



**AROUND THE
WINE GLASS**

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Mount Eyre gems

I probably should have heard of them long ago, but here's an interesting wine producer that is news to me. The wines are pretty good, too. Mount Eyre Vineyards is a Hunter Valley operation, combining, it says, a European family tradition of winemaking with a generation of experience in Australian viticulture.

"From our roots in the tiny towns of Alestena, in the Peloponnese, Greece, and Vallo della Lucania, Italy, the Tsironis and Iannuzzi families have an unbroken involvement in wine extending back centuries, tilling their vines and offering wine to friends and visitors alike."

Here's some background: Dr Aniello Iannuzzi, very busy and involved, is co-founder of the Warrumbungle Medical Centre at Coonabarabran. He studied medicine at the University of Sydney, and concurrently completed a Bachelor of Arts in Italian Studies. He did his residency at Royal Prince Alfred Hospital and Dubbo Base Hospital, before establishing the medical centre with Dr Eve Tsironis in 1997.

Nice traditions here, and Dr Iannuzzi tells us that Mount Eyre has been energetic and innovative, "typifying the vigour and vision of the modern Australian wine industry, to produce distinctive high quality regional wines for the pleasure of the world's wine drinkers".

As well as domestic sales, Mount Eyre Vineyards has an expanding export market. "At Mount Eyre Vineyards we have great respect for terroir. We have combined the different types of soils, aspects and altitude of our exceptional vineyards to produce distinctive regional wines," Dr Iannuzzi

says.

Two Hunter Valley vineyards are involved. Three Ponds, more than 30 acres of semillon, chardonnay, chambourcin and shiraz, is on the sandy loam river flats of Monkey Place Creek, Broke. Planted in 1970 by Neil Grosser, it is still managed by Neil and his son David.

The name Three Ponds is the work of their son Theodore, who when three years old thought the three dams on the vineyard were ponds when he saw ducks swimming on them one afternoon.

The good doctor becomes almost lyrical describing the second property, the Holman Estate: "It represents a most exceptional site. In the heart of the Hunter Valley, its deep red loams have proven their worth and been shown by history to be the backbone of many great Hunter Valley red wines. Here 16 acres are planted to shiraz, merlot and viognier. It is also the site of Mount Eyre Vineyards guesthouse and olive grove, where we produce a small quantity of premium olive oil.

"At Holman Estate, we have shiraz, merlot and viognier, as well as some Italian varieties still in very small quantities. In excellent and exceptional years, Three Ponds produces small quantities of the Heirloom and Holman series of wines, for