



AIRFIELD

ESTATES

2020 RESERVE SYRAH



Marcus Miller, Winemaker
Travis Maple, Winemaker

TECHNICAL DATA

Alcohol: 14.6%
pH: 4.02
TA: 5.3 g/L
358 Cases Produced

*Produced in a Vegan Manner
(No animal by-products 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 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

This Syrah was sourced from specially designated reserve tier blocks on our estate vineyard situated in the Yakima Valley AVA. Creating a wine of this caliber truly starts in the vineyard where we meticulously manage the size of the crop and then late in the season make sure the vines have proper sun exposure to achieve optimal ripeness. Harvested in early October at ideal maturity, the grapes were then sorted using our optical sorter and sent to concrete fermenters. About 35% of the grapes were left on the stems as whole clusters to provide structure and complexity. Fermenting in concrete adds another dimension of minerality and complexity. To increase complexity and intensity of aromatics, we also incorporated 2% Viognier to the fermentation, a process known as co-fermenting. Although a small addition, the 2% Viognier creates an abundance of fruit aromas in the wine. After a 4-day cold soak, the grapes were warmed up, given natural sources of food, and underwent a native yeast fermentation. Native yeast on the grapes creates complexity and varietal characteristics in the wine. Fermentation temperatures were approximately 88-90 degrees with aggressive extraction methods used early on such as a delastage, then we tapered off to a more gentle approach as to not over extract the wine and maintain a soft and lush mouthfeel. The wine was fermented dry in concrete before being drained pressed, and sent to a mixture of exclusive 500L puncheon French oak barrels (85% new French oak, 15% 2-year-old French oak). The wine was then inoculated for malolactic fermentation. During the next three months, the lees were stirred in each barrel twice a month. This process helps naturally fine the wine creating roundness and seamless edges. Overall, the wine was aged for approximately 21 months in barrels, then sent back to a concrete tank for an additional four weeks of concrete aging before being prepared for bottling.

TASTING NOTES

A co-ferment of 98% Syrah and 2% Viognier, this rich, full-bodied wine displays a dark ink-like in color and concentrated notes of black currant and dark plums interwoven with layers of black olive tapenade, white pepper and savory notes of grilled meat and dried herbs. The finish is long and impeccably smooth underscored by lingering notes of sweet, toasted oak and touch of minerality.

