

Through skill, hard work and determination, these 13 female winemakers are true trailblazers who forged their own paths and are making a lasting impact in the world of wine. Here, they share their own words about their vinous voyages and experiences.

the WOMEN who make our WINE

BY THE EDITORS OF
WINE ENTHUSIAST

ILLUSTRATIONS BY
BARBARA SPURLL

Zelma Long

Co-owner/
Winemaking Partner,
Vilafonté

Paarl, South Africa

One of best-known winemakers in the world, Long has been an icon of the vine and inspiration to many for decades. This pioneer in the California wine scene was one of the first women to study oenology and viticulture at University of California, Davis, in the late 1960s. Her winemaking career started at Robert Mondavi Winery in Napa Valley, where she worked for a decade and rose through the ranks to become the winery's chief enologist. In 1979, Long was recruited as winemaker for Simi Winery in Sonoma County. During her 18-year tenure, she became president and CEO of the winery, which made her the first woman to assume senior management of a California winery. In 1997, Long established Vilafonté winery in South Africa, where she focuses on high-quality Bordeaux-style red blends. She has also consulted for numerous wineries worldwide, including in France and Israel, and founded and was the first president of the non-profit American Vineyard Foundation (AVF). —Lauren Buzzeo

Why did you want to become a winemaker?

I decided to enroll in the UC Davis enology and viticulture studies after my in-laws bought property on Pritchard Hill, Napa Valley, in the mid-'60s and planted Chardonnay and Riesling. I was a science graduate, a practicing dietitian and decided to put my science and interest in food to a different direction.

What is your proudest achievement?

I have two. Number one: hiring and mentoring and encouraging young women. Many early women winemakers had worked for me. Diane Kenworthy, who worked with me at Simi as viticulturist, became the first woman president of the American Society for Enology and Viticulture. Dawnine Dyer became the long-term winemaker at Domaine Chandon. Genevieve Janssens became the first [woman] winemaker of Opus One. And so on. I continue to mentor young women in all fields, when the opportunity presents itself, suggesting education, including travel, problem solving and encouraging belief and confidence in one's skills and abilities. Second is Vilafonté. With my husband, Phil Freese, we conceived of creating a wine of international significance, starting with buying land in South Africa, planting Cabernet Franc, Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot and Malbec. We acquired a local partner and 22 years on, our 2016 Series C this year won the Bordeaux Trophy in the Six Nations Wine challenge, an annual competition of New World countries. Three partners, all stars in their area of expertise: me, winemaking; Phil, winegrowing; Mike Ratcliffe, wine sales and marketing. Very fun. I recently read a quote that applies here: "If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go with others."

What is your advice to someone interested in entering the wine business?

It helps if you are interested in agriculture, love nature and being outdoors, are fascinated by this ancient liquid, are attracted to the taste and nuances of wine, and want a complex life because wine encompasses science, agriculture, soils, sensory perception. It is international, it is historical, it is endlessly varied, it is social. In short, it is fascinating.



"I continue to mentor young women in all fields...suggesting education, including travel, problem solving and encouraging belief and confidence in one's skills and abilities."



Priyanka French
Winemaker,
Signorello Estate
Napa Valley, CA

Founded in 1977, Signorello Estate is in the midst of a rebirth. It was one of the few wineries to burn in the 2017 wildfires that hit Northern California, and French is key to its bright future. A native of Mumbai, she worked in France and New Zealand as well as alongside Andy Erickson and Michel Rolland at Dalla Valle Vineyards before being named Signorello's winemaker in the spring of 2019. She is just the third-ever winemaker to grace the property near Napa's Silverado Trail, which comprises 100 acres, 42 of which are planted to a variety of red and white wine grapes. —*Virginie Boone*

Did you have any role models?

I was an undergrad in Mumbai pursuing a degree in food technology when our class visited Sula Vineyards for a field trip, and I instantly fell in love with the wine industry. My first mentor was Neil Fernandes, Sula's winemaker, who gave me valuable direction in terms of gaining an education and, then, experience. More recently, Naoko Dalla Valle, who owns and operates Dalla Valle, is someone I look up to immensely. She has such a clear vision and is tireless in her quest for perfection. Who Naoko is and what she does is truly spectacular. I learned so much working for her.

What is your proudest achievement?

There were a few "firsts" early in my career I am extremely proud of. I was the first Indian to earn a master's in viticulture and enology from UC Davis, and the first Indian to work in winemaking at Hospices de Beaune, Burgundy. And at Signorello, the best is truly yet to come. I'm honored to oversee the construction of a new winery and caves, and excited to work alongside our new viticulture and winemaking team of Steve Matthiasson and Celia Welch.

What was the most surprising experience or encounter you've had as a female winemaker?

To quote a friend, "grapes don't care if you are a man or a woman." All joking aside, I've been very fortunate to always work at wineries and with people where being a woman was a non-issue. I've always been treated like an equal, and for that, I am thankful to all my colleagues, past and present.

What is your advice to someone interested in entering the wine business?

It's not as glamorous as it looks. No matter which field you choose to work in—production, hospitality, sales—always take the time to learn about the whole business. For example, in addition to making wine, I've done sales for a cooperage, which helped me have a far deeper understanding of the interplay of oak and wine, and I've written articles for wine publications in India. Always keep exploring, especially in today's world, where there's an explosion of creativity, off-beat varieties and creative packaging. Find your niche, and then own it.

"I've been very fortunate to always work at wineries and with people where being a woman was a non-issue."

Ludivine Griveau
Winemaker,
Hospices de
Beaune
Beaune, France

Griveau is the first female winemaker in the 473-year viticultural history of the ancient charitable Hospices de Beaune estate in the heart of Burgundy, currently making Pinot Noir and Chardonnay from more than 148 acres of legendary sites across the Côte d'Or that include some famous grands crus. Each November, her wines—hailed as the best ever made at the Hospices—are sold at a charity auction in Beaune that attracts visitors from around the world. Since she arrived in 2015, Griveau has steadily transformed both viticulture and winemaking, imbuing the wines with newfound elegance, transparency and expression. —*Anne Krebiehl, MW*

Why did you want to become a winemaker?

I studied agronomy and food science, and didn't expect to become a winemaker. I was passionate about wine and gastronomy, but no one in my family is from the wine world. Since childhood, I have loved putting my sensations and perceptions into words. Doing my oenology diploma alongside engineering was how it all started.

Did you have any role models?

A wonderful traineeship with the famous Nadine Gublin changed my life. She is my role model even now. She trusted me from the beginning, taught me, prepared me to be a woman in this man's world, shared her knowledge and offered me my first job as a winemaker in Burgundy.

What was the most surprising experience or encounter you've had as a female winemaker?

As a woman winemaker, I would say most men are welcoming, nice and natural. But for some, it is difficult being managed by a woman, but things are changing day by day. I remember

visiting a vineyard on the first day of my previous job. The grower did not speak for minutes and when he did, only to the other male winemaker. But I insisted and spoke about myself in the third person, "she thinks maybe we could try this," etc... Finally, he saw that I knew what I was talking about. Today, he is one of my biggest fans.

What is your advice to someone interested in entering the wine business?

Work hard, stay who you are and always be guided by humility.



Keto Ninidze
Owner/Vineyard Manager/
Winemaker, Oda Family
Winery
Martvili, Georgia

One of the world's oldest winemaking countries, Georgia rests heavily on tradition. It's customary for men to make wine and for their wives to pour and serve food without even being introduced. But Ninidze has made her mark on the wine industry here, as well as in the greater wine world. Beyond breaking boundaries by simply producing wine, she brings attention to women and domestic violence through controversial wine labels that feature images of naked women. A former journalist, she co-authored the book *A Gently Fermenting Revolution: Women in the Georgian Wine Business* and has been a pioneer for wine tourism to Georgia's Samegrelo region. —*Mike DeSimone*

What is your proudest achievement?

The Samegrelo region of Western Georgia, where we live, once had great winemaking traditions. Sadly, it has been forgotten since the 19th century, when fungal diseases attacked its vineyards, and then, during the Soviet era, the state decided that vineyards in Samegrelo would be a great headache for their big industry. As a result, [the] winemaking practice lost biodiversity of our local vines, of which there were 55 indigenous, regional varieties. Samegrelo, as a wine region, was almost deleted from the wine map. My winery, Oda, was one of the new-wave pioneers in Samegrelo, which made its contribution to start popularizing local grapes, and Samegrelo as a vine-growing and wine-tourism region of Georgia.



"My winery was one of the new-wave pioneers in Samegrelo, which made its contribution to start popularizing local grapes."

What was the most surprising experience or encounter you've had as a female winemaker?

I deeply realize that leading a family winery in such a conservative culture like Georgia, where both family and wine stand on patriarchal value structures, isn't an easy job at all. But on the other hand...some sexist attitudes—for example, when people say that wine made by women is not worthy to drink, or that men have to restrict women's entrance into the winery or [only let them] wash *kvevri*, or we are just the exotic marketing projects of our husbands, fathers or brothers—make me, as a human being, always surprised.

Tara Gomez

Winemaker, Kitá Wines & Camins 2 Dreams

Lompoc, CA

A member of the Chumash indigenous community from the California coast, Gomez is the continent's first recognized Native American to make wine for her tribe from a vineyard it owns. She followed a conventional path to the cellar, studying at Fresno State, interning at Fess Parker Winery and working for J. Lohr in Paso Robles for nine years before coming home to the Santa Ynez Valley to launch Kitá Wines. "In a sense, it's like paying it forward," says Gomez. "They sent me off to college, and now I am back and sharing what I've learned." With her Catalonia-born wife, Mireia Taribo, Gomez also makes Grüner Veltliner and cool-climate Syrah under a new brand called Camins 2 Dreams. —Matt Kettmann

Why did you want to become a winemaker?

I became a winemaker because of my love for science and also childhood memories of visiting wineries with my parents. I have vivid memories of the smell of the cellars and seeing the large stainless-steel tanks, and the labs caught my interest. As a child, I loved looking at nature through a microscope. That evolved into chemistry sets and, eventually, an interest in studying enology.

What is your proudest achievement?

My proudest achievement was being the first Native American winemaker to be recognized by the California State Legislature, and our tribe, the Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians, being recognized as the first Native American tribe to have a Native American winemaker, vineyard and winery run solely by our tribe.

What was the most surprising experience or encounter you've had as a female winemaker?

Being turned away from commercial wine buyers before they tasted the wine because of my connection to my tribe. They didn't judge me for what was inside the bottle, but rather the fact that a Native American tribe is behind the brand.

What is your advice to someone interested in entering the wine business?

My advice to others is to always stay open to learning, mentor others, taste often, travel abroad, believe in yourself and follow your instinct because the majority of the time, it will lead you in the right direction.



Susana Esteban

Owner, Susana Esteban Vinhos

Alentejo, Portugal

Though born in Galicia, Spain, and a graduate of the University of La Rioja, Esteban has adopted Portugal as her home and Portuguese wines as her work. After winemaker stints at Douro-based Quinta do Côtto and Quinta do Crasto in the late 1990s and early 2000s, she moved south to the Alentejo region in 2009. Esteban established her own winery there two years later, based around two old-vine vineyards. She now makes wines under the brand names Procura and Aventura. She also works as a consultant for other area wineries and produces additional wines, called Crochet and Tricot, in partnership with friend and fellow winemaker Sandra Tavares da Silva of Wine & Soul. "I discovered very young what I am passionate about," says Esteban. "I determined then to devote myself to achieving what I set out to do. It is a work in progress." —Roger Voss

Why did you want to become a winemaker?

I always wanted to work in something related to agriculture, and although I had no family history in the winemaking industry, I was always very curious about everything to do with tasting: aromas, textures, etc. When I was studying chemistry at the University of Santiago de Compostela, I started to sign up for tasting courses and winemaking seminars. I went to work at wineries during the harvest. I was passionate and decided to dedicate myself professionally to winemaking and studied enology at La Rioja University.

Did you have any role models?

I did not have a single role model because it was a world I did not know, although in my area, Rías Baixas, there were always many enological women who were a source of inspiration for me.

What is your proudest achievement?

I managed to work on what I love. I became a wine producer and created my own project from nothing.

What is your advice to someone interested in entering the wine business?

Do not be in a hurry. Try to work with people who inspire you. Be aware that this is a calling, that you need passion as well as results.

"Although I had no family history in the winemaking industry, I was always very curious about everything to do with tasting."

Eva Fricke

Owner/Winemaker, Weingut Eva Fricke

Rheingau, Germany

Fricke comes from Bremen, an industrial city in northwest Germany best known for cars and beer. Born to two doctors, the self-made winemaker is known as a master of Riesling and a vanguard for organic and sustainable agriculture. In 2006, five years after she earned a degree in viticulture and oenology from Geisenheim University, Fricke established her own domaine while juggling a full-time position as technical director at Weingut Josef Leitz. Today, she oversees more than 32 acres of certified-organic vineyards on Rheingau's ancient steep slopes, many planted with vines that date to 1938, and exports her wine to upwards of 20 countries. —Anna Lee C. Iijima

What is your proudest achievement?

I am proud of the collective achievements of the teams that have been working with me since the beginning. The more established we become, the more I realize how unlikely it was for us to succeed and to get to where we are today. I am extremely grateful for all the people, from trainees and employees, to customers and other winemakers, who supported and carried this dream with me. The first employees I hired were my Romanian harvest team, many who still work with me. They supported me when no one believed in the domaine, and when many people laughed about my ideas.

What was the most surprising experience or encounter you've had as a female winemaker?

I never felt my task or my achievement was different because I am a woman winemaker. I wanted to be famous not because I'm a woman, but because my wines are great. There were always men who supported me, and my greatest mentors were always men. They never told me to do things differently as a woman. As a woman, it's more a question of how you want to focus your life, whether it's family and kids, or a career. A woman can manage everything at the same time, but you definitely need family support and a partner who is willing to support you.

What is your advice to someone interested in entering the wine business?

Question everything. Whether modern or traditional winemaking, don't let a movement capture you fully. Be you, develop your own taste, listen to what is good for your body and question it all again. All actions and buying decisions have long-term consequences. Drink organic, eat organic and work organic. Check wines for additives of all kind. Maintain traditions and traditional landscapes that are at the foundation of our wine culture, and support other producers who make the effort to do so. These traditions took centuries to be built but can disappear in a day in the name of industrialized and more profitable agriculture.



"I am extremely grateful for all the people, from trainees and employees, to customers and other winemakers, who supported and carried this dream with me."



Ntsiki Biyela

Owner/Winemaker,
Aslina Wines
Western Cape,
South Africa

Growing up in Mahlabathini, a semirural town in KwaZulu-Natal on South Africa's Eastern Cape, wine was not a part of Biyela's life. But that didn't stop her from applying for, and ultimately accepting, a scholarship to learn about the stuff. The opportunity prompted her to leave her hometown for the first time to study winemaking at the University of Stellenbosch. Upon graduating in 2003, Biyela would become South Africa's first professional black female winemaker when she landed a job as a junior winemaker at Stellenbosch winery Stellekaya the following year. She launched her own brand, Aslina Wines, in 2017 and, today, she sits on the board of directors for the Pinotage Youth Development Academy, which provides wine-industry training and development for young South Africans in the Cape Winelands. —*L.B.*

Why did you want to become a winemaker?

I didn't know about winemaking when I started, it was through a scholarship from [South African Airways] that I found out about this industry. All I wanted to do was study, and due to financial constraints, I couldn't. When the scholarship came and said "winemaking," I was like, I am in, and interestingly, I had no idea what it was and had never had wine before. To top it up, the university was in Afrikaans, which is a language I didn't understand.

What is your proudest achievement?

There are many proudest moments of my life, but to count them will be too much. Graduating at Stellenbosch University was one of them, but mostly launching Aslina has been a milestone and huge blessing, especially that when I introduce the wines to the market, they are welcomed with warm hearts.

What was the most surprising experience or encounter you've had as a female winemaker?

When I was at the university, the experience made me scared of what I was getting myself into. I was worried that I would not be accepted when I got into the industry. Starting in the industry was a complete shock, and I managed to build relationships. I could easily ask for help from a person I have never met, just call them and ask, and they gladly helped. Yes, there will always be those people who will be the opposite of good, but I made a choice to focus on those who were willing to assist me to grow.

What is your advice to someone interested in entering the wine business?

Getting into the industry shouldn't be about making money. That is a nonnegotiable thing—you have to make money. But it should be about something bigger, what will make you

wake up and go on even when you don't feel like, even when you don't see money at that time. Be informed about the industry before getting in and, most of all, have fun on the journey.

"There will always be those people who will be the opposite of good, but I made a choice to focus on those who were willing to assist me to grow."

Viviana Navarrete

Chief Winemaker,
Viña Leyda
Leyda Valley, Chile

After studying agricultural sciences at the Pontifical Catholic University of Chile, Navarrete began working with Concha y Toro in 2001, where she fell in love with Sauvignon Blanc. In 2007, attracted to the coastal terroir of the Leyda Valley, she became chief winemaker at Viña Leyda, part of the VSPT Wine Group. Her mission? To make the best cool-climate wines in Chile. Along with Sauvignon Blanc, Navarrete is known for her fragrant Pinot Noirs as well as Chardonnay. She's also in charge of Viña San Pedro's fledgling project to produce Pinot Noir in Malleco, about 400 miles south of Leyda. Navarrete calls this the Buchahueico Project, and she works closely with the native Mapuche community to produce a style of cool-climate Pinot that's different than those from Leyda. —*Michael Schachner*

Why did you want to become a winemaker?

I chose winemaking back in 2001 because a lot of interesting things were happening in our industry. New cooler-climate regions were being discovered, giving birth to new styles of wines. It was also the time period when Chilean wineries began investing in high-quality

plantings and better technology in the cellars. Factoring into my decision was the fact that agronomy in Chile was a very male thing. Winemaking seemed like the one area where a woman could find opportunities. Nobody in my family is related to the wine business, so this is my own path. **What was the most surprising experience or encounter you've had as a female winemaker?**

I would say that it has been the evolution of the woman's role in the wine business. When I started working in this industry, there were just a few women working as chief winemakers in Chile. But today, I can happily see how women have gained ground. Now you see many of us working in the commercial area, in quality control, in marketing and communications, laboratories, etc.

What is your advice to someone interested in entering the wine business?

The wine business is all about passion, about culture, about meeting people and enjoying wine. You will never stop learning, and that is one of the best things about this industry.



Kate Goodman

Chief Winemaker,
Penley Estate;
Owner/Winemaker,
Nikkal Wines
Coonawarra and Yarra
Valley, Australia

Through much perseverance, Goodman, a former biomedical science student, rose from cellar hand at some of Australia's most iconic wineries to owner of her own label. She's also chief winemaker of Penley Estate in Coonawarra, South Australia, a brand she turned around in just three years. Today, Goodman commutes regularly between her home in McLaren Vale to Coonawarra and the Yarra Valley, Victoria, where she crafts wine under her Nikkal Wines brand. She is also a mother, recent breast cancer survivor and a consultant for myriad wineries around the globe. Through it all, she has remained an all-around tireless and talented professional, honored as the Winemaker of the Year at the 2018 Australian Women in Wine Awards. —*Christina Pickard*

Why did you want to become a winemaker?

I fell into winemaking by accident. Having studied biomedical science at university, I rapidly worked out it wasn't for me. I investigated other industries that would utilize fermentation and microbiology. I found wine, completed a harvest and have basically never left. I like to joke that I

was into fermentation before it became cool. Winemaking allows me to connect the dots between nature and life. Each year, I can make something that reflects the growing season and that others can enjoy. I love it.

"Winemaking allows me to connect the dots between nature and life."

What is your proudest achievement?

Being a part of the reinvention of Penley Estate. In just three years, we have totally modernized the wine styles, increased sales by 400% and made our wines available in [more than] 20 countries. Our experiments and risks have paid off. This has been immensely satisfying. And beating an illness and coming out the other side a stronger person. In 2017, I was diagnosed with breast cancer. Naturally, it was a stressful time, but one that helped build resilience and changed my outlook. I was surrounded by a supportive community that assisted in keeping my solo wine business running and my mind healthy. Anything is possible.



Matilde Poggi
Owner/Winemaker,
Le Fraghe
Bardolino, Italy

For more than 35 years, Poggi, owner of Le Fraghe, has dedicated herself to making high-quality, delicious Bardolino, the lithe, spicy red from Veneto. Though her family owned vineyards and her uncle made wine, her father chose another career. But when relatives divided the property in the 1980s, Poggi decided to create her own winery as opposed to selling the grapes. At a time when large, quantity-driven firms and cooperatives dominated local production, she chose to concentrate on quality and revamped her vineyards to better express the area's native grapes. Today, she is one of Italy's most respected producers, and her elegant, vibrant wines are food friendly and loaded with personality. She is also the president of the Federazione Italiana Vignaioli Indipendenti (or FIVI, the Italian Federation of Independent Winegrowers) and vice president of the Confédération Européenne des Vignerons Indépendants (or CEVI, the European Confederation of Independent Winegrowers). —Kerin O'Keefe

Why did you want to become a winemaker?

Winemaking has been in my family since the 1960s. My father was not personally involved, as he had another job. Nonetheless, I grew up learning that each season has a particular meaning for vines. Observing the vines, season after season, I was impressed from their spring beginning and their going to rest in fall, followed by a long winter with apparently no life in them. After school, in the afternoons, I liked helping with the harvest. Finally, when I was 22, with this background, I decided to challenge myself with winemaking, aiming to make wines with my personal imprinting.

What is your proudest achievement?

Wine is a very slow business. So far, I have done 34 harvests, and this means just 34 months of actual winemaking. It has always taken me some time to recognize and be proud of my personal achievements and successes, and every year has brought some wins as well as some defeats. But, like trekking in the mountains, eventually you reach your goal. And looking back on the last seven years, I'm finally sure to be on the right path, proud to be considered a reference point in my denomination, Bardolino, one of the oldest appellations in Italy.

“It has always taken me some time to recognize and be proud of my personal achievements and successes.”



Cristina Mantilla
Winemaker,
Mantivinos SL
Vigo, Spain

Trained as an organic chemist, Mantilla chose to pursue winemaking in 1990 after she happened to read a newspaper article on the subject. With no family roots in the wine business, Mantilla obtained a master's degree in viticulture and enology from the Polytechnic University of Madrid. She parlayed that into a winemaker position at a little-known co-op in Rías Baixas, Spain's hotbed for Albariño, and later took on the role of technical director at Adegas Galegas. In 2003, Mantilla founded her own winemaking consultancy, Mantivinos, whose clients have included top-level Albariño producers like Adegas Valmiñor, Pazo San Mauro and Palacio de Fefiñanes. Most recently, Mantilla is in the process of becoming a Master of Wine. —M.S.

Why did you want to become a winemaker?

What brought me into wine was a fascination with science and the winemaking process, which I wanted to master and apply to Galician grape varieties. I am Gallega, and there is an enduring “Atlantic” personality to the wines of my homeland. Showing this style is what motivates me the most.

What is your proudest achievement?

It is always difficult to choose one child over another, but I would say that I am most proud of the first Veigadares I made in 1995 for Adegas Galegas. We made this wine from a mix of local white grapes: Albariño, Treixadura and Loureiro. We fermented it in small French oak barrels and aged it on its lees. It's a style of wine that never really took hold, but, to this

day, it's one of the wines that I keep closest to my heart.

What was the most surprising experience or encounter you've had as a female winemaker?

Spanish women have never had it easy in labor-driven careers like winemaking. But we've come a long way over the last 30 years. I guess what surprises me the most is that even though there are now many more women winemakers in my country, almost no women have been put in charge of an individual winery or winery group, and that needs to change.

What is your advice to someone interested in entering the wine business?

My advice to the younger generation is to train hard and study...and to learn by traveling. Nothing is more educational and valuable than visiting other winemaking countries.

Kay Simon
Co-owner/Winemaker,
Chinook Wines
Yakima Valley, WA

It's hard to imagine just how different the wine world looked when Simon received her degree in enology from the University of California, Davis, in 1976. After a brief stint making wine in California, Simon moved to Washington to become assistant winemaker at Chateau Ste. Michelle in 1977. These were the earliest days of the Washington wine industry, with less than two dozen commercial wineries in a state that's now home to more than 1,000 operations. In 1983, Simon founded Chinook Wines with her husband, Clay Mackey. While women remain underrepresented in Washington's winemaking ranks, Simon has honed her craft there for more than 40 years. —Sean P. Sullivan

Why did you want to become a winemaker?

I originally thought about a career as a nutritionist, and after starting to pursue that degree at UC Davis, it seemed like it might be a bit clinical for my preference. After learning about German beers on a year abroad in that country, I changed majors at the recommendation of my advisor, the brewing professor, Michael Lewis. Fermentation science, my ultimate major on graduating, combined the science part, which I enjoy, with some creative impacts as well.

Did you have any role models?

For starters, my mother, Mary Louise Simon, was a science teacher and encouraged pursuit of math and science in my education. As I became aware of possibilities in the fermentation professions, [other role models included] my professor Ann Noble, sensory scientist at UC Davis, and a couple of pioneering women in winemaking, such as Mary Ann Graf, then at Simi Winery, and Zelma Long, who was then winemaker at Robert Mondavi Winery.

What is your proudest achievement?

Together with my fellow members of the Seattle Chapter of Les Dames d'Escoffier, we have endowed seven scholarship funds at Washington colleges and universities in the areas of fine beverage, hospitality and culinary arts. We have raised approximately \$750,000 in 30 years of this endeavor and are about to endow one more in organic and sustainable agriculture at Washington State University. There are two existing scholarships at WSU in the School of Hospitality Business Management and the Viticulture & Enology major. We have enabled Washington women to thrive and achieve employment in these fields, and it does make me very proud.

What was the most surprising experience or encounter you've had as a female winemaker?

Twice in my professional career, I have been the target of gender-based pay inequities. Both times were extremely disheartening as a person who strives to be professional and serious about my winemaking career.



“We have enabled Washington women to thrive and achieve employment in these fields, and it does make me very proud.”

Visit winemag.com/advocacy2020 throughout the month to hear more from these women winemakers.