



# AIRFIELD

ESTATES

## 2019 MICHAEL L. MILLER



Marcus Miller, Winemaker  
Travis Maple, Winemaker

### TECHNICAL DATA

14.5% Alcohol  
3.84 pH  
5.9 g/L TA  
183 Cases  
Bottled 8/16/21

*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.

### VINEYARD

Established in 1968, our estate vineyard was one of the first commercial vineyards in Washington State. 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.

### FOUNDERS SERIES

This wine pays tribute to our father, Michael L. Miller, who founded Airfield Estates Winery and also expanded our estate vineyard into the large-scale operation it is today. The pride, passion, and enthusiasm that he expressed for our vineyard, grapes, and wine is something that we hope to continue to share with others.

### VINTAGE

The 2019 Vintage threw everything it could at us winemakers. We started off with a very 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 cause a delay in bud break; about 2 weeks later than normal. Delayed bud break then delays ripening overall so we did see a later than usual ripening to get to our optimal ripeness, we did see a decent amount of heat accumulation, but the 2019 vintage will go down as a cooler vintage for Washington State. Not only did we have these challenges to overcome, our typically amazing Octobers was very trying for us. We didn't see one frost on our vines, but we saw two freezing periods that made our winemaking decisions ever more challenging. The 1st frost we saw we were happy with the results thinking we have escaped a terrible outcome in the vineyards, then 9 days later we were hit very hard and we 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 as amazing for us and the results in the wines are more than pleasing for us as well. Challenging vintages like 2019 really lets you know as a winemaker what you are made of and we at Airfield Estates not only took this challenge head on, we excelled and the wines we produced from this vintage are going to be more consumer friendly with higher acidity and lower alcohols but the fruit aspect is exceptional.

### VARIETAL COMPOSITION

69% Syrah, 22% Grenache, 9% Mourvèdre

### WINEMAKING

Each of the three varietals that make up our Founders Series Michael Miller are derived from the best of the best of our Reserve Tier blocks from our Estate Vineyard located in the Yakima Valley AVA. Harvested in early October, all three varietals were destemmed, then sorted using our optical sorter then combined in a concrete tank for a co-fermentation. 30% of the Syrah grapes were left on the stems and sent to the fermenter as whole clusters, having stem inclusion in our Rhone blends creates structure and complexity. By co-fermenting all three of these varietals together, each varietal marries each other from the beginning. This creates rich and dark fruit aromas and accentuates the complex flavors while showcasing each of the varietal's presence in the final product. The element of fermenting in Concrete adds additional layers of complexity, giving the wine multi dimensions of minerality and lifting the wines fruit aromatics. Giving this wine even more special attention, we fermented this only using the grapes native yeasts. A native yeast fermentation brings out each varietal's characteristics, with more lifted fruit aromatics. Our extraction was aggressive to begin fermentation, with aerated pump overs giving the ferment lots of oxygen early on. Having this approach allows us to have optimal color and flavor extraction early on, once alcohol becomes prevalent, we taper off to a gentler approach with less frequent pump overs to maintain the wines naturally silky tannin structure. Fermented dry on the skins for about 16 days with temperatures averaging 86-88 degrees, the wine was then drained from the skins and the skins were gently pressed before being sent to exclusive French oak barrels for Malo-Lactic fermentation and aging. Sent to 100% exclusive 500L French Oak barrel for aging with 85% new French oak and 15% neutral French Oak. During the first three months of aging, the wines lees were stirred twice a month, this process helps naturally soften the wine creating a more seamless rounder finish. Aged for Approximately 21 months in French oak before being sent to a concrete tank for an additional month of concrete aging before preparing the wine for bottling.

### TASTING NOTES

Our 2019 Founders Series Michael Miller, a Rhone blend that displays luscious aromatics of rich, red currant, smoked figs, blackberry, with coriander and anise spice. The entry is remarkably silk like evoking savory flavors of peppered meats, black cherry, and sweet plums. The wine exits the palate, showcasing its medium body with robust tertiary flavors of beechwood, wet gravel and generous sweet, toasted oak that provides for long, lush, and elegant finish.

AirfieldWines



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