

CAMERON HUGHES

Lot 90 Tannat

Lodi, CA

Vintage: 2006

Appellation: Lodi

Grape: Tannat

Production: 900 cases

Alcohol: 15%

Release Date: December 2008

Drink/Hold: Now and through 2015

Taste: This is a big wine. Intense blue-fruited nose of perfumed loganberry. The dusty notes hint that much more is to come as this bad boy opens up. On the palate the wine is broad and deep with sweet tannins and explodes with jammy blue fruit (and a hint of thyme). The finish is tight but long. This is probably the biggest of the first three releases from our Lodi winery trip mentioned below but there is an elegance here which made the winemakers feel that Tannat had a tremendous future in Lodi. Exceptional value.

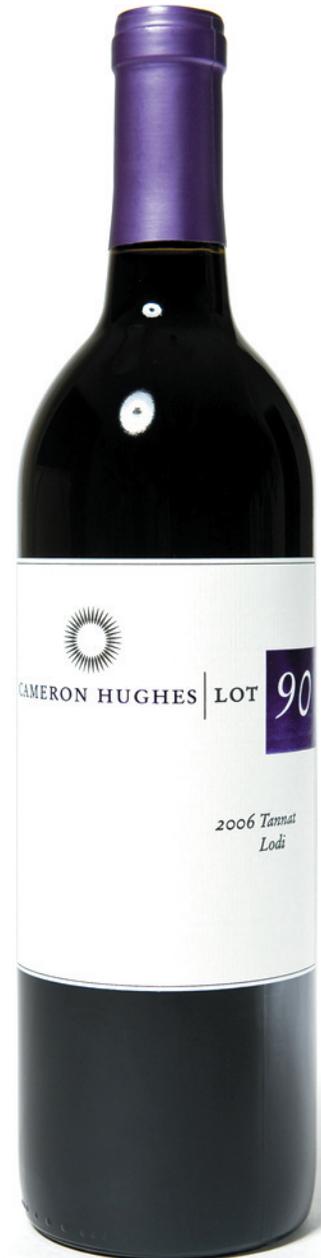
Cameron Confidential: The provenance of this wine I have recounted in the Lot 86 and 89 notes so won't do so again here. Needless to say, Tannat is a rare grape here in California. Mainly grown in the Madiran region in Southwest France, Tannat is Gascony's great red wine, known not only for their powerful tannic structures but for their ability to maintain acidity against high heat. That ability is what enticed UC Davis to promote the varietal for cultivation in Lodi — where it is an ideal growing candidate.

The grapes for this wine come from one of Lodi's best growers and one of its early pioneers. The wine is ably made by one of California's great winemakers in my book — certainly a master of the blend and one of California's most experienced winemakers overseeing the production of 40 different varietals each year. I remember vividly tasting this wine for the first time, the explosion of fruit was great but it was really the solid backbone that carried all that fruit that impressed me the most. If you can get that kind of structure out of Lodi Tannat then the grape should have a bright future out there. We'll see.

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