

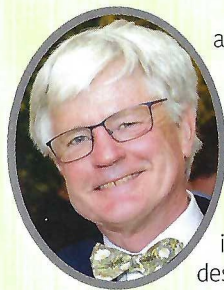


WOMEN IN WINE

When I first began my professional interest in wine, women formed a tiny minority of grape growers, winemakers, merchants, writers and journalists. This has now changed significantly, especially through the work of pioneering women who brought exceptional knowledge, skill, determination and personality to the world of wine. This month's column celebrates six women from very different backgrounds and career stages for whom I have huge respect and who are still active in their roles (in alphabetical first name order).

Jancis Robinson is the doyenne of wine writers, and has been one of the leading figures in the sector for as long as I can remember. In 1985, she became the first person not formally in the wine trade to become a Master of Wine, and is best known for her Oxford Companion to Wine (now edited together with Julia Harding), her column in the Financial Times, and her eponymous website **JancisRobinson.com**, which she sold to Recurrent Ventures in 2021.

Justine Saurel, the oldest daughter of Eric



and Christine at Domaine Montirius in Sarrians in the Vaucluse, has inherited all of her parents' passion for biodynamic winegrowing, and added an infectious energy, enthusiasm and commitment to sharing an alternative way of living in greater harmony with nature. She describes herself as being passionate

about wine and takes great pleasure in helping her taste buds and friends discover the good things that surround us. They make some wonderful Gigondas, Vacqueyras and Côtes du Rhône wines.

Katharina Prüm is the fourth generation of her family to run the beautiful Joh. Jos. Prüm estate in Wehlen in the Mosel. Following her youthful family experiences in the vineyards and winery, she then studied law (with an internship in the US), before returning to the family business in 2003. She is quietly spoken, thoughtful, deeply knowledgeable, and, put simply, makes superb Riesling wines.

Laura Catena is a tireless, knowledgeable and charismatic champion of the wines of Mendoza, and of Bodega Catena Zapata in particular, where she is Managing Director and Founder of the Catena Institute of

Wine. Another fourth generation winegrower, she graduated with a Biology degree from Harvard and a degree in Medicine from Stanford. She always stands out in a wine crowd wearing her gaucho's beret! Despite the accolades showered on her, she still remains very human and is a great raconteur.

Marlène Lebreton typifies the next generation of young women wine makers who remain deeply committed to carrying forward their family heritage. She is one of six



DOMAINE MONTGILET

cousins driving innovation at Domaine Montgilet in Anjou - under the watchful eyes of Victor and Vincent Lebreton. I have only met her once, briefly, as she showed us around their winery, with great pride, knowledge and enthusiasm. However, she is already adding new wines to their portfolio, and I am sure that with her expertise some of my favourite wines from the Loire are going to get even better!

Michelle "Mina" Carlin is a Mexican wine educator-sommelier and content creator, founder of The Easy Wine (**theeasywine.com**), and active on social media, with 135,000 followers on Instagram and 102,000 likes on TikTok. She has boundless energy and enthusiasm, and believes strongly that we should be inspired by the light of others and share it authentically and passionately.

If she was still alive, I would also have included Hazel Murphy in this list; I learnt so much from her. As Chief Executive (Europe) of the Australian Wine Bureau for 17 years, she blazed the trail for the success of Australian wine in the UK market. If there is one woman in wine I would still like to meet, it would be Caroline Frey who is now making such stunning wines in Vaud, Switzerland, especially from Petite Arvine - one of my favourite grapes - having stepped back from her previous leading winemaking roles across France.

WINES MADE BY WOMEN
(please drink responsibly)

LOCAL FAVOURITES

Saracosa, Toscana IGT (Tuscany, Italy) 2024, 13%. Made by Sofia Barbanera, this is a totally quaffable soft red wine, made with Sangiovese and Merlot grapes in southern Tuscany. It has cherry and plum fruit characteristics, with a touch of sweet spice, going well with tomato-based pasta dishes and grilled meat. (Laithwaites, £14.99, **reduced to £12.99 if you present a copy of this magazine**).

SLIGHTLY FURTHER AFIELD

Catena Malbec (Catena, Mendoza) 2024, 13.5%. Great value Argentinian Malbec full of dark fruit flavours, with rich texture and balanced by just the right amount of acidity to freshen it. Perfect with steak from the BBQ (Majestic, £14 mixed six, **reduced to £13 mixed six if you present a copy of this magazine**).

M&S Etna Rosso (Cantine Nicosia, Sicily) 2022, 13%. Made by Maria Carella using Nerello Mascalese and Nerello Cappuccio grapes, and partially aged in old oak barrels, this intense wine has delicious cherry, blackcurrant and slightly chocolate/coffee notes (M&S/Ocado, £14).

WORTH GOING FURTHER FOR

Grolleau (Montgilet, Loire) 2023, 11.5%. An unusual, light and fresh red wine from Montgilet, made from the Grolleau grape with aromas of red fruits and a touch of spiciness. Perfect slightly cool on a hot summer's day, especially with charcuterie (Vinatis, £9.31).

Vacqueyras "Garrigues" (Montirius, Vacqueyras) 2022, 13.5%. Made biodynamically from 70% Grenache and 30% Syrah grapes, averaging 70 years of age, this delicious wine is fermented and aged in concrete, with its name deriving from the aromas of the herbs of the Garrigues (Field & Fawcett, £26.75).

Wehlener Sonnenuhr Auslese Goldkapsel (Weingut Joh. Jos. Prüm, Mosel) 2023, 8%. A stunning wine that will mature over many years. It opens with intense tropical fruit aromas, and evolves into a combination of savoury, mineral and slightly spicy characteristics. Its high acidity beautifully balances the sweetness (Farr Vintners, £43).

(Wine prices and availability correct at going to press, but are subject to change at short notice)

Next issue: A trio from Portugal

