

Marlene Loubser is a Horticulturist with a BSc Agric degree in Plant Breeding, Plant Pathology and Horticulture from the University of Stellenbosch. She spend a year in Holland after her studies as a plant breeder for Preesman. Her first assignment in her early career at the company as a plant breeder was to judge new rose varieties based on the scents and perfumes of the flowers. She learnt to apply her olfactory skills in judging and building her aroma memory bank at a very young age and that has helped her in her olive oil tasting skills.

After a career of more than 18 years in the landscape industry and owner of a business she became the General Manager for Lamara (a Belgium owned company) which grow olives, citrus and essential oil plants in Franschhoek, Western Cape in 2015. She started to taste olive oil at Linda Costa's informal tasting meetings in 2016 and participated in Savantes South Africa in January 2018. There she had the wonderful opportunity to taste some of the world's best olive oils as well as sharing experiences with other world class tasters. She achieved the grade required to obtain the Associate Savantes three times in a row in 2018 and twice in 2019 to make her one of a few in the world to obtain gold status for Savantes Associate.. Marlene was also part of the South African team who participate in the World teams tasting Savantes Championship in October 2019 in Priego de Cordaba in Spain. She joined the SAOLIVE tasting panel in 2018 and has been a regular taster since. Early in 2020 she also passed her ONAOL (National Organization of olive oil) tasting test.

Marlene Loubser is passionate about the science behind growing healthy plants and she put it in good use in this continuous learning cycle of producing good quality olive fruit and extra virgin olive oil. Although she is still in the beginning years of her olive oil judging career she already proofed to be a good judge of olive oil.