



AIRFIELD E S T A T E S

2019 RESERVE SYRAH



Marcus Miller, Winemaker
Travis Maple, Winemaker

TECHNICAL DATA

Alcohol: 14.5%
pH: 3.92
TA: 5.3
228 Cases Produced

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 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, our typically amazing Octobers was very trying for us. We didn't see one frost on our vines, but we saw two freezing periods that made our wine-making 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 very 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

Our 2019 Reserve Syrah comes from our specially designated Reserve tier blocks from our Estate Vineyard Located in the Yakima Valley AVA. Creating a wine of this caliber starts in the vineyard where we meticulously manage the size of the crop, then late in the season make sure the vines have proper exposure to ensure we achieve optimal ripeness. Harvested by hand in the middle of October at Optimal maturity, the grapes were then hand sorted before being sent to concrete fermenters. About 25% of the grapes were left on the stems as whole clusters to provide structure and complexity. Fermenting in concrete adds another dimension of minerality and complexity. Another level to increase the intensity of the aromatics and complexity of the wine was to incorporate about 1% Viognier to the fermentation, a process known as co-fermenting. Albeit a small addition, the 1% Viognier creates an abundance of fruit aromas in the wine. After a 4-day cold soak, the grapes were warmed up and given natural sources of food and underwent a native yeast fermentation. Native yeast on the grapes create complexity and varietal characteristics in the wine. Fermenting at temperatures of 88-90 degrees with aggressive extraction methods used early on such as a delastage, then tapered off to more gentle extraction methods as to not over extract the wine and maintain a soft and lush mouthfeel. Fermented dry in concrete before being drained and pressed, the wine was then sent to a mixture of exclusive French Oak barrels, with about 100% being aged in 500L Puncheon barrels. Consisting of 70% New French Oak, 30% 2-year-old French oak, the wine was then inoculated for Malo-lactic fermentation. During the next three months the wines lees were stirred in each barrel twice per month. This process helps naturally fine the wine creating roundness and seamless edges on the wine. Aged for approximately 20 months in barrels before being sent to a concrete tank again for an additional two weeks of concrete aging before being prepared for bottling.

TASTING NOTES

Our 2019 Reserve Syrah displays a dark ink like color, aromas of black olives, cigar box, with layers of white pepper. The palate is incredibly lush lingering with secondary flavors of black currant and a hint of orange oil. The finish is long and smooth exiting with lovely notes of toasted oak.

