



SCREW CAPS

Sometimes tradition is not necessarily a good thing; certainly this is the case with the use of corks. Stelvin® Screw Caps are now used on all Clairault wine.

Why?

Research indicates up to five to ten percent of all bottles with natural corks show some degree of spoilage commonly known as cork taint. The culprit is trichloroanisole, commonly known as TCA. This complex chemical comes from reactions within corks, which involve natural molds and the chlorine bleach used in cork manufacture. Humans are incredibly sensitive to the compound and can detect it even at weak dilutions of six parts per trillion. Other problems include variable sealing quality and random post bottling oxidation.

Screw caps provide the best seal for bottled wines, and eliminate the 'corked' and oxidation problem. Hogue Cellars, one of the largest wine consortiums in the USA, completed a 30 month study comparing natural and synthetic cork closures with the Stelvin screw caps, their findings suggest significant benefits in utilizing screw caps over either natural or synthetic cork closures.

Furthermore, Peter Godden of the Australian Wine Research Institute (AWRI) conducted a study comparing 14 different types of closures, including the screw cap, electing this closure as the best answer to market requirements.

While, screw caps do diminish the drama and romance of bottle opening it is well worth the sacrifice to ensure a taint-free wine that offers consistent aging, maintained flavor and freshness with optimum quality control.

Sythetic v's Screw Caps

For years there have been numerous cork substitutes on the market. New technologies have greatly improved synthetic corks but there are still problems. Synthetic corks are difficult to pull out; even professional corkscrews have problems punching through the denser plastics, deflating the romance of opening a bottle of wine the traditional way. Additionally, customers have often complained of a 'plastic taint' in the wine.

The screw cap offers the benefit of requiring no opening tools, is airtight and easily resealable.



Origins of the Screw Cap

Originally developed in the 1970s by Pechiney, and were launched into the Australian market by some Australian Riesling producers, such as Yalumba, but failed to take off. The seal has now been updated successfully for today's market.

The Swiss market was the first to employ the Stelvin® concept to a great extent. In 2001, the US, Australia and New-Zealand began to opt for the Stelvin® concept. By 2003, Chile and Argentina, France and Germany were among the many countries adopting this wine revolution.

The Stelvin® Capsule

The Stelvin® capsule is made up of a screw cap, a long printable skirt and a liner specifically designed for contact with wine. The glass bottle used with the cap has a Stelvin Neck Finish with a screw thread beginning at 2.8mm below the neck top, and the closure is re-drawn to avoid leakage.

The liner, know as Saran Film, has a layer of tin sandwiched between PVDC (polyvinylidene chloride), white kraft and expanded polyethylene. This tin layer means that it is less permeable and a lower level of oxygen is allowed to enter the bottle, creating longer storing capabilities. Even though aluminium is an element present in the vast majority of food, here aluminium is not in direct contact with your wine. The liner is in contact, and is totally organoleptically neutral.

Overall, the Stelvin® concept responds to new consumption requirements: the capsule can conserve the qualities, bouquet and the fragrances of the wine thanks to perfect water tightness, controlled gas permeability and, above all, an absence of TCA. Moreover, the practicality of the bottle is improved by easy opening and resealing; you can also convey and store your bottle in any position.

References

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