



**Basic Juice Article**  
**Brunch and Bubbly**

by: *Beau Jarvis*

I'm hard pressed to think of something more pleasant than a lazy Sunday brunch in the sun. Close your eyes and picture yourself at a table in the sunshine eating croissants and berries. What are you drinking? Juice? A Mimosa? I have nothing against the person who decided to add orange juice to Champagne and christen it *The Brunch Beverage*, but why on God's green earth would one want to alter a glass of bubbly so that it resembles a fizzy *Orange Julius*? Perhaps the idea was not to drink too much before noon or to make an attempt at healthier Champagne. Whatever the reason, I think it is time to look beyond the trusty Mimosa. Enter my new favorite sparkling Sunday brunch beverage: Moscato D'Asti. This nifty little wine comes from Asti in Northern Italy's Piedmont region known primarily for its more famous sparkling wine, Asti Spumante. Moscato D'Asti is a lightly sparkling wine made from the Moscato grape. Moscato has a pleasant aroma of apricot and pear with very slight Champagne-like hints of biscuits. Its flavor is subtly sweet and creamy accompanied by bubbles that feel comfortably laid-back. Moscato D'Asti is also a light bodied wine (read: low alcohol content), which in my mind, rounds out its résumé for Sunday Brunch. Sounds good, but does it deliver?

On a recent Sunday, I put one widely available Moscato to the brunch test: "Batasiolo Moscato D'Asti," 2002 (\$9.95). With the Moscato chilling, my wife and I prepared waffles, croissants, strawberries, cantaloupe, melon, and of course, chocolate. Aside from my fear of committing gluttony, I was curious to see how well the Moscato would play with these brunch foods. To my surprise, the Moscato complimented the biscuit-like qualities of the waffles, while the syrup pumped up the apricot and pear flavors in the wine. The waffles and wine *kanoodled* quite well indeed! My favorite match was the croissant and Moscato. The bubbly D'Asti coaxed out sweet buttery flavors in my croissant. My Moscato's fruitiness made it seem as if I had spread jam over the croissant. Clearly, this is a match made in Brunch Heaven. I could have easily stopped here and beseeched you to immediately try this pairing, but there was still food on the table. The Moscato did well with the fruit, never tasting too sweet. Strawberries and Moscato were

definitely the standout fruit pairing. The wine responded to the tart edge of the strawberries by becoming more effervescent in my mouth. I suddenly had a childhood flashback of *Pop Rocks*. A square of milk chocolate and sip of D'Asti brought brunch to a rich, creamy finish. My Mimosa days are now firmly behind me. The next time you are invited to brunch, be the favorite guest by bringing along a bottle of Moscato D'Asti. Better yet, roll out of bed on a Sunday morning, track down some fresh croissants, pour a glass of Moscato and treat yourself to a near-spiritual brunch experience. Cheers!

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