



Basic Juice Article Wine Review Stylin'

by: *Beau Jarvis*

The other day I received the latest issue of *Unnamed National Wine Publication*. Unlike other magazines, I don't rip the plastic open and immediately leaf through its pages. Why is that? Well, the content of nearly all wine magazines is unbearably, mind-numbingly predictable. There is always the feature article: Several syrupy, sentimental sentences about a winemaker accompanied by the requisite photograph of said winemaker standing in the vineyard with a glass of wine. But wait, there's more; the content gets ever more boring. Next comes page after page of wine reviews. Each review is written in the same format (I refuse to use the word, "style," as this really isn't what most would consider an actual writing style). Of course, I understand that these reviews are supposed to convey a particular wine's personality – its scents, flavors, and textures. Unfortunately most reviews succeed only in putting me in a rather catty mood by the repetitive use of phrases such as, "textured and framed," "endless tiers of fruit flavor," cherry-berry-mocha fruit," and the ever-popular "plump cherry and blackberry flavors." Now I know there are only *so* many adjectives one can use to describe wine. When I write my own wine reviews, I notice, to my consternation, that I overuse words like crisp, subtle, and food-friendly. The wine review is a mighty constricting, creativity-quashing format.

What if a wine critic decided to chuck the old review format and trot out an alternative form of the wine review? One would think that after tasting; say five or eleven wines, numerous creatively crafted reviews might flow freely from a critic's pen. It happened to me last night. The creativity bug bit me. I'm currently experimenting with three new wine review styles: the Limerick, the Haiku and the Old School Rhymin'. Compare the reviews below, written in the traditional format, to rewrites in one of these new & improved styles.

Original review #1: **A-Mano Primitivo, 2002 (\$11)** – This deep inky plum colored wine is a slightly softer version of the big red Zinfandel. A-Mano has intense cherry scents with subtle woody pepper aromas. Its flavor is of bright red berries, followed by black pepper and a lightly tannic finish. This wine is bold and simple. Try it with pizza, panini or fried calamari.

Review rewritten as a Limerick:

Consider an inky red wine named Primitivo
Smell its fruity, peppery scent; then shout, "Wow it's Neat-O!"
It tastes of red berries
Perhaps also cherries
Bold, yes indeed, like a brand new pink Speedo

Original review #2: Lustau ‘**Papirusa**’ **Light Manzanilla Sherry, non-vintage (\$8)** - Lustau *Papirusa* is a delicate, dry wine that makes an ideal aperitif. This light straw colored Sherry contains subtle hues of brown and almost shimmers in the glass. Unique, 'non-wine' scents of almond, bread dough and salt will pique your curiosity. *Papirusa* is very light-bodied and has a tangy taste, followed by roasted nut flavors and a long, woody finish. An extremely well made wine at a low price. Try it with shellfish, roasted almonds or Serrano ham.

Review rewritten as a Haiku:

Delicate Sherry
Light straw – shimmering sea spray
Mouth waters with zest

Original review #3: **Martini & Rossi Asti, non-vintage (\$12)** - A good, simple, unassuming wine. Asti is very pale gold in color with active bubbles. It has a scent that can best be described as, “grapey.” There are also aromas of canned peach and apricot. While Asti is sweet, it is balanced by distinct crispness that lasts through the finish. The flavor confirms everything detected by the nose with a creamy sensation in the mouth to boot. Asti is fine as an aperitif and it works very well with Sunday brunch – particularly egg dishes

Review rewritten using Old School Rhyming’:

F*** tha *Kristal!* / I need bubbly for my posse at a price that’s minimal
I’m cynical / I be sniffin’ / Takin a whiffin’ / My nose twitchin’ like a whacked out
kitten.
This glass aint frontin’ / Sweet peach, apricot ‘n grapes sure be sayin’ somthin’.
Asti is dope / It’s creamy / Yeah boy / Feelin’ oh so dreamy. / Sweet but not heavy / Ya’ll
ready?
Gimme eggs. Gimme bread. Gimme fruit. / Man, this s*** is mad-tasty to boot.

You see. Wine reviews need not be dull and boring. With a little style adjustment, reading about wine can be *phat, yo*. Cheers.

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