



AIRFIELD ESTATES

2009 Aviator

VARIETAL COMPOSITION

50% Cabernet Sauvignon, 25% Merlot, 10% Cab Franc, 10% Petit Verdot, 5% Malbec

VINEYARD

For four generations, our family has been farming in the Yakima Valley (Washington's oldest established AVA). Our estate vineyard is situated along the anticlines of the Rattlesnake Mountains, which frame the Yakima Valley to the North. The original vines date back to 1968. Over the years, the vineyard has expanded and now includes 26 different wine grape varieties, spans over 860 acres, and is positioned within a 4 mile radius from the original World War II Airbase that once resided on our family farm.

Aviator is our Bordeaux style blend. The Cabernet Sauvignon was sourced from our Runway Vineyard. Planted in 1989, this vineyard block has a Southwesterly orientation on gently sloping, deep, well drained Warden Silty loam soils, and an elevation of approximately 920 feet above sea level. The vineyard was cropped at 2.9 tons per acre. The balance of the fruit was sourced from our Black Rock Vineyard. All of the varietals were planted in 2006. The orientation for these vineyards are all Southwesterly, at elevations ranging from 1000 to 1050 feet above sea level. The crop levels for each ranged from Malbec at 3 ton per acre, to Petite Verdot at 1.2 tons per acre. Soil types also vary at this site, ranging from deep well drained Warden Silty loam, to shallow, to rocky cobbly soils with low water holding capacity. As we moved toward the formation of the winery, these varieties became part of the business plan. Because of the diversity of soils and slopes at the Black Rock site, these new varieties were planted to replace Chardonnay and Merlot vines formally occupying these blocks.

VINTAGE

The 2009 vintage in Washington State was a warm one. While the average heat units for our vineyard is 2600, in 2009 we accumulated 2861 during the ripening period. By the 3rd week in September, pretty much every variety on the farm was at a brix and pH level in the harvest zone. Due to the fact that everything was ripening at once, it became a mad scramble to bring in the fruit at its ideal ripeness. This was accentuated by the freeze event that occurred on the morning of October 11th. Temperatures fell to 19 degrees in the vineyard, resulting in the rapid defoliation of our vines. This event quickened the pace of harvest as fermenters were piled sky high in the cellar to bring in the fruit before it lost its flavor. The 2009 vintage will be marked by ripe flavors, and lower acidities than normal in typically high acid varieties. While it was a hectic harvest, it is one that achieved a high quality.

WINEMAKING

Our winemaking begins with a pre-sort of the fruit to ensure only ideal clusters get vinified. After being destemmed, a gentle peristaltic pump is used to transfer the must to the fermentation vessel. The wine is fermented in 6 ton stainless steel tanks and 1 ton stainless steel fermentors. Pump-overs, Rack and Returns, and Punch-downs are used to extract tannin and color from the skin. Ideal peak ferment temperatures are 80-84 degrees. After the wine has finished fermenting it is pressed and settled for 48 hours before going to barrel. Barrels are typically 25%-35% new, and are composed of 60% French, 30% American, and 10% Eastern European. The wine goes through malolactic fermentation in barrel and then is racked. Blending occurs during the 2nd racking, usually in April. Racking continues every 3 months until the wine is finally bottled in July after 1 year and 9 months in barrel. Prior to bottling, the wine is pad filtered and bottled using screw cap closures.

WINE ANALYSIS

14.5% Alcohol

RESIDUAL SUGAR

Dry

BOTTLING DATE

July 19, 2011

CASE PRODUCTION

565 cases



Hand-Crafted By Winemaker:

Marion Z. Miller

COLOR Dark garnet.

NOSE A rich bouquet of dark berries, spice and vanilla bean.

PALATE Smooth & well-balanced. Well structured tannins frame the way for flavors of blackcurrant and dark cherry to disperse across the palate.

PEAK DRINKING Now through 2019.