

Beaucastel 2008

2007 was always going to be a tough act to follow. So far, I have tasted only a few 2008s but those I have are actually very good (Domaine de Mourchon, for example, has made a rather good Côtes du Rhône in 2008, already drinking very well) although vintage conditions were certainly difficult in 2008. Domaine de Cristia (in Châteauneuf-du-Pape) has admitted it had its most difficult vintage since 2002 whereas others, such as Raymond Usseglio whose 2008 I tasted from the barrel earlier this year made a really rather good wine. The whites from across the region are, by and large, even better. I have to admit to not having tasted the Beaucastel wines yet (hence my inclusion of full Parker notes) but the Perrins don't release bad vintages and these reds will make attractive drinking whilst waiting for the wines from the rest of the decade to mature. The whites will probably eclipse the 2007s in time having better acidity levels.

Château de Beaucastel, Châteauneuf-du-Pape 2008 Rouge @ £210/6x75cl IN BOND*

"A candidate for one of the top wines of the vintage. While the normal production from their nearly 200 acres of vineyards can be as high as 200,000 bottles, only 60,000 bottles were produced in 2008. It exhibits a deep ruby/purple hue along with scents of creosote, liquorice, smoked herbs, blackcurrants and graphite. This rich, heady, beautifully made 2008 should evolve for 10-15 years. It is somewhat of an outlier for the vintage." 92-94/100 (Parker)

Coudoulet de Beaucastel, Côtes du Rhône 2008 Rouge @ £108/12x75cl IN BOND*

"A dark, dense ruby colour along with a big, sweet nose of roasted Provençal herbs, smoked meats, black currants, cherries, liquorice and seaweed. Ripe, medium-bodied and already delicious it should drink nicely for 4-5 years" 88-91/100 (Parker)

Coudoulet de Beaucastel, Côtes du Rhône 2007 Rouge @ £125/12x75cl IN BOND

Coudoulet de Beaucastel, Côtes du Rhône 2006 Rouge @ £120/12x75cl IN BOND

Coudoulet de Beaucastel, Côtes du Rhône 2005 Rouge @ £135/12x75cl IN BOND

NB. The 2005 is drinking fabulously already.

* Other sizes available: Beaucastel in halves and magnums, Coudoulet in magnums only. Magnums are boxed in cases of 6x150cl and are priced pro-rata. Beaucastel halves are in cases of 24 and are priced at £450 per 24x37.5cl.

Château de Beaucastel, Châteauneuf-du-Pape 2008 Blanc @ £210/6x75cl IN BOND

"The 2008 Châteauneuf-du-Pape Blanc did not go through malolactic fermentation (a choice the Perrins make depending on vintage conditions and intrinsic acidity). A blend of 80% Roussanne and the rest Grenache Blanc and other white varieties, this beauty offers up notes of nectarines, orange marmalade, rose petals and honeysuckle as well as terrific richness, slightly more acidity than usual and an exuberant honeyed, full-bodied style." 93/100 (Parker)

Château de Beaucastel, Châteauneuf-du-Pape 2008 Blanc Vieilles Vignes Roussanne @ £350/6x75cl IN BOND

"More restrained than usual with more minerality and acidity which is in keeping with the vintage character. While still relatively exotic, everything is more buttoned down. However, the overall impression is of a full-bodied, powerful, honeyed white wine with superb depth, richness and potential complexity. This beauty should be at its peak between 2010 and 2015." 95/100 (Parker)

Coudoulet de Beaucastel, Côtes du Rhône 2008 Blanc @ £135/12x75cl IN BOND

"(30% Viognier, 30% Bourboulenc, 30% Marsanne and 10% Clairette) tastes like a premier cru Chablis made in the southern Rhône. Notes of crushed rocks, quince, white currants and lemon zest are present in this intense, medium-bodied, striking white wine" 89/100 (Parker)