



D E E
HITCH
WINE TIPS

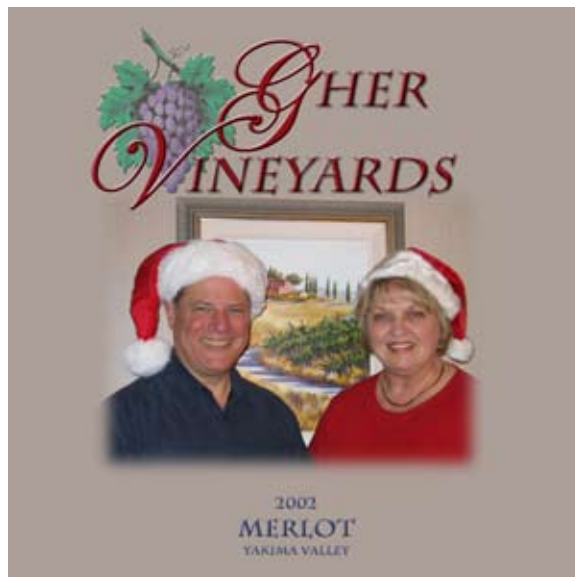
A great gift — personalized wine

Here is a clever gift idea for the holidays, birthdays, anniversaries, weddings, charity events or corporate get-togethers. Northwest Cellars blends wines and adds personalized labels. I met Bob Delf, owner of Northwest Cellars, at a wine event (where else!) and immediately ordered two wines for our home — one with a photo of the grandkids we labeled as Cousins' Blend and the other, with a sketch of our house, we named, Chateau Hitch, which we refer to now as our house wine. Delf has three wines available for personalized packaging: a Washington cabernet/merlot, a Washington viognier/chardonnay and a sparkling wine from Oregon.

I assumed that Delf purchased finished wine from wineries, but he actually blends his own. He has acquired wine from such highly regarded wineries as Kestrel and from such worthy appellations as Red Mountain. When I expressed my admiration for the wines after sampling them, he replied modestly, "I've always been a wine geek."

Here's the procedure: Pick out a label shape. Select your wine from Delf's three choices: cabernet/merlot, viognier/chardonnay or sparkling. Send your design ideas to him. I went to Sudden Printing and had my suggestions scanned and e-mailed to Delf. His design team added the wording and e-mailed the proposed finished label back to me. After my approval, the wine arrived in less than a week. The costs are a onetime \$65 for label design and \$14 per bottle for the red and white and \$21 for the sparkling. The minimum order is only a case (12 bottles). Because of Washington State liquor laws, the wine must be picked up at a retail store which sells wine. Check Delf's Web site at northwestcellars.com for more information.

Another good gift or stocking stuffer is a stain-removal product called Wine Away. People swear by this wine stain remover produced in Walla Walla. Look for it in your grocery store's section for cleaning supplies. It is priced under \$10.



Don Gher and his wife, Mary, of Bellevue had this photo taken and turned into a wine label by Northwest Cellars to use for holiday entertaining and gifts.