

TOP 50 WINES OF THE YEAR



From more than 3,200 wines recommended in *Decanter* over the past year, our tastings team has picked out not only the highest-scoring but also the best-value wines. These top 50 are listed here in one handy guide, with updated UK prices and stockists

DURING 2013 OUR experts have highlighted a wealth of fantastic wines that deserve your attention. Our writers, the most respected in the wine world, have explored regions across the globe – some relatively undiscovered, others household names – hand-picking for these pages the very best bottles they discover on their travels.

Closer to home, via the Weekday Wines section, our tasting team is constantly sampling and reviewing more affordable, accessible wines available on the shelves of UK wine merchants and high street stores.

Finally, our monthly panel tastings – where all the wines are tasted blind – are a valuable tool thanks to their focused, indepth investigations into specific regions. Our judges are among the finest palates to be found, and the panels regularly comprise Masters of Wine and Master Sommeliers, each chosen for their expertise in whichever region finds itself under the spotlight.

We have pored over every page of the past 12 issues and selected 50 of the highest-scoring wines recommended in 2013. Our aim is to deliver a diverse selection: one that guarantees fantastic value for money, whatever the price level, and that brings attention to wines from a variety of countries and regions.

As price and UK availability were taken into account when deciding on the chosen 50, there may be instances where a wine was marginally outscored in a tasting, but made the final cut due to its outstanding value for money. Wines here have been ordered by score and then (in wines of the same score) by price, with the cheapest ranked highest. Where there is a price band, the minimum price was used in the ranking.

With something for everyone, the following pages feature some incredible buys, which truly underline the diverse and exciting nature of the world wine scene today. All come with a *Decanter* stamp of approval.



1 Faustino, Faustino I, Rioja Gran Reserva, Spain 2001

19.25/20pts (97/100pts)

£14–£20 Asda, Bestways, Costco, Fenwick, Fine & Rare, Makro, Rhythm & Booze, Sainsbury's, Venus Wines

Restrained, mineral style with elegant tannins. Youthful and fresh, feminine and complex. Deliciously decadent, with extraordinary vitality in the palate and a long unique, finish. A jewel at this price. **Drink** 2014–2030 **Alcohol** 13.5%

2

Santa Ana, Unánime, Uco Valley, Mendoza, Argentina 2007

19 (96)

£15.95–£16 **Slurp, Swig**
Expressive nose and rich palate. Perfectly structured, round and ready, showing pencil shavings, sour cherries and leafiness. **Drink** 2014–2015 **Alc** 14.5%

3

Pian dell’Orino, Rosso di Montalcino, Tuscany, Italy 2010

19 (96)

£21.99–£33 **AG Wines, Christopher Keiller, Exel Wines, Fine & Rare, Les Caves de Pyrène, Wine Bear**
Crisp hawthorn aromas, followed by rounder but still firm red cherry and raspberry flavours that coat rather than strangle your tongue for a richly digestible mouthful. **Drink** 2014–2017 **Alc** 14%

4

Alheit Vineyards, Chenin Blanc Cartology, Western Cape, South Africa 2011

19 (96)

£25–£26 **Berry Bros & Rudd, Lay & Wheeler, Noel Young, SA Wines Online, Swig, The Wine Society, Wright Wine Co**
Seven parcels of dry-farmed, 30- to 80-year-old bush vines. Bold and complex. Bright acidity lifts juicy apple, plum and citrus fruit. Creamy, nutty texture. Saline length. **Drink** 2014–2020 **Alc** 14%

5

Equipo Navazos, La Bota de Manzanilla 42, Andalusia, Spain NV

19 (96)

£27.50 **Swig**
From Bodega Sánchez Ayala in Sanlúcar de Barrameda. Six to seven years old, bottled in spring 2014. Powdery nose and savoury, saline palate with peaty whisky notes. Textured, pure, weighty, compelling, ethereal. **Drink** 2014–2014 **Alc** 15%



6

Bodegas Muriel, Rioja Reserva, Spain 2008

18.75 (95+)

£9.99 **Majestic**
Menthol and eucalyptus on the nose. More classic aromas come through with aeration. Savoury, traditional style with toasted nuts and coffee, delicate coconut and ripe, baked plum fruit. A great, classic Rioja. Complex and intriguing. **Drink** 2014–2025 **Alc** 13.5%

7

La Rioja Alta, Viña Arana, Rioja Reserva, Spain 2005

18.75 (95+)

£16–£23 **Armit, Secret Cellar, Swig, Tanners, Waitrose**
Traditional, savoury style with soy sauce and rusticity. Typical Rioja with elegance and class. A great wine. An archetype of what makes Rioja unique: harmonious American oak, stylish oxidative development and fresh balance. This is smooth, long and classy. **Drink** 2014–2040 **Alc** 13%

8

Dominio de Tares, Cepas Viejas, Bierzo, Spain 2009

18.75 (95+)

£19.50–£23.50 **Harvey Nichols, Swig**
Aromatics abound with cedar, mint and spices. Meaty, earthy, sensual and unique. Great intensity of fruit on the palate, with finely grained tannins and a complex fruit expression of great originality, crying out what is a unique terroir. **Drink** 2014–2022 **Alc** 14%

9

Gilles Robin, Albéric Bouvet, Crozes-Hermitage, Rhône, France 2010

18.75 (95+)

£19.95 **Lea & Sandeman**
Dark berry, floral and fennel nose, sleek texture, good concentration and focus. Good acidity and ripe tannins. Liquorice, chocolate, coffee and pepper on the finish; not too weighty, very stylish and long. **Drink** 2014–2019 **Alc** 13.5%

10

Paringa Estate, Estate Pinot Noir, Mornington Peninsula, Victoria, Australia 2010

18.75 (95+)

£48.80–£60 **Fine & Rare, Handford Wines, Secret Cellar, Swig**

Warm, resonant, lifted, and fragrant. It tapers beautifully with the refined liquorice-tinged fruits: very classy indeed. Poised, pure, long, lots of currant fruit and very intense. Stylistically impeccable. Bravo! **Drink 2014–2020 Alc 14.5%**



11

Viña Mayu, Syrah Reserva, Elqui Valley, Chile 2009

18.5 (95)

£10.99 **Asda**

The meaty, dried violet and creamy notes have evolved beautifully in bottle. (See *Weekday Wines*, p98, for a review of the 2010 vintage of this wine.) **Drink 2014 Alc 14%**



12

Haridimos Hatzidakis, Assyrtiko, Santorini, Greece 2012

18.5 (95)

£11.99–£12.95 **Tanners, Waitrose**

Honey-baked fruits, banana leaf, jasmine, flowers, pine, lime and grapefruit lift. Immediately lively and bold on the full-throttle, textured, harmonious palate: mouthwatering freshness with tart lemon-curd ripeness, underlined by punchy minerality. **Drink 2014–2021 Alc 13.5%**



14

Terredora, Fiano di Avellino, Campania, Italy 2011

18.5 (95)

£16.10 **Tanners**
Delightful hazelnuts and pear fruit on the nose and palate. Fine racy acidity and a good body. **Drink 2014–2020 Alc 13%**

15

Casa Marin, Miramar Vineyard Riesling, San Antonio, Chile 2010

18.5 (95)

£16.95–£18 **ND John, Noel Young, Swig, Slurp, Wimbledon Wine Cellar**

The 2009 was sensational and now this 2010, produced in tiny quantities after the vineyard was hit by frost, is coming into its own. There's an almost Austrian elegance here: it's broad but grounded, with toasty lime and effortless mineral refinement. **Drink 2014–2020 Alc 12.5%**

16

Domaine des Escaravailles, Héritage 1924, Rasteau, Rhône, France 2010

18.5 (95)

£21.95 **Imbibros**
Confident, with a deeply fruited bouquet. Solid and complete, with a classy Grenache depth. A beauty. Deft tannins, good cut. **Drink 2014–2023 Alc 15%**

13

Château Viranel, Le V de Viranel, St-Chinian, Languedoc-Roussillon, France 2011

18.5 (95)
£14.99 **Cambridge Wine Merchants**
Sweet, warm, svelte aromas of black fruits and subtle spice. A rich, voluptuous and intellectually satisfying palate, packed with velvety fruits, crushed stone and spice. Magnificent, compelling wine of place. Long finish. **Drink 2014–2018 Alc 13.5%**



17

Château La Truffe, Pomerol, Bordeaux, France 2010

18.5 (95)

£23 **York Wines**
Sweet, juicy, oaky nose – the cherry fruit, has flair and charm. Quite rich and succulent, with good density of fruit. Not an extracted style yet it has ample structure and grip, with firm but refined tannins, and the acidity gives it drive, elegance, and length. Lovely, poised and complex wine. **Drink 2015–2035 Alc 14%**