



# AIRFIELD ESTATES

## 2020 DONALD D. MILLER



Marcus Miller, Winemaker  
Travis Maple, Winemaker

### TECHNICAL DATA

13.5% Alcohol  
3.56 pH  
5.9 g/L TA  
160 Cases

Produced in a Vegan Manner  
(No animal biproducts 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 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 2 weeks earlier than normal and veraison was well ahead of schedule too. 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. Proximity to the source of smoke plays a big factor, and our vineyard was a long distance away. Overall, we have not seen any impact of smoke on the 2020 vintage. Another major event of this vintage was an early frost that occurred the second week of October. Our winemaking team worked tirelessly long hours leading up to the frost. By the time our vineyards had been impacted by the cold spell, our winery was stuffed with fermenting grapes and 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. After our wines completed alcoholic fermentation, we were very pleased with the results. We at Airfield have another stunning vintage for you to enjoy. The 2020 wines showcase an abundance of ripe fruit aromatics, low tannin profiles, and exceptionally balanced finishes.

### WINEMAKING

The 2020 Donald D. Miller Chardonnay showcases the best Chardonnay that our estate vineyard has to offer. These reserve blocks have been cropped to small yields to allow depth and concentrated flavors. Harvested at optimal maturity, the grapes were sent directly to the press as whole clusters for a very gentle pressing. After pressing, the juice was cold settled for 72 hours, then racked clean and sent directly to very exclusive French oak barrels. The wine was fermented and aged in a mixture of 500L puncheons and 228L barrels with 90% being new French oak and 10% 1-year-old French oak. The barrels were inoculated with a special yeast strain and had temperature ranging from 55 to 64 degrees allowing for a lengthy fermentation of about 4 weeks. After alcoholic fermentation was complete, the barrels were inoculated for malolactic fermentation (MLF) and were closely monitored. Our goal was to complete MLF and to avoid the "buttery" characteristic. After MLF, the wines had their lees stirred twice a month for 4 months to build roundness and richness on the palate. Overall, the wine was aged for 10 months before being stabilized and prepared for bottling.

### TASTING NOTES

This small-batch, limited production Chardonnay pays tribute to our grandfather, Donald D. Miller, who founded our estate vineyard. Intriguing aromas of caramel apples and poached pears are layered with nuances of butterscotch. The palate is rich and creamy with evolving layers of freshly baked marzipan, lemon oil, and roasted cashews. The wine exits the palate with soft acidity that showcases the wine's balance with rich and creamy toasted French oak notes that lingers on the palate.