

Chateau de Beaucastel

By [Josh Reynolds](#)

"It's impossible to argue that 2007 is not a great vintage," said Marc Perrin. "It has to be considered one of the greatest in modern times." Perrin noted that the Indian summer of '07 (like '09, by the way) ensured fully mature mourvedre, "which enhanced the lushness of the grenache." He also noted that the tannins of the '07s "are very fine and in harmony with the fruit, and don't show the hardness that we see in the 2005s." Incidentally, the Perrin family is now the owner of the cozy restaurant L'Oustalet, in the heart of the tiny, picturesque village of Gigondas, and they have already begun assembling an impressive and sometimes very reasonably priced wine list. This is great news for visitors to the region who have been compelled to make a drive to Avignon for a special meal after exhausting the handful of fine-dining options available in the immediate area. (Vineyard Brands, Birmingham, AL)

[2008 Chateau de Beaucastel Cotes du Rhone Coudoulet de Beaucastel](#)

Bright ruby. Fresh red berries, olive and licorice on the nose. Fresh, sharply delineated raspberry and cherry flavors are framed by dusty tannins and given grip by a tangy mineral note. The finish is a touch gritty but surprisingly persistent, the olive note repeating. Marc Perrin told me that the yield from these vines was only about 10 hl/ha in 2008.

88-89

[2008 Chateau de Beaucastel Chateauneuf du Pape](#)

Bright ruby. Smoky cherry and dark berry aromas are complicated by anise and dried herbs. Sappy, gently sweet black raspberry flavor is given grip by a note of cherry skin and framed by silky tannins. A nicely balanced midweight with good finishing cling and an echo of sweet red fruit. This will drink well young.

89-91

[2007 Chateau de Beaucastel Chateauneuf du Pape](#)

(\$120) Deep ruby. Powerful, pungent aromas evoke kirsch, blackberry, smoky herbs and dried flowers. Energetic, penetrating cherry and dark berry flavors are enlivened by juicy acidity and given spine by a tangy mineral quality. A floral quality sneaks in with air, along with notes of allspice and star anise. The finish is sappy, focused and very long, with herbs and flowers lingering.

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[2007 Chateau de Beaucastel Chateauneuf du Pape Hommage a Jacques Perrin](#)

(\$535; based on 70% mourvedre) Opaque ruby color. Remarkably complex bouquet of dark berry compote, potpourri, sandalwood, smoked meat and licorice, complemented by a smoky mineral overtone. Broad, palate-coating dark fruit flavors pick up notes of candied flowers and licorice with air and show a pungent Indian spice character. Becomes more floral with air and leaves sweet cherry and floral pastille notes behind. I'd buy all of this that I could afford.

97

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Jan/Feb 10

Perrin & Fils

By [Josh Raynolds](#)

[2007 Perrin & Fils Gigondas Vieilles Vignes](#)

Vivid red. Pure, penetrating aromas of raspberry, cherry and smoky herbs, with a mounting floral quality. Deeper dark berry notes on the palate, which add richness to sweeter red fruit flavors. Candied floral and spice qualities dominate a long, sappy and very precise finish. This is delicious now but I'd bet on it being even better with a few more years of bottle age. These 120+ year old vines are planted on sandy soil and were never affected by phylloxera. (Vineyard Brands, Birmingham AL)

Dona Paula

By [Stephen Tanzer](#)

Also recommended: 2008 Viognier Naked Pulp Mendoza (86).

Other wines tasted: 2005 Salix Vineyard Tannat-Malbec Mendoza. (Vineyard Brands, Birmingham AL)

[2009 Dona Paula Torrontes Estate Cafayate Valley](#)

(\$16) Bright, pale yellow. Musky spices, rose petal and citrus peel on the nose, plus a cinnamon note that reminded me of gewurztraminer. Supple, rich and substantial; a weighty, serious style of torrantes that conveys an impression of chewy extract-not to mention a bit of residual sugar. Finishes with enticing floral perfume and noteworthy persistence.

89

[2008 Dona Paula Cabernet Sauvignon Mendoza](#)

(\$16) Bright ruby-red. Aromas of currant, black cherry, spices and pepper. The palate offers good texture and sweetness, with a medicinal herbal quality balanced by riper notes of dark berries and cocoa powder. Finishes with chewy, building tannins and a continuing chocolatey element.

87

August Kessler, Assmannshausen

By [Joel B. Payne](#)

August Kessler has managed to put a more classical stamp on his once-overblown dry rieslings over the past two vintages, with the 2008s being particularly attractive. However, the vintage brought little or none of the noble late-harvest delicacies that he so enjoys making. Although not seen widely in the U.S. , his pinot noirs can be excellent, with the two single-vineyard bottlings from the excellent 2007 vintage showing his estate in top form.

Also recommended: 2008 Rudesheimer Bischofsberg Riesling Kabinett Trocken (85), 2008 Lorcher Schlossberg Riesling Spatlese Trocken (87), 2008 Rudesheimer Berg Roseneck Riesling Spatlese Halbtrocken (88), 2007 Pinot Noir (85), 2007 Pinot Noir Max (89).

Other wines tasted: 2008 Riesling Kabinett Trocken, 2008 Pinot Noir Rose. (Vineyard Brands, Birmingham AL

[2008 August Kessler Rudesheimer Berg Roseneck Riesling Erstes Gewachs](#)

(\$69) Apricot, lemon zest and nut oil on the nose. Rich, full-bodied peach skin flavor leavened by well-integrated acidity. Nicely balanced wine, finishing with a refreshing spicy character.

90

2008 August Kessler Rudesheimer Berg Schlossberg Riesling Erstes Gewachs

(\$79) White peach, persimmon and sweet lime on the nose. Supple apricot fruit with salty minerality animates the palate. Finishes spicy and deep, if still somewhat closed.

91

2007 August Kessler Rudesheimer Berg Schlossberg Spatburgunder

(\$172) Full red-ruby. Rich aromas of blackberry, smoked bacon fat and fresh rose. Lush in texture with sweet berry fruit of noteworthy depth. Finishes gently spice, with ripe tannins and impressive length.

92

2007 August Kessler Assmannshauser Hollenberg Spatburgunder

(\$113) Ruby-red. Bing cherry, hazelnut and a whiff of vanilla on the nose. Ripe raspberry fruit and lively spiciness tease the palate. A very nicely balanced wine with supple tannins, both elegant and complex-and a lovely example of Rheingau pinot noir.

92(+?)