

**Tiger Mountain Vineyards****2006 Tannat
(Georgia)**

Best known as the principal component in Madiran, the tough, rather wiry red from southwest France, Tannat is thought to be a fairly promising red variety for southern winegrowing regions, especially north Georgia. Here it is less harsh, but a vivid grip of tannin and high acidity still require some taming in oak barrels to round off its rough edges.

John Ezzard, co-owner of Tiger Mountain Vineyards, planted Tannat in 1996, producing the first vintage in the drought year of 1999. The wine, which spent two years in oak, attracted notice for its vivid color, flavor and earthiness. The variety grows extremely well here, yielding large well-formed clusters so prolific in some years that fairly drastic cluster-thinning is needed in the effort to concentrate flavors. Tiger Mountain uses Tannat as a varietal as well as in a 50/50 blend with Touriga Nacional called TNT, a fairly rustic little red. (I wonder how Tannat would be with the softening influence of Malbec — might be worth a try.)

The 2006 Tannat has raspberry and hints of spice in aroma. A rich garnet in color, its earthy, ripe-berry flavors are riveted to a spine of tannin that needs a good year or two to integrate, but by 2010 I suspect it will be quite impressive.

Reviewed July 14, 2008 by [Barbara Ensrud](#).

THE WINE

Winery: [Tiger Mountain Vineyards](#)

Vintage: 2006

Wine: Tannat

Appellation: [Georgia](#)

Grape: Tannat

Price: \$23.00

THE REVIEWER**Barbara Ensrud**

Barbara Ensrud has been writing about and reviewing wines since 1979, with a nationally syndicated column for the *New York Daily News* and numerous other publications. Her "no numbers" approach to evaluating wine is simple: how does it taste – on its own, as well

as with particular foods? Is it good value, whether \$10 or \$210? Does it measure up in terms of varietal character and regional identity? ...*"When I taste a good wine, I can't wait to share it with fellow wine lovers."*