



AIRFIELD

E S T A T E S

2021 CABERNET FRANC



Marcus Miller, Winemaker
Travis Maple, Winemaker

TECHNICAL DATA

14% Alcohol
3.73 pH
6.0 g/L TA
168 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 cultivating a wide range of premium grapes and crafting 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

Our estate vineyard was established in 1968 and is situated along the foothills of the Rattlesnake Mountains in the heart of the Yakima Valley AVA. Today, we grow over 20 wine grape varieties spanning over 800 acres. Our vineyard has 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 to 2 weeks earlier than average. Then we experienced a heat wave in late June that lasted roughly six weeks with over 35 days of 100°+ temperatures and some daily highs nearing 118° Fahrenheit. 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 size for us. On the bright side, these smaller berries produced phenomenal flavors. We also saw rapid ripening at a pace last seen in 2015, creating a very early harvest start. 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 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 red wines display dark fruit elements with structure and finesse. The wines created in 2021 will be enjoyable in their youth but also age-worthy, making a lasting impression.

WINEMAKING

The Cabernet Franc was sourced from reserve tier blocks on our estate vineyard. These particular blocks were cropped to smaller yields to obtain more ripeness and concentrated flavors. Harvested towards the end of October at optimal maturity, the grapes were destemmed and sorted using our optical sorter before being sent directly to small fermenters. Cold-soaked for 48 hours, the grapes and juice were then inoculated with a specific yeast strain for alcoholic fermentation. Our extraction protocol was balanced between aerated pump-overs and gentle punch-downs to extract the complex flavors from our Cabernet Franc while maintaining gentle tannin extraction. Fermented for 14 days, the wine was then drained, and the skins were sent to the press to gently extract any remaining wine from the grapes. The wine was then sent to exclusive French oak barrels for aging and inoculated for malolactic fermentation. During the first two months of aging, the lees were stirred twice a month; this process helps achieve roundness, structure, and finesse for the wine. Overall, the wine was aged for 22 months in 100% French oak (45% new barrels, 35% 2 to 3-year-old barrels, and 20% neutral barrels).

TASTING NOTES

Our 2021 Cab Franc is a captivating, full-bodied wine that blends dark and red fruit flavors seamlessly. Black currant, sweet plums, and blueberry mingle with hints of pipe tobacco, licorice, and savory herbs. Secondary flavors of fig jam and black cherry emerge, complemented by subtle notes of graphite and beechwood. The finish is well-structured, with polished tannins enhancing the lingering French oak nuances. Enjoy now through 2037, with peak maturity around 2033.

