

—Domaine— *Koquelicot*

Biographies

Jacqueline Marovac

Jacqueline is an Epidemiologist working in international pharmaceutical drug research for the last 25 years.

She was born in Rijeka, and then started her globetrotter life, which took her to the UK, Canada, USA, Asia, Chile, Africa and France.

Her sense of contact, her curiosity and her taste makes her a fine “connoisseur” of different life styles and particularly of wines from the many countries visited.

Olivier Ertzbischoff

Olivier is a medical doctor (cardiologist) and spent more than 25 years working in the pharmaceutical industry, the last company being Bayer.

Five years ago, he started to think about producing wine.

He participated in harvests and cellar work in famous Burgundy “domaines” such as Anne Claude Leflaive, Bachelet, and did some training on Biodynamic wines. He has been drinking good French wines for many years and is especially a connoisseur of Burgundy wines.

Why producing wine in Croatia??

Just over 3 years ago we started an exciting professional adventure in Croatia, setting up a small production of white wines, Chardonnay and Malvazija using a burgundy type of vinification.

We decided, to try this wine experiment in Croatia as Jacqueline is from there and we really love the area, spending all of our free time in our house in Gračičće, Istria. Of course as we are there, we drink a lot of Croatian wines. Jacqueline’s grandparents used to produce their own wine at the beginning of the century in Kvarner but it was only for family consumption.

We are big wine lovers and Olivier especially loves whites. The region of Istria, produces mainly Malvazija and Chardonnay. Globally we found the quality of Malvazija good, but we thought that the quality of Istrian Chardonnay could be improved. Our idea was to try to produce an Istrian Chardonnay using the Burgundy method. For this, we asked one of our good Burgundy wine making friends to help us in the vinification and in the production of chardonnay “a la Bourgogne”, with local Istrian grapes in the beginning.

Our wines

We don't own a vineyard as we are constantly travelling and the logistics are too hard. However, we do have a partnership with a few local producers who grow the grapes for us and we participate in the process of cutting and care etc.

- Ivica Bencic in Motovun (Chardonnay, white earth)
- Marijo Banko in Kosinozici (Chardonnay and Malvazija, red earth)

To make the wine we rent a cellar and use the equipment (press, pumps, tubes) of Ranko Anđelini in Pazin. However, all the oak barrels are imported directly from Burgundy, (Francois Freres) and all the inox tanks we use for cooling and mixing are our own.

We import all the French oak barrels from Burgundy and we use only 228L barrels (barriques).

In 2012, we did an experiment with some barrels of chardonnay and malvazija. As the wine was not too bad, we decided to expand the experiment in 2013. And we produced the following:

- 2600 L of chardonnay, assemblage of grapes from the red and white earths, kept in oak barrels for 10 months. This is our “**Belaigra**” for which we received Vrhunsko and were told to put the Grand Cru on the label. Why the name? It is a mix of Belaj and Gračičće (two of our favourite places) and means also white toy. This chardonnay only gets better with age and can be kept several years. This year, our Belaigra won Silver in Dubrovnik, VinIstra and Decanter World Wine Awards and previously gold in Slovenia.
- 2000 L of chardonnay macerated for 2 days and kept in oak barrels for 10 months. This is our “Epicuria”, Kvalitetno vino and the name because we believe it will be a “vin de garde” (you can save it for some years) and the flavour will develop even more, a sensual pleasure on the tongue. This little jewel is a special chardonnay with an Istrian twist.
- 3600 L of an assemblage of 85% malvazija and 15% chardonnay. Each were vinified independently in oak barrels for 10 months and then mixed in inox for 2 months prior to bottling. This is our Kvalitetno cuvee “**Santa Chiara**” named after our daughter, Maja Chiara, who is proving to be a hedonist like her

parents. This wine won the Silver medal in the first National Competition of Vino Croatia 2016, Silver in VinIstra and Silver in Dubrovnik 2017.

- 280 L of pure malvazija aged in barrels for 10 months: **“Fugaz”** which in Chilean Spanish means shooting star. This Kvaliteno wine has a special charm for us as we did not intend to produce malvazija alone, our desire is to specialize in Chardonnay, but this little star wanted to come out alone so we decided to try. It turned out to be such a success that we sold out immediately and once again the 2015 vintage won Silver in the World of Malvazija festival in 2017.

All four of these wines were bottled first in August 2014 in Belaj, where we had our podrum for the first few years and the 2015 vintage was bottled in September 2016.

We also started to make a sparkling wine, pjenusač a la “classical metode” using 100% chardonnay grapes. We bottled 3000 bottles in August 2014 for secondary fermentation which sold out very quickly:

- KONTEMPO, Blanc de Blancs, Zéro dosé (Vrhunsko)
- LUNA, Blanc de Blancs, Extra brut (Vrhunsko)

In 2014, we did not make wine for bottling but did make 4000L of pjenusač which was in barriques for one year and was bottled in October 2015. This is a very special pjenusac which is selling quickly and was awarded Silver medal in Dubrovnik, Bronze in Vinistra and Bronze in Decanter World Wine Awards, all in 2017.

Last year was an excellent year. We had a fantastic harvest and launched our new wines **“Nomad”**, a blend of Teran, Cabernet and Merlot, which was in barriques for 3 years. It has sold out already but we hope to bottle the new vintage before the end of the year.

The Name

We choose the name “Domaine Koquelicot” because we did not want to use our family names as many local winemakers do. Domaine is quite a French way to call a wine yard, and Koquelicot because we like the flower and the beautiful fields of coquelicots that surround us in the vineyards outside our door in the springtime in the south of France and Istria, where we now live. We find the poppy (mak) a simple, joyful and elegant flower and we hope that we embottle that spirit in our wines.

Jacqueline & Olivier