



AIRFIELD E S T A T E S

2021 Runway



Marcus Miller, Winemaker
Travis Maple, Winemaker

TECHNICAL DATA

14.1% Alcohol
3.82 pH
5.9 g/L TA
590 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 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

Our estate vineyard was established in 1968 and is situated along the foothills of the Rattlesnake Mountains in the heart of the Yakima Valley AVA. Today, we grow over 20 wine grape varieties spanning over 800 acres. Our vineyard has 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 2021 vintage will be recorded as one of the warmest in Washington State history. With a mild winter and a warm spring, we saw bud break during the second week of April, about 1 to 2 weeks earlier than average. Then we experienced a heat wave in late June that lasted roughly six weeks with over 35 days of 100°+ temperatures and some daily highs nearing 118° Fahrenheit. This period of extreme heat began when the grapes were in a cluster and berry size development stage, causing grapes to stress out weeks before we vintners would prefer. Smaller berry size led to an overall 30% reduction in crop size for us. On the bright side, these smaller berries produced phenomenal flavors. We also saw rapid ripening at a pace last seen in 2015, creating a very early harvest start. By the end of August, we had brought in nearly 150 tons of sparkling wine grapes and Sauvignon Blanc grapes, hands down an August record for us at Airfield. By the end of September, we had crushed every white varietal, which was beneficial for us in winemaking as we could then give 100% of our attention to red varieties. October started with nice warm temperatures, and the pace of grape harvesting was going very well, with ideal ripeness and exceptional quality. By the third week of October, we did see several freezing events causing our canopies to die. With only a limited amount of fruit remaining, it was easy for us to harvest the last remaining fruit before the end of October. In the end, the 2021 vintage made outstanding wine. Our red wines display dark fruit elements with structure and finesse. The wines created in 2021 will be enjoyable in their youth but also age-worthy, making a lasting impression.

WINEMAKING

Harvested at optimal maturity in early October from reserve tier blocks on our estate vineyard, the Cabernet Franc and Merlot grapes were hand-harvested simultaneously. These grapes were then destemmed and sorted using an optical sorter before being sent to a small concrete tank to co-ferment together. Fermenting in concrete adds complexity and roundness to the wine while accentuating fruit character. After a cold soaking period of 72 hours, the wine was inoculated with two yeast strains: one to promote structure and varietal characteristics and the other for more bountiful fruit aromas. Our extraction protocol for a wine of this caliber is to be aggressive early in fermentation, giving the wine a délestage (removing all juice from the skins, then returning the juice to the skins) to extract color and flavor as well as enhance structure before higher alcohol levels are present. Once the alcohol reaches about 9-10%, we handle the fermentation with a gentler approach with fewer pump overs and punch downs. Fermented dry on the skins for about 16 days, the wine was then free run from the skins and gently pressed. It was then sent to exclusive French oak barrels for aging (90% new French oak and 10% 2 to 3-year-old French oak). After malolactic fermentation, the wine's lees were stirred twice a month for three months. This process helps create a round mouthfeel while naturally softening the wine. Overall, the wine was aged for 22 months in French oak barrels and then another month in concrete tank before being bottled. The last bit of concrete aging creates more complexity in the wine while lifting the aromas.

TASTING NOTES

Our 2021 Runway is a stunning, co-fermented blend of 51% Merlot and 49% Cabernet Franc, inspired by Right Bank Bordeaux. Medium to full-bodied, it offers aromas of sweet plum, blackcurrant, espresso bean, and smoked chocolate truffles. The wine presents velvety tannins on the mid-palate with secondary flavors of smoked figs, roasted dates, blackberry cobbler, and salted caramel. It concludes with elegance and power, featuring balanced acidity, soft tannins, and a lengthy finish with hints of seared cedar and roasted spice notes. Enjoy now through 2035, with optimal maturity in 2030.

