



The Stomper

The Free Monthly Winemaking Newsletter
Published by grapestompers.com



Issue #104 March, 2009

<http://www.grapestompers.com>

1-800-233-1505

Hours: 9:00 AM - 5:00 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

Feature Article	1
Announcement.	1
Tom's Cellar	2
Customer Feedback	2
Winemaking Advice.	2
Corky's Winemaking Term	3
New Products	3
This Month's Specials	3
Wine Drops.....	4

Feature Article

Acid in my Wine

by Paul Kovacich

We've had a few folks ask us about acid this month, so I wanted to briefly talk about the different types of acid and acid measurements. First off, let me try and explain the difference between TA and pH. Entire chapters have been written on this, so I'll try to distill it down as much as I can.

TA, or Titratable Acidity (also known as Total Acidity) is the measurement of acid present in a wine expressed by grams/Liter. pH (which is the "power of the H+ ion" for you chemists) is the measurement of the concentration of Hydrogen ions in a wine. Simply put, TA measures the percentage of acid in a wine by weight per volume, and pH measures the strength of the present acid. In practical use, most winemakers will measure pH to check and ensure the microbial stability of a wine, while TA is measured and manipulated to affect the final taste and feel of a wine.

For us wine kit makers, testing and adjusting the TA and pH isn't needed. The manufacturers make sure that each kit has the correct balance of acids for the make and style of the wine. Although it couldn't hurt to test your wine with a wine acid test kit. You can learn how to titrate a wine, plus you will get a better idea of what kind of juice or wine you are working with.

When you decide to adjust the acidity of a must or wine, grapestompers has what you need; [acid blend](#). This is popular with most winemakers for increasing the total acid. Acid blend is a blend of tartaric, malic and citric acids. You could also use [tartaric acid](#) alone. Next to malic acid, tartaric acid is produced naturally in grapes, thus being a better and more natural additive. One side effect of increasing the amount of tartaric acid is the precipitation of tartrate crystals during aging or cold stabilization. Often called "wine diamonds", these little white flakes will not have a negative effect on your wine. If you need an acid reducer,

(continued on page 4)

Important Announcement

Grapestompers Hits 10,000 Online Orders

On January 31, 2009 grapestompers.com hit a milestone. We received our 10,000th online order since our new website went live in November of 2005.

Our 10,000th customer was Andrew Lubbers. Andrew is employed with the US Air Force as a communications contractor living and working in Kuwait. He has worked for the past 4 years throughout Central Asia and the Middle East. He says that Kuwait is a very welcoming country and his family and friends plan to stay there for several more years.

"When not working, I enjoy spending time with my family, playing ice hockey with my Canadian and Kuwait friends (yes we have ice hockey in Kuwait) and SCUBA diving," says Andrew.

As the 10,000th online order, Andrew was awarded a \$100 Gift Certificate which he said "was a very pleasant surprise".

We hope Andrew enjoys his new winemaking hobby. Congratulations Andrew and happy winemaking from the Grapestompers Gang!



Enjoy the last frigid winter days by making some Ice Wine



Spray Bottle Tip

When mixing b-brite and potassium metabisulfite, fill a spray bottle with the mixtures and keep them handy when working with your wine. This will keep your cleaning chemicals at your fingertips.

Submit your hot winemaking tip here:

www.grapestompers.com/submit_ideas.asp

How's Business?

by Tom Burgiss

Often I am asked "How's business?" Business is good but this did make me think of a scenario, why is business good? Let's pretend you are getting ready to order from the Wine Steward at your favorite restaurant a bottle of wine- in the \$20-30 dollar range- when suddenly, a light pops on in your head – and you say to yourself "Hey, I can **make 4 or 5 bottles of better wine at home for the same amount of money!**" So I decided to do some research and headed for the web. This is what I found:

Wine	Lowest prices found*	Cost to make @ home
Amarone	\$12.98 per bottle on the web \$28.00 per bottle in a restaurant	\$2.83 per bottle
Carmenere	\$ 7.59 per bottle on the web \$24.00 per bottle in a restaurant	\$4.23 per bottle
Pinotage	\$ 6.49 per bottle on the web \$21.00 per bottle in a restaurant	\$2.14 per bottle
Pouilly-Fuissé	\$10.99 per bottle on the web \$30.00 per bottle in a restaurant	\$2.14 per bottle

*Granted the lowest prices listed above do not include shipping and/or handling, nor do they take into consideration the comparison of the quality of wines. Please feel free to add the cost of the new or recycled bottles and corks to the price comparisons. At any rate, you can make wine yourself for much less than you can buy a bottle on the web or at your favorite restaurant.

Remember at grapestompers.com the labels with tag line are free – and as a reminder, any time you order 2 or more concentrate kits, the computer automatically takes 10% off the second concentrate and any number beyond the first kit ordered. The nicest part is you receive the discount on the HIGHEST price concentrate (sale items are exempt).

When you are calling, a live person will answer the phone in order to help with any specific questions or concerns that you might have. Later, Tom

Concentrate vs. Grape Juice

By Brant Burgiss

Wayne Wheatley of Cochranville, PA wrote to grapestompers.com with the following question;

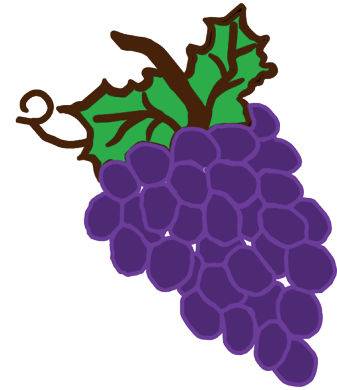
"How does wine concentrate differ from fresh grape juice?"

That's an excellent question! But I think you mean grape concentrate instead of wine concentrate.....

There are two main differences between fresh grape juice and concentrated grape juice that has been prepared for wine making:

1. Much of the excess water in FRESH grape juice has been evaporated off to create CONCENTRATED grape juice. This is done by boiling the grape juice under vacuum. Since the process is done in a vacuum, the temperature needed to boil off the excess water is not nearly as high as you might think! The big advantage here is the elimination of excess weight, essentially water weight, which saves on shipping / freight charges.
2. The CONCENTRATED grape juice has been processed, or refined, for wine making:
 - the must is pasteurized (see above)
 - the must has been balanced for pH
 - the must has been balanced for acids

These steps make the concentrate ready for reconstitution with water at your end, followed by a quick pitch of yeast.... That's pretty much all you have to do to start the wine.



Customer Feedback

I was on site (grapestompers.com in Laurel Springs, NC) this past weekend and received A1 customer service. Thanks so much.

Mike Shelton
Eden, NC

Pam,
If you or any of the Grapestompers Gang are in the Topsail Island area...drop in and sample some of our finest. Right now we are sampling a 2007 [Amarone](#) . Thanks for all the fine service and attention to detail you guys provide. You are the greatest.

Arnold & Sara Frazier
Surf City, NC

Your website is very informative for the beginners.

Philip Althomsons
W. Des Moines, IA

You've been searching for it and here it is, our Hidden Special. This month we are offering 750ML Cobalt Blue Flipper Top bottles stock code #2107F, regular price \$40.37, during March only **\$25.00** Don't forget to mention the deal in the comments section of your order form or you will not receive the special price.

Tom,
I did receive the [Waiter's Corkscrew](#) that you sent for me to try out. It works great! Many thanks. Hope to meet you in May when I visit.

Gary Johnston
Stafford, VA

New Products

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

ITEM #	DESCRIPTION
5284	Cheese Picnic Set, \$5.99
5283	Decanter-Classico, \$24.95
5282	Decanter-Traditional, \$24.95
5285	Bottle Bag-Butterfly, \$1.99
5286	Bottle Bag-Dragonfly, \$1.99
5287	Curved Bottle Rack, \$12.88

CELLAR CRAFT LIMITED RELEASE
OLD VINES MENCIA
ORDER BY MARCH 13, 2009

Close Out Special
on Select Style T-Shirts
To make room for new Spring Styles!

Various Rhinestone T-Shirts
(Limited Sizes Still Available)
NOW ONLY \$19.00

Various Traditional Style T-Shirts
(Limited Sizes Still Available)
NOW ONLY \$10.00

[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

Bramble

A tasting term for a general category of aromas and flavors which includes blackberries, loganberries and raspberries. It may also be applied to wines with prominent tannins and alcohol and a prickly, peppery character.

Look for other wine-related definitions by viewing our online Glossary at www.grapestompers.com/glossary.asp

Hot Tip

Coffee Filter/ Wine Filter

Have you ever tried opening a bottle of wine just to break the cork off in the bottle? If this happens, don't worry, all is not lost. Pour the wine through a household coffee filter. This will remove even the smallest pieces of cork and make the wine drinkable again.

Have a tip to submit? Just go to:

www.grapestompers.com/submit_ideas.asp

Monthly Specials

Specials for March, 2009

Item #	Description	Reg. Price	Special
3213	OB Cran Apple Chardonnay, 7.2L, (1 Avail.)	\$64.79	\$39.00
3146	CC Tempranillo, 15L (exp. 03/09, 1 Avail.)	\$114.81	\$80.00
3211	OB Green Apple Gewurztraminer, 7.2L	\$60.19	\$48.15
3304	CS Ice Wine-Red, 12L	\$100.93	\$80.74
3107	CC Premium Port, 11.5L	\$83.33	\$66.66
3226	CC Piesporter, 15L	\$105.56	\$84.45
3234	CC Gewurztraminer, 15L	\$109.26	\$87.41
3283	CSP Viognier	\$111.11	\$88.89
3186	CSP L'Collage, 16L	\$120.38	\$96.30
3122	VDV Valpolicella, 9L	\$69.44	\$55.55
3220	VDV Chenin Blanc, 9L	\$57.41	\$45.93
HB940	Vieux Chateau Du Roi, 16L	\$83.98	\$67.18
HB905	Chianti, 8L	\$60.72	\$48.58
HB922	Riesling, 8L	\$56.73	\$45.38
HB919	Liebfraumilch, 8L	\$54.18	\$43.34
CF8932	Riesling Ice Wine, 12L	\$88.74	\$70.99
CF8912	Late Harvest Riesling, 16L	\$107.65	\$86.12
CF0288	Red Mountain Cabernet, 18L	\$144.00	\$115.20
2743C	French Medium Oak Chips, 4 oz.	\$2.31	\$1.85
2254A	Bottle Drainer, 45 Bottles	\$27.13	\$21.70
2742	Potassium Sorbate 1.5 oz.	\$2.04	\$1.63
2732B	Potassium Metabisulfite, 5#	\$17.59	\$14.07
2253	Bottle Rinser, Vinator	\$18.06	\$14.45
2779	Cherry Soda Extract, Homebrew	\$5.74	\$4.59
2662	5" Strainer without Funnel	\$1.67	\$1.34
4747	Beverage Napkins, Albert Wine	\$3.25	\$2.60
2600B	12" Test Jar w/removable base	\$4.07	\$3.26
2806	Grapes into Wine Book	\$18.00	\$14.40
4545	Apron, Basic Food Group	\$15.99	\$12.79
4544	Apron, Important Cooking Utensil	\$15.99	\$12.79
4673	Posi Pour, 1/2 oz.	\$7.39	\$5.91
4673A	Posi Pour, 1 oz.	\$7.39	\$5.91
2768	Amaretto Mandel Liquor Quik	\$3.62	\$2.90
3100	Complete Wine Kit - Red	\$301.33	\$240.99
3200	Complete Wine Kit - White	\$294.16	\$230.99

(Continued from page 1)

use [calcium carbonate](#) or [potassium bicarbonate](#). Both are effective at reducing acid, but many winemakers see reducing acid chemically as a last resort. Blending, aging, and fermentation can all reduce the acid in a wine as well.
Happy Winemaking,
Paul

Get To Know Your Concentrate

By Pam Wyatt

We have many emails and phone calls asking some very good questions about concentrate kits. We decided to address some of these basic issues in order to make the decisions of which concentrate to purchase easier for our customers.

Grapestompers.com offers many varieties of kits and they come in different sizes as well. These sizes are listed in "liters" such as 6, 8, 9, 10, 15, 16 and 18. This simply means that you will receive that amount of grape juice concentrate in liters with your kit, not how much wine you will produce. With kits containing smaller amounts of juice, you will be adding more water to bring the product up to 6 gallons in the bucket/carboy. With more concentrate, you will be adding less water, therefore producing a more full-bodied wine in the end.

All kits we sell will produce 23 liters, or 6 US gallons of wine. This means you will have approximately 30 750ML bottles of finished product depending on how full you fill the bottles. Some customers have reported 29, 30 or even 31 bottles.

As with any rule there is always an exception. Port, Sherry and Ice Wine kits only produce 3 gallons of finished wine, therefore, these need to be made in a 3 gallon carboy instead of the standard 6 gallon. You will still be able to use the 7.8 gallon bucket for the primary fermentation stage.

Since these kits yield 3 gallons of finished wine, you will ultimately produce 30 375ML bottles. This is the most popular size bottles for port.

With spring and summer approaching this means the June wedding season is on its way. Many folks are starting kits now to give as wedding favors for family and friends. Grapestompers.com has wonderful [150ML bottles](#) (stock code #2120) that are the perfect sized favor for this special event. They come in cases of 12 for \$8.99 and screw caps are included. They are beautiful when filled, capped and dipped in our [bottle wax](#) for a custom finishing touch.

We can also create a [custom label](#) for your special bottles. We offer these in sets of 36 labels for only \$7.69 per set.

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.asp> 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 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.asp

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.asp>

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 offer a customer's advice on removing labels and a link for Home Wine & Beer Trade Association wine competition. Also a chance to tell us what you would like to see next month.

We're just getting started making wine & a couple of local bars are collecting bottles for us. Most times, after a good hot soak, the labels slide off. But once in awhile, it's a real bear trying to remove them. Scrubbing, re-soaking, & even using a razor blade fails. But, spray a little WD40 on the adhesive & wipe with a cotton cloth and BAM, it's off!

Lorraine Kirkpatrick
Newport, WA

The Home Wine & Beer Trade Association (HWBTA) yearly wine competition is scheduled for April 18. Deadline for entries is April 11. Gold Medal winners in this event are eligible to have their wines judged in the Best of Show judging which is held in conjunction with the annual HWBTA conference. If you would like to enter your wine or wines or if you would like more information visit www.hwbta.org/competitions.php

If you plan to be in the Charlotte, NC area March 4-8, visit our sister company, [Thistle Meadow Winery](#), at the [Southern Spring Home and Garden Show](#) at the Charlotte Merchandise Mart located on Independence Blvd. We will be located at booth #2050 so stop by and say hello and taste some excellent wines.

Don't forget to mark your calendar for the Grapestompers Annual Home Winemakers Showcase on Saturday, May 23 in Laurel Springs, NC. If you would like more information or to participate, email glenn@grapestompers.com or call us at 800-233-1505. Hope to see you here!

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.

WineMaker Magazine

[Get a free trial issue](#) to WineMaker Magazine, the leading magazine and reference guide for the hobby of home winemaking.