

Wine Spectator

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SPARKLERS

STEAM AHEAD

Powered by Prosecco, sparkling wine is more popular than ever before



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UNITED STATES

THE BEST DOMESTIC SPARKLERS ARE WELL-PRICED AND WELL-MADE

DOMAINE CARNEROS

93 | Brut Carneros 2014

Dynamic yet elegantly refined, this features expressive Asian pear, raspberry and toasted spice flavors that build vibrancy toward the long, steely finish. (T.F.) **\$33**

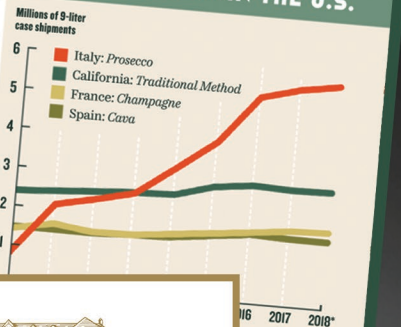


Domaine Carneros, Champagne Taittinger's Napa Valley winery helmed by bubbly expert Eileen Crane, has long been a leader in U.S. sparkling wine, which it makes in various styles.

When Eileen Crane recently accepted an invitation to speak about sparkling wine production at an Oregon vintners' conference, she wasn't expecting much. Crane has been the winemaker at Domaine Carneros, Champagne Taittinger's Napa Valley winery, since 1987. She has seen interest in sparkling wine production up and then pop like bubbles in a coupe glass. "I expected to address three people," she says. "I walked in to find 120 eager faces staring at me." Everyone wants to be more sparkly these days—bubbly is booming. Sparkling wine sales have been surging in the U.S. for more than a decade, and there are few signs of the trend fizzling soon. Sparkling wine was long associated primarily with luxury and celebration, with wedding toasts and birthdays and the annual dropping of a ball at midnight. But an increasing number of consumers are discovering that the wines go just as well with dinner on Tuesday, binge-watching with friends on Thursday, or a Sunday summer picnic in the park.

wine brands from Italy, three from France and two from Spain. "Prosecco has been the runaway hit with consumers." In 2007, Prosecco sold fewer than 500,000 cases a year in the U.S. market. Sales then began to surge, hitting almost 900,000 in 2010. The following year, the U.S. imported 2.1 million cases. For a decade, Italy has been the top sparkling wine exporter to the U.S., thanks largely to Prosecco. In 2017, Americans bought more than 5.3 million cases. Last year, La Marca, the top-selling Pro-

TRACKING SPARKLING WINE CONSUMPTION IN THE U.S.



DOMAINE CARNEROS.



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