



# 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 Experimenting with Wine Kits By Bill Young

At [grapestompers](http://grapestompers.com) we usually recommend that you follow the directions that come with the wine kit. Once you are more experienced, however, you might want something that a wine kit alone can't offer. Perhaps you'd want to tweak a wine that you like into a wine that you love. Here are some ideas:

First you need to decide on the volume of the test. You can break a 6 gallon kit into six [1 gallon jugs](#), two [3 gallon carboys](#), or anything in between. You could even do tests with smaller volumes, but that might not be worth the work. Also, you do not have to make the whole wine kit an experiment. You can make 3 gals of wine the "kit way" and experiment with other 3 gallons just in case something doesn't taste good. Whatever you decide, we recommend you begin by pouring all the concentrate / juice into a bucket and add water to the reach the 6 gallon level before you split out your batches. This way you are making sure you have a consistent starting point of must.

Now comes the fun part. What will you change?

**Oak-** When you change the oak, it is crucial to keep an eye on it. Oak added during primary fermentation will be less pronounced than oak added in the secondary. If adding [oak](#) in secondary, remember to taste once a week until you like the amount of oak flavor. Oak becomes smoother as wine matures.

**Sugar-** If you want your wine to have more kick to it, adding sugar will increase your alcohol percentage. Be careful; if the alcohol is too high, the wine will be out of balance. Also, too much sugar in the must can overwhelm your yeast.

**Fruit-** Buying fruit, fresh or frozen, and adding it to a wine kit can make it delicious. If you use fruit make sure to use pectic enzyme to insure there is not a pectin haze. We always suggest putting fruit into a straining bag to catch any seeds. Fruit additives will also increase ABV.

**Yeast strains-** Yeast is what turns grape juice into wine, but not all yeasts provide the same results. Different strains of [wine yeasts](#) can give you different body, color, structure, aroma, and taste. It can be a lot of fun to see which strain of yeast you prefer with your wine.

#### \*Try these experiments with finished wine\*

Set up these glasses with 25-50 ml of wine in each. Then add different amounts of additives to each of the glasses to determine which glass tastes best. i.e. one drop flavoring vs 5 drops in 50 ml of wine, 1 ml sweetener vs 3 ml sweetener in 50 ml of wine, blending 10 ml of merlot and 10 ml cab vs 10 ml merlot/ 20 ml cab.

**Flavoring-** We offer a variety of [fruit flavorings](#) that can be added to suit your taste: peach, blackberry, blueberry, strawberry, apricot, and cherry.

**Back sweeten-** you can make a dry wine sweet, or a sweet wine sweeter.

**Blending wines-** Do you love cranberry and apple? Try mixing them together, or take your favorite merlot and favorite cabernet sauvignon and make a red blend. The sky is the limit when it comes to blending.



Happy Easter from  
[grapestompers.com](http://grapestompers.com)!

## Hot Tip

### Avoid Abrasives

We hope you take equipment cleanliness seriously, but not to the point that you ruin your equipment.

If you use harsh physical scrubbers, like steel or copper wool, or anything else that can harm your buckets, carboys, spoons, etc., then you run the risk of permanently scratching and harming your equipment. Scratches can harbor bacteria and dirt!

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

*Tom's Cellar*  
**Get Organized Now for Vintage 2018**  
*By Brant Burgiss*

With my fingers crossed, I am hoping that Winter will finally relent and make way for Spring. We recently experienced what I hope is the last snowfall of the season for the mountains of North Carolina. Even though I hate mowing the lawn, I am definitely looking forward to warmer days ahead.

With the onset of warmer weather, it's only natural to begin thinking about the types and styles of wine you'll be making this season. The big question I have for each of you is: **Are you ready for the fruit?**

By that, I mean: Have you inventoried and checked your equipment for wear and tear / damage and other winemaking supplies for efficacy and freshness?

Take a good look now to see if anything needs replacing or replenishment. The last thing you want to happen is to have fruit ready to go, while your equipment or chemicals are not ready for prime time.

Use a flashlight and take a critical look at all of your equipment. Do you notice any cracks or gouges? If so, you'll want to replace any equipment that shows that type of damage. Cracks indicate a potential break, and believe me, no one wants to lose wine due to a stress fracture or a broken carboy or bucket. In particular, look at the bottom of your [primary fermenting bucket](#) as well as where the handles meet the top of the bucket. Don't risk your wine to a vessel that's damaged; retire an old vessel and replace it with a new one. Even though they are not as severe as cracks or breaks, gouges can make it difficult to clean and sanitize effectively because they hide dirt and bacteria.

Food grade tubing can be difficult to clean properly, even with a [tubing brush](#). If you've not changed out your tubing recently, buying new tubing at less than a half dollar per foot is very inexpensive insurance against a possible wine infection. The same is true with your other racking equipment, such as siphons.

If you've ever experienced the problem of a batch of wine tasting great for some bottles, but not for others, you may have a bottle cleanliness / sanitation problem. Mold or other infections can be difficult to detect and even harder to clean. My advice? If you see mold in a recycled bottle, just throw it away and recycle it. The time and effort spent cleaning the bottle won't be worth the value of a new bottle.

The same holds true for [airlocks](#) and [bungs](#). If they are infected with mold, it's best to toss them in lieu of new ones.

Winemaking chemicals can go bad or lose their efficacy over time, especially if they are stored where they can be subjected to warmer temperatures. If your KMS ([potassium metabisulfite](#)) is turning yellow, or doesn't have the same sharp smell, it's time to replace it. If your yeast nutrient starts to clump up, better get some more. If your yeast has expired, even if stored in the refrigerator, your dose of yeast would need to be doubled or tripled depending on its age. If your [potassium sorbate](#) is no longer snowy white, it's time to chunk the old and get some new.

For those who test for TA, you should refresh your [sodium hydroxide](#) each year to ensure accurate test results. We stock both 0.1 and 0.2 N NaOH.

Make out your list of needed equipment and supplies and order what you need for the coming season before the rush of the harvest. It'll be a load off your mind, and you won't have to worry about our suppliers being out of stock.

Brant

*(Continued on page 4)*



## Customer Feedback

*We love to hear your feedback! Let us know what you like about our products or service, and we may post your comments here soon.*

Brant Burgiss  
Manager

### **CELEBRATING OUR 20th YEAR**

Thank you, Katie, for taking care of my order. God bless,

David Zeitz  
Melbourne Village, FL

To Bill and Katie,  
Quick ship as always, snow or no!

Larry Fritts  
Thomasville, NC

Hi Katie,  
I buy my kits from you because your selection is great and [the] prices [are] competitive. You always beat [the local dealer] prices on kits, even with shipping added.

Jerry Lagorio  
Venetia, PA

Hold it Homer... you've found the right spot! This month's hidden special is a great price on Portuguese Floor Corker, item # 2260. Save \$14 off the regular price and pay only \$55.00 when you mention this in the comment section of your next order, or mention it to a salesperson when placing a phone order. Offer expires 4/30/2018.

*We've been in business since 1998, 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 some new winemaking products that were recently added to the grapestompers web site:

| ITEM #   | DESCRIPTION  |          |
|--|--|----------|
| CF5323   | Cellar Craft Yakima Valley Gewürztraminer - Riesling 18L | \$176.84 |
| VC7145   | NM Pineapple Ginger                                      | \$72.28  |
| VC5526   | NM Spiced Lime   | \$75.79  |
| <b>Extra Passport and RQ Wine Kits Now Available</b> |  |          |
| PP6844   | Passport French Grenache                                 | \$147.37 |
| PP6845   | Viognier, Roussanne, Marsanne blend                      | \$138.95 |
| 2018RQ1  | Aust. Shiraz / Viognier (Triumph)                        | \$165.99 |

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

### Corky's Corner

## Winemaking Definition

### Sweet Reserve

A sample of the original juice from which a wine is made. It is used to sweeten the finished wine after fermenting to dryness and the wine is stabilized. The sweet reserve is usually refrigerated or frozen until needed. Some advantages of using a sweet reserve is that it adds sweetness, fresh flavor, and natural aroma to the wine. It may also improve the color of the finished wine.

## Hot Tip

### Free Wine Bottles

If you're on the hunt for free wine bottles, why not make it a point to become friends with the owner of a local restaurant or wine shop? They always tend to have empty wine bottles lying around.

The trick, of course, is to pick up the bottles before mold has a chance to get started. If you pick up the bottles on a Sunday afternoon, the Saturday night wine bottles will be freshly emptied and a quick rinse or two of water and drying will prevent mold.

Have a winemaking tip to submit?

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

### Monthly Specials

## Specials for April 2018

| Item # | Description  | Reg. Price | Special Price |
|--------|--|------------|---------------|
| VC781  | California Connoisseur Pinot Chardonnay, 7.5L<br>(2 available, expiring April 9, 2018) | \$60.70    | \$42.49       |
| VC771  | California Connoisseur California White, 7.5L  | \$60.70    | \$48.56       |
| VC779  | California Connoisseur Merlot, 7.5L  | \$72.98    | \$58.38       |
| VC0302 | Cheeky Monkey Zinfandel Shiraz, 10L<br>(limit one per household)                       | \$96.84    | \$77.47       |
| VC0868 | Legacy Chardonnay, 16L   | \$116.84   | \$93.47       |
| VC0882 | Legacy Valroza (formerly Valpolicella), 16L  | \$118.53   | \$94.82       |
| 3170   | Cru Select Amarone, 16L  | \$137.50   | \$110.00      |
| 3166   | Grand Cru Merlot, 10L  | \$86.71    | \$69.37       |
| 3273   | Grand Cru Chardonnay, 10L  | \$86.27    | \$69.02       |
| VC0370 | NM Wildberry White Zinfandel, 7.5L   | \$72.28    | \$57.82       |
| 3289   | Orchard Breezin' Strawberry Sensation, 5.5L  | \$72.49    | \$57.99       |
| CF3542 | Showcase Argentinean Malbec, 18L w/CGP   | \$176.84   | \$141.47      |
| CF5323 | Showcase Gewürztraminer Riesling, 18L  | \$176.84   | \$141.47      |
| 2102   | Wine bottles, antique green Bordeaux, per case of 12 x 750 ml bottles                  | \$14.63    | \$11.70       |
| 2613   | Buon Vino Mini Jet filter pads, #2 polishing   | \$2.99     | \$2.39        |
| 2208   | Bottling spigot, fits 3/8" and 7/16" tubing  | \$2.65     | \$2.12        |
| 2732   | Potassium metabisulfite, 4 oz.   | \$3.78     | \$3.02        |
| 2746   | Wine conditioner, 32 oz.   | \$7.31     | \$5.85        |
| 2608   | Floating thermometer   | \$6.30     | \$5.04        |
| 2107A  | Replacement flipper top for Grolsch style bottles                                      | \$0.99     | \$0.79        |
| 2242   | Stirring paddle, 28" long  | \$4.51     | \$3.61        |
| 2711A  | Wine Clear K.C.  | \$1.29     | \$1.03        |
| 2737C  | American Oak Chips, Medium Toast, 4 oz.  | \$1.75     | \$1.40        |
| 2603   | Triple scale hydrometer  | \$6.06     | \$4.85        |
| 2706   | Red Star Premier Cuvée Wine Yeast, 5 g.<br>(only 10 available - expired 12/2017)       | \$0.56     | \$0.15        |
| 2707   | Lalvin EC-1118 Wine Yeast, 5 g. packet   | \$1.00     | \$0.80        |
| 2310   | Corks, Agglomerated #9 x 1.75" (44 mm)   | \$0.16     | \$0.12        |
| 2423   | PVC Capsules, blue w/gold grapes, each   | \$0.14     | \$0.10        |
| 3200   | Complete Wine Kit - White (includes 1st kit!)  | \$323.39   | \$236.99      |
| 3100   | Complete Wine Kit - Red (includes 1st kit!)  | \$339.71   | \$245.99      |

## Oak Pack Change

For Global Vintners' / Vineco's Rosso Fortissimo Wine Kit

We just received the following notice from the manufacturer about an oak pack change that is occurring with the **Cellar Craft Rosso Fortissimo** kit.

**Start Date:** Kits made on or after April 16, 2018\*  
**Duration:** Permanent

Granular oak is being removed and will be replaced with oak chips. This change is being made to better suit consumer expectations of our super premium wine kit category. The flavor profile will remain unchanged.

Rosso Fortissimo will contain the following oak packs:

- 1 x Oak pouch French Heavy Toast 30 grams
- 1 x Oak pouch American Light Toast 30 grams
- 1 x Oak pouch French Medium Toast 30 grams

*\*equivalent to Julian production date code of 8107*



## SCRATCH 'N DENT SALE

We have one 6 US gallon plastic (PET) carboy on our shelves that arrived with two small dents in it. There's no leakage or cracks, it's just got a couple of dings in it. We're offering this particular scratch 'n dent carboy for only \$17.50, a discount of \$7.00. Ask for item # 2201A, and mention in the order comments section that you want the slightly dinged carboy.

*The Stomper*

## List Maintenance: How to Subscribe or Unsubscribe

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## Wine Drops

*Wine Drops is a catch-all for various tidbits that we find interesting. This month we have a link to an article about keeping your wine fresh while traveling. Also we want to give you a chance to tell us what you would like to see next month.*

### Traveling With Wine

With the summer traveling season rapidly approaching, we want you to keep in mind that there are best practices you should follow if transporting wine in a car during the hot months ahead.

This article, entitled "[11 Tips to Protect Your Wine Purchases When Touring](#)" is an excellent topic starter.

Some of the simple hints they offer:

- Keep wine in the passenger area (where air conditioning is available), and never in the trunk.
- Transport your wine in a cooler, even if it's only a cheap Styrofoam cooler.
- Use freezer packs instead of ice, to avoid a drippy, melting mess and to protect the wine labels

*Happy Easter!*

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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](#).