

Publication of an application for amendment of a specification for a name in the wine sector referred to in Article 105 of Regulation (EU) No 1308/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council

(2020/C 196/09)

This publication confers the right to oppose the application pursuant to Article 98 of Regulation (EU) No 1308/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council ⁽¹⁾ within two months from the date of this publication.

REQUEST FOR AMENDMENT TO THE PRODUCT SPECIFICATION

'RIBEIRO'

PDO-ES-A1123-AM03

Date of application: 17.8.2017

1. Rules applicable to the amendment

Article 105 of Regulation (EU) No 1308/2013 – Non-minor modification

2. Description and reasons for amendment

2.1. Introduction of a new category of grapevine products (quality sparkling wines)

Description and reasons

A new category of wines has been added: quality sparkling wines (Regulation (EU) No 1308/2013, Annex VII, part II, category 5).

This change makes it necessary to amend section 2 of the specification and section 2.3 of the single document. In addition, the change indirectly affects sections 3, 7 and 8.b.2 of the specification. In the single document, the following sections are affected: 4 (Description of the wines), 5.a. (Specific oenological practices), 8 (Link) and 9 (Additional provisions relating to labelling).

These wines must be produced by the traditional method, exclusively with white or red grapes designated main varieties, meaning indigenous varieties that give the wine more individual character.

The change is due to the tradition of producing these wines in this area, as well as on the high quality of the sparkling wines currently produced. Production of sparkling wines began in the 1920s in Ribeiro, with various producers continuing the tradition until the end of the twentieth century. As time passed, the practice greatly declined. Production was limited and on an occasional basis, mainly for curiosity value or as gifts or tokens of esteem for important visitors. However, in recent years there has been a revival in production. This is due to positive past experiences and an ever-more-demanding consumer market, keen for new experiences and willing to pay for an exclusive, and relatively expensive, product. Past experience has shown that the main grape varieties of the DO, when made by the traditional method for sparkling wines, produce high quality wines.

2.2. Amendment to the description of the wines

Description and reasons

Within category 1 (wines), the new specification sets out differences based on the varieties used in production. This means that the term 'Castes' will be used for white and red wines made exclusively from specific grapes considered to be main varieties. All such varieties are indigenous and highly adapted to the natural conditions of the region. They are: Caiño tinto, Caiño bravo, Caiño longo, Ferrón, Sousón, Mencía, Brancellao, Treixadura, Torrontés, Godello, Lado, Caiño blanco, Loureira and Albariño. Similarly red and white wines that have been aged in wooden barrels will be identified on the market by the term 'Barrica'.

⁽¹⁾ OJ L 347, 20.12.2013, p. 671.

Consequently the description needs to be amended with reference to both the analytical and the organoleptic qualities, in order to include the characteristics that distinguish the wines identified by the aforementioned terms from other wines.

The change therefore mainly affects section 2 of the specification and section 2.4 (Description of wines) of the single document. Indirectly, the change also affects sections 3, 7 and 8.b.2 of the specification, and sections 5.a. (Specific oenological practices) and 9 (Additional provisions relating to labelling) of the single document.

The change is justified by the need to give consumers information to enable them to make better purchasing choices. The information will help them to identify wines with distinguishing characteristics, either because they have been made from the grape varieties best adapted to the area, as in the case of Ribeiro Castes wines, or because they have been aged in wooden barrels, as for Ribeiro Barrica wines.

In addition, there is a small change to the organoleptic description, with the intention of avoiding references to pleasurable factors and using more objective descriptors. The same applies to the analytical values of the white and red wines not labelled 'Castes' or 'Barrica', and to those labelled 'Ribeiro Tostado'. The minimum alcoholic strength (total and actual) has been raised for both white and red wines. The maximum total acidity has been increased for the white wines, while the minimum total acidity has been reduced for the reds. In the case of Ribeiro Tostado, the total natural alcoholic strength and minimum total content of sugars have been increased.

The changes referred to in the previous paragraph only concern section 2 of the specification, and 4 (Description of the wines) of the single document. They are justified by the data obtained during the tastings and analytical testing carried out in recent years.

2.3. *Changes in wine-making practices (cultivation practices): planting density*

Description and reasons

Section 3.a of the specification and section 5.a. (Cultivation practices) of the single document have been amended.

A minimum planting density of 3 000 vines per hectare has been established. This replaces the provision in the current specification establishing a maximum planting density of 7 000 vines per hectare.

This change is due to the existing tradition of densely planted vineyards in this wine-growing area. The 1976 regulations established the aforementioned maximum limit of 7 000 vines per hectare, which had not been present in the previous regulations of 1957. The change was made in 1976 as it was considered advantageous to set the maximum limit in order to improve the quality of the wine and also to facilitate mechanisation in the vineyards.

We now know that with appropriate monitoring of wine-producing capacity, density levels above 7 000 vines per hectare can result in high quality wines. The new specification includes a significant wine-yield reduction per hectare, meaning that this amendment will not harm the quality of the wine.

2.4. *Changes in wine-making practices (cultivation practices): more detailed regulation of pruning and training systems*

Description and reasons

Section 3.a of the specification and section 5.a. (Cultivation practices) of the single document have been amended.

There is a more detailed description of the permitted pruning and training systems. Specifically, there will be cordon, gobelet and Guyot pruning. Training will be with trellises or stakes. The current wording says only that '[pruning] will be done on spur and cane or by leaving the appropriate number of spurs and training will be done with wires or canes'.

This change is necessary as the current wording of the specification is very ambiguous and imprecise, and could therefore result in very different types of pruning. The intention is to include only those actually used, some for many years and others that have been introduced more recently.

Cordon pruning is included despite not being traditional to the Ribeiro denomination of origin. It has been introduced for various reasons including the following. It is easy to do in practice. The grapes benefit from the distribution of shoots and leaves. It also allows monitoring of productive yields and the grapes produced are of high quality. For these reasons, it has been decided that it is appropriate to include this pruning system among those permitted for the designation of origin.

Gobelet pruning is the most longstanding of those in evidence in Ribeiro and is still used in some vineyards. It involves leaving the appropriate number of spurs and the occasional cane. Stakes support the cordons and trunk in less mature vines. Additionally, when training systems with wires were first introduced into vineyards, the Guyot system began to be implemented. It is now explicitly mentioned in the new specification.

2.5. *Changes in wine-making practices: maximum yields*

Description and reasons

The extraction yield in the production of wine and sparkling wine has been increased from the current rate of 70 litres per 100 kg of grapes to 74 litres, or 72 litres in the case of Ribeiro Castes, Ribeiro Barrica and Ribeiro Espumoso wines. Conversely, the production yield for grapes per hectare has been reduced from the current rate of 30 000 kg per hectare to 13 000 kg in the case of grapes used to produce the white wines Ribeiro Castes, Ribeiro Barrica and Ribeiro Espumoso. In the case of the grapes used to produce the red versions of those same wines, it is now 12 000 kg per hectare. For all the other wines, the grape production yield has been set at 19 000 kg per hectare. Grape production yields for Ribeiro Tostado remain the same at 12 000 kg per hectare.

The overall outcome of these amendments is a significant reduction in wine production per hectare, from the current rate of 210 hectolitres per hectare to between 140,60 and 86,40 hectolitres per hectare depending on the type of wine. The extraction yield of the Ribeiro Tostado type remains unchanged at 40 litres per 100 kg harvested.

These changes affect sections 3.b, 5 and 8.b.1 of the specification, and sections 5.a. (Specific oenological practices) and 5.b. (Maximum yields) of the single document.

The increase in extraction yields is due to the fact that the modern technology used in production allows for greater extraction yields without detriment to the quality of the wine.

The grape yield per hectare stated in the current specification is 30 000 kg. This is the yield given in the regulations for this designation of origin approved in 1976. This high yield belongs to a different era and a different approach to wine-growing which no longer applies. Now, quality is a greater concern than quantity. This significant reduction in yields therefore aims to achieve a higher quality for the raw materials and, consequently, for the wines covered by the designation of origin.

2.6. *Changes in wine-making practices: definition of specific oenological practices for sparkling wines and for ribeiro castes, ribeiro barrica and ribeiro tostado wines*

Description and reasons

Section 3.b, 3.c and 3.d of the specification and section 5.a. of the single document (Specific oenological practices) have been amended.

A new category of wine product, the sparkling Ribeiro wine, has been introduced, and new types of wine have been defined within category 1: Ribeiro Castes and Ribeiro Barrica. It is therefore necessary to define their special production conditions. In addition, it has been specified that Ribeiro Tostado wines shall be white or red and made exclusively from main varieties.

The Ribeiro Castes wines must be made exclusively from main varieties. The Ribeiro Barrica wines shall be red or white wines which, at any point in the production process, have been held in barrels with a maximum volume of 600 litres, and which are also made exclusively from main grape varieties.

In addition, the sparkling wines must be made only from main grape varieties, using the traditional method, in the 'Brut' and 'Brut Nature' versions.

These changes are due to the need to establish specific objective conditions for these wines, which are going to be labelled differently on the market. The basic, and common, feature in all of these wines is that they are made exclusively from grapes classed as main varieties. All such varieties are traditionally grown in the area. They produce wines that best express the unique characteristics of the Ribeiro wines.

2.7. *Changes in wine-making practices: increase in minimum sugar content in grape must for the tostados category*

Description and reasons

Section 3.d of the specification and section 5.a. of the single document (Specific oenological practices) have been amended.

The experience of recent years, together with the results observed in the production of Ribeiro Tostado, suggest it would be beneficial to increase the minimum sugar content of must obtained from raisined grapes, raising the current rate of 300 grams per litre to 350.

2.8. *Classification of varieties as main and secondary*

Description and reasons

Section 6 of the specification and section 7 of the single document have been amended.

This is one of the main new features in the amendment to the specification. It consists of creating two separate categories for the grape varieties that can be used to produce wine with the DO 'Ribeiro': main varieties and secondary varieties. The distinction is primarily based on the quality that the varieties confer on the wines of this designation of origin. This quality is judged according to two main criteria. On the one hand, there is the purely technical quality, and on the other the potential diversity that the specific grape varieties confer on the product. The main varieties are indigenous varieties and are always those recommended in the classification of varieties drawn up by the Autonomous Community of Galicia. The classification would be as follows:

— Main varieties:

Red: Caíño tinto, Caíño bravo, Caíño longo, Ferrón, Sousón, Mencía and Brancellao

White: Treixadura, Torrontés, Godello, Lado, Caíño blanco, Loureira and Albariño

— Secondary varieties:

Red: Garnacha tintorera and Tempranillo White: Palomino and Albillo

Wines of the type Castes and those that bear the mention Barrica must be made exclusively from main varieties, as must quality sparkling wines and naturally sweet wines (Tostado).

2.9. *Inclusion and removal of varieties*

Description and reasons

Section 6 of the specification and section 7 of the single document have been amended.

It is proposed to add the white varieties Lado and Caíño blanco, both as main varieties, and to remove the white variety Macabeo.

An explanation of these changes is set out below.

— Lado (added)

Lado is a variety recommended by the Autonomous Community of Galicia in accordance with Spanish legislation. It is an indigenous variety of the geographical area which includes the 'Ribeiro' DO. The variety is undoubtedly on the increase and its use is more prevalent in this locality than in any other production area. It is perfectly adapted to local agricultural and climate conditions, and to the district's traditional cultivation systems. It confers quality and diversity of character on the wines of the area, which made approval of its use essential.

— Caíño blanco (added)

This variety is also recommended by the Autonomous Community of Galicia in compliance with Spanish legislation. It has been gradually introduced into the Ribeiro area over several decades, largely from the areas bordering DO 'Rías Baixas', where it is already included in the regulations. Initially its impact was limited, as was demand from wine-growers and producers. It was therefore not considered necessary to include the variety in the regulations for the designation of origin. However, it adapted well to local agricultural and climate conditions and to the traditional cultivation systems of the area. This, and its positive contribution to the quality of the wines in which it is present, gradually led to demand in the sector for its inclusion in the regulations so that wines protected by DO 'Ribeiro' can be made with this variety.

— Macabeo (Removed)

This variety has appeared in the regulations for DO 'Ribeiro' since the first version in 1957. Nevertheless, it is now clear that it is not typical of the area, either in production or in terms of adding quality and character to the wines protected by the designation of origin. We therefore propose removing this variety from the production of DO 'Ribeiro' wines.

2.10. *New measures to improve checks*

Description and reasons

Section 8.b.3 of the specification has been amended. This does not affect the Single Document.

Registered facilities must be independent and not immediately adjoining non-registered ones, communicating only by public roads. Furthermore, there must be monthly declarations of all deliveries and dispatches of wine.

SINGLE DOCUMENT

1. **Name of product**

Ribeiro

2. **Geographical indication type**

Protected Designation of Origin

3. **Categories of grapevine products**

1. Wine
5. Quality sparkling wine
15. Wine from raisined grapes

4. **Description of the wine(s)**

Ribeiro Castes and Ribeiro (white)

Visual appearance of the wine

Transparent with shades ranging from pale yellow to gold and tints ranging from green to gold, depending on age and production method.

Aromatic characteristics of the wine

Clean and bold aromas, with some of the following descriptors present: ripe fruit and fresh fruit, flowers, honey, aromatic herbs, plants and balsams. The wines of the category Castes have greater complexity and medium-high intensity.

Characteristic tastes

Fresh and balanced with a flawless, lingering finish. The wines of the category Castes have greater structure, volume, taste, extract and finish.

* Where limits have not been established, applicable EU legislation must be respected.

* Minimum actual alcoholic strength of 'Castes blancos': 11 % vol.

* In wines that have been aged in wood for more than three months, and are up to one year old, the maximum volatile acidity shall be 0,85 grams per litre (14,17 milliequivalents per litre (meq/l)). Where such wines are aged over a year, the quantities shall be 0,9 grams per litre (15 meq/l) plus 0,06 grams per litre (1 meq/l) for every degree of alcoholic strength above 11 % volume. In no case shall the limits set out in the applicable legislation in force be exceeded.

General analytical characteristics

Maximum total alcoholic strength (in % volume)	
Minimum actual alcoholic strength (in % volume)	9,5
Minimum total acidity	4 grams per litre expressed as tartaric acid
Maximum volatile acidity (in milliequivalents per litre)	13,3
Maximum total sulphur dioxide (in milligrams per litre)	200

Ribeiro Castes and Ribeiro (red)

Visual appearance of the wine

Transparent with a medium-high colour intensity, shades ranging from violet to cherry-red and tints ranging from violet to terra cotta, depending on age and production method.

Aromatic characteristics of the wine

Clean and bold aromas, with some of the following descriptors present: red and dark fruits, ripe and fresh, flowers, aromatic herbs, dairy products, plants and balsams. The wines of the category Castes have greater complexity and medium-high intensity.

Characteristic tastes

Fresh, balanced, with a medium-high tannic structure and a flawless, lingering finish. The wines of the category Castes have greater tannic finesse, volume, taste, extract and finish.

- * Where limits have not been established, applicable EU legislation must be respected.
- * Minimum actual alcoholic strength of 'Castes tintos': 11 % vol.
- * In wines that have been aged in wood for more than three months, and are up to one year old, the maximum volatile acidity shall be 0,85 grams per litre (14,17 milliequivalents per litre (meq/l)). Where such wines are aged over a year, the quantities shall be 0,9 grams per litre (15 meq/l) plus 0,06 grams per litre (1 meq/l) for every degree of alcoholic strength above 11 % volume. In no case shall the limits set out in the applicable legislation in force be exceeded.

General analytical characteristics

Maximum total alcoholic strength (in % volume)	
Minimum actual alcoholic strength (in % volume)	9,5
Minimum total acidity	4 grams per litre expressed as tartaric acid
Maximum volatile acidity (in milliequivalents per litre)	13,3
Maximum total sulphur dioxide (in milligrams per litre)	150

Ribeiro Barrica (white)

Visual appearance of the wine

Transparent with shades ranging from pale yellow to gold and tints ranging from green to gold, depending on age and production method.

Aromatic characteristics of the wine

Aromatically complex with clean, bold aromas, with balance in the woody aromatic component, medium-high intensity, with some of the following descriptors present: ripe fruit, fresh fruit, dried fruit, flowers, honey, jam, aromatic herbs, plants, balsams, spices, toasted and baked aromas.

Characteristic tastes

Fresh, balanced and intense, flavourful and with extract, good structure and volume, flawless lingering finish of considerable length.

- * Where limits have not been established, applicable EU legislation must be respected.
- * In wines that have been aged in wood for more than three months, and are up to one year old, the maximum volatile acidity shall be 0,85 grams per litre (14,17 milliequivalents per litre (meq/l)). Where such wines are aged over a year, the quantities shall be 0,9 grams per litre (15 meq/l) plus 0,06 grams per litre (1 meq/l) for every degree of alcoholic strength above 11 % volume. In no case shall the limits set out in the applicable legislation in force be exceeded.

General analytical characteristics	
Maximum total alcoholic strength (in % volume)	
Minimum actual alcoholic strength (in % volume)	12
Minimum total acidity	4 grams per litre expressed as tartaric acid
Maximum volatile acidity (in milliequivalents per litre)	13,3
Maximum total sulphur dioxide (in milligrams per litre)	200

Ribeiro Barrica (red)

Visual appearance of the wine

Transparent with a medium-high colour intensity, shades ranging from violet to cherry-red and tints ranging from violet to terra cotta, depending on age and production method.

Aromatic characteristics of the wine

Aromatically complex with clean, bold aromas, with balance in the woody aromatic component, medium-high intensity, with some of the following descriptors present: ripe and fresh red and dark fruit, dried fruit, flowers, jam, aromatic herbs, plants, dairy products, balsams, spices, toasted, roasted and baked aromas.

Characteristic tastes

Fresh, balanced and intense, flavourful and with extract, good structure and volume, flawless lingering finish of considerable length.

* Where limits have not been established, applicable EU legislation must be respected.

* In wines that have been aged in wood for more than three months, and are up to one year old, the maximum volatile acidity shall be 0,85 grams per litre (14,17 milliequivalents per litre (meq/l)). Where such wines are aged over a year, the quantities shall be 0,9 grams per litre (15 meq/l) plus 0,06 grams per litre (1 meq/l) for every degree of alcoholic strength above 11 % volume. In no case shall the limits set out in the applicable legislation in force be exceeded.

General analytical characteristics	
Maximum total alcoholic strength (in % volume)	
Minimum actual alcoholic strength (in % volume)	12
Minimum total acidity	4 grams per litre expressed as tartaric acid
Maximum volatile acidity (in milliequivalents per litre)	13,3
Maximum total sulphur dioxide (in milligrams per litre)	150

Ribeiro Espumoso (white and rosé)

Visual appearance of the wine

Transparent with fine, steady bubbles, shades ranging from pale yellow to gold (sparkling whites) and from raspberry pink to orangey pink (sparkling rosés). Tints range from green to golden shades (sparkling whites) and violet to orange shades (sparkling rosés), depending on age and production method.

Aromatic characteristics of the wine

Aromatically complex with clean, bold aromas, medium-high intensity, with some of the following descriptors present: ripe fruit, fresh fruit, dried fruit, yeast, breadcrumbs, baked goods, flowers, honey, jam, aromatic herbs, plants, balsams, spices and toasted aromas.

Characteristic tastes

Fresh, balanced and intense, flavourful and with extract, medium-high structure and volume; bubbles are fine, steady, pleasant, soft and creamy, flawless lingering finish that is medium to long.

* Where limits have not been established, applicable EU legislation must be respected.

General analytical characteristics	
Maximum total alcoholic strength (in % volume)	
Minimum actual alcoholic strength (in % volume)	10
Minimum total acidity	5 grams per litre expressed as tartaric acid
Maximum volatile acidity (in milliequivalents per litre)	16,7
Maximum total sulphur dioxide (in milligrams per litre)	185

Ribeiro Tostado (white and red)

Visual appearance of the wine

Transparent with shades ranging from amber yellow to mahogany and tints ranging from golden to chestnut. Lighter red shades can develop in the red wines depending on their age and production method.

Aromatic characteristics of the wine

Aromatically complex with clean, bold aromas, medium-high intensity, with some of the following descriptors present: ripe fruit, raisined fruits, candied fruits, dried fruits, honey, aromatic herbs, spices, balsams, with toasted, roasted and baked aromas and hardwoods.

Characteristic tastes

Sweet and balanced, with subtle freshness, intense, high in volume with an oily feel, with extract and very flavourful, flawless lingering finish that is highly intense and long.

* Where limits have not been established, applicable EU legislation must be respected.

* Maximum sulphur content: 200 mg/l for reds and 250 mg/l for whites.

General analytical characteristics	
Maximum total alcoholic strength (in % volume)	
Minimum actual alcoholic strength (in % volume)	13
Minimum total acidity	
Maximum volatile acidity (in milliequivalents per litre)	35
Maximum total sulphur dioxide (in milligrams per litre)	

5. Wine-making practices

a. Essential oenological practices

Specific oenological practice

— Whites and reds

The extraction yield should not exceed 72 litres of wine for every 100 kg of grapes for wines made from the main grape varieties: Ribeiro Castes, Ribeiro Barrica and Ribeiro Espumoso. For the other wines, the figure is 74 litres of wine for every 100 kg of grapes.

The Ribeiro Castes wines must be made exclusively from main varieties.

The Ribeiro Barrica wines shall be red or white wines which, at any point in the production process, have been held in barrels with a maximum volume of 600 litres, and which are made exclusively from main grape varieties.

— Sparkling wine

Made only from main grape varieties, using the traditional method, in 'Brut' and 'Brut Nature' versions.

— Tostado

Made exclusively from the main red or white varieties as appropriate. Using a process of naturally drying the grapes in covered areas with the appropriate features to allow proper drying using natural ventilation. The drying period is a minimum of three months. Grape must from, at least, 350 grams of sugars per litre. The maximum yield shall be 40 litres of wine for every 100 kg of raisined grapes. It shall undergo a process of ageing in oak or cherry-wood vats in a way that ensures that the total time in contact with the wood shall not be less than six months. This includes, where relevant, turning over during the fermentation process. The process of bottle-ageing shall not be less than three months.

Cultivation practice

New plantings shall have a minimum density of 3 000 vines per hectare.

The annual pruning shall use Guyot, cordon, gobelet or spur pruning.

The training systems shall use trellises or stakes.

b. *Maximum yields*

Main white grapes for Castes, Barrica and Espumoso

13 000 kg of grapes per hectare

Main white grapes for Castes, Barrica and Espumoso

93,6 hectolitres per hectare

Main white grapes for Tostado

13 000 kg of grapes per hectare

Main white grapes for Tostado

52 hectolitres per hectare

Main red grapes for Tostado

12 000 kg of grapes per hectare

Main red grapes for Tostado

48 hectolitres per hectare

Main whites and reds for wines other than those mentioned above

19 000 kg of grapes per hectare

Main whites and reds for wines other than those mentioned above

140,6 hectolitres per hectare

Secondary varieties

19 000 kg of grapes per hectare

Secondary varieties

140,6 hectolitres per hectare

6. **Demarcated geographical area**

The production area of the wines covered by DO Ribeiro comprises the lands lying within the following municipalities and localities: municipalities of Ribadavia, Arnoia, Castrelo de Miño, Carballeda de Avia, Leiro, Cenlle, Beade, Punxín and Cortegada; parishes of Banga, Cabanelas and O Barón, municipality of O Carballiño; parishes of Pazos de Arenteiro, Albarelos, Laxas, Cameixa and Moldes in the municipality of Boborás; localities of Santa Cruz de Arrabaldo and Untes in the municipality of Ourense; and in the municipality of Toén, the localities of Puga, A Eirexa de Puga, O Olivar, the village of Feá y Celeirón and the parish of Alongos; and the village of A Touza in the municipality of San Amaro.

All of these municipalities are in the province of Ourense, in the Autonomous Community of Galicia.

7. Main wine grapes variety(ies)

FERRÓN

ALBARIÑO

MENCIA

BRANCELLAO

CAÍÑO BLANCO

CAÍÑO BRAVO

TREIXADURA

CAÍÑO TINTO

SOUSÓN

TORRONTÉS

GODELLO

LADO

LOUREIRA – LOUREIRO BLANCO

CAÍÑO LONGO

8. Description of the link(s)*Wine*

The district is located in what is known as the climate transition area of Galicia, created by the combination of the shelter from the surrounding mountains and the proximity of the Atlantic Ocean. The climate is temperate and Mediterranean in character with an Atlantic influence tempered by the mountain ranges situated to the west of the district. The mountains protect the district from the storms that head inland from the sea. Notable features include temperatures that differ significantly from day to night; low rainfall levels following pollination; uncultivated lands, largely granitic, of low field capacity, and the steep mountain terrain.

The district is on the limit of suitability for wine-growing. The fruit does not ripen easily, but reaches the requisite alcoholic ripeness at the same time as phenolic ripeness. In this way, it maintains a balanced freshness supplied by the natural acidity with tartaric acid prevailing over malic. The slightly continental nature of the area, together with the prevailing air currents, produce a significant difference in temperature from day to night. This assists a slow ripening, thus intensifying the natural freshness and aroma.

Taking advantage of the district's hilly terrain, producers established vineyards on the most favourably oriented slopes. In many cases, they built terraces to help tend the vines and give the soil greater depth, resulting in a landscape in which human intervention is highly apparent. In this way, producers ensured that the plants receive sufficient sunlight and thus create the sugars necessary to produce wine with a good alcohol content. This, as previously stated, is an area on the limit of suitability for wine-growing.

Another fundamental aspect of the link between these wines and the area concerns the grape varieties available. Most of them are varieties traditionally grown in the district but rarely found in other wine-growing areas. Prominent among these is the white variety Treixadura, the most representative and widely grown in this geographical area. These varieties are fully adapted to the environment and result from the selections made by producers over time. With the conditions of the district, these varieties, Treixadura especially, produce wines that are highly aromatic and fruity with floral notes. The alcohol content offsets the acidity, resulting in wines that are fresh and balanced.

Quality sparkling wines

The quality sparkling wines of the DO Ribeiro are made using the traditional method. Their characteristics are closely linked to the specific environmental conditions and to the grape varieties used.

This environment is characterised by a temperate climate of Mediterranean character with Atlantic influences. Temperatures differ significantly from day to night with low levels of rainfall after pollination. The soils have low field capacity and are enclosed by mountainous terrain. This is an area where wine-growing has developed under restrictive conditions and grapes do not ripen easily. In response, wine-growers take advantage of the area's hilly terrain by siting vineyards on slopes with the greatest exposure to sun. The difference in temperature from day to night is conducive to a slow ripening of the fruit. This intensifies the natural freshness and aroma of these sparkling wines.

The grape varieties used are all indigenous and adapted to the particular environmental conditions of the district. They are the result of the selection process made by the area's producers over the years. Prominent among them is the Treixadura variety, the most widely grown. However, the varieties Loureiro and Albariño are also very well suited to making these wines. The soil and climate conditions of this district mean that these varieties can be harvested early, once the correct balance of sugar and acidity is reached. In this way, the grapes are picked when they have a moderate sugar content and reasonable level of acidity. This makes it possible to produce balanced base wines that are not excessively alcoholic but are highly aromatic. In other, nearby, wine-growing areas, the practice of bringing forward the harvest in order to moderate the alcoholic strength of the base wine would result in increased acidity, which does not happen here. The main cause would be the excessive malic acid which would diminish the quality of the wine produced.

These varieties represent a genetic heritage of great value. It confers a unique quality on the different types of wine from this district, in particular on the sparkling wines which are highly aromatic and fruity.

Wine from raisined grapes ('Tostados')

Tostado del Ribeiro is a wine made from raisined grapes. Its particular characteristics are due to the raw materials used to produce it, and to the natural environmental conditions and particular production method, the result of local producers' know-how.

The raw materials are grape varieties indigenous to the area which are adapted to the particular environmental conditions. Prominent among these varieties is Treixadura, the most widely grown and characteristic.

The environment is characterised by a temperate climate of Mediterranean character with Atlantic influences. Temperatures differ significantly from day to night with low levels of rainfall after pollination. The uncultivated soils have low field capacity and are enclosed by mountainous terrain. Vines are grown on the slopes most exposed to the sun in order to allow proper ripening.

The area is on the limit of suitability for wine-growing, where it is not easy for vines to ripen properly. Ripening is only possible because the grape varieties used are adapted and grown in carefully oriented parcels. This is what makes the wine very special. It is a sweet wine from an area in which the natural environmental conditions would not normally allow its production.

This is possible thanks to the production techniques that local producers have developed over time. After the grapes are harvested, the producers subject the bunches to a complex ripening process in covered areas with natural ventilation. The Treixadura variety is particularly suitable for raisining as its skin is thicker and more resistant than that of other varieties. This makes it better able to cope with the natural raisining process.

In addition, the climate of this district has drier autumns than would be expected given its proximity to the Atlantic. This is due to the protective barrier formed by the mountains enclosing it to the west. These conditions assist the raisining process. The grapes are not subjected to excessively high levels of relative humidity, which would slow down the natural dehydration process and increase the risk of cryptogamic diseases. In addition, autumnal temperatures tend to be moderate, which assists the drying process. Districts situated further inland may have the advantage of lower ambient humidity. However, the disadvantage of this is that low temperatures would make natural drying more difficult.

The result of this process is a sweet and balanced wine with a total sugar content of over 120 grams per litre, highly characteristic of the district's wine-growing culture. It is highly prized, expensive to produce and enjoys an excellent reputation.

9. Essential further conditions

Legal framework:

In national legislation

Type of further condition:

Packaging within the demarcated geographical area

Description of the condition

Transporting and bottling outside of the production area poses a risk to the quality of the wine, which can be seen in the phenomena of oxide-reduction, variations in temperature and others. This risk is all the more serious the greater the distance covered. Bottling in the area of origin enables the product's characteristics and qualities to be preserved. This, combined with the experience and deep knowledge of the wines' particular qualities, built up over the years by the wineries of the designation of origin 'Ribeiro', make it necessary to bottle in the area of origin. Consequently, all the physical, chemical and organoleptic characteristics of these wines are preserved.

Legal framework:

In national legislation

Type of further condition:

Addition provisions relating to labelling

Description of the condition

The labels of the bottled wines shall include the logo and name of the designation of origin.

For wines of the designation of origin 'Ribeiro' that are produced from main varieties, it shall be permitted to include the following terms on the labels, packaging and advertising materials: 'Castes', 'Barrica', 'Espumoso' and 'Tostado', as appropriate.

For wines not classed as 'Castes', 'Barrica', 'Espumoso' or 'Tostado', the terms 'caste' and 'autéctonas' shall not be permitted to appear on their label, and nor shall the name of any of the main varieties. Similarly, it shall not be permitted to use any other term that could mislead the consumer regarding the characteristics of the wine, in particular terms that could lead to confusion with wines of the categories Ribeiro Castes, Ribeiro Barrica, Ribeiro Espumoso and Ribeiro Tostado.

The year of harvest must appear on the labelling of wines in the Castes and Barrica categories.

Packaging should include numbered quality seals or front/back labels, issued by the Regulatory Board. These must be attached in the corresponding winery.

Link to the product specification

https://mediorural.xunta.gal/fileadmin/arquivos/alimentacion/productos_calidade/2019/DOP_RIBEIRO_Pliego_Condiciones_octubre_2019_definitivo-C.pdf
