



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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Important Announcement What I Say About Chardonnay By Brant Burgiss

Neil Barnett of Reidsville, NC recently wrote to us and asked: "I would really like to make an oaky, buttery Chardonnay from a kit. Could you check with Brant to see if he thinks this kit ([Lodi Chardonnay](#)) would come close to getting me an oaky buttery type of Chardonnay?"

The manufacturer has certainly made lots of California Chard kits before, but to my knowledge this is the first time they've nailed down this specific AVA region (Lodi) in California for a Chardonnay. In the past, the grapes have probably come from a mixture of several regions (Central Valley, Alexander Valley, etc.)

As to the buttery flavor you seek: You can get subtle buttery / vanilla overtones from the use of lightly toasted French oak in the primary, but you would not be able to get the REALLY buttery flavor from the Chard (as in a Kendall Jackson Chardonnay) unless you do a malolactic fermentation.

You should do this ONLY with grapes, and NOT with a wine kit. Wine kits are tartrate balanced when manufactured, and thus have even MORE malic acid available to be converted to lactic acid. If you did an ML fermentation, your wine would be too soft (not acidic enough) and taste flabby. Moreover, the pH would likely become very high (say > 3.7) and require a substantial amount of free SO2 to remain stable. Lastly, the sorbate packaged with a wine kit (to prevent re-fermentation in the bottle) reacts badly to a wine that contains ML bacteria and creates a geranium smell that will not go away.

Even if malic acid levels were "normal" in a wine kit, you may wonder why the manufacturers do not even mention an ML fermentation. The answer is pretty simple: wine kit manufacturers know from experience that most people who make wine from kits do not have the desire to buy the ML test equipment or the bacteria itself, which adds significantly to your per-bottle price and the labor involved. A wine kit consumer generally wants a fail-safe product that is ready to drink quickly without too much fuss.

Any oaking you might do post-fermentation would create a really oaky flavor. If you decide to go this route, go slow and taste often to avoid overstepping your bounds.

Here is the "official" description of the Lodi Chard, as provided by Vineco:

[Chardonnay, Lodi California](#)

Sweetness: Dry Alcohol: 12.5% Oak: Yes

Body: Medium-Full

Green apple, citrus, and tropical fruit aromas, lead into light citrus and peach flavors, with soft vanilla oak and a creamy finish.



Beautiful wine bottle light with basket design made by one of our customers, **Linda Wylie of West Jefferson, NC**

Hot Tip

Cork Soak

If you buy corks from grapestompers, no need to soak before bottling. The corks we sell have a silicone coating that makes them slide into the bottle easier therefore eliminating the need to soak. Also, if you do soak these, it will remove the coating and may not go into the bottle as well.

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

Bottles and a bit of Wine-Ology

By Tom Burgiss

What does a wine bottle weigh? A normal wine bottle weighs 15 to 20 ounces - but the most expensive bottles will tip the scales at as much as 44 ounces (that's close to 3 lbs!) and that is without the wine! What are the manufacturers' reasons for making bottles with the heavier weight? Or a winery's reasons for selecting the bottles they use? Aside from the physical reasons (thicker glass protects the product more effectively), is it prestige value? Or is it just the mere fact that most consumers associate the impressive heavier bottle with higher quality of wine?

One thing's for sure: Whether you like the weightier bottles or not, using heavier bottles drives up the cost of wine to the consumer.

- More weight means higher freight bills
 - Thicker bottles cost more to produce
 - Sturdier boxes must be used to package cases
 - Glamor/prestige of bottle affirms a higher price
- Is it worth it?

Last month we started our wine kit of the month deal and we plan to continue this every month this year. Our deal this month is called [Mad March](#) and it is the Cellar Craft Old Vines Zinfandel #CF3550. This kit normally sells for \$150.56 but just mention the [Mad March](#) deal to purchase this kit for the ridiculous price of \$114.99. We only have 8 of these kits available so order early before they are all gone. This deal is only available at grapestompers in Laurel Springs. No other discounts apply

We've all heard of astrology and signs of the zodiac. Some people swear they can predict a person's disposition based on the time of year someone was born. But have you ever heard of predicting a woman's tendencies based on her favorite wine?

I offer the following as a light-hearted look at "Women Wine Styles":

The Chardonnay Lady: Likes clean closets, happy endings, credit cards and the white meat of chicken. They are opposed to violence on TV. Favorite clothing? White silk blouse. Favorite food? Salad. Their general disposition is trusting!

Sauvignon Blanc Lady: Likes nail polish, driving fast, foreign accents, and cookies for breakfast. They are opposed to lawyers (unless they married one). Favorite clothes - silk stockings. Favorite food (besides cookies for breakfast) is sushi. And now, get this - general disposition - **WILD Ladies**, are your favorite wines not covered? Just email me your wine and I will see what I might come up with!

Happy St. Patrick's Day - Later, Tom

TMW Tasting Room Closed

By Pam Wyatt

I know this sounds scary but never fear. We have a really good reason to close the Thistle Meadow Winery tasting room (for a short time).

Tom has decided to do a complete facelift at the winery for 2015 to make your visit to Thistle Meadow and grapestompers more enjoyable. We started renovations in February and they are coming along nicely.

Since the entire winery is being updated we have had to clear everything, and I mean everything from inside the tasting room. We plan to have a brand new bar, new floor, tables for your wine drinking enjoyment, a larger porch—just a new and inviting atmosphere for our customers to enjoy. We even plan to move the grapestompers gift shop items into the winery so you can browse when you are through tasting. This means we will have some new items for the gift shop as well.

So due to all the construction, we must close for tastings for the time being. You can still come in to purchase your favorite wines but no tastings will be conducted during this time. We certainly will let you know when everything is complete so you can come and check it out.



Customer Feedback

Thanks! You folks at grapestompers are the best.

Jack Clark
Bel Air, MD

I was hoping to get in touch about the grapestompers winemaking links page. I've taken a look at just about all of those references, especially the books. I'm a retired teacher and my husband and I have been dabbling in home winemaking for several years now. Your suggestions have been valuable over the years, especially when I was first starting out and learning the ropes.

Kathy Whitbeck
Atlanta, GA

Pam, Thank you for the order info and for the advice.

Bill & Linda Clark
Rutherfordton, NC

Thanks, and ya'll have a great day!

James Yates
Liberty, NC

I just wanted to say thank you. There is no rush on this, but I do want to follow through when time permits. It is much less expensive to purchase the used bottles, and you all being close helps with the shipping cost. I thank you again and look forward to your reply.

James C. White
Stedman, NC

Thanks Pam!

Mike Pierce
Zionsville, IN

Hot Products

Here is a list of some of the top selling items at grapestompers:

ITEM #	DESCRIPTION
2107	Blue Flip Top Bottles, \$32.60
2210S	Bucket w/Lid Combo, \$17.00
5416S	Sit, Stay, Drink Stopper, \$7.69
5972	Got Cork? Magnet, \$4.00
2113	375ML Bottles, Frosted, \$21.30
5914	Woof/Wine Wooden Sign, \$5.00
5915	Home/Wine Wooden Sign, \$5.00
4915	Snowflake Glass Woozie, \$7.00
5835	Metal Wine Bucket, \$25.00
2908	Maximus Corkscrew, \$5.00
2260	Floor Corker, \$72.45

New Wine Concentrate Kits

3171 Orange Chocolate Port,
11.5L, \$99.99
2013 Release

[See all these 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

Pectins

Complex carbohydrate chains naturally occurring in fruits that can contribute to the viscosity and haziness of a wine. They can be shortened and solubilized (dissolved) by [pectic enzymes](#), which are sometimes used in winemaking when dealing with non-grape fruit. March Hidden Special #5118 Essential Extractor. Regular price \$345 now only \$299! Only 1 available, first come, first served.



Good Trade

Winemakers are proud of their product, as they should be! If you are looking for practical ways to share your wines and get something in return consider a bottle trading program with friends and neighbors. For example, they give you five or ten empty bottles and you give them wine in return. They get wine and you get bottles for the next batch so everyone is happy.

Have a winemaking tip to submit?

grapestompers.com/submit_ideas.aspx

Monthly Specials

Specials for March 2015

Item #	Description	Reg. Price	Special Price
3128	CC Cabernet Merlot, 15L (Exp. 4/15, 1 Avail.)	\$134.50	\$94.15
3235	CC Riesling, 15L (Exp. 4/15, 2 Available)	\$123.00	\$86.10
3236	CC Sauvignon Blanc, 15L (Exp. 4/15, 1 Avail.)	\$128.50	\$89.95
3170	CSP Amarone, 16L (Exp. 4/15, 2 Available)	\$145.90	\$102.13
3284	CSP Chardonnay, 16L (Exp. 4/15, 2 Available)	\$141.00	\$112.80
3262	OB Banana Pineapple Paradise, 6.8L	\$75.78	\$60.62
3257	OB Watermelon Wave, 6.8L	\$75.78	\$60.62
VC0366	NM Raspberry Merlot, 7.5L	\$69.41	\$55.53
3116	VDV Sangiovese Merlot, 9L	\$86.50	\$69.20
3223	VDV Liebfraumilch, 9L	\$79.00	\$63.20
3161	GC Petite Syrah, 10L	\$90.90	\$72.72
3160	GC Bergamais, 10L	\$90.20	\$72.16
3147	CC Cabernet, Syrah, Zinfandel, 15L	\$146.00	\$116.80
3256	CSP Riesling Traminer, 16L	\$141.00	\$112.80
CF3549	Italian Barbera w/CGP, 18L	\$151.84	\$121.47
CF5328	Yakima Valley Viognier, 18L	\$161.40	\$129.12
VC782	CA Conn. Pinot Grigio, 7.5L	\$71.74	\$57.39
VC769	CA Conn. Cabernet Sauvignon, 7.5L	\$77.62	\$62.10
VC0865	Legacy Cabernet Merlot, 16L	\$121.25	\$97.00
VC0879	Legacy Riesling, 16L	\$109.57	\$87.66
2214A	Bucket/Pail Opening Tool	\$6.80	\$5.44
2202	Carboy Handle	\$7.50	\$6.00
2265	Fermtech Blast Bottle Washer	\$12.25	\$9.80
2250	Carboy Drier	\$9.50	\$7.60
2120	Screw Top Bottles, 150ML Flint, Case of 12	\$10.92	\$8.74
2744	Wine Super Smoother	\$3.08	\$2.46
2730	Acid Blend, 3 oz.	\$2.31	\$1.85
2900	Anti Foam Packet	\$1.15	\$0.92
2609	Airlock Brush	\$2.35	\$1.88
2315	Tasting Cork w/Black Top	\$0.40	\$0.32
2707	Lalvin EC-1118 Yeast Packet	\$1.00	\$0.80
5505	Wine Country Double Wine Box	\$20.00	\$16.00
3200	Complete Wine Kit - White	\$297.16	\$236.99
3100	Complete Wine Kit - Red	\$303.33	\$245.99

Recipe

Left Over Red Wine?

By Pam Wyatt

The month of February here at grapestompers was really a “bear” as we say in the mountains. Bitter cold and lots of snow provided a “not too nice” month.

One good thing about winter (excuse me, the ONLY good thing) is no mowing the grass, or gardening so you have plenty of time to curl up by the warm fireplace with a good book and a glass of wine.

This quiet time never lasts long, at least at my house, so sometimes you end up with some left over red wine because you didn't have enough book-reading episodes to finish the entire bottle. If you are wondering what to do with the bits and pieces of bottles, here is a recipe that you can use to put them to good use.

Winter Sangria

Ingredients:

- 6 oz. red Bordeaux (or other Cabernet/Merlot blend, etc.)
- Splash of sherry
- Splash of Grand Marnier
- 1 tsp. confectionary sugar or simple syrup
- Slice of orange
- Slice of lemon

Mix all ingredients in a cocktail shaker with ice. Pour, unstrained, into a tall glass. Serve it with a straw. Garnish with a sprig of fresh mint. If you're having a party and want to make a full recipe in a punchbowl, use the entire bottle of wine, a couple generous pours of the sherry and Grand Marnier, and add the sugar to taste. You can also extend the volume and give the punch a little bit of a kick by adding a liter of club soda. Slice up a full lemon and orange, and leave the wedges in the punch bowl.

Hopefully the month of March will bring some much needed sunshine but if not, try this recipe and make the cold a little easier to bear.

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Wine Drops

Wine Drops is a catch-all for various tidbits that we find interesting. This month we have a bit of presidential trivia, and info about Winemaker Magazine's International Wine Competition. Also we want to give you a chance to tell us what you would like to see next month.

President Lyndon B. Johnson instituted a policy of serving American wine exclusively at public events in the White House, a practice that has been maintained to this day.

In 1801, Thomas Jefferson spent 12% of his \$25,000 Presidential salary on wine. (I'm sure the salary is much higher today)

John Quincy Adams installed the first billiard table in the White House, and also enjoyed hosting wine tastings.

According to the Wine Market Council's 10th annual report on US wine sales, research showed that high-frequency wine drinkers were purchasing wine from many different places. Read the story [here](#). Where do you purchase your wine that you don't make yourself?

Deadline for entries for the [Winemaker Magazine](#) 2015 International Wine-maker Amateur Wine Competition. is March 6, 2015. Find rules, medal categories and entry form [here](#).

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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.

The more wine I drink, the better I get at pronouncing the wines that I am drinking.