



AIRFIELD

ESTATES

2019 DONALD D. MILLER



Travis Maple, Winemaker

TECHNICAL DATA

13.6% Alcohol
3.53 pH
5.9 g/L TA
209 Cases

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

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 2019 Vintage threw everything it could at us winemakers. We started off with a very mild winter, then out of nowhere we saw record snow accumulations in late February that lasted until early March. Thankfully, this did not affect buds on the dormant grapes, but it did cause a delay in bud break; about 2 weeks later than normal. Delayed bud break then delays ripening overall so we did see a later than usual ripening to get to our optimal ripeness, we did see a decent amount of heat accumulation, but the 2019 vintage will go down as a cooler vintage for Washington State. Not only did we have these challenges to overcome, but our typically amazing October was also very trying for us. We did not see one frost on our vines, but we saw two freezing periods that made our winemaking decisions ever more challenging. The 1st frost we saw we were happy with the results thinking we have escaped a terrible outcome in the vineyards, then 9 days later we were hit extremely hard and we saw considerable frost damage to all our grapes. As we are seasoned winemakers, we took this challenge head-on and decided to purchase brand new state of the art equipment including an optical sorter that would eject bad and damaged grapes before any of these grapes went into a fermenter or press. The new equipment worked as amazing for us and the results in the wines are more than pleasing for us as well. Challenging vintages like 2019 really lets you know as a winemaker what you are made of and we at Airfield Estates not only took this challenge head-on, we excelled and the wines we produced from this vintage are going to be more consumer-friendly with higher acidity and lower alcohols but the fruit aspect is exceptional.

WINEMAKING

The 2019 Donald D Miller Chardonnay showcases the best Chardonnay our Estate Vineyard has to offer. These reserve blocks have been cropped to small yields to allow depth and concentrated flavors. Harvested at optimal maturity, the grapes were sent directly to the press as whole clusters for a very gentle pressing, after pressing the juice was cold settled for 72 hours, then, racked clean and sent directly to very exclusive French Oak barrels. Fermented and aged in a mixture of 500L puncheons and 228L barrels with 85% being new French Oak and 15% 2-3-year-old French Oak. The barrels were inoculated with a special yeast strain and had temperature ranges from 55-64 degrees allowing for a long fermentation of about 4 weeks before alcoholic fermentation was completed. After Alcoholic Fermentation, the barrels were inoculated for Malo-Lactic Fermentation (MLF) and were closely monitored. The goal being able to complete MLF and to avoid the "buttery" characteristic. After MLF, the wines had their lees stirred twice a month to build roundness and richness on the palate for about 4 months before being racked off the wine's solids. Aged for 10 months before being stabilized and prepared for bottling.

TASTING NOTES

This small-batch, limited production Chardonnay displays delicious and intriguing aromatics of lemon zest and Asian pear infused with honeysuckle and exotic spice. The palate is rich with evolving layers of freshly baked brioche bread and crushed cashews. The wine exits the palate with soft acidity that showcases the wines' balance with French oak notes that linger.

