

PRODUCT FOCUS

Glasswashers for Tasting Rooms

Choosing the proper stemware washing system

By Stacy Briscoe

Alex Lewis, director of hospitality at Testarossa Winery in Los Gatos, Calif., has been working in the winery's hospitality department for more than 11 years and says the glasswasher is one of the winery's most important pieces of equipment. "Because we are showcasing world-class wines, we are diligent about our glassware," she said. The historic winery is home to a tasting room and wine bar and plays host to a wide variety of events — from intimate tastings to weddings, and even

wine education courses. "On a busy Saturday, we could easily require 1,750 glasses between all departments just for that day."

To keep up with the demand and flow of wine tasters throughout the day, Lewis and her team use the D2 TimeSaver, a two-rack glass washer by Auto-Chlor System.

Big winery, large loads

The D2 TimeSaver is a low-temperature chemical-based washer that uses an integrated automatic-dispensing system to release a combination of detergent, rinse

aid and sanitizer throughout each cycle — which can be as quick as 60 seconds. According to Benny Sanchez, Auto-Chlor's Santa Clara, Calif., branch manager, the amount of chemicals the machine releases is customized by the company's technicians. "It's adjusted to what you're washing," he said. "We tend to use less chemicals on wine glasses because they're not as greasy as, say, a breakfast plate that held a bunch of bacon."

The industrial machine also includes a fully enclosed pump to maximize spray pressure, a built-in pressure regulator to ensure consistent water volumes for each cycle, and a freshwater low-temperature rinse (120°F to 140°F) that uses a standard water supply, so no external booster heater is needed.

The low water usage (as little as 1.94 gallons per cycle) and low-temperature sanitization mean the Auto-Chlor System meets Energy Star requirements for energy efficiency. For a standard 90-second cycle, the ma-

chine uses only 20 amps. "We even have a line of products that meet green requirements," Sanchez said. "We can customize our washers depending on what people want because we build them right here."

Customization is key for wineries as large as Testarossa, where the washer can run anywhere from 12 to 40-plus times per day, Lewis said. Auto-Chlor provides a regularly scheduled inspection every 28 days but increases that inspection to up to three times a month for those running washers as often as Testarossa. "It's a 29-point inspection," Sanchez said. "We check everything from the correct chemical quantity to water flow, and even things you may not think to check like the motor vents."

An important check for Testarossa is the water itself. Water in Santa Clara County is considered "hard," so-called because of the excessive calcium and magnesium — minerals that will leave white, crusty residue after the water has evaporated.

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“All water to the winery for winemaking is reverse osmosis,” Lewis said. “The tasting room uses the same water source as the winery, so no hard water is used in either winemaking or washing.”

But she added that water quality is something that needs to be tested regularly. If she starts to see white spots or other residue left on the glasses, she’ll call Auto-Chlor’s 24/7 tech service immediately. “We test the chemical content of the water with a water hardness test kit,” Sanchez said. “We need to make sure that if

water is being treated, that treatment is working.”

According to Sanchez, the test also helps determine if the amount of the cleaning chemicals released during each cycle needs to be adjusted.

One-man wash station

On the other end of the spectrum is Jeff Fadness — owner and winemaker of La Vie Dansante, and co-owner of “Blended, a Winemaker’s Studio,” where three wineries pour their wines in a rustic, open-air tasting room in Gilroy, Calif.

Despite the shared space, Fadness said, he and his fellow winemakers use only about 200 glasses on their busiest days. “This is about the same amount of glasses we have ready on the tasting room rack,” he said, so he only needs to run his glasswasher after business hours.

The Blended co-op uses the Hobart L30H glasswasher, an older model Fadness bought used from Habitat for Humanity for \$600. “Reusing and recycling is big at Blended,” he said. The modest, single-rack washer washes only 25 glasses at a time, but does it in a quick, 85-second cycle.

Fadness, who’s been working in the wine industry for more than 10 years, said chemical washers that pump soaps and sanitizers are the most common washers found in tasting rooms. Yet he’s opted for a machine that uses heat sanitization: The Hobart L30H finishes each cycle by rinsing at 190°F.

Fadness said he prefers heat sanitization because he’s experienced rinse aids and sanitizers

that leave unpleasant lingering scents in wine glasses, affecting the aromas of his wines. And while he does use a low-foaming commercial dishwashing soap, he inserts the liquid himself before each load. “It’s about 10 to 15 milliliters for each load,” he said. “Rather than have the machine pull the soap from a bottle automatically, we just pour it on the door from a repurposed vinegar bottle. It seems to work.”

Unlike the Testarossa tasting room, Blended uses untreated well water in the winery. (The reverse osmosis system in place is reserved for the drinking water and laboratory.) Although the well water is sent in for analysis every six months to ensure there are no harmful chemicals or residue present, there are no treatments for the hard water going into the washing system. “There is a coarse cartridge filter in the water line before the dishwasher to trap any big particles,” said Fadness, who hasn’t found any mineral deposits or other marks

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on his glasses. “I have yet to find lipstick, lip balm or sunscreen stains,” he said. “I even write on some glasses with a Sharpie during blending trials, and even the Sharpie comes off.”

Since purchasing the used Hobart model in 2015, he's had a technician come out only once for a general inspection before opening his winery. “It's expensive to have them come out,” he said. “And I haven't had any issues yet.”

The Hobart L30H is about as water-efficient as Testarossa's larger machine, using just about 2 gallons per load. Fadness estimates he does about 10 loads per day, so he marks the low water usage as a benefit to his machine. “The downside,” he said, “is that it does suck power — even more than my destemmer.” The glass washer uses about 38 amps for just a few seconds because of the flash steam finish. He also mentioned that he wouldn't recommend this style of glasswasher for interior tasting rooms, as it lets out a lot of steam once the doors are opened.

Heat-chemical compromise

New to the downtown Sonoma, Calif., tasting room scene is Karen Triosi, who co-owns Jean Edwards Cellars with her husband, John. Triosi keeps her two-rack DishStar HT by Jackson Warewashing Systems (WWS) under the counter of her interior tasting room and has no problems with excessive steam affecting the environment.

Like Fadness' Hobart, the DishStar HT is a high-temperature

machine that finishes each cycle by sanitizing the glasses using hot, 180°F water. “The hot water does an excellent job of removing lipstick,” said Jackson WWS vice president of sales Jonathan Akin. “It's one of the most difficult things to remove from glassware and usually requires water that's at least 160°F.”

Again, the flash-steam finish uses a significant amount of power — anywhere between 37.2 and 40.7 amps per load — and uses 1.1 gallons of water per rack, per load.

The machine's guidelines state that the glasswasher does require a commercial-grade detergent and highly recommends the use of a rinse aid. The built-in chemical pumps automate the distribution of the chemicals, all of which are efficiently removed by the flash-heat finish, according to Akin.

Triosi said she has yet to notice any lingering scents or stains on her stemware. “So far, the only negative has been it does leave some water on the bottoms of the stems after drying,” she said. “But a nice lint-free towel takes care of that.”

The couple purchased the single-rack DishStar HT for about \$3,500 from a restaurant supply store before opening their winery in February 2018. “We haven't hit tourist season yet, which is good for a new tasting room, as it's given us time to get in a rhythm. The Jackson we purchased can do 24 loads in an hour (25 glasses per rack), which is quite a lot of clean stems, so it should be able to keep up,” Triosi said. 🍷



HOBART

The Hobart LXGeR-1 handles up to 30 standard racks per hour while only using .62 gallons of water per rack. An energy recovery system enables the glass washer to run on cold water by recycling hot water vapor produced during the wash and rinse cycle, reducing the amount of steam released into the air.

hobartcorp.com



BARMAID

The GP-100 glass polisher by BarMaid features five spinning heads made of a soft microfiber twine material that simultaneously polish inside and outside of glassware, absorbing moisture as they polish. An air blower sends a steady stream of warm air through the polishing heads for drying. The machine can polish up to 350 glasses per hour. barmaidwashers.com



MIELE

The Miele U 644-S plastic basket includes 16 compartments, 113 mm x 113 mm, with tilters that hold glasses at an angle to prevent water from pooling along the base of the stemware. miele-pro.com



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The DishStar HT-E-Seer is a hot water sanitizing glasswasher that extracts steam from the cleaning chamber at the end of each rinse cycle, which is then used to increase rinse water temperature for subsequent cycles. This is an energy savings feature that also prevents bursts of steam being released when the washer door is opened. jacksonwws.com



AUTO-CHLOR

The U34, Auto-Chlor's most popular model, is a chemical sanitizer that can be adjusted for customers concerned about the taste impact of residual chlorine. The machine can be used with Auto-Chlor's Oxymize, a peracetic acid sanitizer, to eliminate chlorine as well as an integrated fresh water post sanitizing rinse to remove residual chemicals. The wash compartment holds standard 20 x 20 dish racks and 13-inch tall ware. autochlor.com

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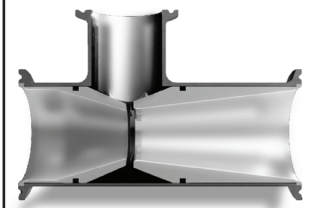
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