



AIRFIELD
E S T A T E S

2022 MERLOT



Marcus Miller, Winemaker
Travis Maple, Winemaker

TECHNICAL DATA

14.3% Alcohol
3.82 pH
5.6 g/L TA
2700 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

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 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

Sourced from our estate vineyard, the grapes for this wine were carefully selected from our best-performing Merlot blocks, with the aim of creating a world-class Merlot that boasts abundant fruit aromas, lush tannins, and seamless integration of French oak. Harvest took place in early October at optimal maturity. The grapes were destemmed and sorted using an optical sorter before being transferred to various-sized fermenters. A cold soak of 48 hours was employed to extract color without the influence of fermentation. The grapes were then warmed and inoculated with several yeast strains. Our extraction approach was aggressive initially to achieve the desired flavor, aroma, and color before alcohol levels began to rise. Once the alcohol content reached approximately 9-10%, we adopted a gentler method to avoid over-extracting the wine and to preserve its lush, round mouthfeel. The wine underwent fermentation on the skins for 13 days before being drained and gently pressed. Then it was transferred to a variety of French oak barrels for malolactic fermentation. Following this process, the wine's lees were stirred twice a month over three months to naturally soften it while enhancing its structure and mouthfeel. The wine was aged for 19 months in 100% French oak barrels, consisting of 31% new, 44% two to three-year-old, and 25% neutral barrels.

TASTING NOTES

Our 2022 Merlot is a medium to full-bodied wine that displays an abundance of dark fruit aromas. Layers of dark cherry juice, black cassis, blackberry, and roasted dates intertwine with complex notes of dark espresso and smoked caramel. On the palate, the wine shows finesse, balance, and roundness. Smooth, supple tannins frame the way for lingering flavors of plum jam, vanilla bean, bakers' chocolate, and toasted oak. Enjoy now through 2035 with optimal maturity peaking around 2030.