

OTHER ACTS

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Publication of an application pursuant to Article 17(6) of Regulation (EC) No 110/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the definition, description, presentation, labelling and the protection of geographical indications of spirit drinks and repealing Council Regulation (EEC) No 1576/89

(2021/C 430/12)

This publication confers the right to oppose the application pursuant to Article 27 of Regulation (EU) 2019/787 of the European Parliament and of the Council ⁽¹⁾.

MAIN SPECIFICATIONS OF THE TECHNICAL FILE

‘PREGLER’/‘OSTTIROLER PREGLER’

EU No: PGI-AT-02512 – 7 June 2019

1. Name

‘Pregler’/‘Osttiroler Pregler’

2. Category of spirit drink

Fruit spirit (category No 9 of Regulation (EC) No 110/2008)

3. Description of the spirit drink

Physical, chemical and/or organoleptic characteristics

‘Pregler’/‘Osttiroler Pregler’ is produced by fermentation and distillation exclusively in distilleries in the defined geographical area of the ‘Political district of Lienz’ region, either from apples and pears from the region or – in individual cases – by adding plums, which must also come from the geographical area. In order to produce the complex aroma, various varieties of apple and pear are used.

The apple content is predominant; the pear content is not below 25 %.

Plums, up to an alcohol-based content of 25 %, are added – in addition to the same ratio of apples and pears – only if the producer can demonstrate that it has traditionally added plums to its recipe over a continuous period of at least 20 years and the relevant specific labelling rules are complied with.

- Actual alcoholic strength of the ready-to-drink spirits: at least 40 % vol.;
- Sweetening products for rounding off: at most 4 g of sugar, expressed as invert sugar, per litre of finished product;
- Ethyl carbamate: at most 1 mg/l of product – for ‘Pregler’/‘Osttiroler Pregler’ made by adding plums;
- Volatile components: at least 280 g/hl of pure alcohol
- Ethyl acetate: at most 350 g/hl of pure alcohol
- Clarity: clear

⁽¹⁾ OJ L 130, 17.5.2019, p. 1.

- Colour: colourless
- Smell/taste: characteristic fragrant floral bouquet and full fruity taste of ripe East Tyrol apples and pears, both easily recognisable; the pear taste must never be dominant.

In the particular case of plums being added: typically balanced aromatic smell and full fruity taste of pome fruit with characteristic, well-integrated notes of plum and a discreet, never dominant hint of stone.

- Food additives: none.

Specific characteristics (compared with spirit drinks of the same category)

'Pregler'/'Osttiroler Pregler' has, at 40 % vol., a higher minimum alcohol content than conventional fruit spirit and a strictly limited, very low sugar content of at most 4 grams per litre, used to round off the taste.

On the nose, 'Pregler'/'Osttiroler Pregler' made exclusively from apples and pears has the fresh, fruity aroma of apple peel and delicate notes of the pips/core. Discreet fruity, juicy aromas of stewed apple with well-integrated pear notes reminiscent of banana, along with hints of dried pear, pear juice and stewed pear round off the aroma on the nose.

Where plums are added, a slightly nutty, almond aroma fits perfectly into the background.

On the palate, 'Pregler'/'Osttiroler Pregler' is typically mild, well rounded and harmonious with a long finish. The wide range of varieties of fruit used result in density and complexity. The apple aromas, with their fruity freshness and delicate peel notes, are supported by sweet aromas of ripe pear and with banana-like hints of the esters of the fruits.

Moreover, in the particular case of plums being added, notes of chocolate and cinnamon can be detected in the finish, giving it a delicate tartness.

'Pregler'/'Osttiroler Pregler' is never matured in wooden casks, nor are wood chips or wood inserts used in storage tanks.

4. Geographical area concerned

'Pregler'/'Osttiroler Pregler' is produced exclusively in distilleries in the defined geographical area of the 'Political district of Lienz' ('East Tyrol').

The area comprises the municipalities of Abfaltersbach, Ainet, Amlach, Anras, Assling, Außervillgraten, Dölsach, Gaimberg, Heinfels, Hopfgarten in Deferegggen, Innervillgraten, Iselsberg-Stronach, Kals am Großglockner, Kartitsch, Lavant, Leisach, Lienz, Matri in Osttirol, Nikolsdorf, Nußdorf-Debant, Oberlienz, Obertilliach, Prägraten am Großvenediger, Schlaiten, Silian, St. Jakob in Deferegggen, St. Johann im Walde, St. Veit in Deferegggen, Strassen, Thurn, Tristach, Untertilliach and Virgen.

5. Method for obtaining the spirit drink

Fermentation and distillation

The first stage in producing 'Pregler'/'Osttiroler Pregler' involves chopping or crushing the apples and pears – and, if applicable, also plums – which have been freshly harvested exclusively in the defined geographical area.

Only ripe, healthy and clean fruit is used. All the chopped or crushed fruit (mash) is placed in a tank or cask (maceration). Plums are usually stoned.

The second stage is fermentation of the mash, pure yeasts generally being added. Genetically modified yeasts are not used. During fermentation, which takes place at a controlled temperature and following a set procedure, the sugar in the fruit is converted into alcohol and carbon dioxide. On average, the fermentation process usually takes between 2 and 6 weeks. Once fermentation is complete, the fermented mash, which has an alcohol content of 4-8 % vol., is stored until it develops the desired characteristic aroma typical of the fruit. If the mash contains stones from the plums added, they are not then transferred to the distillation unit.

The third stage is the distillation of the fermented mash in simple stills or in stills with a dephlegmator. Continuous distillation is not compatible with traditional production methods and is not used. Depending on the type of distilling equipment (a pot still with or without enrichment trays), the mash is distilled once or twice to less than 86 % vol. These days, copper pot stills with enrichment trays are increasingly being used, so the mash is distilled only once, which not only saves energy but also retains the aromas of the fruit better.

In order to achieve a balanced, harmonious composition, the fourth production stage, following distillation, is storage for at least 4 weeks in suitable neutral containers (glass containers, stainless steel tanks, etc.). Maturing in wooden, e.g. oak or mulberry wood, casks does not take place, nor are wood chips or wood inserts used in storage tanks.

After storage, the fifth and final production stage is the finishing process, which includes the following steps:

- (optional) blending of different distillates which must meet the above requirement,
- diluting the high-alcohol distillate(s) to drinking strength with pure drinking water,
- bottling or decanting into other suitable sale containers, and
- labelling and packaging.

No food additives are added to 'Pregler'/'Osttiroler Pregler'.

A maximum of 4 grams of sugar, expressed as invert sugar, per litre of finished product may be added to round off the taste.

Reduction of the distillates to drinking strength, bottling, labelling and packaging may also take place outside the geographical area.

6. Link with the geographical environment or origin

Details of the geographical area or origin relevant to the link

The raw materials for the 'Pregler'/'Osttiroler Pregler' from farm distilleries have always been hand-picked apples and pears from commercial orchards, or come from meadow orchards and solitary trees on agricultural holdings in the geographical area. The fact that traditional farm 'Pregler' has always been a fruit spirit made only from pome fruit is historically grounded in tax law, which has always taxed spirits made exclusively from pome fruit less heavily than spirits made wholly or partly from stone fruit.

In individual cases, however, there was also a tradition among commercial distillers who, in order to make their products stand out, are known to have added a certain proportion of plums as well as apples and pears, but without deviating too far from the typical character of the regional speciality.

Historically, fruit cultivation in the district of Lienz can be traced back a long way. As long ago as in 1558 the *particular qualities of fruit* from Lienz were emphasised in the poem 'Der fürstlichen Grafschaft Tyrol Landtreim' [Rhyme of the Princely County of Tyrol], written by a Mr Rösch von Geroldshausen, who was born in the town. To this day, typical (East) Tyrolean surnames derive from Old High German or Romance words for apples.

Fruit cultivation in the district of Lienz takes place in the 'cool humid zone' up to altitudes of 900 m above sea level, and in the 'harsh humid zone' above that height. The climate of the region is particularly influenced by the Alpine foehn. The Alpine foehn in the Lienz Basin pushes warm air far into the surrounding tributary valleys and produces a unique microclimate at the northern edge of the Dolomites. The high temperatures and low humidity resulting from the foehn, together with clear air and a dry wind, offer the fruit, in alternation with foehn-free periods, unique conditions in which to develop their typical aroma and flavour with particular intensity. Together with the soil composition, which ranges from alluvial soil with a high lime content, glacial till material to brown earth, these climatic conditions have always made fruit cultivation in the Lienz district something special and have given pome fruit, in particular, a very 'typical quality'.

The specificity of the name 'Pregler' is derived from the dialect word 'pregeln', which is in common use only locally in the geographical area of East Tyrol.

The word 'pregeln', 'prägneln' or 'brägneln' means to broil, boil or braise; it was a common term for the refining of schnapps. To this day, the word 'pregeln' is commonly used in East Tyrol as a very general term for the distillation of schnapps. In former times, spirits made from apples and pears from East Tyrol farm production were generally known as 'Pregler'.

In 1991, 20 schnapps distillers from across the district of Lienz came together to form the Association of East Tyrolean Pregler Farmers, based in Dölsach, in order to maintain and increase the quality of 'Pregler' and to uphold its tradition in the future.

On the basis of those traditions, and having first been entered in the Austrian Food Register in 1998, 'Pregler' was incorporated into Chapter B 23 of the fourth edition of the Register as a protected geographical indication of nationwide significance on 24 July 2012 by Decree BMG-75210/0006-II/B/13/2012. Since then, 'Pregler'/'Osttiroler Pregler' has enjoyed special protection at national level.

Owing to the location of the political district of Lienz, with its particular attractiveness for tourism and the associated trade relations, 'Pregler'/'Osttiroler Pregler' is now a product that is known and respected far beyond Austria's borders and that is closely related, not only linguistically, to the region and its distillers.

The popularity and thus the good reputation that 'Pregler'/'Osttiroler Pregler' now enjoys is repeatedly attested to by the awards that it receives at events, such as 'Gold' at the 2016 International Wine & Spirit Competition (Cranleigh, UK), multiple awards for 'Pregler'/'Osttiroler Pregler' from various rural distillers at the 2018 Tyrol Provincial Schnapps Awards, and 'Gold' at the sixth Annual Berlin Spirits Competition and 'Silver' at Destillata in 2019. How closely related the reputation of this special fruit spirit is to the name 'Pregler'/'Osttiroler Pregler' is apparent from various reports on and references to it in both the local and international press (*Tiroler Tageszeitung*, *Kleine Zeitung*, *Osttiroler Bote*, *Bezirksblätter Osttirol*, the weekly newspaper *Die Zeit*, *Zeitmagazin* No 49 of 1 December 1995), as well as from specialist articles (*Besseres Obst* [Better Fruit]). A cultural initiative even organised an event, 'Pregler G'schichten', addressing the theme of 'Pregler': *a piece of regional identity and part of East Tyrolean culture*.

Specific characteristics of the spirit drink attributable to the geographical area

As a result of the regional climate in the geographically defined basin of the district of Lienz, with the particularly marked differences between daytime and night-time temperatures during the apple and pear ripening season, the influence of the soil and the more than 100 year-old cultivation tradition, the typical quality of the exclusively regional pome fruit (apples and pears) contributes significantly to the particular characteristics of 'Pregler'/'Osttiroler Pregler' and has given the products their exceedingly rich characteristic aroma, which is specific to the fruit used and is convincingly dense and complex owing to the range of varieties of fruit used.

7. European Union or national/regional provisions

Legal basis: EU spirit drinks legislation; horizontal EU food labelling legislation

Description of the requirement(s): General quality criteria for fruit spirits

8. Applicant

Name: Federal Minister for Social Affairs, Health, Care and Consumer Protection Legal status: Federal ministry forming part of the Federal Government

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9. Supplement to the geographical indication

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10. Specific labelling rules

Indicating the addition of plums

In order to fully inform consumers, the addition of plums must be clearly indicated, either pictorially or verbally, in the principal field of vision (on the front label).

Specifying the producer

It is mandatory to specify the distillery or producer that made the product.

Union symbol

The Union symbol for registered geographical indications established in Annex V to Regulation (EC) No 1898/2006 may be used as provided for in Article 22 of Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 716/2013.
