



# 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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### Feature Article

## Record Keeping Makes the Difference

by Paul Kovacich

Here at Grapestompers.com, we pride ourselves on superior customer service. Tom boasts the fact that any time you call us, you will get an actual human being answering the call. We're here as a resource for winemakers who may run into trouble with making wine, or who just have some questions they want answered. That being said, there are measures you can take to make us better at helping you make a better wine.

Most importantly, keep good records while making your wine. Before you pitch the yeast on any batch of wine, record the initial specific gravity, the time you started fermentation, and the relative temperature of the wine or must. Plus, also write down the lot number of the kit you are working with. (*The lot number is printed on the top or side of the kit box*) This can be useful if we need to contact the manufacturer about problems with the kit.

So what's so important about the initial specific gravity? It gives you a starting point of reference. How would you know if the s.g. is falling if you don't know where it started? It also tells you how much sugar is in your must to begin with, which directly correlates with the amount of alcohol your wine can produce. If you are using a [triple scale hydrometer](#), you can take an initial s.g. and match it up to the percentage alcohol scale located next to the s.g. scale on your hydrometer. If you do not have a hydrometer, GET ONE! It is the most important tool in your winemaking arsenal. For you mathematicians out there, you can also use this formula for calculating alcohol content:

Beginning s.g. – Ending s.g. / .0074 = % alcohol (e.g. 1.09 - .998 / .0074 = .092/.0074 = %12.4)

$$e.g. \frac{(1.09 - .998)}{.0074} = \frac{.092}{.0074} = \%12.4$$

(continued on page 4)



Cheers to you and happy winemaking in 2009!

## Hot Tip

### Size Matters

When purchasing a concentrate kit, the size (8L, 10L, 16L, etc.) refers to the amount of juice you will receive. The more concentrate you have, the less water you will need to add to your wine.

Submit your hot winemaking tip here:

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

### Important Announcement

## St. Jude Update

In last month's issue of The Stomper, we asked you to submit your orders to grapestompers.com on December 9th. We promised to donate 15% of total sales on that day to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital in Memphis, TN. Well, thanks to all our wonderful customers who did just that, we were able to donate **\$383.07** to this worthy charity. St. Jude is nationally recognized for its pioneering work in finding cures and saving the lives of children with life threatening illnesses such as pediatric cancer. To learn more or to make a donation please visit [www.stjude.org](http://www.stjude.org).

## FAQ

by Tom Burgiss

Happy New Year to everyone! With this new year comes some new questions for me to answer.

***"My wine is just fine for me, but my wife likes it sweeter. How can I make it so she will enjoy my winemaking efforts more?"***

This is a question asked often because husbands and wives don't always share the same taste. Here are some simple rules: Always follow the directions enclosed with your concentrate kit. Do not try to modify it by adding more sweetener until fermentation is complete. When your wine is ready to bottle, taste it. This will be the time to add some [wine conditioner](#), little by little, until it tastes like you (or she) desires. Now she has a "private stock bottle of her own". Repeat this process bottle by bottle. Do not sweeten in advance because any wine will become more mellow with time (age); therefore, your wife will require less and less conditioner added to each bottle. If it is then too sweet, reverse it by adding a dry wine. I always tell my customers, "*you can saw a board too long, but if you saw it too short, it's just too short!*" .. **Same for wine, make it dry, then you "can always make it sweeter!"**

***"Why is your phone line always busy?"***

Personally, I don't like pushing a button, *to push another button, to push another button!!!!* I like to talk to a human being, not a recorded voice! We want **you** to have that same privilege at [grapestompers.com](#). Sometimes conversations run long with the customer in front of us, usually one question turns into many. In order to help us speed up your answers, please have these things available when calling; the concentrate you are working with, the date started, the room temperature and the specific gravities (both starting and present). With this information available, we will be able to answer your questions easily and efficiently. As stated in earlier "Stompers", all of our staff members make wine themselves and are well experienced to answer most questions that you might have.

Later, Tom

### Wine Kit News

## Changes at Cellar Craft; Pre-Order Deadlines

By Brant Burgiss

We recently received notification about some personnel changes that have occurred at Cellar Craft and how it might affect the home winemaker. To learn more, [read the letter](#) by Bing Smith, VP of Sales & Marketing.

Don't look now, but another wave of order deadlines for some terrific one-time wine kits is upon us. Check out this list of wine kits from three different manufacturers and place your order before the pre-order deadline:

The deadline to pre-order Cellar Craft's **Quartet Syrah**, a blend of Syrahs from Australia, South Africa, Washington and California, is January 13, 2009. Includes crushed grape pack.

Item # [CFLR209](#) Your price: \$138.78

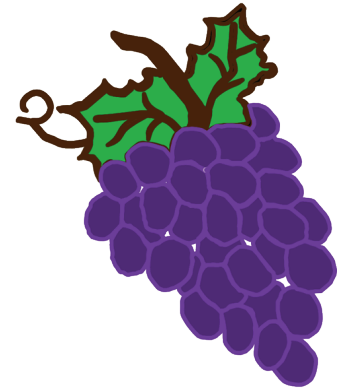
The deadline to order Heron Bay's **South African Chenin Blanc** is January 20, 2009. It is available in a Blue Label (8L) and a Platinum Label (16L) size.

Blue Label: # [HBBL209](#) Your price: \$68.37

Platinum Label: # [HBPL209](#) Your price: \$102.69

Order R.J. Spagnol's **Okanagan Valley Red Meritage** (a blend of Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, and Cabernet Franc) no later than January 29, 2009.

Item # [RQ409](#) Your price: \$106.59



## Customer Feedback

Happy Holidays to you all! By the way . . . The [Cranapple Chardonnay](#) that we bottled last Saturday is AMAZING! WOW!!!!

Vicky Warry  
Goddard, KS

Tom, thanks so much for your wonderful customer service. It has been a pleasure to work with you.

Carolyn Jacques  
Lynchburg, VA

Thank you! You guys are great!! I decided to follow the directions and got this one (concentrate kit) started yesterday. Thanks for the response, I look forward to hearing from Paul, too

Mike Sjulstad  
Northfield, MN

Last Christmas we received a bottle of South Fork Red ([Cellar Classic Merlot](#)) from Thistle Meadow Winery. We opened it last night and while I wasn't surprised that it was good, I was surprised at how good it was! Congratulations on making a very good wine.

John Merritt  
Gastonia, NC

If you have been looking for our hidden special, here it is; 30 free [grapestompers.com](#) logo corks with the purchase of any concentrate kit. Please specify either #2322 (9x1.5) or #2320 (9x1.75). Be sure to mention the special in the comments section of the order form or you will not be able to receive the deal.

## New Products

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

ITEM #	DESCRIPTION
5267	Ceramic Plate Set, \$33.17
5248	Port Decanter w/sippers, \$44.95
5247	Stemware Rack, \$21.29
5274	Wine Trivet, \$11.88
5276	Wine Gift Box, \$4.00
5279	Got Cork? Magnet, \$4.95
	Assorted Picture Frames, \$14.25
	Assorted Bottle Jewelry, \$12.99

### RESERVE your RJ Spagnols and Cellar Craft Pre Orders Now

RQ 409 Okanagan Valley Red Meritage  
Special pre-order price: \$106.59  
**Must pre-order by Jan. 29**

CFLR209 Quartet Syrah, 18L  
Pre-order price: \$138.78  
**Must pre-order by Jan. 13**

[See all these new products online now.](#)

*If you have a suggestion for a new product, please call us at 1-800-233-1505. Special orders welcomed for unique winemaking items or supplies.*

### Corky's Corner

## Winemaking Definition

### Clarify

The process of a wine becoming clear. This occurs when all the yeast and lees have settled to the bottom of the secondary fermentation, leaving clear wine with no haze. Wine that has completely clarified and is crystal clear is called brilliant.

Look for other wine-related definitions by viewing our online Glossary at

[www.grapestompers.com/glossary.asp](http://www.grapestompers.com/glossary.asp)



### How to remove those stubborn corks

Every once in a while, you'll come across a really tight cork that doesn't want to budge. Try running the top of the bottle under warm water for a minute or two, or wrapping a towel around it to create friction. Either one of these actions will usually loosen the cork enough for you to remove it more easily.

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 January, 2009

Item #	Description	Reg. Price	Special
HB775	Crocodile Den White 16L, (exp. 02/09, 1 avail)	\$114.99	\$79.99
3165	GC Malbec 10L	\$77.78	\$62.23
3137	GC Chat Dormant 10L	\$74.07	\$59.26
3136	CC Red Zinfandel 15L	\$111.11	\$88.89
3234	CC Gewurztraminer 15L	\$109.26	\$87.41
3121	VDV Shiraz 9L	\$71.30	\$57.04
3139	VDV Cabernet Shiraz 9L	\$67.59	\$54.07
3249	VDV Chardonnay Semillon 9L	\$61.11	\$48.89
3117	VDV Merlot 9L	\$67.59	\$54.07
3172	CSP Australian Shiraz 16L	\$120.38	\$96.30
3302	CS White Ice Wine 12L	\$100.93	\$80.74
3289	OB Strawberry Riesling 7.2L	\$60.19	\$48.15
CF0007	Malbec 18L	\$117.00	\$93.60
CF8941	Washington Reserve White Merlot 18L	\$93.61	\$74.89
HB938	Shiraz 16L	\$83.98	\$67.18
HB925	Pinot Grigio 8L	\$56.73	\$45.38
HB953	Sauvignon Blanc 16L	\$81.91	\$65.53
HB979	Wild Blueberry Blush 6L	\$55.70	\$44.56
2202	Carboy Handle	\$7.13	\$5.70
2224	Auto Siphon 1/2"	\$15.83	\$12.66
5264	B-Brite, 5#	\$13.15	\$10.52
2732B	Potassium Metabisulfite, 5#	\$17.59	\$14.07
2253	Bottle Rinser/Vinator	\$18.06	\$14.45
2687	Ferrari Auto Bottle Filler Tap	\$13.43	\$10.74
2646	Brew Belt	\$20.28	\$16.22
5140	Crown Mulling Spice 6oz.	\$2.99	\$2.39
4631	Cork Trivet Set	\$18.99	\$15.19
4153	Certified Wine Taster T-Shirt—Medium	\$15.99	\$12.00
4154	Certified Wine Taster T-Shirt—Large	\$15.00	\$12.00
4155	Certified Wine Taster T-Shirt—XLarge	\$15.00	\$12.00
5213	Wine Bottle Server	\$16.99	\$13.59
6001	Wine Barrel Table	\$288.00	\$230.40
6002	Wine Barrel Bar Stool 28"	\$149.00	\$119.20
3100	Complete Wine Kit - Red	\$290.59	\$245.99
3200	Complete Wine Kit - White	\$287.98	\$235.99

(Continued from page 1)

Regardless of how you use your records, it is better to have them and not need them than the other way around. If you run into problems making your wine, your records are what we use to diagnose the problem. If you have no records, the best you can expect from us is an educated guess.

## Recipes for Relaxation

Now that the holiday rush is over, the presents have been opened and the ham and turkey eaten, wouldn't it be nice just to sit back, relax and enjoy a toddie by the fireplace with family or friends? We found a few recipes that we thought would be perfect for relaxing and winding down after the holidays. All are made with our [Crown Mulling Spice #5140](#). A couple of weeks ago we made these here at [grapestompers.com](#) and let our customers have a sample. Everyone that tried them left happy with a bag of mulling spice in hand!

### Rum Toddie

Mix 1/2 pkg. Crown Spice with 1 stick soft butter, store in container and refrigerate. Add 1 teaspoon of spiced butter to 1 cup of hot apple juice. Add 1-2 tablespoons of Dark Rum and stir. Enjoy!

### Wine

4.5 cups of apple or cranapple juice  
3 cups of Bourgeron Wine  
1 package Crown Spice  
Warm all ingredients until spices dissolve and serve.

And if you are in the mood to party...

### Party Punch

1 package Crown Spice  
1 gallon apple juice  
64 oz. cranberry juice  
1 quart orange juice  
Mix together and serve hot or cold.  
Optional—Rum or Vodka may be added or 2 quarts ginger ale

### 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 offer a customer tip for storing extra corks, a special announcement from [grapestompers.com](#), a link for a free issue of "Winemaker Magazine" and a chance to tell us what you would like to see next month.*

*Hi,*

Noticed your TIP to only purchase the needed amount of corks. I store left over corks by sealing in a vacuum sealed seal-a-meal bags and storing them in the freezer!

Joseph Bower  
Savannah, MO

How's your wine savvy? The Wine Hub offers a free weekly wine quiz for you to enjoy. If you haven't visited yet, it's a multiple choice questionnaire that displays a mix of levels of difficulty, so wine lovers at different stages of expertise can enjoy it. Log on to [www.thewinehub.com/learn/quiz](http://www.thewinehub.com/learn/quiz) to check it out.

**Plans are in the works for our First Annual Home Winemaker Show to be held on the Grapestompers grounds here in Laurel Springs, NC on Saturday, May 23, 2009!**

**We will have home winemakers from around the area showing off their best efforts, craft vendors, demonstrations and fun! More details coming soon!**

### **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.

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