

# PARDO WINE GRAPES



## Making Wine Using Buckets of Fresh Juice

### Supplies and Equipment Needed

- 5.4 or 6 gallon bucket(s) of fresh pressed grape juice
- 1 - 5 gallon carboy per bucket or larger fermentation vessel
- 1 – airlock with rubber bung per carboy or 1 per barrel
- 1 – Extra carboy for racking
- 1 – 1 oz. packet of wine yeast per bucket (provided)
- Potassium meta-bisulfite (1 - 1 oz. bag provided)
- 1 – Hydrometer
- 10 ft. – Clear food grade plastic hose; approximately 5/8 x 1/2 for racking carboys; larger hoses for barrels
- 24-25 wine bottles per bucket of juice (2 cases)
- 24-25 corks, screw caps or other bottle stoppers

### Process

The fresh juice that you have purchased has been kept at a low temperature to retard fermentation. Although it may be fermenting slowly, it needs to be brought to room temperature to properly ferment.

- 1) Wait until the next day when the juice has reached room temperature to start the process.
- 2) Sanitize any equipment that will come in contact with the juice; hoses, carboys, barrels, airlocks, etc. Potassium meta-bisulfite or other specialized solutions are recommended. Read instructions.
- 3) Use a hydrometer to test the sugar level in the juice. Be aware that due to slow fermentation during refrigerated transport and storage, the reading at this point will probably be slightly lower in sugar than when the grapes were crushed.
- 4) Open and rehydrate the packet of yeast provided in 1/2 cup of warm water for approximately 15 minutes.
- 5) Open the juice bucket and thoroughly stir in the yeast. Stir up the sediment at the bottom of the bucket. It will help fermentation.

- a. Note: If you want your wine a bit sweet, do not add the yeast. Yeast will produce a strong fermentation that will burn up all the sugar producing a dry wine.
- 6) Pour the juice into your fermentation vessel (carboy, barrel, etc.) ensuring not to fill to the top. The juice will rise during fermentation.
  - a. Note: you can ferment in the juice bucket.
- 7) Pour any excess juice into a smaller bottle until you are ready to top off the fermentation vessel later.
- 8) Seal your fermentation vessel(s) with an airlock to protect your juice from airborne infection and insects. The airlock will allow pressure to be released but not allow anything to enter.
- 9) Monitor fermentation daily.
  - a. Make sure that fermentation pressure has not pushed the airlock out of the fermentation vessel. This will allow entry of air borne bacteria and insects. If so, replace as soon as possible.
  - b. Use the hydrometer to measure fermentation progress.
  - c. If fermentation appears too slow, aerate the juice to expose the yeast to more oxygen.
- 10) When the active fermentation reduces, top off your fermentation vessel with any juice you have held on the side.
- 11) For Sweet Wine: When the hydrometer reading is about 2 on the balling/brix scale, remove a cup of the juice and dissolve  $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon of potassium metabisulfite. When dissolved, pour the sulfite mixture into the fermentation vessel to inhibit the remaining yeast from converting more sugar to alcohol. Stir gently. Allow the sediment to collect at the bottom of the fermentation vessel beginning the wine clarification process.
- 12) For Dry Wine: Allow the fermentation to continue until the hydrometer reading is at least 0 but preferably 2 points below 0 on the balling/brix scale. Allow the sediment to collect at the bottom of the fermentation vessel beginning the wine clarification process.
  - a. Note: you can add the sulfite as in #10 above at this time or if you want to consider malolactic fermentation, sulfite the wine after malolactic fermentation is complete.

- b. The initial fermentation is the conversion of sugar into alcohol. Malolactic fermentation is a secondary fermentation that converts malic acid in the wine to lactic acid which is softer to the palate. It is optional and sometimes occurs naturally. Ask for more information on malolactic if you are interested in this process.
- 13) Racking: Racking is the use of a plastic hose to siphon the clear wine off the sediment that has settled at the bottom of the carboy or barrel.

For carboys, it is best to cut a V notch at one end of the siphoning hose, and then wrap that end with a white surgical tape so that it is visible in the red wine. That end of the hose should be inserted into the carboy just above the sediment line. Siphon the clear wine into an empty carboy ensuring not to splash thereby aerating the wine.

Wine should be racked 3 times before bottling to ensure clarity.

- a. The 1st racking should occur between 30 and 45 days after fermentation. Wines clear at different rates.
- b. The 2nd racking should occur between 30 and 45 days after the 1st racking.
- c. The 3<sup>rd</sup> racking should occur between 30 and 45 days after the 2<sup>nd</sup> racking, or at bottling time. As long as the carboys or barrels are filled and closed with an airlock, the wine is protected and there is no need to rush bottling. Wine left in a barrel will improve with barrel aging. Oak products (dowels, staves, etc.) can be added to carboys and have the same effect.

To protect the wine and prevent oxidation, dissolve  $\frac{1}{4}$  teaspoon of sulfite in the wine after each racking, except at bottling if you are going to begin drinking your new wine immediately.

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