



AIRFIELD

E S T A T E S

2020 AVIATOR



Marcus Miller, Winemaker
Travis Maple, Winemaker

TECHNICAL DATA

14.4% Alcohol
3.73 pH
6.1 g/L TA
398 cases produced

*Produced in a Vegan Manner
(No animal by-products 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.

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 2020 vintage will go down as a very memorable year. The growing season was exceptional with a mild winter, warm spring, and moderate summer. Bud break occurred two weeks earlier than normal, and veraison was also well ahead of schedule. Just as we were preparing for an early start to harvest, wildfires in the Northwest created a thick cloud of smoke over Washington State. Concerns arose about exposure to smoke. Taking a cautious approach, we delayed harvest until the smoke cleared and conducted trials to determine the effect of smoke on our grapes. Fortunately, results showed no sign of smoke taint as our vineyard was a long distance away from the fires. Another major event in 2020 was an early frost that occurred the second week of October. Our winemaking team worked tirelessly for long hours leading up to the frost. By the time our vineyard was impacted by the cold spell, harvest was 95% complete. All remaining grapes were then hand-harvested and sorted with an optical sorter to remove any excessive M.O.G. or bad grapes. Overall, we were very pleased with the results of the 2020 vintage. The wines showcase an abundance of ripe fruit aromatics, low tannin profiles, and exceptionally balanced finishes.

WINEMAKING

All of the varieties for this blend were sourced from reserve tier blocks on our estate vineyard. These blocks were cropped to low yields to produce dark, concentrated flavors while balancing out tannins. Each element was harvested at optimal maturity, sorted, sent to small fermenters, cold-soaked for 48 hours, and then inoculated with very specific yeast strains selected to help each wine achieve certain flavor and mouthfeel profiles. Although our extraction protocol for each variety varied, we generally achieved 80% of our extraction early on before 8% alcohol. After that point, we tapered off to a more gentle extraction approach. Once each lot was fully extracted, some lots were left on the skins for an extended maceration to develop more exotic and compelling flavors while other lots were sent directly to the press. Each wine was barreled down into exclusive French oak barrels and was inoculated for malolactic fermentation. During this process, the lees were stirred twice a month for three months to help build roundness and naturally soften the wine. Overall, the wine was aged for 20 months in French oak barrels (78% new French oak, 22% 2-year-old French oak). A wine of this caliber was created to be enjoyed in its youth, yet has the structure to age for many years to come.

TASTING NOTES

This full-bodied Bordeaux style blend is comprised of 58% Cabernet Sauvignon, 24% Merlot, 16% Cabernet Franc, and 2% Petit Verdot. Powerful aromas of black currants, cherry cola, and smoked dates are layered with undertones of seared Beachwood. The palate is robust and seamless with restrained tannins that evoke secondary flavors of dark espresso, black cherry, and smoked caramel. On exit, this well-structured blend showcases impressive length with notes of sweet oak spices lingering on the finish. Enjoy now through 2038 with optimal maturity in 2034.

