



AIRFIELD ESTATES

2019 DAUNTLESS



Travis Maple, Winemaker

TECHNICAL DATA

14.2% Alcohol
3.84 pH
5.9 g/L TA
627 Cases

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 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, but our typically amazing October was also 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.

WINEMAKING

Our 2019 Dauntless comes from our Estate Vineyard in the Yakima Valley. We carefully select each varietal that goes into this blend from blocks that are the best suitable for each grape varietal, our goal when creating a blend of this caliber is to see a bounty of fruits, a nice touch of balanced oak and soft tannins to create a well-balanced wine. Harvested towards the end of October at optimal maturity the grapes were sent to various size fermenters, the grapes were then cold soak for 48 before being inoculated with several different strains of yeast. Our extraction approach is to be aggressive at the beginning of fermentation, this allows us to extract the color and flavors we look for in our Merlot, Cab Franc's Cabernet Sauvignons. Once alcohol levels start to increase throughout fermentation, we then take a much gentler approach to our extraction as to not overly extract tannins and harshness with our end goal being a soft and lush finish, yet still maintaining balance and structure. After fermentation, each lot was then sent to a variety of New and Neutral French Oak Barrels and inoculated for Malo-lactic fermentation. After Malo-lactic fermentation is completed, each barrel had its lees stirred twice a month for up to five months, this process helps build structure and roundness while enhancing the mouthfeel and acting as a fining agent to naturally soften the wines. The final blend consisted of aging in 100% French Oak for 15 months, with 25% being new French oak and 35% 1 to 3-year-old French oak and 40% Neutral Oak.

TASTING NOTES

This wine displays gorgeous fruit characteristics of black currant and boysenberry compote intertwined. This fine Bordeaux blend presents an array of black current, boysenberry, and toasted oak with firm tannins that carry through to a long finish.

VARIETAL COMPOSITION

69% Merlot, 17% Cabernet Sauvignon, 14% Cabernet Franc

