



# The Stomper

The Free Monthly Winemaking Newsletter  
Published by [grapestompers.com](http://grapestompers.com)



Issue #196 December 2016

<http://www.grapestompers.com> 1-800-233-1505

Hours: 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM Eastern 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!

## In This Issue

Important Announcements. . .	1
Tom's Cellar . . . . .	2
Customer Feedback. . . . .	2
Corky's Wine Word . . . . .	3
This Month's Specials. . . . .	3
Fun Indoor Activity. . . . .	4



Winter's arrived in the NC mountains. Merry Christmas from grapestompers!

## Hot Tip

### Degassing in Winter

During colder weather, it is generally more difficult to degas your wine. Why? It all has to do with temperature. The colder a liquid is, the more it retains carbonation, and the more your wine will resist your efforts to degas. To make it easier, bring your wine up to room temperature before degassing.

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

### Special Holiday Security Announcement Protect Your Delivery with "Signature Required" By Renā Barnes, Warehouse Manager

Customer service is a top priority for us, so we'd like to share a hint that may prevent the theft of your precious winemaking supplies from your doorstep. Last year around the holidays, we heard that some packages were being stolen in broad daylight from customers' front porches. We would like to remind you that if you live in a high risk area, you may want to add a signature request to your delivery. It's an inexpensive way to add piece of mind, at only an additional \$2.00 fee. Without this protection, once the package is delivered to your house by FedEx we are not responsible if theft occurs. All of us hate thieves, especially thieves that come between us and our wine! Stay alert, and if you know you're not going to be home to accept delivery, please ask a friend or neighbor to sign for you and to put the items in a safe location.

Please let us know if you want to add "signature required" when placing your order.

We value our customers and would like to thank you for choosing Grapestompers for your wine making supplies. From our family to yours, we want to wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

### Important Announcement Order Deadlines for Christmas Delivery 2016 By Renā Barnes, Warehouse Manager

To ensure delivery of winemaking supplies in time for the Christmas season, here's our recommendation for ordering:

For deliveries to NC, VA, or SC, please ensure your order is placed (received by us) by 4 PM EST on **December 14th.**

For deliveries to AL, AR, CT, DE, FL, GA, IL, IN, KY, LA, MD, MS, NJ, OH, PA, TN, or WV please ensure your order is placed by 4 PM EST on **December 11th.**

For deliveries to IA, KS, MA, ME, RI, MI, MN, MO, Eastern NE, NH, NY, OK, TX, VT, or WI please ensure your order is placed (received by us) by 4 PM EST on **December 9th.**

For deliveries to AZ, Eastern CO, ND, Western NE, NM, and SD please ensure your order is placed (received by us) by 4 PM EST on **December 8th.**

For deliveries to all other states on the west coast, (CA, Western CO, ID, MT, NV, OR, UT, WA, WY) please ensure your order is placed by 4 PM EST on **December 7th.**

This schedule is based on deliveries made no later than December 22nd., and allows one extra day to compensate for possible bad weather. **For gift deliveries, let us know to mail the invoice copy separately.**

## Growing Older, But Not Up

By Brant Burgiss

*Note: Tom is taking a break from writing this month, as his wife (and my mom) Nancy is dealing with some health issues. We hope she feels better and he'll be able to return and write more for the Stomper soon.*

Wine is one of the most easily recognized items in the world that generally improves with age. I'm sure most of you who are older than 50 remember the TV advertisements for a particular national brand of wine that claimed: "We will sell no wine before its time."

Even famous singers and bands recognize the importance of time and have devoted several songs on the subject. Mick Jagger of the Rolling Stones once wrote that "time is on my side." Jimmy Buffett, one of my favorite musicians, has his own take on the topic, with his song that proclaims "I'm growing older, but not up. My metabolic rate is pleasantly stuck..."

One thing's for sure concerning time and wine: If you have an age-worthy wine (a big table red, for instance) you have a couple of choices. You can either age your batch in bulk or in bottles.

Which one is better? For me, I think it boils down to your winemaking philosophy or even perhaps your physical layout and how you wish to store your wine. If you make an error while batch aging, you can lose the entire batch. On the other hand, if you bottle your batch as soon as it's clear and stable, you may be more tempted to sample often and early... and before you know it, your wine is gone before it reaches its peak flavor, body, and aroma.

Regardless of which way you prefer to age your wine - whether in a carboy or in individual bottles - you must make sure that your wine is stored with the proper amount of preservative. Winemakers generally use potassium metabisulfite (also known as KMS) as a preservative. You should have a plan to add a proper amount so that your investment is protected against spoilage as well as oxidation.

Obviously, the best way to do that is to accurately measure and monitor your wine's free and total SO<sub>2</sub>, then make KMS additions as necessary based on the pH and sugar content of your wine. At our winery, we use the Vinmetrica SC-300 device, which is very accurate but consumes batteries like a voracious shrew (which eats 10 times its body weight every day).

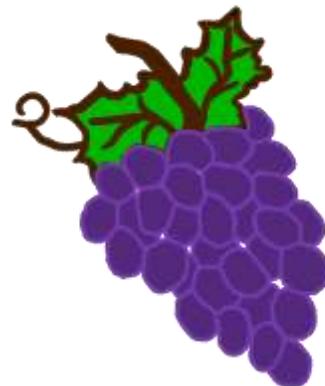
Since everyone cannot afford this pretty toy, I thought I'd share with you my own observations over the past 3 years of making wine and taking samples on a weekly basis. In short, I have learned that the little packet of KMS provided by the wine kit manufacturers is NOT enough to do the job properly.

I usually recommend adding at least 1/8 of a teaspoon of KMS per 6 gallons of wine during your last racking. You can add as much as 1/4 teaspoon, but no more than that because you'll be able to detect it by smell in the wine glass.

And please, do NOT simply add the KMS powder to the wine and stir. Dissolve it first in a bit of water until all the crystals are gone, then add it to the wine and stir.

During bottling you have one last chance to add a bit of free SO<sub>2</sub> to your wine. Sanitize your bottles by rinsing them with a strong solution of KMS and water (use one tablespoon or 3 teaspoons of powder with one gallon of water). Pour out the solution and hang your bottles upside down on a bottle draining tree to drip dry. I generally let them drain 15 minutes, then pull them one by one from the tree and bottle.

Cheers,  
Brant



### Customer Feedback

You have the most awesome service. Thanks!

Fred Bohlmann  
Cedarburg, WI

Thanks again for finding this month's hidden special. During December we're offering an item that very well might be on every home winemaker's wish list - a wine filter! The Buon Vino Mini Jet Wine Filter is on sale for only \$153.99, which represents a savings of nearly \$40. Ask for item 2611, and remember to mention the hidden special on the phone or during online check out in the comments section.

Dennis Ciemniecki  
Branchburg, NJ

... and from the archives of 2001:

Tom,  
We had a Wine and Cheese party Saturday night. I really didn't think people would drink that much wine. They loved it and drank 23 bottles, wiping me out. They preferred the Merlot over the Cabernet Merlot, but loved it all. You may have some people coming your way as 5-10 people expressed serious interest in contacting you. I would also like your recommendation. In looking at something other than the Merlot, I see you have a Pinot Noir. How long will that take to age and how critical is the temperature over that time period? Also, do you have any 30 day white wine kits? Thanks for your help.

Bob Erwin  
Spartanburg, SC

*We've been in business since 1999, always striving to bring you the best in winemaking products and customer service. Thank you for your business!*

## New Products

Here is a list of new items that can be found on the grapestompers web site:

**ITEM # DESCRIPTION**  
 VC6056 NM Chocolate Black Cherry Pinot Noir, 7.5 liters, \$67.63  
 VC6327 CM Enchanté Red, 10L, \$88.40  
 VC6328 CM Déja Vu White, 10L, \$82.81  
 VC6304 French Cab Sauv 16L, \$122.81



[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

### Spinner

A mechanical device that applies a tin or poly laminate capsule on a wine bottle. A series of "fingers" with Teflon wheels flatten and anchor the foil to the neck of the bottle using a spinning motion, hence its name. As a result, the one-piece tin capsule is precisely spun down onto the neck without wrinkling.

## Hot Tip

### Totally Tubular

Ask any winemaker or brewer who's made several batches of wine or beer and they'll admit one of the most difficult items to clean properly is the food grade vinyl tubing used during racking and bottling.

Our advice? Don't sweat it too much. Tubing is inexpensive and is easy to replace, so once you see you can no longer clean it properly, simply order more!

Have a winemaking tip to submit?

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

### Monthly Specials

## Specials for December 2016

Item #	Description	Reg. Price	Special Price
4881	Orchard Breezin' Tropical Lime, 5.4L (Exp. 11/16, 2 available)	\$67.80	\$47.46
3236	Cellar Classic Sauvignon Blanc, 15L (Exp. 11/16, 1 available)	\$112.72	\$78.90
VC778	Calif. Connoisseur Liebfraumilch, 7.5L (Exp. 01/17, 1 available)	\$57.19	\$45.75
VC787	Calif. Connoisseur Sauvignon Blanc, 7.5L (Exp. 01/17, 1 available)	\$60.70	\$48.56
3255	Cru Select Pinot Grigio, 16L (Exp. 01/17, 1 available)	\$127.68	\$102.14
3259	VDV Pinot Grigio, 9L (Exp. 01/17, 1 available)	\$70.98	\$56.78
3284	Cru Select Australian Chardonnay, 16L (Exp. 01/17, 1 available)	\$127.68	\$102.14
VC770	Calif. Connoisseur California Red, 7.5L	\$55.79	\$44.63
VC776	Calif. Connoisseur Gewürztraminer, 7.5L	\$58.95	\$47.16
VC6242	Niagara Mist Stone Fruit Syrah Rosé, 7.5L	\$63.86	\$51.09
3278	OB Rockin' Raspberry Rosé, 5.4L	\$67.80	\$54.24
VC0310	Cheeky Monkey Chilean Malbec, 10L	\$85.61	\$68.49
VC0866	Legacy Cabernet Sauvignon, 16L	\$111.72	\$89.38
VC0874	Legacy Piesporter, 16L	\$98.04	\$78.43
3172	Cru Select Platinum Australian Shiraz, 16L	\$131.98	\$105.58
CF5837	Cellar Craft Showcase Sonoma Cabernet Sauvignon, 18L with crushed grape pack	\$162.80	\$130.24
Various	ALL Soda Pop base flavors	\$8.17+	\$0.99
2607	Fizz-X Degasser	\$27.98	\$22.38
2221	7/16" food grade vinyl tubing, per foot	\$0.48	\$0.38
2710	Lalvin D47 wine yeast, 5 g.	\$1.00	\$0.80
2696	Lalvin BM 4x4 wine yeast, 5 g.	\$1.00	\$0.80
2701	Red Star Montrachet wine yeast, 5 g. (7 available, Exp. 12/16)	\$0.56	\$0.29
2747	Dried Elderberries, 4 oz.	\$5.50	\$4.40
2521	French Oak Cubes, Light Toast, 1 lb.	\$24.78	\$19.82
2310	Corks, agglomerate, #9 x 1.75"	\$0.16	\$0.13
2761	Hazelnut extract, to make hazelnut liqueur	\$4.25	\$3.40
2409	Heat Shrink Capsules, Green w/gold grapes	\$0.14	\$0.10
2428	Heat Shrink Capsules, Black w/silver stripes	\$0.14	\$0.10
2791	Cherry Flavoring, 4 oz.	\$6.58	\$5.26
6105	Guide to Winemaking DVD	\$19.95	\$5.99
3200	Complete Wine Kit - White	\$297.16	\$236.99
3100	Complete Wine Kit- Red	\$303.33	\$245.99

## Fun Indoor Activity

### Love Is Blind

Courtesy of The Vino Shoppe

One of the most enjoyable ways for a group of wine lovers to learn about wine together is a "blind tasting," wherein the participants try several wines without knowing what they are until after the wine is tasted and comments made.

First, you want to be sure that your guests have enough interest in wine to want to wrap their minds around it rather than simply drinking it. This is a given for a wine-tasting club, but you might want to sample sentiment among your pinochle group before inviting them in for a serious tasting session.

The second issue is a little more subtle: You'll want to set the degree of difficulty of your wine challenge to fit the level of knowledge of the average member of your group, and you'll want to take pains to avoid having it turn into a game of one-upmanship.

We don't think of a blind tasting as a game, exactly; more like a learning experience that just happens to be fun: A group of wine lovers surrounding a festive table with two, three or four bottles wrapped in paper bags, trying to learn by tasting, comparing and contrasting.

Having totally unknown bottles and requiring people to guess what's what is certainly the most difficult way to do this, and frankly, we wouldn't recommend it for most groups. We wouldn't have much confidence in my own ability to do well at this!

An easier, and perhaps more educational variation is to select a few wines of similar-only-different type. Let your guests know in general what the wines are, and invite them to try to determine which is which. This can be a very good way to sharpen your palate, and it would be easy to set this up as either a discussion-group event with no winners, or as a scoring game with points for each correct guess.

Consider doing this with four red wines made from different grapes, giving your group the opportunity to pick out the differences between Cabernet, Pinot Noir, Zinfandel and Merlot (for instance), or Chardonnay, Sauvignon Blanc, Riesling and Gewürztraminer.

Or play a geography game, with similar Cabernets/Cab blends from California, France, Chile and Australia. Or for a more advanced group, with similarly priced Bordeaux from the Medoc, Graves, Pomerol and St.-Emilion.

We hope these quick ideas are enough to give everyone a starting point, and if you're reading this and like the concept, they're yours and welcome to them.

### The Stomper

## List Maintenance: How to Subscribe or Unsubscribe

To subscribe to *The Stomper* winemaking hints newsletter, simply go to our subscription request page at <http://www.grapestompers.com/stomper.aspx> or go to our home page and click the "Subscribe to the Stomper" button. If your email address has changed and you have ordered from us before, update your email address the next time you shop or send an email to [tom@grapestompers.com](mailto:tom@grapestompers.com) and let us know your name and your old and new email address.

To quit receiving *The Stomper* winemaking hints newsletter, simply visit this page: [http://www.grapestompers.com/quit\\_stomper.aspx](http://www.grapestompers.com/quit_stomper.aspx)

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.aspx>

*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 have information on the world's largest amateur winemaking competition and more. Also we want to give you a chance to tell us what you would like to see next month.*

### Your Wine Could Be a Winner!

Enter your homemade wines in the world's largest amateur winemaking competition, sponsored by WineMaker Magazine. Prepare your entries now. The entry deadline is March 3, 2017. The cost is only \$25 per wine, and there will be bronze, silver, and gold medals awarded in up to 50 categories of wine, ranging from the standard to the very weird.

The actual judging will take place in early April, with the results announced at WineMaker Magazine's annual conference, scheduled this year in the Finger Lakes region of NY for the weekend of June 3, 2017.

We have several entry forms available at grapestompers, and are currently stuffing them in outgoing boxes that contain a wine kit.

MERRY CHRISTMAS  
And  
HAPPY NEW YEAR  
from [grapestompers.com](http://grapestompers.com)

**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](#).