

Your Home Cellar

The official newsletter of Bett-A-Brew & ibrew.com.au Australia.

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Home Brewers Make The Easy Transition To Wine Making

Perhaps its because home brewers already have a sound understanding of the process of fermentation and are enjoying the rewards of a good home brew, that makes them eager to venture into home wine making.

If you are a brewer you already have a lot of the necessary equipment needed to make the transition to wine making. For instance, polyethelene fermenters, bungs and airlocks, hydrometer, sterilising powder and syphon/racking equipment are all standard items that brewers use constantly and are necessary for wine making.

What equipment will I need to start wine making ?

This is the most common questioned asked and the answer depends on the *quantity* of wine you wish to make.

The most important consideration when choosing wine making equipment is to select a fermenter, either a glass demijohn, or a polyethelene fermenter, which is the correct size for the quantity of wine you wish to ferment. Do not attempt to make wine in a fermenter that is too big as the excess air space is detrimental.

We recommend either 15 or 30 litre glass demijohns or 15 and 30 litre polyethelene fermenters. So your first consideration is 'Do I want to make 15 or 30 litres of wine at a time.'

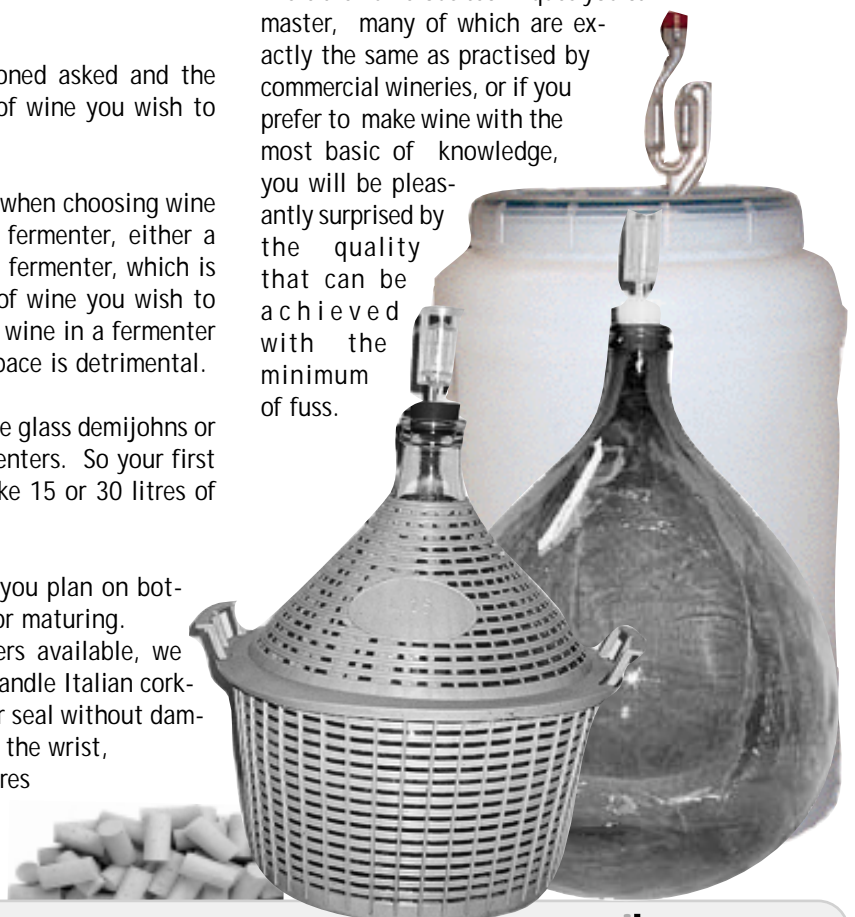
Another consideration is whether you plan on bottling the wine into wine bottles for maturing. While there are small hand corks available, we strongly recommend using a two handle Italian corking tool. These give a much better seal without damaging the cork, and are easier on the wrist, especially if you are making 15 litres or more. A quality corking tool is a wise choice.

Wine requires a longer clearing and settling period than beer so some patience is required to achieve a high standard of clarity. You must be prepared to allow the wine plenty of time in the fermenter to clear and mature and to rack the wine several times until no more sediment is forming. I have gone into more detail on racking wine on the following page as this is one of the most important stages in the wine making process.

There is something very rewarding about making your own wine.

Offering your own home made wine to friends brings its own rewards. With Christmas and the summer entertaining season just around the corner, now is the ideal time to embark on a wine making session. You will discover that making your own wine can be as complex or as easy as you want it to be.

There are numerous techniques you can master, many of which are exactly the same as practised by commercial wineries, or if you prefer to make wine with the most basic of knowledge, you will be pleasantly surprised by the quality that can be achieved with the minimum of fuss.



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use
BentoGRAM
For Superior
Fining

Whether you are clearing a wine or clearing a mash prior to distillation, Bentogram offers the best solution for settling unwanted protein hazes or unsettled particles.

Bentogram is a form of clay that can be used to stabilise and clarify wine. It is a widely used fining agent throughout the commercial wine making industry in Australia.

It is now available in a much easier to use granular form than the original Bentonite powder. Preparation is shortened to about 15 minutes (compared to 24 hours for the older form)

It is best introduced after the first racking of the wine or distillation mash. Available from Bett-A-Brew Retail outlet or ibrew online in 50gm and 100gm sachets.

Quirky Quotable Quotes

"I'm for anything that gets you through the night, be it prayer, tranquilizers or a bottle of Jack Daniels"....

Frank Sinatra

"Alcohol is the anesthesia by which we endure the operation of life"....

George Bernard Shaw



One of the most important stages of wine making is *after* the wine has finished fermenting and the clearing process begins.

Racking, or decanting is the process of transferring clear or clearing wine from one container to another container leaving behind any settled sediment. This natural clearing stage cannot be hurried and quality results are dependent on this process.

When wine has finished fermenting, it is laden with many particles, including yeast, tartrate crystals and protein hazes etc. As the wine is allowed to stand it will start to clear naturally and the heavier particles will settle and form a sediment at the base of the demijohn or fermenter. If you let a wine stand for too long on its sediment off tastes can develop and these can be more noticeable in a white wine than a red wine.

The first racking of the wine off the sediment should be done approximately 2-3 weeks after fermentation is complete. At this stage the heavier particles will have settled quite firmly at the base and by using a syphon with a sediment reducing U bend, the wine can be drawn off leaving the bulk of this sediment behind.

A Syphon Outfit Makes the Job Easier

A syphon should consist of a rigid glass rod, sediment reducing U bend, rubber bung, beverage hose and in-line bottle filler.

To syphon you will need to have the first fermenter in a higher position than the demijohn to be racked in to. The rubber bung, bored

Racking for Clearer Results

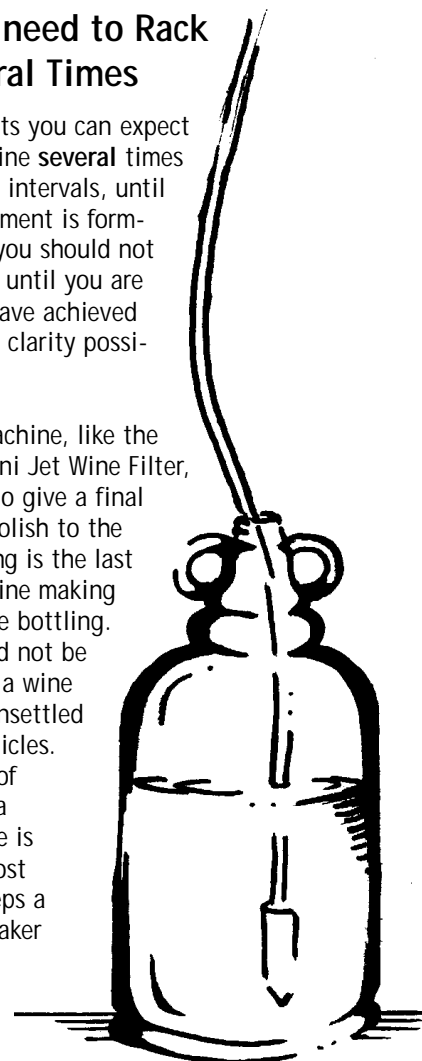
with a hole (this can be the bung that houses the airlock) will hold the syphon in place and the beverage hose into the second container should be allowed to go right to the bottom of the container to avoid splashing the wine.

An in-line bottle filler can be added to the end of the syphon hose so that if you need to stop racking at any time it will automatically shut off the flow when lifted up.

You will need to Rack Several Times

For best results you can expect to rack the wine **several** times at fortnightly intervals, until **no more** sediment is forming. Ideally you should not bottle a wine until you are certain you have achieved the maximum clarity possible.

A filtering machine, like the Buon Vino Mini Jet Wine Filter, can be used to give a final commercial polish to the wine. Filtering is the last step in the wine making process before bottling. A filter should not be used to clear a wine that is still unsettled or full of particles. The process of racking over a period of time is one of the most important steps a home wine maker can take to ensure best results.



European & American Oak Chips Give Maturing Edge

Oak Chips offer the home wine maker the opportunity to add barrel aged complexity and flavour to their Wine, Port, or Spirit without the expense of purchasing an oak cask.

Vicard French Oak and Magrennan American Oak Chips provide the best Oak aromas, tannins and vanilla flavours and are used widely within the Australian (and European) commercial wine industry. They are very convenient to use, and easily removed when the required oak flavours are achieved.



Vicard French Oak Chips

(pictured above) are a medium toast, larger size chip and are recommended for adding oak complexity to red wines, port and some varietal white wines. Despite the darker colour of these chips, the extraction is more subtle from French Oak than American Oak. Available in 200gm bags (fully imported from France)

Oak chips can be used in a variety of ways i.e.. In the primary fermentation on the skins at approximately 10gms per litre, or in the secondary ferment at 5 grams per litre. More commonly they can be introduced at the maturing stage at 1- 5 grams per litre.

Dosage rates vary depending on requirements. The longer the wine is in contact with the oak, the greater is the extraction of flavours.



Magrennan American Oak Chips

(pictured above) are available in a medium toast and are renowned for flavouring Spirits, Whiskey and in particular Bourbon. They offer a more aggressive flavour suited more to spirits than wine. Available in 200gm bags (fully imported from America)

AustinFest Home Brew Festival

On October 14th Mt. Nimmel Hall is hosting the 'Mt. Nimmel Austinfest'

This is a Home Brewing and Wine making Festival, incorporating flavoured Vodka and Liqueurs, with judging and tasting.

Mt. Nimmel Hall is nestled in the Austinville Valley behind Mudgeeraba in the Gold Coast Hinterland. The hall was donated by the Knock family to the Austinville community approximately 65 years ago. Because maintenance of the hall is self funding, the hall committee

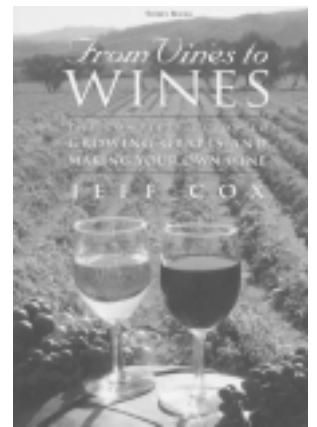
hold various events and activities to raise money to keep the hall viable for the local community.

If you would like to enter this inaugural home brewing festival, entry forms are available from the Bett-A-Brew Retail outlet or contact John & Sharyn Millsom on 55307309 or 55306630. Printable Forms and information are also available on-line at www.continue.to/hall/ Entry is free for those bringing brews etc to offer for tasting.

Entry to judging is optional and details and conditions of entry are available on the entry form.

A good time should be had by all, with the chance to win some great prizes donated by Bett-A-Brew.

Book Review



Jeff Cox's book, *From Vines to Wines*, is a complete and up to date guide to growing flawless grapes and making extraordinary wine.

Wine connoisseurs, gardeners, and home winemakers will find the latest techniques in this fully revised and updated edition. With thorough illustrated instructions, you'll learn how to:

- Choose and prepare a vineyard site
- Construct sturdy and effective trellising systems
- Plant, prune and harvest the perfect grapes for your climate
- Press, ferment age and bottle your own wine
- Judge wine for clarity, colour, aroma, body and taste

Jeff Cox is a contributing editor to Organic Gardening magazine and The Wine News, and host of 'Grow It', on the Home and Garden Television Network. He is the author of 13 gardening books.

Bett-A-Brew

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Your Questions Answered

Addressing some of the most common brewing questions asked every day by new home brewers and wine makers

I have made a Bett-A-Brew Bavarian Bock beer pack, and after 2 weeks my hydrometer reading is still 1010. Should I bottle or will the bottles explode?

It is quite normal for the Bavarian Bock to finish between 1008-1010. So will the Festival Ale, Stout and Colonial Ale in the Bett-A-Brew range.

If unsure, always allow the beer to clear and settle until a sample taken out is very clear. We recommend this for all Bett-A-Brew Products.

NOTE: This recommendation for natural clearing is for Bett-A-Brew beer packs. You must follow manufacturers directions with other products.

A friend of mine filters all his wine through a Buon Vino filter. Can I filter my home brew as well?

Unlike wine, which is a still product in the bottle, home brew relies on a bottle fermentation (from the yeast fermenting the priming sugar to give bottle carbonation) resulting in gas and head retention. Be-

cause filtration removes all yeast cells, filtering beer is not an option for those relying on natural bottle carbonation.

However, if you are using a kegging system, then filtration would be an option.

If I rinse off the sterilising solution as per directions, am I 'undoing' the effects of any sterilising that has been done?

To keep the whole sterilising issue in perspective, fear of contamination from rinsing with tap water is really unfounded. The majority of people make the beer with the same tap water anyway! Sterilising solution should be rinsed off thoroughly from your fermenter and bottles as failure to do so could be detrimental to your health.

How long should the beer be in the fermenter for?

Usually the fermentation temperature is going to govern how long a beer will ferment. The cooler the temperature, the longer the beer will need to ferment out. As a rule, the beer will usually take about 7 days to ferment in warmer conditions. We would then recommend leaving the beer to clear and settle about a week after that before bottling. This will ensure the beer is bottled clearer resulting in reduced bottle sediment and unwanted yeast flavour.

I have noticed that Bett-A-Brew products do not mention using a fining agent ...why is this as most brands do?

The Danish Yeast supplied with all Bett-A-Brew Beer packs is an excellent self clearing yeast. By allowing a natural clearing time after fermentation is complete, and by syphoning from the fermenter, you can bottle very clear beer without forcing the issue with finings. Over use of finings can cause poor head retention on the beer.

Ways to Shop

- ▶ Mail Order
- ▶ Retail Showroom
- ▶ Internet
- ▶ Selected Outlets

