

The Wine Merchant TOP 50

Spain leads the list of winners

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The overall quality of the winners was acknowledged with the inclusion of two new categories. The highest scoring wine will compete for one of two trophies – Sporting Wine, Best and Best Value – while the 10 highest scoring wines that make it through to the second round of judging, but currently missed the final 10, will be given a ‘highly commended’ award. The winners in both categories will be announced in the special 2011 Wine Merchant Top 50 awards booklet to be published with the July issue of *The Wine Merchant*.

The programme is designed to ensure that wine producers or importers, with judges asked to assess their wines by the same criteria they approach a potential buying or retail wine shop. All the wines are scored blind in flights grouped by style and region, and judges are given an indication of price as they vote.

This year’s judging, which took place over an intensive day at The Wine in February, began at 10am as they were some 150 wines that were 100ml and, with each wine listed at just six pence, will be sold for as many as 100 pence.

“We’re looking for overall character, balance and quality, but we also want the wines to be commercially viable,” said Wilson.

“We’re confident that all of the winning wines would be readily available to independent merchants – but not necessarily ‘value’.”