

LANCE SURUJBALLY

Facebook: The Lone Caner

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HOW DID YOU GET INTO THE WORLD OF RUM?

The Lone Caner began as part of a book club in 2009. Later, I started a blog, and the rum reviews began in January 2010. Everything was ported over to the standalone site in 2013, and it's been going on regularly ever since.

DESCRIBE YOUR ACTIVITIES AS A RUM INFLUENCER.

The blog is dedicated to clear and informative writing about rums. It consists of rum reviews, short retrospectives of out-of-production rums, deeper examinations of the key rums of the world, company biographies, and whatever else catches my fancy. I've only ever been asked to judge once and had to decline due to travel restrictions.

WHAT DO YOU DO WHEN YOU'RE NOT WRITING ABOUT OR PROMOTING RUM?

Between professional duties and writing and researching, I read voraciously, and am a lover of photography, art and movies.

WHAT EXCITES YOU ABOUT THE MODERN RUM INDUSTRY, AND WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED?



I love the increasing quality of white rums such as the clairins, grogues, agricoles, and pot still juice from new distilleries the world over. These are increasingly being released as quality rums in their own right, not merely as afterthoughts.

I'm particularly enthused about small rum makers from outside the Caribbean: this is taking place in Mexico, Africa, the Far East and the Pacific/Australasia. No other spirit has anything like this global footprint, or this kind of variety.

I think the dysfunctional distribution systems in North America are relics of the Prohibition era and create undue burdens to reasonable access to quality rum at reasonable prices. These systems have to be reformed at some stage.

Global rum standards should be harmonised and made consistent. There is this ongoing misconception that "rum

has no rules", which is nonsense.

The problem is that the existing rules are often country specific, and not consistently enforced, consistently accepted or even consistent with each other. Steps to make these regulations align must happen if rum is to ever be taken seriously.

WHAT IS THE NEXT COUNTRY, STYLE OR INNOVATION TO WATCH OUT FOR IN THE RUM WORLD?

The Far East and India might try to break out of their own markets. Smaller distilleries like Mia, Sampan, Issan, Chalong Bay, Laodi, Naga and Sang Som, as well as the Australian and Pacific island distilleries will hopefully take on a greater share of fans' attention. Africa might develop into a powerhouse of rum distillation, and the USA definitely bears careful watching.

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