

**American Wine Society**  
**Las Vegas Chapter**  
**Seminar**

**Home Wine Making From Kits**

**Tom Burt**  
**Purple Sage Estates**  
**November 17, 2007**

# Wine Making Equation

Juice +  
Yeast +  
Time +  
Work  
=  
*Wine*



# Agenda



- Home Wine Making Basics
- Why Juice Kits?
- Wine Making Equipment
- Step by Step Process
- Bottling and Labeling
- Where to Shop
- Web Links for Information
- Final Questions and Answers

# Home Wine Making Basics

- Whether from kits or crush, it's a lot of fun
- Can produce very good (or very bad) wines
- Doesn't take *too much* work
- Relatively low cost: \$3 to \$5 a bottle
- Nice team project (if you both like wine)
- Plan on about 3 months per batch

# Why Juice Kits?

- **No season – can make wine anytime.**
- **Relatively inexpensive**
  - Standard kits \$50-\$60
  - Premium kits \$80-\$100
- **Less equipment needed**
  - Fermenter, carboy, some tubes, ...
  - No wine press needed
- **Can get a batch started in about an hour**
  - Just add water, nutrients and yeast
- **Rich variety of grape choices**

# Wine Making Equipment

- Plastic Fermenter (7 gallon)
- Carboy(s) 6 gallon, 5 gallon
- Silicone Rubber tubing
- Air lock
- Siphon for racking & bottling
- Bottling cane
- Hydrometer
- Corker
- Plastic paint drop cloth

# Step by Step – Get Ready

- Read the instructions
- Make your detailed plan
- Buy spring water (5 gallons)
- Sanitize your fermenter and tools
- Choose your workspot (e.g. kitchen nook)
- Set up the drop cloth (you WILL have spills)
- Set the fermenter on the table

# Step by Step – Primary Ferment

- Open the juice bag and pour into fermenter
- Add ~4 gallons of water & stir
- Use hydrometer to check initial specific gravity
- Add yeast nutrients, bentonite, ...
- Add sugar as needed (raise SG to ~1.10)
- Bloom the yeast in 1 cup of tepid water and add to fermenter
- Snap lid on fermenter and install the air lock
- Record the date and initial SG

# Handy Hydrometer Table

Specific Gravity	Initial Brix	Potential Alcohol
1.300	31	17%
1.112	27	14.8%
1.098	24	13%
1.085	21	12%
1.076	19	10%

# Getting Started 1



November 17, 2007

LV AWS - Tom Burt

10

# Getting Started 2



November 17, 2007

LV AWS - Tom Burt

11

# Getting Started 3



November 17, 2007

LV AWS - Tom Burt

12

# Step by Step – First Racking

- **After ~7 days, open fermenter and check the SG.**
  - Kit directions will specify what it should be down to (1.00 to 1.02). If not, snap the lid on and continue ferment.
- **Sanitize the 6 gallon carboy**
- **Siphon the fermented wine from the fermenter into the carboy (on the floor).**
  - Be careful to leave the dregs (the lees) behind
- **If kit provides, add oak chips (or use your own)**
- **Install stopper and air-lock into carboy**
- **Lift carboy in steps back into table**

# First Racking



November 17, 2007

LV AWS - Tom Burt

14

# Step by Step – Secondary Ferment

- **Secondary lasts about two weeks**
  - Goal is SG of .990 to 1.000 (kit will indicate exact goal)
- **De-gas every few days**
  - Remove stopper and stir for about two minutes
- **To check SG in carboy, use a wine thief**
  - Use thief to fill the hydrometer's container
  - Hydrometer will float and show SG
- **When target SG is reached, time for second racking**

# Step by Step – Second Racking (1)

- **Sanitize the fermenter**
- **Siphon the fermented wine from the carboy into the fermenter (on the floor).**
  - **Be careful to leave the dregs (the lees) behind**
- **Take the carboy away and sanitize it**
- **Float the hydrometer in the fermenter to recheck the SG**
- **Mix ½ teaspoon of sulfite into the fermenter**
  - **Keep face back to avoid initial fumes**
  - **Stir for a minute or two**
  - **Kills yeast and stops the ferment**
- **Lift fermenter in steps back onto table**

# Second Racking



November 17, 2007

LV AWS - Tom Burt

17

## Step by Step – Second Racking (2)

- Siphon from the fermenter back to the carboy on the floor
- Remove fermenter (sanitize later)
- Lift carboy in steps back onto table
- Add fining agent from kit (e.g. isinglas) to carboy
- Top up the carboy with the same varietal or another compatible wine.
  - Don't want a large air space in the carboy
- Reinstall the stopper and air lock

# Step by Step – Clarifying

- **Clarifying lasts two weeks to 6 months**
- **You may choose to do a third racking**
  - Gets rid of sediment and tartrate salts
  - Same procedure as second racking
  - Don't repeat sulfites, finings
  - May want to rack into a 5 gallon carboy
- **You can again use wine thief to check clarity, color, taste, aromas**
  - If you do, top up as needed.
- **When satisfied and have time, proceed to bottling**

# Bottling 1

- **Typical kit produces about 24½ bottles**
- **Can refill *sanitized* used bottles**
  - Works best if rinse empty bottles when emptied
  - Need to remove the old labels
  - Scrub inside with bottle brush
- **Soak in dilute ammonia, peroxide, or sulfite**
  - Don't need a strong solution
  - Rinse, rinse, rinse
- **Place clean bottles nose down in case box**
  - Clean a few extra (maybe a 1.5 liter)

# Bottling 2

- Rack from the carboy to the fermenter
- Take away the carboy, lift fermenter to table
- Add ½ teaspoon of sulfite, stir well & cover
- Set up a sanitized bucket to hold bottles as they are being filled
- Set up siphon tube with bottling cane
  - Has a one-way valve stem
- Start siphon into first bottle, set up second
- When first bottle full, move cane to next
- Repeat until all 24+ bottles filled
- Place filled bottles on counter and cover
- Top up each bottle to 1½ inches below rim

# Bottling



November 17, 2007

LV AWS - Tom Burt

22

# Bottling Done



November 17, 2007

LV AWS - Tom Burt

23

# Corking

- **Can use synthetic or natural corks**
  - Natural corks may “cork” your wine
  - For synthetic corks, a levered corker is needed
- **Soak natural corks in a sulfite solution**
- **Soak synthetic corks in vodka or brandy**
- **Position bottle in corker, adjust height**
- **Insert cork into corker’s guide hole**
- **Lower arm and press down hard**
- **Release corker and remove bottle**

# Corking the Filled Bottles



November 17, 2007

LV AWS - Tom Burt

25

# Labeling

- **Can make labels from Avery label 2x3 stock**
  - Print on your inkjet printer
  - Use MS Word or any other label printing program
  - Easy to apply and fairly easy to remove.
  - Print a plain paper proof sheet
- **Print 5 sheets of 6 labels**
- **Place bottle on a folded towel**
- **Peel off label from sheet**
- **Carefully apply to bottle**

# Labeling Your Bottles



# Kit Makers

- **Wine Experts**
  - Vintner's Reserve
  - Selection
- **RJ Spagnols**
  - Vino del Vida
  - Grand Cellars
  - Grand Cru
- **Heron Bay**
- **Cellar Craft**

# Where to Shop

- **Currently no supply store in LV**
- **More Beer (More Wine) in Riverside, CA**
  - **Good web-site**
  - **Excellent selection**
  - **Can order on-line and they ship**
  - **Many items free shipping if large \$ order**
  - **Can call ahead and pick up at store**
- **Many on-line stores (see web links)**

# Web Links

<http://morewinemaking.com> (More Wine)

<http://www.grapestompers.com/>

<http://www.renohomebrewer.com/>

Google for: “home wine-making kits”

# Final Questions and Answers



November 17, 2007

LV AWS - Tom Burt

31