

Women in Wellness: Reinventing patisserie for a health-conscious audience with Claire Duverger

As a part of my series about the women in wellness, I had the pleasure of interviewing Claire Duverger, founder of Duverger Macarons



Fab Giovanetti [Follow](#)

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I believe that people are here in order to make a bigger impact in the world — and with my book, 'Make an Impact', I had the chance to prove that hundreds of people are using their influence to improve other people's lives.

As the founder of the Health Bloggers Community, my mission is to support people with growing their passion into a business — and so many women are building businesses empires all over the world.

This series is a chance to spotlight some of these women

“Take a moment for yourself every single day. Even if it is only 5 minutes but take a moment to honour who you are and to do something that makes you feel good.”

Claire Duverger

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Claire Duverger is the founder of Duverger Macarons. Duverger carefully confects its macarons in the purest French tradition, exclusively with freshly-

sourced organic ingredients — no preservatives, no artificial colourings, no compounds. The macarons are available in a wide range of flavours and are available in 12-pack variety or 3-pack grab and go.

Thank you so much for doing this with us! What is your “backstory”?

The story begins almost 15 years ago back in Paris. At that time, I was a painting conservationist as well as a mother of 2 young boys, and I shared my time between the museums, my workshop, and my family. In my spare time, I loved to cook and bake for my friends and family. One day, my husband who was a film composer and a total macaron addict, challenged me to make his favourite treats. I took on the challenge and started doing some tests.

Thanks to my mother and grandmother who had taught me solid foundations in “patisserie” I was able to bake decent macarons. I really enjoyed it and became passionate about those very special confections. With time and practice, my macarons improved and I developed my own flavours. It became my ‘special thing’ and a lot of people around me really enjoyed them, and even sometimes ranked them higher than some of the most famous Parisian macaron makers.

Fast forward — a few years later, my husband and I decided to move to the US. The decision was motivated by our desire to see the world, to give our children the opportunity to become bilingual, to experience a different culture, and to give ourselves the opportunity to reinvent our lives in our mid-30s. We were not sure what we were going to do in the US but the macaron project was definitely on our minds.

After 2 years in Los Angeles and after my third son was born, it became clear that it was the time to start our business project as macarons were becoming trendy and that very few players were present on the market. Then, I spent almost 6 months finalizing my recipes and sourcing my ingredients before really starting the business. We started very low key, producing in a shared commercial kitchen and selling at farmers markets, but the concept paid off pretty quickly. Being one of the very few companies to offer all-natural and gluten-free macarons, we had the opportunity to start selling our products at Whole Foods Markets in California and Earth Fare on the East coast.

From there, the company experienced growth both in terms of sales and offerings. We now have 2 lines of macarons and a full range of flavours, including the recent organic line. Even more exciting, we are about to expand our offering beyond French macarons and premiere a line of

delicious Gluten-free tartlets. My current vision is for Duverger to develop a full line of high-end, French-inspired, and all-natural pastry items.

Can you share your top three “lifestyle tweaks” that you believe will help support people’s journey towards better wellbeing?

1. Take a moment for yourself every single day. Even if it is only 5 minutes but take a moment to honour who you are and to do something that makes you feel good.
2. Enjoy the present moment as much as you can.
3. Listen to your intuition.

Can you share the most interesting story that happened to you since you started your career?

Well, it was maybe 1 or 2 months after we started the company. I was baking my macarons at night in a neighbourhood bakery, maybe 12 or 20 macarons per flavour at a time depending on the next day demand. Then, my friend who was a teacher at the French school in Los Feliz (LILA school) asked me if I could help her with fundraising for her class field trip. I said yes of course but I didn’t expect that the parents would buy more than 3,000 macarons in just 3 days. This was crazy.

My husband, Bernard, was selling the macarons at school while I was baking them, and it was almost impossible to keep up with the demand! It was 3 crazy days but what a great kick-starter! The feedback was amazing and it really spirited me up.

We thought “well, we might have something here” and the adventure really began.

Can you share a story about the biggest mistake you made when you were first starting? Can you tell us what lesson you learned from that?

I think the biggest mistake we made along the road was putting our trust in or working with the wrong people. It is always a painful experience when you realize that things are not working out as planned and that the relationship has to come to an end.

The lesson I learned from that is really a psychological thing, that maybe applies to other aspects of life as well, but in professional terms, there was always a part of me that I underestimated or didn’t trust sufficiently which led me to make the wrong choice. This business journey has really taught me a lot of things on myself and showed me that I am capable of doing things I never thought I could accomplish.

When it comes to health and wellness, how is the work you are doing helping to make a bigger impact in the world?

I think that modern processed foods have a very negative impact on the health of people, especially on children. We know that artificial food colouring can be very harmful to them. Therefore, I am happy to offer kids and grownups with delicious treats that are 100% clean and not too high on sugar. Also, I think the more we can use non-GMO/Organic/Gluten-free ingredients the better the agriculture will be, with fewer pesticides and less genetic intervention.

None of us are able to achieve success without some help along the way. Is there a particular person who you are grateful towards who helped get you to where you are? Can you share a story about that?

First of all, I want to thank my husband, Bernard, who has been key in helping bring forth my vision and my products. He has played the role of business guru for the company and has trusted and supported me since day 1.

The other person I will be eternally grateful towards is Raymond Lobjois. Ray is one of the very first, if not the first, French pastry chefs who settled in Los Angeles more than 50 years ago. We met him at a key moment in our development when we were looking for a place to start making macarons for Whole Foods Market. Ray let us use the production facility that he had built in Oxnard in the 2000s, which allowed our business to take off. Ray trusted us immediately and provided us with so much precious advice. Duverger wouldn't be what it is today without his contribution.



If you could start a movement that would bring the most amount of wellness to the most amount of people, what would that be?

A movement that promotes food autonomy and community, and helps people get access to small parcels of cultivatable land so they can grow their own food and share it with their community. I believe we need to mend our relationship with the earth, plant our feet and our hands in the soil, and revitalize local communities.

What is your “3 Things I Wish Someone Told Me Before I Started” and why?

1. “Often things take more time than expected, be patient” — It would have helped me to better accept the process and the time it takes to get from point A to point B.
2. “Trust your gut” — There are so many occasions to lose oneself in the process, especially when success starts to come and everybody has a ‘great’ idea for you, it is so easy to lose sight of who you are and what your products should be.
3. “Everything ends up costing more than what you think” — It is also a crucial point and I see businesses going down not because the products are not good or there is a problem with the concept but simply because the company is not sufficiently funded to go through the first years of development.

Do you have a “girl-crush” in this industry? If you could take one person to brunch, who would it be?

There is a woman in France, her name is Eva Jaurena and she created a non-profit that is called Ernest. The organization brings together restaurants, chefs, clients, farmers and people in need. The program is based on local solidarity and allows people in need to access fresh organic produce that they couldn't afford otherwise. Moreover, it creates local jobs for people in need of social or professional rehabilitation and sustains the local community by bringing together all the actors of the program on a regular basis. I love this kind of initiative.

Sustainability, veganism, mental health and environmental changes are big topics at the moment. Which one of these causes is dearest to you, and why?

In a way, I think the four topics are intimately related, but the one that stands out for me is environmental changes. It is such a fundamental issue and the survival of our species as a whole seems to depend on it. At my

level, I try to take small steps in this direction. For instance, I am currently working on a new compostable packaging that our clients will be able to throw directly in their compost bin.

What is the best way our readers can follow you on social media?

you can follow on [Instagram](#) and Facebook [@duvergermacarons](#)

About the author:

[Fab Giovanetti](#) is a business mentor, published author, influencer-specialist, best known as the founder of the [Health Bloggers Community](#) and co-founder of the [Register of Health and Wellness Influencers](#).

Serial start-up founder and professional troublemaker, she is obsessed with avocados and helping people making an impact in health and wellness.

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