



AIRFIELD

ESTATES

2021 RESERVE SYRAH



Marcus Miller, Winemaker
Travis Maple, Winemaker

TECHNICAL DATA

Alcohol: 14.6%
pH: 3.94
TA: 5.2 g/L
368 Cases Produced

*Produced in a Vegan Manner
(No animal by-products 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 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 2021 vintage will be recorded as one of the warmest in Washington State history. With a mild winter and a warm spring, we saw bud break during the second week of April, about 1 to 2 weeks earlier than average. Then we experienced a heat wave in late June that lasted roughly six weeks with over 35 days of 100°+ temperatures and some daily highs nearing 118° Fahrenheit. This period of extreme heat began when the grapes were in a cluster and berry size development stage, causing grapes to stress out weeks before we vintners would prefer. Smaller berry size led to an overall 30% reduction in crop size for us. On the bright side, these smaller berries produced phenomenal flavors. We also saw rapid ripening at a pace last seen in 2015, creating a very early harvest start. By the end of August, we had brought in nearly 150 tons of sparkling wine grapes and Sauvignon Blanc grapes, hands down an August record for us at Airfield. By the end of September, we had crushed every white varietal, which was beneficial for us in winemaking as we could then give 100% of our attention to red varieties. October started with nice warm temperatures, and the pace of grape harvesting was going very well, with ideal ripeness and exceptional quality. By the third week of October, we did see several freezing events causing our canopies to die. With only a limited amount of fruit remaining, it was easy for us to harvest the last remaining fruit before the end of October. In the end, the 2021 vintage made outstanding wine. Our red wines display dark fruit elements with structure and finesse. The wines created in 2021 will be enjoyable in their youth but also age-worthy, making a lasting impression.

WINEMAKING

This Syrah was sourced from specially designated reserve tier blocks on our estate vineyard in the Yakima Valley AVA. Creating a wine of this caliber truly starts in the vineyard, where we meticulously manage the size of the crop and then, late in the season, make sure the vines have proper sun exposure to achieve optimal ripeness. Harvested in early October at ideal maturity, the grapes were sorted using our optical sorter and sent to concrete fermenters. About 30% of the grapes were left on the stems as whole clusters to provide structure and complexity. Fermenting in concrete also adds another dimension of minerality and complexity. To add intensity of aromatics, we also incorporated 1% Viognier into the fermentation, a process known as co-fermenting. Although a small addition, the Viognier creates an abundance of fruit aromas in the wine. After a 4-day cold soak, the grapes were warmed up, given natural sources of food, and underwent a native yeast fermentation. Native yeast on the grapes creates complexity and varietal characteristics in the wine. Fermentation temperatures were approximately 88-90 degrees with aggressive extraction methods used early on, such as a delastage, then we tapered off to a gentle approach so as not to over-extract the wine and maintain a soft and lush mouthfeel. The wine was fermented dry in concrete before being drained, pressed, and sent to a mixture of exclusive 500L puncheon French oak barrels (65% new French oak, 35% 2-year-old French oak). The wine was then inoculated for malolactic fermentation. During the next three months, the lees were stirred in each barrel twice a month. This process helps naturally fine the wine, creating roundness and seamless edges. Overall, the wine was aged for approximately 21 months in barrels and then sent back to a concrete tank for an additional four weeks of concrete aging before being prepared for bottling.

TASTING NOTES

A co-fermented blend of 99% Syrah and 1% Viognier, this rich, full-bodied wine displays a dark, ink-like color, unfolding bold aromas of black plums, black olive tapenade, white pepper, and fresh sage. The palate is incredibly lush, combining secondary flavors of black currant with hints of grilled herbs and orange oil. The finish is long and impeccably smooth, with lasting notes of sweet, toasted oak, flint, and wet stones. Enjoy now through 2040, with the optimal maturity in 2035.

