



AIRFIELD
E S T A T E S

2022 MICHAEL L. MILLER



Marcus Miller, Winemaker
Travis Maple, Winemaker

TECHNICAL DATA

14.3% Alcohol
3.89 pH
5.7 g/L TA
208 Cases

*Produced in a Vegan Manner
(No animal by-products used
in production of this wine)*

ABOUT US

Airfield Estates is a fourth-generation family farm and winery located in the Yakima Valley AVA of Washington State. Our estate vineyard, established in 1968, spans 830 acres and showcases over 20 distinct wine grape varieties. Located at the base of the Rattlesnake Mountains, our vineyard offers breathtaking views of both Mount Rainier and Mount Adams. These sun-kissed slopes benefit from a long growing season, extended summer daylight, and cool evenings—ideal conditions that result in well-balanced, world-class wines.

FOUNDERS SERIES

The Founders Series is a heartfelt tribute to our father, Michael L. Miller, whose vision and dedication not only established Airfield Estates Winery but also transformed our vineyard into the thriving, large-scale operation it is today. His unwavering pride, passion, and enthusiasm for our vineyard, grapes, and wines continue to inspire us. Through this collection, we honor his legacy by sharing that same spirit with every bottle we produce.

VINTAGE

The 2022 vintage in the Yakima Valley was a bit of a roller coaster. A mild winter extended into spring with early frost periods and winter-like conditions in April. The cool spring delayed bud break by a few weeks and caused delayed growth in the vineyard as we moved into summer. Each vineyard block was meticulously managed to ensure a ripe crop by harvest. We lowered clusters per vine and allowed for more sunlight exposure. By mid-July, temperatures finally started warming up and led to record growth in a short amount of time. Fortunately, warm summer temperatures extended into fall, helping to lengthen the growing season and allowing the grapes to continue to ripen. Harvest ended up being delayed approximately three weeks from a typical year. We gratefully did not experience any fall frost events, so the grapes had extended hang time on the vines to achieve optimal ripeness and excellent flavor development. Overall, the 2022 vintage displays ripe flavors, bountiful fruit aromas, and balanced acidity. The wines can be enjoyed in their youth, or they can cellar for many years to come.

WINEMAKING

Crafted from the finest reserve-tier blocks of our estate vineyard, the Syrah, Grenache, and Mourvèdre grapes for this exceptional blend were harvested in early October. After destemming and precise optical sorting, the fruit underwent fermentation in concrete vats, with 35% of the Syrah included as whole clusters to enhance both structure and complexity. During fermentation, each lot spent an average of 17 days in concrete, allowing the wine to go dry on the skins before pressing. The concrete vessels contribute additional layers of complexity, imparting a nuanced minerality and elevating the fruit aromatics. Our extraction method was intentionally vigorous at the onset, utilizing aerated pump-overs to introduce oxygen early in the process. This strategy ensures optimal color and flavor extraction, while a gradual shift to a gentler approach as alcohol levels increased helped preserve the wine's naturally silky tannin structure. Following fermentation, each lot was transferred to large-format French oak barrels for aging. Once malolactic fermentation was complete, we stirred the lees twice monthly for four months, naturally softening the wine and enhancing its seamless, rounded palate. After this initial aging period, we meticulously evaluated each barrel, hand-selecting only the finest from each lot to compose this remarkable blend. The blend then matured for an additional 16 months in exclusive 500L French oak barrels, all 100% new, imparting depth and elegance. To further elevate the aromatics, the wine spent a final month aging in concrete tanks, resulting in a masterpiece that balances exquisite finesse with layered complexity.

TASTING NOTES

Crafted for exceptional balance, richness, and complexity, this full-bodied Rhône-style blend features 83% Syrah, 13% Grenache, and 4% Mourvèdre. Aromas of blackberry, black currant, and candied plum harmonize with savory notes of wild smoked game, black olive tapenade, and spiced oak. The palate offers a smooth entry, unveiling evolving layers of soy sauce, cassis, white pepper, orange peel essence, and subtle minerality. A silk-like tannin structure, soft acidity, and lingering finish of sweet toasted oak complete this robust yet elegant wine. Enjoy now through 2044, with peak maturity in 2038.

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