



AIRFIELD E S T A T E S

2019 DOLCETTO



Marcus Miller, Winemaker
Travis Maple, Winemaker

TECHNICAL DATA

14.2% Alcohol
3.48 pH
6.4 g/L TA
50 Cases
Vegan

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

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 2019 vintage started off with a mild winter, then out of nowhere, we saw record snow accumulations in late February that lasted until early March. Thankfully, this did not affect buds on the dormant grapes, but it did delay bud break by approximately 2 weeks, which had some residual affects on the overall ripening process. We did see a decent amount of heat accumulation, but the 2019 vintage will go down as a cooler vintage for Washington State. Our typically amazing Octobers was very trying for us with not just one but two freezing periods. The first frost was not very damaging, but then 9 days later we were hit very hard and saw considerable frost damage to all our grapes. As we are seasoned winemakers, we took this challenge head on and decided to purchase brand new state-of-the-art equipment including an optical sorter that would eject bad and damaged grapes before any of these grapes went into a fermenter or press. The new equipment worked wonders. Challenging vintages like 2019 really let you know as a winemaker what you are made of, and we at Airfield Estates not only took this challenge head on, but we excelled and the wines from this vintage are going to be more consumer-friendly with higher acidity and lower alcohols but the fruit aspect is exceptional.

WINEMAKING

Hand-harvested from our estate vineyard at optimal ripeness, the Dolcetto grapes were 100% destemmed but not crushed, then sorted using our optical sorter before being pumped to a small 1-ton fermenter. After a 72-hour cold soak, the wine was warmed up and inoculated with three different yeast strains, one for fruit aromas, one for complexity, and the other to make sure we go dry. When working with a high pH wine, the fermentation can struggle towards the end and adding this yeast gives us a form of insurance. Each strain of yeast was carefully selected to ensure it would not compete with the other yeasts. A mix of extraction methods were used to create a wine of balance and one that showcases the unique traits of the Dolcetto grape. These methods included gentle punch-downs in the morning, then a gentle punch-down in the evening. This grape can easily be over extracted, and our main goal was to have a gentle approach to avoid this. The wine was fermented dry on the skins lasting about 16 days with temperatures closely monitored as to not exceed 86 degrees. After fermentation, the grapes were sent to the press for a gentle pressing, then sent directly to French oak barrels and inoculated for malolactic fermentation. This process was followed by stirring the lees twice a month for three months to create a rounder mouthfeel while naturally softening the wine. This wine was aged in 100% neutral French oak for 18 months. The use of neutral French oak creates the perfect balance for this wine, allowing the exotic aromatics to be the star of the show and not deterring them from the presence of oak.

TASTING NOTES

Our 2019 Dolcetto is a great example of how versatile Washington State is at growing grapes from all around the world. This Italian varietal is very food-friendly and displays an abundance of concentrated red fruits with brisk acidity. Aromas of raspberry liqueur and crème d' cassis are layered with undertones of eucalyptus and black licorice. The palate is lush with interwoven flavors of pie cherries, hints of vanilla, and a touch of exotic spice, all leading to a silky-smooth, lingering finish.

