

Tablas Creek Vineyard, Paso Robles (California) "Esprit de Beaucastel Blanc" 2007 (\$40):

The Perrin family, owners of one of Châteauneuf-du-Pape's stellar properties, Chateau Beaucastel, and Robert Haas, founder of the import company Vineyard Brands, joined forces to establish Tablas Creek to produce Rhône-style wines in California. This one, their signature white wine, emulates a white Châteauneuf-du-Pape with its blend of Roussanne (68%), Grenache Blanc (22%) and Picpoul Blanc. A richer and larger version of its French counterpart, it retains freshness, avoiding the pitfall of coming across as heavy. Its lanolin-like texture supports its appealing spiced honey flavors. With remarkable balance and length, it is one of the most successful Rhône-style white wines from California.

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