

A Hearty, Pure-Tasting Rhône Red

Château de Beaucastel Côtes du Rhône Coudoulet de Beaucastel 2006

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Among my favorite go-to reds for a variety of cuisines and occasions are the blends of the Rhône Valley. I'm not talking about the high-priced bottlings from Côte-Rôtie or Châteauneuf-du-Pape, but rather the affordable wines from the Côtes du Rhône. The best among them have pure-tasting fruit and mineral flavors that are backed by firm acidity and have the stuffing for short-term aging. Their flavor profiles and structures make them well-suited for matching with the hearty grilled fare that is my summertime passion.

The most enjoyable of these reds I've had recently is the 2006 Coudoulet de Beaucastel red. It is made by the Perrin family, who produce one of the greatest Châteauneufs, [Château de Beaucastel](#). The Coudoulet is often called "baby Beaucastel," and it provides a basket of delicious flavors for a fraction of the price of its big brother. The blend is 30 percent Mourvèdre and 30 percent Grenache, along with 20 percent Cinsault and 20 percent Syrah. The '06 version is ripe and full-bodied, with a core of dark plum and dark cherry flavors, precise minerally notes and plenty of fresh acidity; the ripeness and muscle I attribute to the Mourvèdre, while the Grenache adds freshness and spiciness. I rated it 90 points, [non-blind](#).

The four varieties are fermented separately and are then blended and put into oak casks for six months before fining. The vineyards are located just north of Châteauneuf and share many of the same characteristics of the storied appellation: limestone, alluvial deposits and the rounded rocks called *galets*. So the Coudoulet is indeed a "baby Beaucastel." I am planning to split a case with a friend and put it in my cellar. The wine should age well for the next few years, and it's well-priced at \$31 a bottle.

WineSpectator.com members: Read the original blind-tasting review for [Château de Beaucastel Côtes du Rhône Coudoulet de Beaucastel 2006](#) (90, \$31).

- Plus, get scores and tasting notes for more [recently rated Côtes du Rhône reds](#), along with our quick list of [Top Values](#) among Rhône reds.