



Celebrating International Women's Day – A Woman and Her Wine

We're celebrating [International Women's Day](#) with a salute to one of our female winemakers and one of her most beautiful organic wines, [La Joly](#). The day is observed annually on March 8, to celebrate the social, economic, cultural and political achievement of women. Cellar Master [Elodie Gilles](#) from [Vignobles Raymond](#) in Bordeaux is a stellar example of influential women in wine.

Elodie joined Vignobles Raymond because of her passion for organic wine and a desire to get closer to the final product. She comes with impressive credentials. Elodie, 28, holds a Master 2 in viticulture, terroir and environment. Prior to joining Vignobles Raymond, Elodie worked for two years at Veuve Clicquot where she was in charge of the viticulture, traceability and vinification of 60 hectares.

As Cellar Master of Vignobles Raymond, Elodie is responsible for every aspect of production from the time the grapes arrive at the winery to the time the bottled wine is shipped out. She works with the winemaker, Yohan Lafon, to create wines that reflect his taste and style, while imbuing important aspects of femininity into the wines.



Vignobles Raymond Cellar Master Elodie Gilles

A Beautiful Wine for Celebrating International Women's Day

One of the very special wines Elodie is charged with producing is [La Joly](#). The name translates to "The Pretty" and this wine does not disappoint. The blend is 95% Cabernet and 5% Malbec. While it's unusual for a Right Bank Bordeaux to have a Cabernet-dominant blend, the Raymond family prefers the rich style the grape brings.

La Joly is named after of the plot. All plots on a vineyard have names based on the "lieu dit" place known, locality. That is also how most of the Châteaux got their names. The La Joly plot was named by the first generations arriving at Lagarde because it was beautiful land. It is also the oldest plot of the vineyard. The vines are 48 years old.



Stéphanie Dolet, U.S. Export Ambassador, Vignobles Raymond

In late October, at the end of the harvest season, Chateau de Lagarde holds the "[La Joly](#)" harvest fest. They harvest the grapes by hand in the morning with music and fanfare. The harvest is followed by a grand lunch for the workers and guests who come from throughout France to join in the celebration. Harvesting with music is truly a great experience, it adds the ambiance and provides a very happy "joly" moment!

The wine aged for 24 months in all new French oak 400-liter barrels. Beginning at 22 months, the winemakers taste the wine weekly to determine its progress, and it is bottled at the peak of perfection.

The resulting wine is a deep purple hue, with a complex and delicate nose. The flavor profile consists of blackberry, plum, and cassis, with delicate floral

notes. There is a distinct "lace-like" quality to the wine, having spent nearly two years in the large barrel format, providing the wine with a soft, yet round and supple mouth feel.



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Celebrating International Women's Day – the Story of a Wine Bottle for the Ages



Eleanor of Aquitaine

The unique conical design of the La Joly bottle is quite different from those common in Bordeaux, having no broad shoulders. This bottle is called the Eleanor bottle, named after **The Duchess of Aquitaine**. The Duchess lived in the 12th century during the ages of Robin Hood and was known for her high-spirited nature. As a member of a powerful royal family, she ruled the entire region of Southeast France and was one of the wealthiest women of the time.

For her beauty and her power, she was considered the most eligible bride in all of Europe. She married King Louis VII of France. After marrying him she single-handedly led armies and started the Second Crusade out of Europe. With an unsuccessful crusade, she decided to leave Louis VII and have the marriage annulled, but Pope Eugene III said no. Only after the birth of their second daughter did Louis VII agree to annul the marriage, as Eleanor hadn't given him a son. Just 8 weeks later, she married King Henry II, the King of England, a man 11 years younger than she. Quite progressive for her time, she kept her title as Duchess of Aquitaine, even after moving on to her second king and out of her home country to England.

A fan of fine wine, Eleanor single-handedly started the import of Bordeaux wines to England. At that time, they were all using this conical style of bottle and were primarily selling Clarets.

Over the next 13 years, she had eight additional children with Henry II, three of whom went on to be Kings. Her one son, who became King after his father died was known as Richard the Lionheart. When he set off for the Third Crusade, Eleanor took complete power while he was gone. She lived to an extremely ripe old age of 82 years for that time (maybe the red wine helped?), outliving eight of her 10 children. She's been played by several women over the years in Hollywood films including Katharine Hepburn and Glenn Close.

Let's raise a glass of our pretty and outstanding artisan wine – hand-picked from the La Joly plot, and bottled in honor of Eleanor – a toast to all powerful and free-spirited women throughout the ages.

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