

# MAGAZINE



## Wine

MAX ALLEN

● An Italian winemaker is the last person you'd expect to hear supporting regional styles and terroir in Australian wine. But Alberto Antonini is no ordinary Italian winemaker. "I hear people in Europe say that New World countries have no terroir," he says. "This is wrong, absolutely. It is nothing more than oenological racism."

Antonini should know. As well as the excellent wines he produces at his family's Poggiotondo estate in Tuscany, he also makes wine in Argentina, California and, since 2001, Australia. "Mark Walpole [then viticulturist for Brown Brothers] took me to see their vineyards in Heathcote," he says. "I liked very much the soil, the greenstone rocks in it. And I liked very much the flavour this terroir gave the grapes."

So Antonini teamed up with Walpole, UK wine importer David Gleave and Mornington Peninsula winemaker Sandro Mosele to plant the Greenstone vineyard.

The latest release, a 2006 shiraz (\$35), is a complex, elegant beast, with autumnal, sandalwood perfume and a dense, grainy texture – all classic expressions of that greenstone-rich soil. The 2007 sangiovese [tasted as a barrel sample and due for release in a few months] is even better; made from new Tuscan clones of the sangiovese vine, it is a heavenly mix of Heathcote sandalwood aromatics and the most amazing, fine, powdery tannic grip that gently hugs your tongue and refuses to let go. It's a new benchmark for sangiovese in Australia. [www.greenstoneofheathcote.com](http://www.greenstoneofheathcote.com) ©