



AIRFIELD ESTATES

2019 HELLCAT



Marcus Miller, Winemaker
Travis Maple, Winemaker

TECHNICAL DATA

14.1% Alcohol
3.98 pH
5.0 g/L TA
370 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 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 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 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 that made our winemaking decisions ever more challenging. The first frost we saw we were happy with the results thinking we have escaped a terrible outcome in the vineyards, and 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 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 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

Both the Tempranillo and Syrah components of this blend were sourced from reserve tier designated blocks on our estate vineyard. The Tempranillo was harvested at the beginning of October and fermented in a concrete tank. The Syrah was harvest towards the middle of October and fermented in a small 2-ton fermenter. Both varieties had a similar extraction program, with a 3-day cold soak, then inoculated with a special yeast strain. With these varietals, the goal was to get as much extraction before 9-10% alcohol. Once we achieved our extraction, we took a gentle approach to not over extract the wine. Fermented until dry on the skins, each lot was then drained, and the remaining grapes were sent to the press to gently press any remaining juice left in the skins. The wines were then sent to a variety of French oak barrels and inoculated for malolactic fermentation. Once malolactic fermentation was completed, the wines lees were stirred in each barrel twice a month for 3 months to help the wine achieve a rounder, softer mouthfeel acting a natural fining agent. A blend of this nature naturally has a high pH and low acidity so extra care must be taken to ensure the wines health during aging. Each barrel was topped twice a month to ensure minimal headspace as well as constant chemistry check-ups. After aging in barrels for approximately 10 months, we then chose the best performing barrels of Syrah and Tempranillo to create this blend. After blending, the wine was then aged for an additional 10 months in exclusive French oak with 35% being new French oak, 30% 2 year-old French oak, and 35% neutral French oak. After barrel aging, the wine was sent back to a concrete tank and aged for an additional month before being prepped for bottling.

VARIETAL COMPOSITION

64% Tempranillo, 36% Syrah

TASTING NOTES

Blue fruit aromatics of huckleberry jam and blueberry are layered with hints of black olive tapenade. The entry to the palate creates a voluptuous round mouthfeel with secondary flavors of black truffles and intriguing layers of soy sauce and spicy smoked meats that leave the palate with a gentle layer of toasted oak. On exit, the wine showcases silky tannins, a beautiful oak integration, and a long-lasting creamy finish.