AIRFIELD
ESTATES

2024 MERLOT



Crafted by Winemakers
Marcus Miller & Travis Maple

TECHNICAL DATA
100% Merlot
14.2% Alcohol
3.85 pH
5.6 g/L TA
1,568 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 varietals 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 2024 vintage in Washington State was cooler than previous vintages, yet impressive. A mild winter gave way to a chilly spring, with consistent bud break by the third week of April. Below-average temperatures delayed growth, while meticulous vineyard management allowed us to tailor crop loads for each tier of grapes. After a cool June, July and August brought welcome heat, with full veraison by the second week of August. Despite a warm September, ripening remained about two weeks behind average, preserving elevated acidity. A beautiful fall and later frosts allowed extra hang time for optimal ripeness and maturity. Overall, we see 2024 as an exceptional vintage, producing some of the ripest grapes we've harvested in years, especially the red varieties. Our white wines will showcase bright tropical fruit aromas and stone fruit flavors with balanced, brisk acidity. The reds will be robust yet elegantly structured, with dark berry flavors, refined tannins, and slightly more pronounced acidity—creating world-class wines to enjoy young or cellar for many years.

WINEMAKING
Our 2024 Merlot comes from selected top-performing blocks at our estate vineyard in Washington State's Yakima Valley AVA, chosen to produce a world-class wine with abundant fruit aromas, lush tannins, and well-integrated French oak. Harvested at optimal maturity from late September through early October, the grapes were destemmed, optically sorted, and placed in fermenters of various sizes. A 48-hour cold soak extracted color before the grapes were warmed and inoculated with multiple yeast strains. Vigorous early extraction developed flavor, aroma, and color before alcohol levels increased. At approximately 9–10% alcohol, we adopted gentler extraction to prevent over-extraction and retain a lush, round mouthfeel. The wine fermented to dryness on the skins over 12 days and was then drained; the skins were gently pressed to recover the remaining wine. After the solids settled in the tank, the wine was transferred to selected French oak barrels and inoculated for malolactic fermentation. Once malolactic fermentation was complete, we stirred the lees twice monthly for three months to naturally soften the wine and enhance its structure, roundness, and mouthfeel. Barrels were topped regularly to support healthy aging. The wine aged for 20 months in 100% French oak barrels: 24% new, 41% two- to three-year-old, and 35% neutral.

TASTING NOTES
Our full-bodied 2024 Merlot offers layered aromas of dark and red fruit and a richly textured palate. Bing cherry, dark cassis, blackberry jam, and candied dates blend with chocolate and salted caramel. Vanilla bean, mocha, and sarsaparilla unfold on the palate, accented by seared sandalwood and balanced with finesse. Smooth tannins and balanced acidity sustain dark berry and jam-like flavors through a silky, lingering finish. Enjoy now through 2037; peak maturity is expected around 2034.