

THE **tasting** panel

MAGAZINE

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The newly-completed Taylor Lombardo-designed Crocker & Starr winery building.



Crocker & Starr

Starr Power

CABERNET FRANC HIGHLIGHTS 20-YEAR VERTICAL
by Deborah Parker Wong

Chalk it up to hindsight, but now that we've entered the post-critique era of wine, there seems to be far more appreciation for producers who have stayed their course and never fallen victim to the lure of excessive ripeness that conditions in Napa Valley so naturally favor. The rare occasion of a retrospective tasting spanning 20 years provided such an opportunity, as each vintage lays bare the winemaker's intention, and together, they tell the story of the land from where they came.



Crocker & Starr owner and winemaker Pamela Starr has built a Cabernet Franc benchmark for the valley.

in 1886—full circle.

After priming our palates in 2012 and three successive vintages with Starr's expressive Sauvignon Blanc, the 17-wine Cabernet Franc vertical opened with Crocker & Starr's first

"Outside of the Loire Valley, transparency wouldn't be a common way to describe Cabernet Franc's expression, but given Starr's low-touch winemaking - a style that's so eminently respectful of the fruit - it's possible to taste the evolution of the estate, the complexity of the various clones and the influence of the vintage as the years unfold."

*"It's a partnership with the vines, not unlike the partnership that created **Crocker & Starr**, that defines the winemakers' role in terroir."*

This partnership was born by accident. In Spottswood, there were early captivated time they formed Crocker & Starr. The addition of a new winery, completed in time for the 2016 harvest, has brought the winemaking history of the estate—first planted to Zinfandel and Riesling

clone that was planted to the estate, Starr planted Cabernet Franc clones 214, 332 and Goddess for complexity. From 2000 onward the wines were

the partnership that created Crocker & Starr, that defines the winemakers' role in terroir. ■■

