



WHEN WINE IS WOMAN

From the sunny days spent in grandfather Giuseppe's vineyards and the memories of the first harvests, to travel around the world. Export manager and Lady of wine, Francesca Marastoni tells her story to "La Voce".

A good wine needs patience and waiting to reach the best of its organoleptic properties. The same was for Francesca Marastoni, 41 years old from Scandiano (Reggio Emilia), who after a lifetime spent working between rows of family and important wineries of Reggio Emilia, in the last one and a half year has become an export manager and a Lady of wine in all effects.

The brand, named Francesca Mara, reflects the elegance and delicacy of her being, along with the professionalism and enthusiasm to spread around the world the tradition of her land.

Passionate about wine since her childhood, Francesca graduated in Agriculture with specialization in control and quality of food. Her degree course was the first at Reggio Emilia University.

She adores animals, especially horses, nowadays she is divided between trips abroad and her beloved countryside, focused on bringing her wine experience to an even higher level.

Francesca, would you ever have imagined to see your name on a bottle?

It could sound trivial but no... I absolutely never thought about it.

A passion born inside your family...

The family vineyards, which belonged to my grandfather Giuseppe, have fascinated me since my childhood. I remember when we harvested grapes all together and we, as children, were put on the cart, cheerful days...

Then you decided to make it a job...

When it was time to attend high school I chose the agricultural institute, so I attended Zanelli, then the University and my first jobs. For 10 years I worked hard, always having a good head on my shoulders, side by side with people who know well this field. I learnt a lot.

How was "Francesca Mara" born?

The idea was born from my former employer, Franco Prati and the winemaker Antonio Maccieri, who were encouraging me. I found it interesting and I threw myself into this project.

How did you choose your wines?

I tried to choose the most representative ones, based on what is the market response. So I choose Pinot, Montepulciano, Primitivo and Prosecco.

Your favorite is...?

I like bubbles so I tell you Prosecco.

Are you Reggiana (how people from Reggio Emilia are called, translator's note) doc (as for wines it means your origin is exactly from that area, tn) when is Lambrusco coming?

It's coming ... We'll have a winery in Reggio Emilia and we'll add it to the FM brand list. We are waiting for the numbers to raise then we will also add "our" Lambrusco.

Let's speak about the difficulties of the trade...

I'd been lying if I was telling you there's not so much work behind any brand like mine.

Starting from working on your brand logo, something I wanted to be personally involved into... I wouldn't call it hard, just commitment and dedication. You have to take care of contacts around the world, marketing, wine tasting. Sometimes I am required at some events, so I travel quite a lot. Then I like to know where my products are sold/served, easier to say than to do.

Italy, United States, Canada, South America... I'd say it looks as a good start

I'm not complaining about it, I'm receiving a lot of approval. All of this thanks to the priceless partnership with *Schenk Italian Wineries* too, one of the most relevant wine making companies here in Italy.

Is it difficult for a woman to succeed in the wine field, historically a men's world?

I think everybody is facing some difficulties. I saw growing the number of women both in wine production and distribution. It gives us hope.

Speaking about it, what do you think are women's winning features?

Organization, close attention to details and taking care of things usually men don't pay too much attention to, these are the qualities able to make us to have a leg up on men, as well as empathy and our natural dedication. I think women know how to impose themselves, there's no doubt it's harder for them to overthrow some walls.

Your dream is...

Well... That my project reaches results increasingly positive, and maybe a day I'll be able to find a Francesca Mara bottle in the list of a New York wine shop. That would be a great achievement...



One of these pictures portrays you as a child holding a glass of wine, riding a horse...

My two biggest passions in a picture. Nothing more to say. I love countryside and animals. I own a mare, "La Vale", I love her so much.

I've grown up in the middle of grapevines, my father Laurenti went along with me through the years.

A glass of good wine... What does it bring to your mind?

It makes me think about evenings in front a fireplace, deep in my thoughts, both a moment of sharing and a moment by myself.

What do you do in your spare time?

It's not easy to stop working when you're so passionate about it, I try to spend some time with some friends of mine, a few and good ones, and in the countryside with my relatives.

If you had to give an advice to a girl interested in follow this path, what would it be?

I'd tell her to work hard and commit herself. Passion is the core of every activity.

What are your expectations about future?

I'd like to sow grapevine again on my family's land. A sort of coming back to origins.

If you had to leave the planet tomorrow, what would you bring with you?

People I love and my animals. I'd need no more.

I everyday pray for people I care about and for the loved ones who are gone, I never pray for myself, I just hope everything is going to be alright.

"I see wine as a moment of sharing and an experience to keep for ourselves at the same moment..."

A moment all by myself. I see myself holding a glass in my hand, in front of a fireplace, deep in my thoughts."