



AIRFIELD

E S T A T E S

2020 HELLCAT



Marcus Miller, Winemaker
Travis Maple, Winemaker

TECHNICAL DATA

14.6% Alcohol
3.92 pH
5.1 g/L TA
368 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

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

Each element of our 2020 Hellcat is sourced from our Estate Vineyard, located in the Yakima Valley AVA, from our Reserve Tier designated blocks. The Tempranillo was harvested at the beginning of October and fermented in a concrete tank, the Syrah was harvested towards the middle of October and fermented in a small 2-ton fermenter. Both varieties had a similar extraction program, with a 3-day cold soak, then inoculated with a special yeast strain. With these varieties, the goal is to get as much extraction before 9-10% alcohol, once we achieved our extraction, we took a gentler approach to not over extract the wine. Fermented until dry on the skins, each lot was then drained, and the remaining grapes were sent to the press to gently press any remaining juice left in the skins. The wines were then sent to a variety of French oak barrels and were inoculated for Malo-lactic fermentation. Once Malo-lactic fermentation was completed, the wines lees were stirred in each barrel twice a month for 3 months, this process helps the wine achieve a more round, softer mouthfeel, acting a natural fining agent. A blend of this nature naturally has a high pH and low acidity so extra care must be taken to ensure the wines health during aging. Each barrel was topped twice a month to ensure minimal headspace as well as constant chemistry check-ups. Aged for 16 months in exclusive French oak with 30% being new French Oak, 30% 2yr-old French Oak and 40% Neutral French Oak. After barrel aging, the wine was sent back to a concrete tank and aged for an additional month before being prepped for bottling.

VARIETAL COMPOSITION

67% Tempranillo, 33% Syrah

TASTING NOTES

Our 2020 Hellcat is a harmonious blend of Tempranillo and Syrah that evokes dark blue fruit aromatics with a silk like texture on the palate. Aromas of huckleberry jam, blueberry compote, and hints of spicy black olive tapenade. The entry to the palate creates a voluptuous round mouthfeel with secondary flavors of bramble berry infused with black truffles. Interwoven layers of soy sauce and peppery smoked meats that leaves the palate with a gentle layer of toasted oak. The wine exits the palate with silky tannins and beautiful oak integration that displays the wines low acidity, creating a long-lasting creamy finish. Enjoy now through 2033 with optimal maturity in 2028.

