



AIRFIELD

E S T A T E S

2021 LIGHTNING



Marcus Miller, Winemaker
Travis Maple, Winemaker

TECHNICAL DATA

13.3% Alcohol
3.51 pH
6.2 g/L TA
244 Cases

*Produced in a Vegan Manner
(No animal byproducts used
in production of this wine)*

Airfield Estates is a fourth generation family farm based in the Yakima Valley crafting a wide range of estate grown wines of exceptional quality. As the name suggests, Airfield Estates has ties to aviation. A portion of the family property operated as a training base for hundreds of Army Air Corps pilots during World War II. The pride, passion, and dedication of these heroes provide a great source of inspiration as we strive to pay tribute to them with our wines.

VINEYARD

Established in 1968, our estate vineyard was one of the first commercial vineyards in Washington State. Our first plantings were Riesling, Gewürztraminer, and Cabernet Sauvignon. Over the years, we have expanded to over 20 varieties spanning approximately 830 acres. Nestled on the foothills of the Rattlesnake Mountains in the heart of the Yakima Valley AVA, our vineyard has one of the most spectacular views of Mount Rainier and Mount Adams. These sunny slopes are blessed with a long growing period, extended summer daylight, and cool evenings that yield well-balanced, world-class wines.

VINTAGE

The 2021 vintage will be recorded as one of the warmest in Washington State history. With a mild winter and a warm spring, we saw bud break during the second week of April, about 1-2 weeks earlier than average. Then in late June, we experienced a heat wave for approximately 6 weeks. During this time, we saw over 35 days of 100+ degree temperatures, with some daily highs nearing 118 degrees! This period of extreme heat began when the grapes were in a cluster and berry size development stage, causing grapes to stress out weeks before we vintners would prefer. Smaller berry size led to an overall 30% reduction in crop sizes for us. Nevertheless, the flavors that these smaller berries produced were phenomenal! We also saw rapid ripening at a pace we have not seen since 2015, and this created a very early start to harvest. By the end of August, we had brought in nearly 150 tons of sparkling wine grapes and Sauvignon Blanc grapes, hands down an August record for us at Airfield. By the end of September, we had crushed every white varietal, which was beneficial for us in winemaking as we could then give 100% of our attention to red varieties. October started off with nice warm temperatures and the pace of grape harvesting was going very well with ideal ripeness and exceptional quality. By the third week of October, we did see several freezing events causing our canopies to die. With only a limited amount of fruit remaining, it was easy for us to harvest the last remaining fruit before the end of October. In the end, the 2021 vintage made outstanding wine. Our white wines showcase bright fruit aromas with brisk acidity. Our red wines display dark fruit elements with structure and finesse. The wines created from 2021 will be age worthy and enjoyable in their youth and will be wines that will make a lasting impression.

WINEMAKING

Our Lightning blend, much like all our reserve tier wines, begins in the vineyard. Sourced from our Estate vineyard from reserve tier blocks that have been cropped to lower yields to showcase more concentrated flavors and depth of the wines. Each of the elements that went into the Lightning blend were harvested at optimal maturity in late September and sent directly to the press as whole clusters for a gentle pressing. After pressing and cold settling of solids for 72 hours, the juice was clean racked to exclusive French oak barrels where it was fermented cool and aged in these barrels. After fermentation, each barrel was inoculated for Malo-lactic fermentation and closely monitored, to ensure full Malo-Lactic completion without the production of Diacetyl (buttery flavors) After fermentation was completed, the lees in each barrel were stirred twice a month for 3 months to help build body and soften the texture of the wine. Aged for 10 months in barrels before being prepped for bottling.

VARIETAL COMPOSITION

57% Viognier 43% Chardonnay

TASTING NOTES

Our 2021 Lightning a medium-light bodied blend of Viognier and Chardonnay fermented and aged in 100% French Oak. Lush aromas of spiced roasted apple, poached pear with layers of marzipan. The palate has a creamy entry leading into secondary flavors of toasted marshmallows, smoked pecans layered in crème brûlée. The palate is impeccably balanced with tertiary flavors of banana pudding and smoked toffee, exiting the palate with a long and creamy finish. Enjoy now through 2032 with Optimal Maturity in 2028; enjoy at 50-55 degrees.

