

What's Cool

Products that are smart, make your tasks easier and provide cost or labor savings

Bill Pregler

Bill Pregler has worked in the winery equipment industry for many years and is a staff writer for *Wine Business Monthly*.



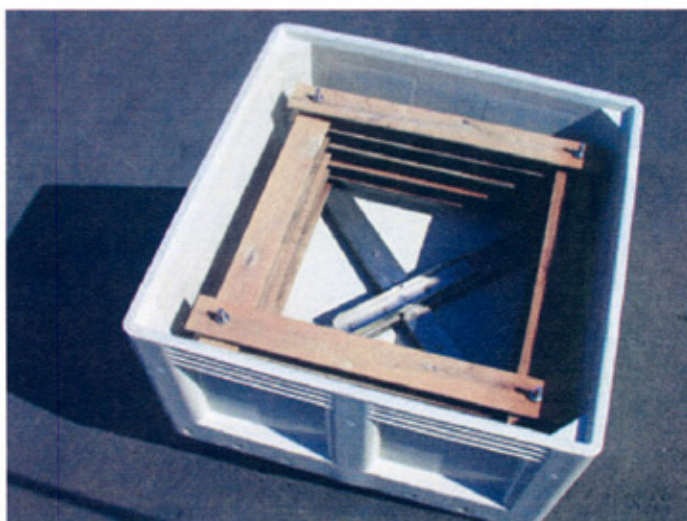
The Binsert

New oak barrel fermentation in macrobins

THIS MONTH'S COOL INSPIRATION came from Ed Barr, owner and lead designer for **P&L Specialties**, the stainless-steel fabricators of custom crush pad equipment in Sonoma County. Ed excels at moving grapes but what was he doing making fermenters?

After watching wineries deal with the hassles of barrel fermentation, like getting the must in and out of the barrels, he decided there had to be a better way. Traditionally, the winemaker can either remove the barrel head or pump through the bung hole. The answer was simple: build a containment system for wood staves which fits neatly into a common vessel that everyone has—the half-ton macrobin.

First, Barr fabricated a stainless steel rack. Next, he secured an exclusive licensing agreement and teamed up with **Innerstave, LLC** for the oak infusion. Winemakers will contact Innerstave directly and order the desired wood (typically, American or French oak) and the level of toast. Innerstave will then bundle the wood with the disassembled metal racks for shipping.



The Binsert™ fits nicely into a ½ ton Macrobin.

Totally cool—the whole package, known as the **Binsert™**, goes out the door and arrives at the winery via **UPS**.

Using a macrobin, the winemaker now has a fermentation vessel that holds roughly 135 gallons, depending on the cap, versus around 60 gallons in a typical barrel. The first thing the good folks at Innerstave did was to replicate the same exposed surface area inside a single barrel then multiply it to match the increased volume of the bin.

Accordingly, they now ship you 20 staves, with total contact surface on all sides to equal the surface area you would expect to replace 2.25 barrels.

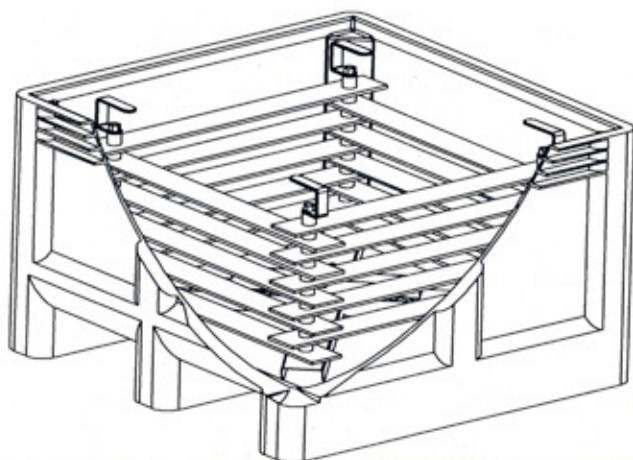
The staves are 39 inches long by 4 inches wide by 5/16-inch thick. Tools for the rack assembly are but a crescent wrench and single Allen wrench, which is included. The procedure is simple. First, assemble the stainless framework with the socket button head screws. Next, stack the wood in the proper alternating pattern on the four-core rods, one in each corner of the rack. Phenolic plastic spacers separate the staves. My first attempt took all of 30 minutes. The final unit weighs in at about 25 pounds.

Thereafter, you nest the Binsert into the macrobin, fill it with must, cover it with a tarp and secure it with bungee cords. Done.



A snap to assemble and at only 25 pounds, the Binsert™ is quick and easy to install.

Once again, someone sees a need and makes life easy for the winemaker.



A cutaway drawing shows the 20 oak slats and phenolic spacers.

What is really cool is the must can now be loaded directly from the destemmer straight to the bin. Easy in and easy out. You simply remove the Binsert, separate your wine and then take the bin straight to the press. One person, with one forklift, does it all.

How about ease of cleanup? Nothing more than disassembly and a hot water pressure wash or steam for the stainless rack. The wood staves are only used once and yield their full extraction. Thereafter, Barr recommends cutting them to length and using them on the BBQ for your salmon filets. Good-bye barrel cleaning.

What's Cool: Once again, someone sees a need and makes life easy for the winemaker. The Binsert more than doubles production while dramatically reducing labor, time and the related hassles of traditional oak barrel fermentation.

Filling, emptying and cleanup are a snap. Winemakers can tailor their programs as they see fit, from small lots to large lots or just for experimenting.

What is really cool is this makes life so easy that the concept of barrel fermentation is now available to everyone.

For more information, call **Melissa Westerman** at Innerstave, LLC in Sonoma, California, at 888-996-8781 or go to www.innerstave.com for additional contacts. [WBM](#)

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