine Festival, always on the first Sunday in October. This year it will be held on October 6 in beautiful Laurel Springs, NC. We will feature local wineries, craft vendors, food vendors and live entertainment. Make plans now to join us. For more information, give us a call at 800-233-1505.

It seems that the bubbly may make your mind more bubbly. Research on champagne at the [Reading University](#) suggests that regular consumptions (3 glasses per week) may give a boost to memory staving off dementia and Alzheimer's disease. Read the article here: <http://www.reading.ac.uk/news-and-events/releases/PR503596.aspx>

"Come quickly! I am tasting the stars!"
Dom Perignon, at his first sip of champagne

WineMaker Magazine

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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!

Do you 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.