

OTHER ACTS

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Publication of a communication of approval of a standard amendment to a product specification for a name in the wine sector referred to in Article 17(2) and (3) of Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2019/33

(2019/C 307/09)

This communication is published in accordance with the fifth paragraph of Article 17 of Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2019/33 ⁽¹⁾.

COMMUNICATING THE APPROVAL OF A STANDARD AMENDMENT

‘Cava’

Reference number: PDO-ES-A0735-AM07**Notification date: 22.2.2019**

DESCRIPTION AND REASONS OF THE APPROVED AMENDMENT

1. Reduction in the acidity limit of the base wine and the cava

Description and reasons

Amendment to points 2.c, 3.b.1, 7a and 7b of the Product Specification and point 3 of the Single Document.

Description: Reduction of 0,5 grams per litre (from 5,5 to 5), expressed as tartaric acid, of the total acidity of the Cava and base wine.

Reasons: In view of the continuing trend for a drop in the total acidity observed in previous harvests, in the 2012 harvest a study was carried out to monitor the total acidity of base wines for Cava, in which more than 50 % of the wines were sampled according to the different varieties in the area.

The conclusion drawn from this study is that the natural acidity — once the grapes are ripe enough — is balanced, and the wines do not need to be acidified, unless it is to meet the total acidity imposed by law which is, however, undesirable as it makes the taste of the wines unbalanced. This acidification happens both in the phase prior to fermentation, in respect of the base wines, as well as in the Cavas. As a result of this, we propose to reduce the total acidity both in the base wines and the final product.

2. Lifting of the restriction on the use of trademarks

Description and reasons

Amendment to point 8.b.vi of the Product Specification. This does not affect the Single Document.

Description: Lifting of the restriction on the use of trademarks.

Reasons: Alignment of the Product Specification with EU legislation concerning trademarks in response to the letter sent by the European Commission's Director-General for Agriculture and Rural Development on 19 December 2013 in which he indicated that certain specifications 'contain prohibitions on using commercial trademarks covered by the denomination of other wines which are not included in this protection. This prohibition of trademark rights is not justified for reasons related to preserving the quality of wine products with a denomination, and it is against EU legislation on trademarks.' Consequently, for the reasons given by the Commission, we have removed the following from point 8(b) of the PDO Cava Product Specification: 'It will not be possible to use the trademarks simultaneously on the labels of other wines and drinks derived from wine that are presented in bottles that are characteristic of sparkling wines'.

⁽¹⁾ OJ L 9, 11.1.2019, p. 2.

3. **Permitting the use of the Trepat variety**

Description and reasons

Amendment to points 6 and 7a of the Product Specification. This does not affect the Single Document.

Description: Authorisation to use the red Trepat variety for white Cava.

Reasons: In 1998, commercial development of rosé Cava began and the use of the Trepat variety was authorised for making rosé Cava. At present, with demand for rosé wines more than covered, and taking into account the good qualitative assessment of wines made from the Trepat variety, we consider that making white Cava (blanc de noirs) from the Trepat variety is an option of product diversification that does not take away from the quality of the Cava. Therefore we decided to authorise this proposal so that white Cava may also be obtained from this variety.

4. **'Paraje calificado' cava**

Description and reasons

Amends: points 2d, 3a, 3b1, 3b2, 3b3, 4, 5, 8biii, 8biv, 8bv, 8bvi, 8bvii and 9bii3 of the Product Specification; points 3, 4, 5 and 8 of the Single Document.

Description: An optional term for the label ('Paraje Calificado' ('Qualified Single Estate Cava') and conditions for its use have been included.

Reasons: The EU legislation in force allows the use of the name of a smaller defined geographical unit on the labels of wines with a PDO. It is also possible to lay down in the Product Specification optional labelling information regulated according to certain conditions of use.

At the request of the Cava sector, and in order to draw attention to the quality of some of its wines, especially linked to the conditions of a specific area, regulation of the use of the term 'Paraje Calificado' ('Qualified Single Estate Cava') — which shall be accompanied by the name of the area — has been introduced. All this is in accordance with the fourth additional provision of Law 6/2015 of 12 May 2015 on Protected Designations of Origin and Protected Geographical Indications at supra-Autonomous-Community level.

5. **Revisions to the text of the product specification**

Description and reasons

- Revisions have been made to points 2d, 7b and 8biii of the Product Specification. The term 'carbonic gas' has been replaced by 'carbon dioxide'.
- A revision has been made to point 8bv of the Product Specification. The Regulatory Board is not responsible for classifying the wine. This power belongs to the operator responsible for this wine.
- A revision has been made to point 8bvi of the Product Specification. The Regulatory Board is not responsible for approving labels.
- A revision has been made to point 8bvii of the Product Specification. The guarantee marks also differ according to the categories of Cava.
- A revision has been made to point 9a of the Product Specification. The information on the Competent Authority has been updated. In addition, under Law 6/2015 of 12 May 2015 on Protected Designations of Origin and Geographical Indications at supra-Autonomous-Community level, the Regulatory Board has ceased to be a decentralised Government body, and has now become a public-law corporation.

6. **Increase in the maximum pH value of the base wine and the cava**

Description and reasons

Description:

Amendment to points 2.c and 3.b.1 of the Product Specification and point 8.b of the Single Document.

Increase of 0,1 (from 3,3 to 3,4) in the maximum pH value of the base wine and the Cava.

Reasons:

The extensive research carried out into the effect of climate change on grape ripeness reveals that the main consequence is that the wines have increasingly higher alcoholic strengths, lower total acidity and higher pH.

It is well-known that drops in total acidity, such as that which has been approved in relation to the base wine and the Cava in the amendment to points 2.c, 3.b.1, 7a and 7b of the Product Specification, and to point 3 of the Single Document, lead to increases in pH.

The fact that the pH of wine increases in times of drought should also not be overlooked. Although it is not possible to predict the future, rainfall levels in the Cava region have clearly been following a downward trend in recent years, coupled with the general increase in temperature.

These are the reasons for this proposal to increase the maximum pH value of the base wine and of the Cava, bringing it up from 3,3 to 3,4.

7. **Inclusion of aspects related to the transfer of bottles in a horizontal ('rima') or inverted ('punta') position**

Description and reasons

Description:

Amendment to point 8.b.viii of the Product Specification. This does not affect the Single Document.

Description: This amendment refers to the transfer of bottles in a horizontal ('rima') or inverted ('punta') position.

Reasons: The transfer of bottles in a horizontal ('rima') or inverted ('punta') position is a common practice in the Cava sector, either as a supplementary stage in the production process or when bottles have to be transferred between facilities belonging to the same corporate group for logistical reasons. However, a maximum limit must be imposed on such movements in order to prevent facilities from focusing only on 'finishing off' purchased bottles without actually having manufactured the product.

This is the reason why it has been decided to include in the Product Specification a set of conditions to limit such movements and ensure adequate control, monitoring and traceability of bottles being transferred between Cava producers.

The purchase of bottles in a horizontal ('rima') or inverted ('punta') position between producers is limited to 25 % of their own production. This percentage is considered adequate in order to meet specific spikes in demand for production that cannot be met by the stock of bottles held by the company. Specific increases in demand occur due to unforeseeable market circumstances and it is hard to meet them based on the tirage and minimum ageing schedules that apply to a company's stock of bottles and therefore there is a need to purchase products that have already met the minimum ageing requirements.

As well as this limit, conditions have also been set by the Regulatory Board for the PDO to control such transfers of bottles in the horizontal ('rima') or inverted ('punta') position. All transfers must be monitored to check that the 25 % limit is being respected, that the bottles being transferred have met the minimum ageing requirement and that the number of bottles matches the information recorded in the Board's database.

SINGLE DOCUMENT

1. **Name of product**

Cava

2. **Type of geographical indication**

PDO — Protected Designation of Origin

3. **Categories of grapevine products**

5. Quality sparkling wine

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

Quality sparkling wine

Cava – White or Rosé: Clean and bright wines, with a continuous release of carbon dioxide in the form of small, bead-shaped bubbles. The colour of white Cava ranges from pale yellow to straw yellow; the colour of rosé Cava varies in intensity, with the exception of the violet-coloured rosés. Cava has characteristically fruity, slightly acidic, fresh and balanced aromas with hints of yeasty flavours coming through in the nose.

Cava 'Gran Reserva' – White or Rosé: Balanced wines, with nuances of ripe fruit and roasted nuts, with complex and clean aromas and hints of the lengthy contact with yeast.

Cava 'Paraje Calificado' – White or Rosé: Complex aromas with perfectly blended nuances of the area's own minerals, together with roasted nuts. On the palate, it presents a perfect structural balance, creaminess and acidity.

The relevant EU legislation will apply with respect to the analytical parameters, the limits of which are not set in this Single Document.

General analytical characteristics	
Maximum total alcoholic strength (in % volume)	
Minimum actual alcoholic strength (in % volume)	10,8
Minimum total acidity	5 in grams per litre expressed as tartaric acid
Maximum volatile acidity (in milliequivalents per litre)	10,83
Maximum total sulphur dioxide (in milligrams per litre)	160

5. Wine-making practices

a. Essential oenological practices

Specific oenological practice

The base wine for Cava may be made using only the first press juice, with a maximum yield of 1 hectolitre of must/wine for every 150 kg of grapes. Depending on the area, healthy grapes with a minimum natural alcohol content of 8,5 % vol. or 9 % vol. shall be used. The base wines shall be produced using only the press juice and no other parts of the grape; when producing rosés, at least 25 % of the grapes used must be red grape varieties.

When making 'Paraje Calificado' Cava:

- the maximum yield is 0,6 Hl of must for every 100 kg of grapes.
- the following are prohibited: artificially increasing the natural alcoholic strength of the musts and/or base wine, acidification, and discolouration.
- the minimum total acidity of the base wine shall be 5,5 g/l (5 g/l for other Cava wines)

Cultivation practice

Grape-producing vineyard plots shall be considered suitable for Cava production from the authorised variety's third growing season onwards. The density of plantation shall be from 1 500 to 3 500 stocks per hectare, using the traditional goblet or espalier vine-training systems.

b. Maximum yields

Cava

12 000 kilograms of grapes per hectare

Cava

80 hectolitres per hectare

'Paraje Calificado' Cava

8 000 kilograms of grapes per hectare

'Paraje Calificado' Cava

48 hectolitres per hectare

6. Demarcated geographical area

The geographical area in which the grapes may be grown and the base wine and Cava produced is located within the boundaries of the following municipalities, separated in the text according to the province to which they belong:

— Álava:

Laguardia, Moreda de Álava, and Oyón

— Badajoz:

Almendralejo.

— Barcelona:

Abrera, Alella, Artés, Avinyonet del Penedès, Begues, Cabrera d'Igualada, Cabrils, Canyelles, Castellet i la Gornal, Castellvi de la Marca, Castellvi de Rosanes, Cervelló, Corbera de Llobregat, Cubelles, El Masnou, Font-Rubí, Gelida, La Granada, La Llacuna, La Pobla de Claramunt, Les Cabanyes, Martorell, Martorelles, Masquefa, Mediona, Mongat, Odena, Olérdola, Olesa de Bonesvalls, Olivella, Pacs del Penedès, Piera, Els Hostelets de Pierola, El Pla del Penedès, Pontons, Premià de Mar, Puigdalber, Rubí, Sant Cugat Sesgarrigues, Sant Esteve Sesrovires, Sant fust de Campsentelles, Vilassar de Dalt, Sant Llorenç d'Hortons, Sant Martí Sarroca, Sant Pere de Ribes, Sant Pere de Riudevittles, Sant Quintí de Mediona, Sant Sadurní d'Anoia, Santa Fe del Penedès, Santa Margarida i els Monjos, Santa Maria de Martorelles, Santa Maria de Miralles, Sitges, Subirats, Teià, Tiana, Torrelavit, Torrelles de Foix, Vallbona d'Anoia, Vallirana, Vilafranca del Penedès, Vilanova i la Geltrú, Vilobí del Penedès.

— Girona:

Blanes, Capmany, Masarac, Mollet de Perelada, Perelada.

— La Rioja:

Alesanco, Azofra, Briones, Casalarreina, Cihuri, Cordovín, Cuzcurrita de Rio Tirón, Fonzaleche, Grávalos, Haro, Hormilla, Hormilleja, Nájera, Sajazarra, San Asensio, Tirgo, Uruñuela, and Villalba de Rioja.

— Lleida:

Lleida, Fullela, Guimerà, L'Albi, L'Espluga Calva, Maldà, Sant Martí de Riucorb, Tarrés, Verdú, El Vilosell, and Vinaixa.

— Navarre:

Mendavia, and Viana.

— Tarragona

Aiguamúrcia, Albinyana, Alió, Banyeres del Penedès, Barberà de la Conca, Bellvei, Blancafort, Bonastre, Bràfim, Cabra del Camp, Calafell, Creixell, Cunit, El Catllar, El Pla de Santa Maria, El Vendrell, Els Garidells, Figuerola del Camp, Els Pallaresos, La Bisbal del Penedès, La Nou de Gaià, L'Arboç, La Riera de Gaià, La Secuita, L'Espluga de Francolí, Llorenç del Penedès, Masllorenç, Montblanc, Montferri, El Montmell, Nulles, Perafort, Pira, Puigpelat, Renau, Rocafort de Queralt, Roda de Berà, Rodonyà, Salomó, Sant Jaume dels Domenys, Santa Oliva, Sarra, Solivella, Vallmoll, Valls, Vespella, Vilabella, Vila-rodona, Vilaseca de Solcina, Vilaberç, and Vimodó.

— Valencia:

Requena.

— Zaragoza:

Ainzón, and Cariñena.

7. Main wine grapes variety(ies)

MACABEO — VIURA

XARELLO

CHARDONNAY

PARELLADA

GARNACHA TINTA

TREPAT

PINOT NOIR

8. Description of the link(s)

(a) *Natural and human factors*

NATURAL FACTORS: The soils are mostly limy, not very sandy and relatively clay-based. They tend to have a low organic material content and are not very fertile.

The area has general characteristics typical of a Mediterranean environment: a very long summer season with long hours of sunshine and high temperatures through spring to summer, also producing wide temperature variations which allow the grapes, including varieties with longer cycles, to ripen well. In addition, rainfall is low and poorly distributed over the seasons meaning that during the period of plant growth rainfall is scarce and relative humidity is very low. As a result, there is a pronounced water deficit, particularly in the ripening phase. The Mediterranean climate in the area is transitional between the milder climate on the coast, due to its proximity to the sea, and the harsher mainland climate which is cold in winter and hotter in the summer, as inland areas tend to be. The annual rainfall is on average 500 mm, with more frequent rainfall in autumn and spring. It is very bright with an average of around 2 500 hours of sunlight, which is sufficient for the grapes to ripen properly.

HUMAN FACTORS: In the second half of the 19th century, various wine-making families started making sparkling wines in the countryside of Barcelona province using the then-named champagne method, in which the second fermentation which produces the bubbles takes place in the bottle. It was in 1872 that the first bottles of Cava were made in the municipality of Sant Sadurní d'Anoia. After tirage, the bottles of sparkling wine were stored in underground caves which had a sufficient relative humidity level and an ambient temperature which remained around 13/15 °C throughout the year, helping to eliminate vibrations, which are to be avoided when making good quality sparkling wines. These are ideal conditions for the second fermentation and the ageing process of sparkling wines to take place correctly. Over time, the name 'cava', which identified the places where the bottles of sparkling wine were stored for ageing, ended up becoming the name of the wine itself. The most widely grown grape varieties are: Macabeo, Xarello, and Parelada, which represent 85 % of those used to make Cava. These three varieties are always present in different proportions in the base wines obtained from the demarcated geographical area. The low density of vines, between 1 500 and 3 500 plants per hectare, helps to improve the quality of the base wine. In addition, the limited precipitation in the area and the goblet or espalier vine-training systems allow for a moderate amount of productive buds, which limits the maximum yield per hectare to 12 000 kg. In addition, the base wine may be produced only from first press juice, with a maximum of 100 litres of must for every 150 kg of grapes; with a staggered ripening involving the separate harvest of the different varieties, with a potential alcohol level for the base wine of between 9,5 and 11,5 % volume, a total acidity of > 5 g/L and analytical indicators that ensure the sanitary quality of the crop. There must also be an approximate one-to-one relationship between the malic acid and tartaric acid; production conditions that allow for a slow development of the second fermentation, and the interaction between the wine and the yeast (autolysis), which brings delicate aromas to these wines, giving them unique organoleptic qualities.

(b) *Detailed information on the quality or characteristics of the product*

PDO Cava wines, produced correctly with a second fermentation and ageing in the bottle in contact with the lees, have an alcohol content of between 10,8 and 12,8 % vol. Cava is characterised by low pH levels, between 2,8 and 3,4, so the wine ages correctly over time, reducing the risks of detrimental oxidation. These are wines with a low level of gluconic acid, which indicates that healthy grapes were used.

(c) *Causal link between the geographical area and the characteristics of the product.*

The soils combined with the climate in late summer and autumn, which is relatively mild and dry, allow the grapes to develop correctly, particularly in the phases preceding their harvest, which encourages the various authorised varieties to ripen at different times, thereby producing good base wines for making a healthy Cava, with moderate alcoholic strength, high acidity and a low pH. The product's rich tertiary aromas and strong release of bubbles depend in full on the production process from tirage to disgorging in the specially equipped plants, which allow the second fermentation and the ageing of the wine to develop slowly.

9. Essential further conditions (packaging, labelling, other requirements)

Legal framework:

In national legislation

Type of further condition:

Derogation on production in the demarcated geographical area

Description of the condition:

Cava may be produced in five wine cellars located outside the demarcated geographical area, as these cellars were producing base wine and/or 'Cava' prior to the entry into force of the Order of 27 February 1986 and were thus granted authorisation through the Ministerial Orders of 14 November 1991 and 9 January 1992.

Legal framework:

In national legislation

Type of further condition:

Addition provisions relating to labelling

Description of the condition:

The cork shall display the name CAVA and the number of the bottler. It shall be mandatory to use a trademark registered with the Spanish Intellectual Property Registry (RPI) or the Office for Harmonisation in the Internal Market. Only Cava 'Gran Reserva' and Cava 'Paraje Calificado' may use the terms 'Brut Nature', 'Extra Brut' and 'Brut' and indicate the vintage year. It is mandatory to use specific control marks.

The indication 'Paraje Calificado' shall not exceed 4 mm in height, nor shall it exceed the size of the brand, and it shall feature alongside the name of the area in question.

Link to the product specification

http://www.mapama.gob.es/es/alimentacion/temas/calidad-agroalimentaria/calidad-diferenciada/dop/htm/documentos_dop_cava.aspx
