

Wine Spectator

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Behind the Bubbly

Q&A with four female leaders in California sparkling wine

By MaryAnn Worobiec ■ From the Nov 15, 2021, issue

Remi Cohen: CEO / Domaine Carneros

Cohen became CEO at Domaine Carneros in 2020. Her 20 years in wine include stints at Saintsbury, Bouchaine and Merryvale. She owned a vineyard management company and more recently was COO at Lede Family. She holds a B.S. in molecular and cellular biology, a Master's in viticulture and an MBA in finance. Still, she questions whether she could have gotten so far without the mentors who pushed her—support she believes many women in the industry don't get. This is something she's hoping to help change.

WS: Your job at Domaine Carneros: Is it fair to call it a dream job?

RC: Oh yes. I felt like Cliff Lede was a dream job, too, in a lot of ways. But when [Domaine Carneros] approached me, I was like, this is the job. This is basically made for me in so many different ways. I think it's awesome too that the Taittinger family has always put an emphasis on female leadership. Eileen Crane was selected in 1987 [the founding year] to lead Domaine Carneros. At Champagne Taittinger, Vitalie Taittinger is president. To be able to continue that legacy is special.

WS: What has your experience been as a woman in this industry?

RC: I have been fortunate to work with a lot of amazing men. I feel fortunate to have worked with men who have promoted me into positions and helped cultivate advancement in my career. But I do think that there are some situations where I might not have gotten a job that I applied for [because I was a woman]. I had applied for GM jobs and didn't get them. They were like, "She seems lovely and talented but needs more experience." I remember thinking, I'm in my thirties; I'm not that young. I wonder if they would say the same thing to a male my age with my experience. When I went to Davis, easily half the students were women. So what happens? Is it women's lives and lifestyles are getting in the way, or companies aren't cultivating the ability for a woman to have a family?

WS: Tell me more about what you see for the future of Domaine Carneros.

RC: I have to say that the foundation is amazing, the wines are awesome, and the business is really healthy. It's an incredible place filled with amazing people. I love the open management. I'm building upon the transparency within the management that we do here—building out this mentorship program, building out this employee engagement program, modernizing the open book management and making it accessible to everyone.

