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A TOAST TO TELEVISION'S BEST

FALCON CREST'S SUDSY SUCCESS

CBS led the '80s primetime pack in one of TV's most beloved genres, the nighttime soap

Much like one of its characters, the primetime soap opera once spent years in an apparent coma.

After the 1969 demise of the genre's one true early hit, *Peyton Place*, the soap had languished, asleep, through most of the 1970s. Then, in the spring of 1978, CBS did *Dallas*.

Dallas brought Texas-sized drama to the small screen, and soon notched the No. 1 spot in TV's Nielsen ratings. In the fall of 1979, CBS introduced *Dallas* spinoff *Knots Landing*, and in December 1981 came a third hit, *Falcon Crest*.

The juicy, wine industry-set *Falcon Crest* would prove to be the decade's last successful soap. ABC's *Dynasty* spinoff *The Colbys* quickly fizzled, and NBC never found serialized success, with flops including *Flamingo Road*, *Berrenger's* and 1983's *Yellow Rose*—also set, suspiciously enough, on a Texas ranch.

Falcon Crest followed *Dallas* on Friday night for almost all of its nine seasons, creating a solid weekly two-hour block of backstabbing and betrayal. *Knots Landing* ruled its own Thursday night roost. In the end, this trifecta of treachery proved to be a ratings combination that, all throughout the '80s, no other network could replicate or topple. But much like *Falcon Crest's* Jacqueline Perrault (played by movie legend Lana Turner), they were apparently willing to die trying. — *Jim Colucci*

As the titular vineyard's playboy scion Lance Cumson, Lorenzo Lamas was one of only three actors to remain at *Falcon Crest* for its entire nine-year run.

THEIR BRUSHES WITH *CREST*

The stars of *Falcon Crest* reminisce about the winery-based drama's twists, turns and tantalizing secrets on the next page.

