

Interview with
Jean Pascal Petit

from Ardeche Lamas in France

by Sue Wilde



Hi Jean Pascal welcome to the LamaLink. For those of us who don't know our geography of France, tell us where your farm is located with some nearby cities we might know. How many llamas do you have on your farm?

Hi everybody from all over the world! I am so glad to be part of the LamaLink and very honored to be able to introduce my llamas.

My farm is situated in the south-east of France. The village is named Saint Remèze and the area is called the Gorges de l'Ardèche ("Gorges" means Canyon and the Ardèche being the name of a river). This place is a famous spring and summer tourist resort known all over Europe for it's kayaking canyon. It is here 10 years ago the

world oldest pre-historical painted grotto was discovered.

My village is known for it's good wine!

I have an active part in my village life as the acting Mayor.

The closest well known city is Avignon. This historical city is famous for The Popes Palace and was the Christian capital city of the world during the 14th century.

How long have you been raising llamas? What was your first introduction to llamas that started you on your path to being an active llama breeder?

Animals have always been my passion. I was born in Africa. It was then quite common to have a chimp jumping in your bed to say hello. Experience with taming wild animals taught me that they preferably should be left in the wild. This is what has always seduced me with llamas: they are exotic but domestic!

I have always been passionate about breeding. The first book I read as a child was "How to raise the Yorkshire terrier" by Mona Huxam.

At that time we were living in Morocco

and my father used to take me to the Royal Stables and it was there that my love for Arabian horses began.

My deep interest in both Yorkshire and Arabian horses really helped me in my breeding program. That helped me in studying a pedigree, as well as, training my eyes!

I have owned llamas for 18 years.

You have a unique farm operation where many visitors come to your farm. What is your program about?

I had become a successful breeder with a two years waiting list. My llama clients were wonderful people but...I realized that I am much more a llama "collector" than a llama seller. I never enjoyed selling my baby llamas! I just always wanted to keep them all! So to make my living out of my passion, I had to find a way. Our area is a very touristy one so I decided I would open my ranch to visitors. The program is very simple; respect, nature, discover of the llamas. Ardeche Lamas has become very successful and we welcomed 17,000 visitors last season. This is a lot of work but so much fun. Visitors are very quiet, very



respectful to the llama's welfare.

I was lucky and honored, last year to receive financial help of government for the quality of the project. I could then build a better welcome room with a llama products store. (mainly my own wool production garments)

What are your first priorities in your breeding program? What direction is your program moving in?

My first priorities in my breeding program have always been for sound conformation, healthy, gentle llamas. My personal taste has led me to straight shoulders-long necked-stretchy and very tall llamas! My first love for long coated dogs always attracted me to single coated llamas and my first love for Arabian horses attracted me to very charismatic animals.

My present direction is more to suri and silky wool on very tall and charismatic llamas.

I love to work on every detail such as teeth and nails.

I have 90 llamas. Just five or six from my best blood lines are now going to born each year

Do you have a registry for your llamas in Europe? You were recently the president for the association of llama breeders. Is this association for breeders in France or other countries as well? How many breeders are in the association? What is the main focus for your association?

We have a European online registry called LAREU, both for llamas and alpacas. 2500 animals are now registered. We have a wonderful team of people working on it.

I was the President of "Association Française des Petits Camélidés" for 7 years. We also have members from Belgium, French part of Switzerland, Germany and Italy. We have about 130 members.

As President, my main focus was on educating breeders and new owners and on the well being of animals. I have put in place a quality breeding chart.

I decided to quit my function as president because I had so much work with my own llamas, my growing business and my devotion to my village council. I am still in close touch with the new President Renée! We call on the phone almost daily!

You enjoy showing your llamas. Do you have a show association? How many shows would be in your area in a year? Where are your judges mainly from?

I love showing llamas!

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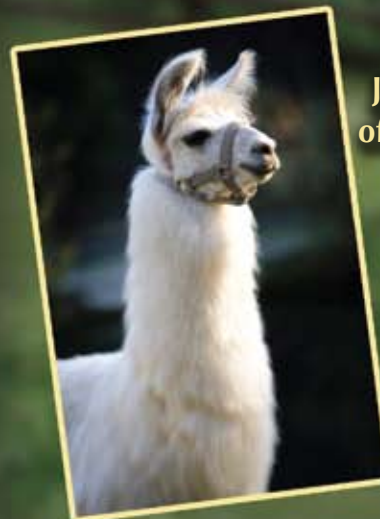
*McDreamy
purchased from
Sue Wilde will now
have a wonderful
life in France!*

Wild Oak Llamas

Thank you to the following farms for their purchases of our awesome Argentines at the 2008 Celebrity Sale



Ken & Kathy Smalley of Dixie Doodle Farm in Cumming, GA for their purchase of WOL PRINCESS JUANI & WOL ARGENTA



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We have three important shows: one in France, one in Germany and one in Italy. There are not enough breeders so we organize regional shows. As a show organizer, I have always loved to work with ALSA and AELAS judges. AELAS is our European show association. If time allows me, I'd love to be a judge one day!

Several years ago you visited Canada and imported some llamas and are now bringing in another group. What is the process for bringing llamas into France?

True! I was very familiar with "old" North American bloodlines.

I met Karin and Hans Buhrmann and I bought several llamas from them in Germany, (among them, MMR Shazanne, a Windwalker daughter that has just given birth to one of the most correct and showy girl I have ever seen, MMR Vanessa, a Contender daughter that has been the starting of my "V" line, MMR Kilimandjaro, an Etol son ...)

I realized the Buhrmann had gathered the most precious lines of llamas you could ever dream of. When Hans and Karin stopped breeding, they offered me the choice of their llamas. I then imported 9 of them which really was the beginning of my program.

There is no word to express my gratitude to Karin and Hans.

While searching details on my MMR Lulalie's father, Lumino, I met Sue Wilde! I realized she had all the llamas that I wanted! I got in touch with Sue for "just one llama"... I ended up with seven! I always say I should get an official addiction from buying llamas!!! Just like some people get addiction from playing casino games!!! (Big laughs!)

This new group of llamas is really going to be a wonderful addition to my herd. I have now put emphasize on suri wool.

Importing is rather simple. Llamas just need a 30 days isolation period before leaving Canada and on arrival in France. This is all very well organized with very professional people. Llamas are safe.

Are many breeders in Europe importing llamas from South America or North America?

Not that many. I may say we are just a few people in Europe really into high selection. The main importations have been from Chile (one online auction is presently going on.) Very few from Argentina. (Not from the Argentine type) A few llamas came from the USA to Switzerland. The main importations from Canada have been from the Buhrmann's to Germany.

What are your favorite times with your llamas? What is a favorite llama story that you could share with us?

I just love spending time with my llamas! Feeding, grooming, talking to them, observing them. They are all my life. I am sure I was a llama in a former life! Every day is a new llama story! I would have so many stories to tell you!

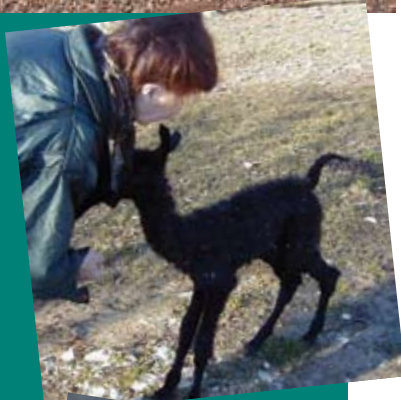
One story: I was working with mentally and physically handicapped adult people. One of my guests was Marie-Lou. She had not risen from her wheeled chair for years. This very day, a white woolly female cria was born. When Marie Lou saw her, she just raised from her chair, stumbling a few steps, crying "bébé! bébé! bébé!" (meaning "baby!" in French). We were all speechless we didn't really know what to say and think. Marie Lou was holding this little llama in her arms. We were all mute. One of the educators then said, "Well! If you don't have a name yet, why don't you call her "Miracle?" In fact, we just called her "Bébé"! This was Marie Lou's choice. "Bébé" is now a tall 4 year old girl... This is the kind of emotions I shall remember all my life!

From a global perspective, what do you think keeps people's love affair with llamas alive and keeps growing?

I have been studying and observing a lot people and especially handicapped people with llamas. Llamas always remain themselves and they just want you to be yourself. They teach you how to remain calm, peaceful... They are a real therapy on a daily basis! Just look at them and you are transported to another planet! Llamas are a journey in a world of peace. This is what makes them successful.

Thankssomuchforyourinternational contributions to the LamaLink, and we wish you all the best for you and your llamas.

Thank you and long life to LamaLink.



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