

Kit Wines – are They Worth It?



How is the Juice Made?

- <https://winecellarkw.com/2021/01/07/how-wine-kits-made/>
- In the mid-1980s, two businessmen (Doug and Ross Tocher, who founded Brew King, one of the first wine kit companies) tackled the modern kit.
- They mixed concentrates with fresh grape juice, adjusted and balanced the blend exactly like a winery would, and aseptically packaged into bag-in-box 'kits'.
- The techniques they used then, still form the basis of kit manufacture today.
- Grape processing takes place right in the growing region the vineyard is located in. The process is very similar to processing any grapes. After the juice has been fined it is sent to a pasteurizing facility.

- 95%+ of all concentrates are made in vacuum distillation units.
These vacuum concentrators work like the reverse of a pressure cooker. Inside a sealed vessel the expansion of water vapor increases the pressure, raising the boiling point of water until things inside cook very rapidly.
- After pasteurization the juice is sent to a packaging facility where the juice is put into sterilized bags, capped and put into a box with a UPC and product code sticker for quality assurance.
- Non Pasturized Juice – has not been heat processed and needs to stay refrigerated
- Kit taste vs non kit taste – Some claim that a pasteurized kit has a “kit taste”.

Kit Wines

- Wine kits contain all of the ingredients that you need to make a 6 gallon batch of wine.
- Most importantly, there is a bag of sterile grape juice. The juice comes from vineyards throughout the world.
- The acids, tannins and sweetness in the kits are perfectly balanced with the grape juice to achieve the best possible wine, and they are remarkably consistent in their flavor from year to year.
- There are four week kits, six week kits, and high-end eight week kits.

What Comes in a Kit Wine?

- Concentrated juice of a varietal
- Bentonite - to clarify the wine
- Wine Yeast: Usually (Lalvin EC-1118), which is a very strong fermenting yeast in that it can ferment to high alcohol levels and under stressful conditions in a wide temperature range between 10° – 30°C (50°–86°F).
- 2 stabilizers: Metabisulphite, used to prevent oxidation, which causes browning of the must, and it helps fight against bacteria and wild yeast. Potassium sorbate - used to prevent renewed fermentation in off-dry to sweet wines and to prevent reproduction of mold and yeast. Combined with sulfite, sorbate helps keep wine stable during aging.
- Clarifying Agent – Usually, Kieselsol and Chitosan
- Oak chips, or oak powder, to give your wine the complexity of a barrel-aged wine.
- Instructions



Top of Box

Barcode (Barcode location – Top of the box)	Description
<p> a Brand b Wine Style c G007662 d 2 0232 e f 2134002 g </p>	<p> a – Brand b – Wine style c – Manufacturer item number d – Work order number e – Kit number f – Lot number: 2 – Last digit of year 134 – Julian date (May 14) 002 – Batch sequence (2nd batch of the day) g – QR (Quick Response) Code (For GVI internal use only) </p>

A production sticker is located on the top of every kit box.

Peel and stick to the instruction sheet for future reference.

Best practice is to make a wine kit within one year of the date of production.

Why the Different Prices?

- Entry level kits are primarily concentrate. The higher the tier, the more juice and less concentrate.
- Juice generally contributes more varietal characteristics.
- The juice and concentrate are blended and balanced in production facilities, pasteurized, and packaged.
- Grape skins are added in mid to upper tier kits which allow for further extraction of polyphenols and aromatic precursors for more complex and fuller-bodied wines.
- Some upper tier kits may have F-Pacs for extra flavoring.
- There are four main types of wine kits: pure juice; fully concentrated grape juice; partially concentrated grape juice; and kits that combine juice and concentrate.

Ingredients Included

WineXpert Sauvignon Blanc

Purchased at Friar Tucks \$68.

CAME WITH:

- Instructions
- Lalvin EC 1118 Yeast
- Bentonite
- Sulphite/Sorbate pac
- Kieselesol/Chitosan
- Juice

“Herbaceous, peach and pineapple”





Winemaking Notes for WineXpert Sauvignon Blanc

- Feb. 7 - Started off with the Bentonite provided and stirred in 8 cups of hot water
- Uncorked the juice pouch, spilled about 1 cup
- Added water to the 6 gallon mark and stirred
- Starting Specific Gravity was 1.093
- Prepared QA23 Yeast with Go Ferm
- Fermentation started, secured the bucket with an air lock
- Added FT Citrus – Tannin to bring out citrus flavor
- Feb. 15 – Racked and degassed with AIO WINE PUMP SG .997
- Feb. 23 – SG .993 –PH 3.08 TA 6.2 Racked and degassed with AIO Wine Pump and added Sulphite/Sorbate pac
- March 5 - Cleared with Kieselsol/Chitosan

- May 2 - Dissapointed with the taste – no flavor or aroma
- May 25 - Added zest from 1/2 grapefruit, 1/2 lime and 1/2 lemon – let sit for 3 months
- July 17 - Backsweetened with .5ml Stevia drops - BOTTLED
- Started the kit February 7 – Bottled July 17

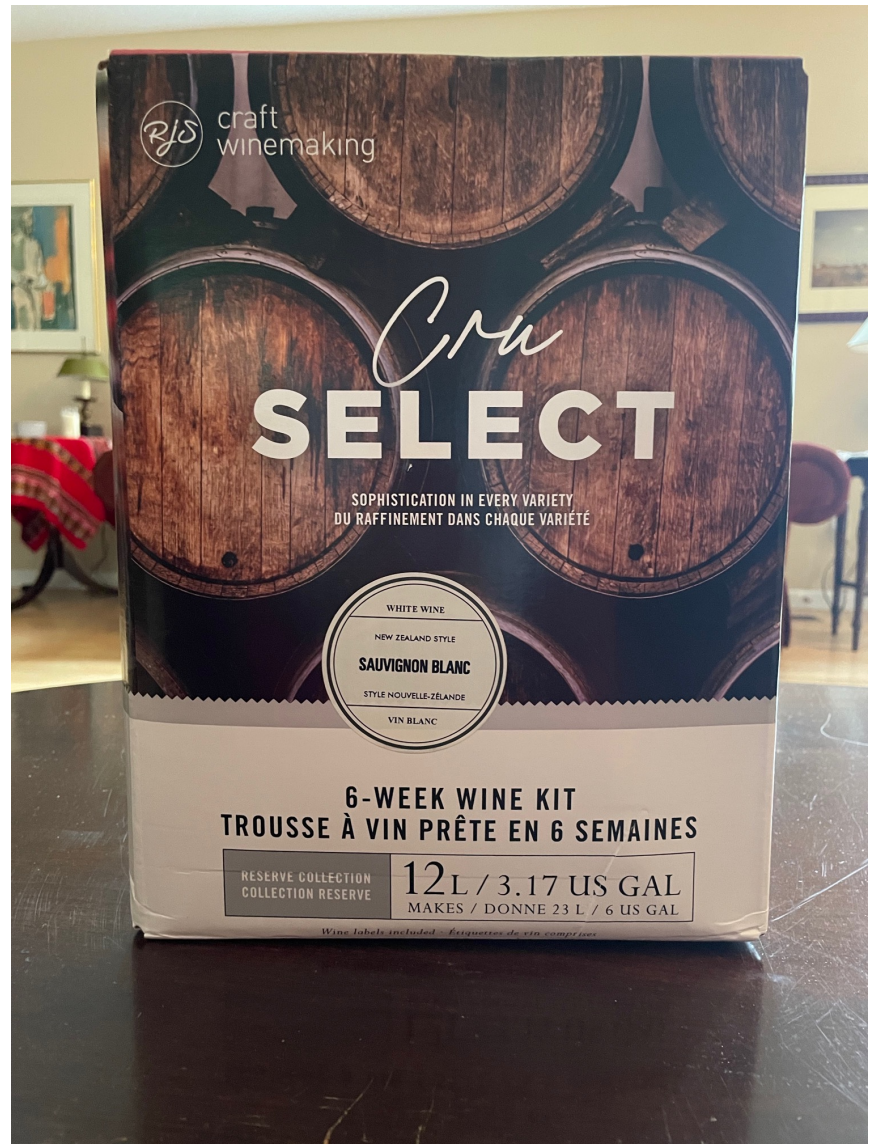
Final SG .994 PH 3.20 TA 6.2

FOR THE PRICE, I WOULD MAKE THIS KIT AGAIN – I WOULD ADD THE ZEST AT THE BEGINNING OF FERMENTATION

RJS Cru Select Sauvignon Blanc

- Purchased from Midwest Supplies
- \$114. with a 20% off coupon
- Free shipping

“Crisp and light, with intense flavors of grapefruit peel and freshly cut grass and an accent of light oak on the finish. The wine presents soft hues, with a slight tinge of green.”



Ingredients Included in Kit

Directions – Bentonite - EC118 Yeast – Oak Chips - Metabisulphite – Sorbate – Kieselsol and Chitosan – Labels – Nutrition guide

80057701 CS New Zealand Style Sauvignon Blanc

Nutrition Facts	
Valeur nutritive	
Per about 6.5 tbsp (98 mL) pour environ 6.5 c. à soupe (98 mL)	
Calories 190	% Daily Value* % valeur quotidienne*
Fat / Lipides 0.1 g	1 %
Saturated / saturés 0 g	
+ Trans / trans 0 g	0 %
Carbohydrate / Glucides 47 g	
Fibre / Fibres 0 g	0 %
Sugars / Sucres 46 g	46 %
Protein / Protéines 0.3 g	
Cholesterol / Cholestérol 0 mg	
Sodium 30 mg	1 %
Potassium 150 mg	3 %
Calcium 20 mg	2 %
Iron / Fer 0.5 mg	3 %
*5% or less is a little, 15% or more is a lot *5% ou moins c'est peu, 15% ou plus c'est beaucoup	

Ingredients:
 Fermenter Blend: Sugars (concentrated grape juice, grape juice), Water, Diammonium phosphate, Natural flavour, Sulphites, Tannin, Yeast nutrient, Pectinase.
 Add pack: Chitosan (crustaceans), Oak, Bentonite, Silicon dioxide, Wine yeast, Sulphites, Potassium sorbate.

Ingrédients:
 Mélange de fermentation: Sucres (jus de raisin concentré, jus de raisin), Eau, Phosphate diammonique, Arôme naturel, Sulfites, Tanin, Nutritive pour levure, Pectinase.
 Adjuvants de vinification: Chitosane (crustacés), Chêne, Bentonite, Dioxyde de silicium, Levure de vin, Sulfites, Sorbate de potassium.



Winemaking Notes for Cru Select Sauvignon Blanc

- June 12 – Stirred Bentonite in gallon of Spring Water – added the juice – added 2 ½ gallons of Spring Water – stirring several times. Final SG 1.093 – Sprinkled Lalvin EC 1118 and QA23 Yeast on top of juice. Added zest of 1 grapefruit
- Stirred must on June 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, in bucket with loose lid
- June 18 – racked to carboy – topped up with 2021 Vignoles
- June 24 – Final SG .993 – metabisulphite pack provided was 4.8g – took my own sO₂ test and added .4g metabisulphite – did not add sorbate
- July 8 – added Kieselsol and Chitosan
- August 16 – PH 3.18 TA 8.6
- August 19 – Filtered added .5g Metabisulphite and pack of Sorbate
- August 26 - Bottled

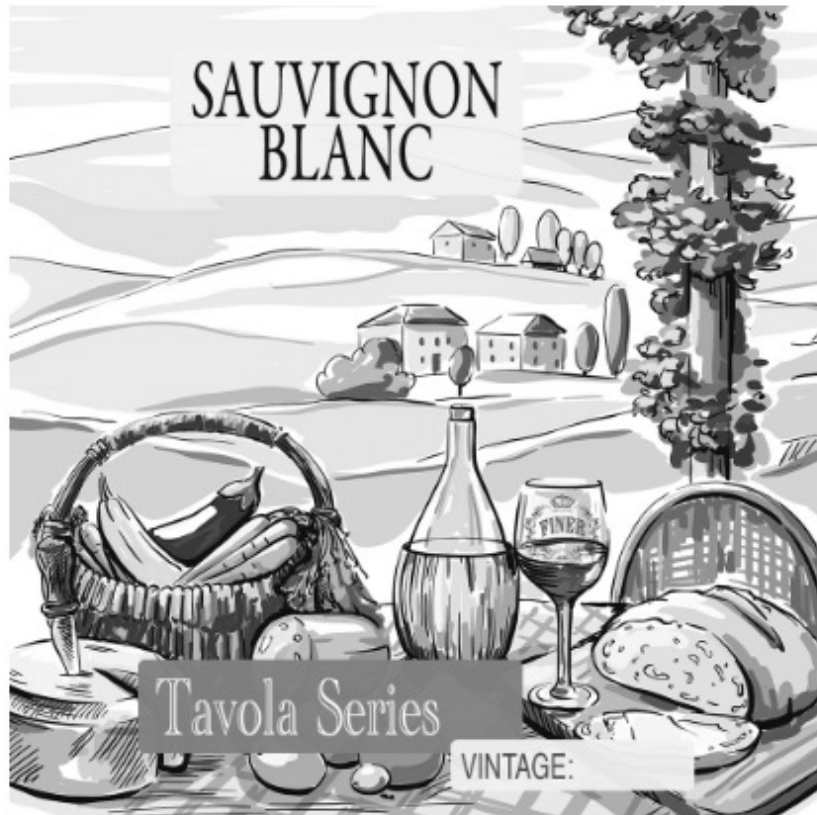
What did I do Different?

- Used QA23 Yeast along with the Lalvin 1118
Sprinkled on top of juice
- Used Spring Water instead of tap water
- Added grapefruit zest of 1 grapefruit to fermentation
- Fermented in an open bucket with a loose lid in my basement
- Stirred several times
- Started June 12 – bottled August 26
- FINAL PH 3.18 TA 8.6

DEGASSED WITH AIO WINE PUMP

DEFINITELY WOULD BUY THIS KIT AGAIN

Finer Wine Kit Sauvignon Blanc



The kit contains perishable juice concentrate which is shipped in refrigerated packaging. This maintains the integral quality of the grape. It eliminates the cooked juice flavor commonly found in pasteurized wine kits which are able to be stored warm.

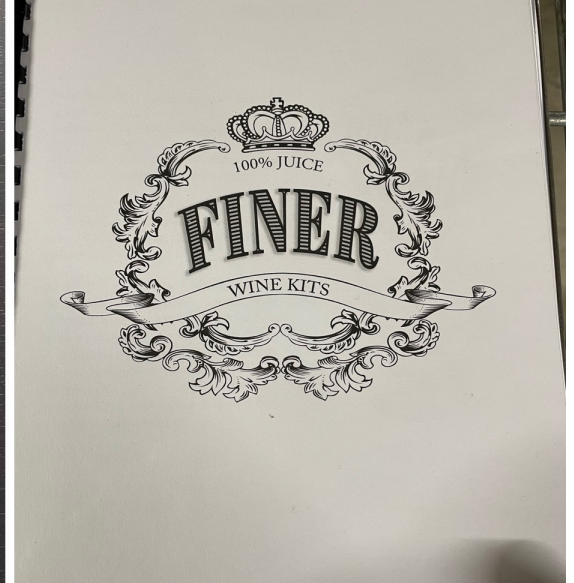
Purchased from Label Peelers
\$116 included shipping

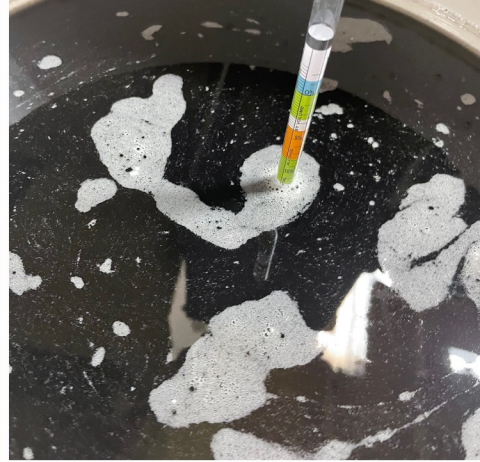
“The kit makes a light to medium body white wine with citrus flavors of lime and grapefruit, medium acidity and a slight residual sweetness. Enjoy this refreshing white wine with a peach and passion fruit bouquet, a round fruit forward flavor and smooth finish.”

Included with Finer Wine Kit

Sauvignon Blanc

- Juice – about 2 gallons – came refrigerated
- Carbon – to clarify the color
- Packet A – “purges wild yeast and adds nutrients”
- Packet B – Starter for Yeast
- Yeast – D47
- Packet C – Yeast Nutrient
- Kieselsol and Chitosan
- Metabisulphite & Sorbate
- Instruction Booklet





Winemaking Notes for Finer Wine Kit Sauvignon Blanc

- March 29 – started kit – Added the Carbon pack with 1 gallon water – added juice and water
- Starting SG 1.100 – added packet A – Prepared Yeast (QA 23) with Packet B and 1 cup water
- March 30 – pitched yeast – put loose lid on
- March 31 – Fermentation active – added packet C – stirred – secured lid with air lock
- April 15 – Degassed with AIO Wine Pump and Racked to carboy PH 3.85. TA 6.4 SG .998
- April 18 – added Sorbate/Metabisulphite pac and kieselsol and Chitosan
- May 2 – Clearing and carbon dropping out
- May 9 – No citrus flavor
- May 25 – added zest from 1/2 grapefruit, 1/2 lime, 1/2 lemon
- July 20 – added Tartaric Acid – PH 3.67 TA 9.4 – put in cold stabilization
- August 19 – Filtered with #2 Buon Vino,
- August 26– Bottled 4 bottles – blended with 1 gallon of 2021 Seyval Blanc
- Sept 11 – Making a sparkling wine!

Trouble in Sauvignon Blanc Paradise

- I followed the directions except I used QA 23 Yeast
- Starting SG 1.100 Ending SG .998
- After fermentation Ph 3.85 TA 6.4
- Flavorless – added Grapefruit zest
- Added Tartaric Acid and Cold Stabilized
- Final numbers – PH 3.67 TA 9.4
- Needed filtering because it would not clear

DEGASSED WITH AIO WINE PUMP

WOULD NOT BUT THIS KIT AGAIN

Finer Wine Kit Syrah



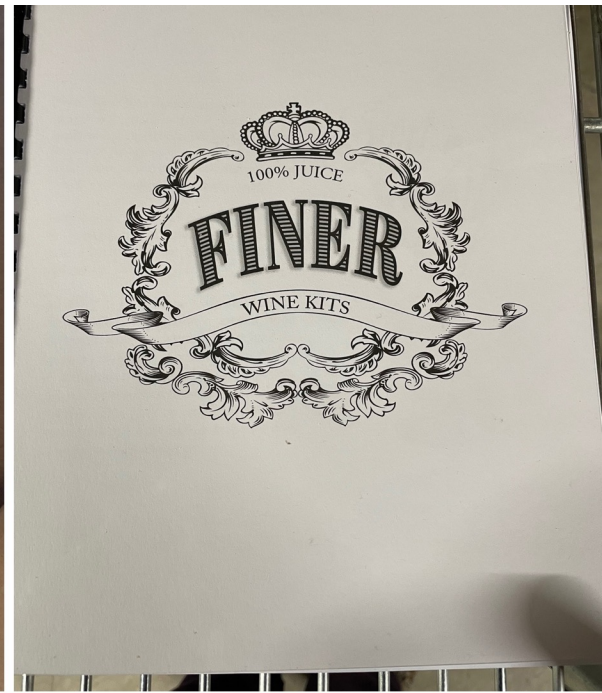
Purchased from Label Peelers
\$113. plus Shipping

Currently the kit comes with a double skin pack and seed pack. They claim that adding both makes a fuller body wine adding more tannins and phenolics to balance out the higher alcohol.

“The kit makes a medium body red wine that is both fruit forward and earthy. Enjoy hints of plum, black cherry, chocolate, cassis and truffles, a spicy and floral nose, bold acidity and dark ruby color.”

Finer Wine Kit Syrah Ingredients

- Instructions
- Juice
- RC212 Yeast
- Oak Chips
- Packet A – “purges wild yeast, adds nutrient, and balances PH of juice
- Packet B – sugar and yeast nutrient
- Packet C – Yeast nutrient
- Packet D – Metabisulphite/Sorbate
- Kieselsol and Chitosan



Winemaking Notes for Finer Wine Kit Syrah

- Feb. 7 - Combined juice, water, oak chips, starter pack. Starting SG 1.100. Prepared yeast (RC212) with nutrient pack. Pitched yeast
- Put loose cap on bucket. Stirred daily
- Feb. 22 - SG .994 – PH 3.76 TA 5.8 – RACKED AND DEGASSED WITH AIO WINE PUMP – added metabisulphite
- Did not add sorbate
- Mar. 5 - Added Kieselsol and Chitosan
- April 4 - Racked
- June 24 – added oak cubes
- Aug 23 - PH 3.70 TA 7 added more oak cubes -
- Sept 1 – Blended 25% Syrah with 75% Norton - PH 3.72 TA 7.15
- 5 Gallon Carboy still aging

- DEFINITELY WILL BUY THIS KIT AGAIN – BUT WILL INCLUDE THE GRAPE SKINS AND SEEDS