

—Domaine— Koquelicot



Biographies

Jacqueline Marovac

Jacqueline is a Clinical 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.

She holds certificates in viticulture and WSET 3.

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.

He holds recent certificates in enology and biodynamic wines.

Why producing wine in Croatia??

Just over 6 years ago we started an exciting professional adventure in Croatia, setting up a small production of white wines, Chardonnay and Malvazija using a burgundy style 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 (Zamet) 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 enhanced. 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 the first year in the vinification and in the production of chardonnay “a la Bourgogne”, with local Istrian grapes.

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 two local producers who grow the grapes for us and we participate in the process of cutting and care etc.

To make the wine we started out at Belaj where we rented a cellar and used the equipment (press, pumps, tubes). Last year we built our own cellar in Gračičće and had the first harvest there in 2020.

We import all the French oak barrels from Francoise Freres in Burgundy and we use mainly 228L barrels (barriques).

But how did it all start? Well in 2012 in Belaj, we did an experiment with some barrels of chardonnay and malvazija.

As the wine was not too bad, our friends encouraged us and we decided to expand the experiment in 2013.

And we produced the following:

- Handpicked 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 (where we started wine making) 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 wine has won several awards: won Silvers in Dubrovnik, VinIstra and Decanter World Wine Awards twice and previously gold in Slovenia and Frankfurt.
- Handpicked chardonnay macerated for 2 days and kept in oak barrels for 10 months. This is our **“Epicuria”**, Vrhunsko 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.
- Then we did an assemblage of 85% malvazija (2 days of maceration) 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 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 and Gold in the World of Malvazija 2019.

- Our pure malvazija undergoes a 5 day maceration and then is aged in barrels for 10 months: “**Fugaz**” which in Chilean Spanish means shooting star. This 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. The 2016 won the Silver Decanter Medal.

All four of these wines were bottled first in August 2014 in Belaj, where we had our podrum for the first few years.

We also started to make a sparkling wine, pjenusač a la “classical metode” using 100% chardonnay hand-picked grapes. We bottled 3000 bottles in August 2014 for secondary fermentation which became quite the hit:

- **KONTEMPO**, Blanc de Blancs, Zéro dosé (Vrhunsko) 2014
- **LUNA**, Blanc de Blancs, Extra brut (Vrhunsko) 2015

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

In 2015 as it was an excellent year, we had a fantastic harvest and launched our new label “**Nomad**”, a blend of Teran, Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot, which was in barriques for 2 years. It has been called the Istrian Bordeaux and is a refreshing blend with good acidity and mild tannins.

In 2020 we launched a new red cuvee “**Bohème**”, which is a blend of Merlot and Teran, also aged in oak for 2 years before bottling. It was a limited production that became quite a success and sold out quickly in 2021. New vintage will be available next year.

This year we launched our first rose wine of 100% local Merlot grapes called “**Koquette**”. A refreshing summer wine with beautiful color that goes really nice with BBQ and as aperitif.

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