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## MARK & TERRI STARK

### **Stark Reality Restaurants, Sonoma County California**

Willi's Wine Bar, Willi's Seafood & Raw Bar, Monti's,  
Stark's Steak & Seafood, Bravas, Bird & The Bottle,  
Grossman's Noshery & Bar

James Beard Award Semifinalist for Outstanding Restaurateur

James Beard Outstanding Restaurateur semifinalists Mark and Terri Stark together own and operate seven of Sonoma County's favorite, and most highly rated, restaurants: Stark's Steak & Seafood, Bird & The Bottle, Monti's, and Grossman's Noshery & Bar in Santa Rosa, and Willi's Seafood and Bravas in Healdsburg. After losing their flagship, Willi's Wine Bar, in the 2017 Tubbs Fire, they re-opened Willi's at the restaurant's new home in the Town & Country Center in Santa Rosa in June 2019. Willi's Wine Bar first welcomed diners and introduced Santa Rosans to the small plates concept in 2002. Less than one year later, the Starks opened Grossman's Noshery & Bar in Santa Rosa's historic Railroad Square in March 2020.



Mark is executive chef and Terri handles all front of the house operations for the restaurants. From Willi's Wine Bar to their most recent opening, Mark and Terri's restaurants have consistently earned top accolades and praise including *San Francisco Chronicle* Top 100 Bay Area Restaurant status (Willi's Wine Bar and Bravas), Michelin Bib Gourmand (Monti's, Willi's Wine Bar, and Bravas), and *Travel + Leisure* Top 20 US Tapas Restaurants (Bravas).

Said *San Francisco Chronicle* former restaurant critic Michael Bauer, "What sets Mark and Terri Stark apart from many restaurateurs who have multiple locations is that each location is different. If their names weren't written on the menu, in fact, you probably wouldn't know it was one of their properties... Willi's has remained one of my favorite casual stops in Sonoma County."

Mark is a graduate of the Culinary Institute of America in Hyde Park, New York and honed his professional cooking skills in Washington DC and Seattle. Terri majored in hospitality at the University of Oregon and had a successful catering and restaurant management career in the San Francisco Bay Area. Mark and Terri met while both were working for the California Cafe Restaurant Group in Palo Alto: he as a regional chef and she as manager of the catering department. They married in 1999 and relocated to Sonoma County shortly thereafter where Terri has four generations of family.

The Starks founded Stark Reality Restaurants in 2004 to manage the operations of their diverse group of dining establishments. They are now one of Sonoma County's largest employers, with over 400 employees. More than awards and accolades, Terri and Mark are most proud of being able to provide mentorship and employment to so many workers in the local culinary field. They have offered health care to their fulltime employees since the day they opened, a rarity in the days before the Affordable Care Act. Another rarity in the restaurant business: many of their employees have been with them for ten years or more. The Starks are committed to promoting from within, what Terri refers to as "stocking our own pond." All of their chefs started out working for them as cooks, and, in some cases, dishwashers. The biggest measure of success, according to Mark, "At least 20 employees who started out washing dishes and bussing tables now own their houses; more than anything else, that is our greatest accomplishment."

The Starks believe it's not enough to provide great food and service in a comfortable setting—those things are to be expected. Their goal is to provide an experience that will leave diners saying, "I can't wait to come back." With six (and soon to be seven) restaurants under their belts, that philosophy seems to be working.

For more information about Stark Reality Restaurants, visit [www.starkrestaurants.com](http://www.starkrestaurants.com).

## **Restaurants**

### **Willi's Wine Bar**

*Town & Country Center, Santa Rosa*

Celebrated roadhouse featuring international small plates and wine flights.

Opened 2002. Lost in Tubbs Fire 2017. Re-opened in new location in June 2019.

### **Willi's Seafood & Raw Bar**

*Downtown Healdsburg. Opened 2003*

East Coast meets South America for Small Plates and Cocktails

### **Monti's**

*Montgomery Village Center, Santa Rosa. Opened 2004*

The locals' favorite, with wood-fired rotisserie specials nightly

### **Stark's Steak & Seafood**

*Historic Railroad Square, Santa Rosa. Opened 2008*

Classic steakhouse and lounge with legendary Happy Hour

### **Bravas**

*Healdsburg. Opened 2012*

Spanish-inspired tapas, large plates, and paella

### **Bird & The Bottle**

*Midtown Santa Rosa. Opened 2015*

Modern tavern with large and small plates to share, many from the open kitchen's wood-fired grill.

### **Grossman's Noshery & Bar**

*Historic Railroad Square, Santa Rosa. Opened March 19, 2020*

New York style deli, bakery and bar