



DOMAINE CARNEROS®

EILEEN CRANE FOUNDING WINEMAKER



“It’s a good thing when talent and opportunity meet in unexpected ways. When Claude Taittinger, the second generation to run the famous Champagne house in Reims, was looking for someone to plant the family’s flag in California with sparkling wine in the 1980s, he hired the person with the most experience for the job, Eileen Crane, an American woman. Today, 30 years later, Crane is both the founding winemaker and chief executive officer of Domaine Carneros, the Taittinger family’s majestic Sparkling wine outpost in, well, Carneros.” – Dorothy Gaiter, Grape Collective, May 5th 2017

Crane was raised with a keen appreciation for fine food and wine by her father, who first learned about the latter as a D-Day soldier in France and later as the head of the international department for Dean Witter. He brought home wonderful wines and cheeses to share for their Sunday dinner. One evening, champagne was on offer, and Crane was captivated. Her appreciation for fine food led her to obtain a master’s degree in nutrition coupled with professional training at the prestigious Culinary Institute of America in Hyde Park, New York. After two years of teaching nutrition for the University of Connecticut, she focused on her passion for wine, enrolling in the U.C. Davis Enology and Viticulture program. Upon completing her studies, Domaine Chandon hired her as a tour guide. Within a few months, she started to move up the ranks, eventually promoted to the position of Assistant Winemaker.

Crane’s next role in the wine industry was at the soon to be new winery, Gloria Ferrer Caves & Vineyards in the Carneros region. In 1984, she accepted the role of Winemaker and Vice President, entrusted with the dual responsibility of overseeing the design and construction of the facility as well as developing their line of Sparkling wines.

After an exhaustive search in 1987, the Taittinger family selected Crane as Domaine Carneros’ founding winemaker. While directing the first vintage, she was also tasked with overseeing the planning and

construction of the winery. In 2003, Crane continued to showcase her aptitude for building, managing and constructing Domaine Carneros' second winemaking facility, dedicated exclusively to the production of pinot noir wines.

Crane is not only one of the industry's pioneering women, but also the most experienced American Sparkling winemaker with over 40 years to her credit and is widely regarded as the doyenne of Sparkling wine in America. Her pursuit of excellence in viticulture, winemaking and hospitality has made Domaine Carneros an iconic American winery. After an incredibly successful career spanning 42 years, Eileen Crane stepped down from her role as CEO at the end of summer 2020.

Crane is also actively involved in numerous wine organizations, is a past President of the Carneros Wine Alliance. She has also been an active board member in civic organizations such as OLE Health (formerly Clinic Ole), providing affordable healthcare to the underserved in the community; Collabria Care; and Music in the Vineyards.

FOR PRESS INFORMATION

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