



AIRFIELD

ESTATES

2020 LIGHTNING



Marcus Miller, Winemaker
Travis Maple, Winemaker

TECHNICAL DATA

13.5% Alcohol
3.54 pH
5.9 g/L TA
184 Cases

*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 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

Our Lightning blend, much like all our reserve tier wines, begins in the vineyard. The grapes for this wine were sourced from reserve tier blocks of our estate vineyard that were cropped to low yields to showcase more concentrated flavors and depth of the wines. Both the Viognier and Chardonnay components of this blend were hand harvested at optimal maturity in late September to early October and sent directly to the press as whole clusters for a gentle pressing. After pressing and cold settling of solids for 72 hours, the juice was clean racked to exclusive French oak barrels where it was fermented cool and aged in these barrels. After fermentation, each barrel was inoculated for malolactic fermentation and closely monitored, to ensure full malolactic completion without the production of diacetyl (buttery flavors). After fermentations were completed, the lees in each barrel were stirred twice a month for 3 months to help build body and soften the texture of the wine. Overall, the wine was aged for 10 months in 100% French oak barrels (60% New, 25% 2-Year, and 15% Neutral).

VARIETAL COMPOSITION

76% Viognier and 24% Chardonnay

TASTING NOTES

A luscious blend of French oak fermented Viognier and Chardonnay, the 2020 Lightning displays gorgeous aromatics reminiscent of spiced pear jam and apple butter with hints of banana foster. The palate is round, smooth, and impeccably balanced with secondary flavors of toasted marshmallows, lavender and lemon zest leading into tertiary flavors of vanilla beans and toffee. On exit, this elegant blend leaves a long and creamy impression on the palate.

