

OTHER ACTS

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

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 152/05)

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

'Rioja'**PDO-ES-A0117-AM06****Date of application: 24.9.2018****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. *Corrigendum***

Correction of an error detected in the wording of the second paragraph of point b.7.1 of section 8 of the Product Specification (Applicable Requirements). This does not affect the single document.

The wording must be changed to:

'The qualification process will be performed per homogeneous consignment or batch and must be performed in accordance with the Standards for wines eligible for the "Rioja" Protected Designation of Origin, which are drawn up by the Regulatory Board'.

2.2. *Removal of the restriction on the use of some white varieties*

Point 3.b.1 of the Product Specification, headings 'WHITE' and 'ROSÉ', and point 2.5.1 'Specific oenological practices' of the Single Document must be amended.

The line stating that the varieties Chardonnay, Sauvignon Blanc and Verdejo must not predominate in the final product in the case of white and rosé wines must be deleted.

The Regulatory Board for the 'Rioja' Protected Designation of Origin extended the catalogue of authorised white and red varieties in 2008 and 2009. This was a strategic decision, in line with one of the recommendations set out in the Strategic Plan for Rioja Wine 2005-2020 in the light of the market opportunities.

With a view to preserving the characteristics of its white wines, it decided that the Chardonnay, Sauvignon Blanc and Verdejo varieties would not predominate in the final product. The idea was that adding them would provide a complementary note and would allow a gradual mastery of growing and handling these varieties.

⁽¹⁾ OJL 347, 20.12.2013, p. 671.

The commercial results of the decision were significantly positive, as the quality of Rioja white wines gained in appreciation and growth rates that were much higher than the market average were achieved.

On that basis, the Plenary Session of the Regulatory Board of the 'Rioja' Protected Designation of Origin agreed at a plenary meeting held on 11 November 2016 to eliminate the restriction on the share of the Chardonnay, Sauvignon Blanc and Verdejo varieties in the final product, on account of the commercial interest in them and also because of their proven suitability for qualitative handling.

2.3. *New labelling term 'Viñedo singular' [single vineyard] and conditions for use*

Various points in the Product Specification (3.b.3, 4, 5, 8.b.1, 8.b.3.4, 8.b.4.1, 8.b.4.3, 8.b.5.2, 8.b.5.3, 8.b.5.5, 8.b.6.2, 8.b.6.3, 8.b.6.4, 8.b.7.3, 8.b.9, 8.b.10.3, 8.b.10.5, 8.b.10.9) and in the Single Document (2.5.1 processing yield, 2.5.2, 2.6 last paragraph, 2.9, labelling) must be amended to introduce the conditions for using the term 'viñedo singular' [single vineyard].

The response to consumer demand for more information about the origin of the wines on the label; the interest of operators in promoting wines that are from a specific origin and limited to a particular place; and the need to properly organise and standardise the existing offering of wines and possible new additions to it: all these factors meant that it was advisable to set out the conditions, within the scope of the fourth additional provision of Law No 6/2015, for recognising those wines from smaller geographical entities which, in the specific case of Rioja, have been given the designation of 'viñedos singulares' or single vineyards.

Given this situation, various proposals have been drawn up and alternatives have been analysed in the last two years. The opinion of experts has been sought and debates have been held to look at every last detail. The result is a regulation which is mindful of the success based on the existing categories and which builds on these to offer information that will be appreciated by certain consumers.

Single vineyards must be balanced, with limited vine vigour and qualitative requirements that together with the origin will help produce high-quality wine.

That is the reason why, as well as the mandatory traceability, procedures have been defined to ensure this balance. However, there are also limitations as regards age, yields, growing practices, harvesting and processing. The organoleptic assessment is more demanding and the link with the vineyard must be intended to last over time.

This paves the way for a broader wine offering in Rioja, which will no doubt help boost its profile as a leading, pioneering PDO as well as being appreciated by influencers and opinion leaders.

2.4. *Changes in the conditions for use of the traditional terms 'Reserva' and 'Gran Reserva'*

Point 3.C, headings 'For the traditional term "Reserva"' and 'For the traditional term "Gran Reserva"' must be amended in the Product Specification. This does not affect the single document.

For red 'Reserva' wines, minimum times are introduced for ageing in bottles and for red 'Gran Reserva' wines, this time is shortened, within the minimum timeframes regulated by Spanish legislation on the use of these traditional terms.

The definition of the complementary traditional term 'Reserva' did not specify – in the definition provided in Law 6/2015 of 12 May 2015 or in the Product Specification for the 'Rioja' Protected Designation of Origin – a minimum period for ageing in bottles. This was therefore left to the discretion of the operator, who was free to decide when the right balance and characteristics for the category in question had been achieved. In view of the organoleptic monitoring of wines labelled in wineries for dispatch and acquired at the point of sale, it was decided that it would be a clear qualitative step forward to set out a minimum time for ageing in bottles in the case of red wine, with respect to the total minimum time specified in the definition, and that it would be in keeping with the process of ongoing improvement to which Rioja has always been committed. The Plenary Session of the 'Rioja' Protected Designation of Origin therefore decided, at its plenary meeting of 11 November 2016, to define a minimum period of 6 months ageing in bottles for red 'Reserva' wines to follow the barrel-ageing process, which must last for at least a year. In total, the entire maturing and ageing process must last at least 36 months.

The definition of the traditional complementary term 'Gran Reserva' means there are certain inflexibilities in the Product Specification for the 'Rioja' Protected Designation of Origin compared to its definition as set out in Law 6/2015 of 12 May 2015, which provided for a minimum period of ageing in bottles of 36 months, following 24 months of barrel-ageing. Spanish legislation requires that this period in the barrel last at least 18 months but it does not specify the length of time the wine must remain in bottles. Rioja has stricter requirements for the minimum barrel-ageing time – 24 months – as this is considered to allow for greater versatility and more expressive wines while obtaining optimal quality. The minimum period for ageing in bottles is reduced to 24 months – though this is still longer than the national legislation which does not specify anything in this regard – without altering the minimum 60-month combined maturing and ageing period. At its plenary meeting of 11 November 2016, the Plenary Session of the Regulatory Board for the 'Rioja' Protected Designation of Origin decided to define red wines in the 'Gran Reserva' category as those that have been matured and aged in a winery for at least 60 months, of which they must have spent at least 24 in the barrel and at least 24 in bottles.

2.5. *A new category of protected product has been added – quality sparkling wine*

Various points in the Product Specification (2, 2.a.1, 2.a.2, 2.a.4, 2.a.5, 2.a.6, 2.a.7, 2.a.8, 2.b, 3.b.1, 3.b.2, 3.b.3, 3.b.4, 3.c, 7, 8.b.5.1, 8.b.7.2, 8.b.9, 8.b.10.3) and in the Single Document (2.3, 2.4, 2.5.1, 2.8, 2.9 labelling) must be amended to introduce the requirements for this new product category and its link.

Market data show that sparkling wines have been performing exceptionally well in recent years. As a permanently market-oriented designation, 'Rioja' cannot miss out on this opportunity. A significant number of Spanish Designations of Origin include sparkling wines in their Product Specification and therefore the extension described for 'Rioja' is not in any way a reckless or illogical decision.

With a view to maintaining the same quality standards as for still wines, the intention is to create a high-end sparkling wine and this is the reason for the restrictions on yield and on sugar content (Brut, Extra Brut and Brut Nature). The use of the traditional wine-making method and the minimum 15-month ageing period are proof of this.

2.6. *Area and municipality wines*

Various points in the Product Specification (2.a.1, 8.b.9, 8.b.10.3, 8.b.10.10) and in the Single Document (2.6 'Rioja Baja' changed to 'Rioja Oriental', 2.8, 2.9, labelling) must be amended to introduce the conditions that need to be met for wine to carry the name of certain areas and municipalities.

The concept of sub-area is replaced by that of area and the three already in existence are maintained. However, one changes name ('Rioja Baja' to 'Rioja Oriental'). It will also be possible to indicate the name of a municipality on the label if the wine is from there.

The Plenary Session of the Regulatory Board updated the rules on the area indications (a change of name for the sub-areas that better expresses the philosophy that Rioja aims to get across, i.e. an entity that is larger than these three demarcations or smaller geographical units) and the municipality or town, with a view to boosting their visibility and promoting these wines. This also responds to the concerns of operators, opinion leaders and end consumers, who are demanding more information on the label about the huge diversity of wines currently offered on the market by the 'Rioja' Protected Designation of Origin. These indications will complement the traditional, successful range of wines made by blending wines of different origins.

After defining the rules for a traceability procedure in 1998, which allowed the names of the municipalities or the indications 'Rioja Alta', 'Rioja Alavesa' or 'Rioja Baja' to be featured on the label, the Board has now gone a step further by envisaging situations where wine-makers grow vines in bordering locations. It is now possible to include up to 15 % of the volume of grapes from outside the aforementioned smaller entities, subject to these conditions. The requirement will be a commitment from the vineyard over time, so as to promote sustainability and avoid speculation. This tolerance margin is within the possibilities offered by EU legislation.

Another new development is the increase in the size of the portion of the label that can be allocated to the municipalities or what are now called areas. Until now, the size of these indications on wine labels was limited to two-thirds of the size allocated to 'Rioja', at the most. From now on, they can be featured on an equal basis and the only requirement is that they must not be more prominent than the name of the Designation.

Rioja continues to expand its existing range of categories as part of the process of ongoing improvement to which it is committed, and is always seeking to boost its positioning as one of the landmark regions in the quality wines segment on the international market. This classification of the existing wine offering establishes some requirements that make it possible to guarantee the quality of the product and the accuracy of the indications on the labels.

2.7. *Change in the colour intensity of rosé wines*

Point 2.a.3 of the Product Specification must be amended but this does not entail any amendment to the Single Document.

Rosé wines with less colour intensity are allowed.

Given the intensity range established for the quality sparkling wines covered by this PDO, it is a good idea for the sake of consistency to adopt the same categories as are used for the still rosés covered by it, while also covering the wines with less colour intensity which are now in vogue and are sought after by consumers.

2.8. *Change regarding dates from which ageing periods are calculated*

Point 3.c of the Product Specification must be amended but this does not entail any amendment to the Single Document.

Mention is no longer made of the dates from which the ageing period is calculated for wines bearing the traditional term 'Crianza'. The Regulatory Board is authorised to reach agreements in that regard.

The reason for this change is that the harvest has started earlier in recent years. It has been noted that this circumstance has in turn led to the wine-making also being brought forward in time and the wine being placed in barrels earlier. This meant that there was a discrepancy between what was actually happening and the start of the calculation according to the Product Specification.

It is also noted that the date of 1 October specified in the same section must be brought forward when calculating the start of the two calendar years that the ageing process must last, in light of the current circumstances and the above explanation.

It is at the discretion of the body in charge of managing the Protected Designation of Origin to reach agreements in that regard, so that it can flexibly allow for any change in circumstances that occurs in future.

SINGLE DOCUMENT

1. **Name of product**

Rioja

2. **Geographical indication type**

PDO – Protected Designation of Origin

3. **Categories of grapevine products**

1. Wine

5. Quality sparkling wine

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

White and rosé wines (dry and semi-dry)

White wines: straw yellow with hints of lime, clean and bright. Aroma of green fruit, flowers and greens, typical of the variety. Moderate acidity with a sensation of freshness.

Rosé wines: strawberry with a tinge of raspberry (salmon, in case of Crianza wines), bright, clean. Aroma of red fruits and floral notes. Balance between acidity and fruit in the mouth, with a fresh feeling.

In both cases, the aromas are blended in the ageing process with others of oak wood (vanilla, toasted and smoky notes) and the acidity is integrated with the toasted wood notes.

— The alcohol content varies depending on the sub-areas and ageing.

— Greater volatility in wines that are over a year old.

— Maximum SO₂ 180 mg/l if sugar < 5g/l.

— For any limits not covered, the standing legislation will apply.

General analytical characteristics	
Maximum total alcoholic strength (in % volume)	
Minimum actual alcoholic strength (in % volume)	10,5
Minimum total acidity	3,5 grams per litre, expressed as tartaric acid
Maximum volatile acidity (in milliequivalents per litre)	13,3
Maximum total sulphur dioxide (in milligrams per litre)	240

White and rosé wines (semi-sweet and sweet)

White wines: straw yellow with hints of lime, clean and bright. Aroma of green fruit, flowers and greens, typical of the variety. Moderate acidity, a feeling of freshness and sweetness in the mouth depending on the type.

Rosé wines: strawberry with a tinge of raspberry (salmon, in case of Crianza wines), bright, clean. Aroma of red fruits and floral notes. A balance between acidity/fruit, a feeling of freshness and sweetness in the mouth depending on the type.

In both cases, the aromas are blended in the ageing process with others of oak wood (vanilla, toasted and smoky notes) and the acidity is integrated with the toasted wood notes.

- The alcohol content varies depending on the sub-areas and ageing.
- Greater volatility in wines that are over a year old.
- Maximum SO₂ 180 mg/l if sugar < 5g/l.
- For any limits not covered, the standing legislation will apply.

General analytical characteristics	
Maximum total alcoholic strength (in % volume)	
Minimum actual alcoholic strength (in % volume)	10,5
Minimum total acidity	3,5 grams per litre, expressed as tartaric acid
Maximum volatile acidity (in milliequivalents per litre)	25
Maximum total sulphur dioxide (in milligrams per litre)	240

Red wines (dry and semi-dry)

Young wines are purple with violet tones; 'Crianza' wines are maroon and cherry red; 'Reserva' wines are cherry red in colour with hints of ruby; 'Gran Reserva' wines are ruby with russet tones. Nose: intense fruity, varietal and floral notes, with toasted oak wood aromas in the case of 'Crianza' wines. 'Reserva' and 'Gran Reserva' wines are more complex with spicy aromas. Taste: flavourful with balanced acid/alcohol/tannin content. Ageing improves smoothness and extends the length.

- The alcohol content limits vary depending on the areas and ageing.
- Volatile: dry wines more than a year old, maximum 1 gr/l up to 10 % vol. and 0,06 gr/l for each degree of alcohol above 10 % vol.
- SO₂: Maximum 140 mg/l if sugar < 5g/l.
- For any limits not covered, the standing legislation will apply.

General analytical characteristics	
Maximum total alcoholic strength (in % volume)	
Minimum actual alcoholic strength (in % volume)	11,5
Minimum total acidity	3,5 grams per litre, expressed as tartaric acid

General analytical characteristics	
Maximum volatile acidity (in milliequivalents per litre)	13,3
Maximum total sulphur dioxide (in milligrams per litre)	180

Quality sparkling wines (white or rosé)

Wine featuring the continuous release of carbon dioxide which takes the visual form of fine bubbles when served for consumption.

Quality sparkling wine, like its cuvée after the first fermentation, will be clear, without particulates in suspension, and different shades of yellow or pink in colour.

Its aroma must have positive attributes of freshness and fruit, with the complexity resulting from resting on the lees during the second fermentation. This is most noticeable in 'Reserva' and 'Gran Añada' wines. It must be free from defects, especially those resulting from oxidation or reduction.

— For any limits not covered, the standing legislation will apply.

Maximum actual alcoholic strength 13 % vol.

General analytical characteristics	
Maximum total alcoholic strength (in % volume)	
Minimum actual alcoholic strength (in % volume)	11
Minimum total acidity	5,5 grams per litre, expressed as tartaric acid
Maximum volatile acidity (in milliequivalents per litre)	10,83
Maximum total sulphur dioxide (in milligrams per litre)	140

5. Wine making practices

a. Essential oenological practices

Cultivation practice

Vineyards are considered to start producing in their fourth growth cycle (or before that, subject to authorisation).

Density: min. 2 850- max. 10 000 vines/ha

Pruning/training systems: goblet pruning and variants, double cordon, rod and thumb, single or unilateral cordon, double Guyot (only for Chardonnay, Sauvignon Blanc, Verdejo, white Maturana, white Tempranillo and Turruntés).

Maximum load: 12 buds/vine; 16 for white varieties mentioned and 14 for Grenache. Exceptions possible.

Irrigation: allowed. Between 15 August and the harvest, irrigation must only be carried out using localised systems and a notification must be submitted in writing 24 hours in advance; sprinkler irrigation allowed if permission is granted; other methods are prohibited.

For quality sparkling wines, the grapes must be harvested by hand (mechanical harvesting is prohibited).

Specific oenological practice

Proportion of varieties depending on wine types:

RED: min 95 % of red varieties if the grapes are destemmed and 85 % if they are whole.

WHITE: 100 % white grapes.

ROSÉ: min. 25 % red grapes

QUALITY SPARKLING WINES (WHITE AND ROSÉ): with white and/or red grapes. Rosés must contain at least 25 % red grapes.

The optional mixing of grape colours must be done after delivery.

Grape characteristics: healthy and with a minimum alcohol content of: 11 % vol. for red wines, 10,5 % vol. for white wines and 9,5 % vol. for quality sparkling wines.

Maximum processing yield

- 70 litres/100 kg harvest for wines. This can vary in exceptional cases within certain limits.
- 62 litres/100 kg harvest for quality sparkling wines. This can vary in exceptional cases within certain limits.
- 65 litres/100 kg harvest for those that feature the 'viñedo singular' [single vineyard] indication. No variation allowed.

Restriction relevant to winemaking

Prohibitions

- Use of fractions of must or wine obtained by inadequate pressures in protected wines
- Continuous screw presses, crushing machines with a centrifugal action, preheating of grapes or heating must or wine in the presence of the marc in order to force the extraction of colouring material
- Using pieces of oak wood in production, ageing and storage
- Blending different types of wine to obtain wine different from the blended wines

Specific wine-making conditions

- Barrel fermentation: only for white and rosé wines, which must remain in the barrel for at least a month.
- Carbonic maceration: the maximum percentage of white grapes permitted in the production of red wines is 5 % in the case of stemmed grapes and 15 % in that of whole grapes.
- Quality sparkling wine: by the traditional method. At least 15 consecutive months between tirage and disgorgement, in the same bottle. The entire production process, including labelling, at the same winery. In the secondary fermentation, the actual alcohol content must not exceed 1,5 % vol. The expedition liqueur must not increase the actual alcohol content by more than 0,5 % vol. After disgorgement, transfer without filtration is allowed to glass bottles with a capacity of less than 0,75 l or at least 3 litres. Acidification and decolouring are prohibited.

b. *Maximum yields*

Red varieties

6 500 kilograms of grapes per hectare

Red varieties

45,5 hectolitres per hectare

White varieties

9 000 kilograms of grapes per hectare

White varieties

63 hectolitres per hectare

Red grapes intended for 'viñedo singular' [single vineyard]

5 000 kilograms of grapes per hectare

Red grapes intended for 'viñedo singular' [single vineyard]

32,5 hectolitres per hectare

White grapes intended for 'viñedo singular' [single vineyard]

6 922 kilograms of grapes per hectare

White grapes intended for 'viñedo singular' [single vineyard]

44,99 hectolitres per hectare

6. Demarcated geographical area

RIOJA ALTA

Autonomous Community of La Rioja

Ábalos

Alesanco

Alesón

Anguciana

Arenzana de Abajo

Arenzana de Arriba

Azofra

Badarán

Bañares

Baños de Río Tobía

Baños de Rioja

Berceo

Bezares

Bobadilla

Briñas

Briones

Camprovín

Canillas

Cañas

Cárdenas

Casalarreina

Castañares de Rioja

Cellórigo

Cenicero

Cidamón

Cihuri

Cirueña

Cordovín

Cuzcurrita de Río Tirón

Daroca de Rioja

Entrena

Estollo

Foncea

Fonzaleche

Fuenmayor

Galbárruli
Gimileo
Haro
Hervías
Herramélluri
Hormilla
Hormilleja
Hornos de Moncalvillo
Huércanos
Lardero
Leiva
Logroño
Manjarrés
Matute
Medrano
Nájera
Navarrete
Ochánduri
Ollauri
Rodezno
Sajazarra
San Asensio
San Millán de Yécora
San Torcuato
San Vicente de la Sonsierra
Santa Coloma
Sojuela
Sorzano
Sotés
Tirgo
Tormantos
Torrecilla sobre Alesanco
Torremontalbo
Treviana
Tricio
Uruñuela
Ventosa
Villalba de Rioja

Villar de Torre

Villarejo

Zarratón

Province of Burgos (Miranda de Ebro): El Ternero (enclave)

RIOJA ORIENTAL

Autonomous Community of La Rioja

Agoncillo

Aguilar del Río Alhama

Albelda

Alberite

Alcanadre

Aldeanueva de Ebro

Alfaro

Arnedillo

Arnedo

Arrúbal

Ausejo

Autol

Bergasa

Bergasilla

Calahorra

Cervera del Río Alhama

Clavijo

Corera

Cornago

El Redal

El Villar de Arnedo

Galilea

Grávalos

Herce

Igea

Lagunilla de Jubera

Leza del Río Leza

Molinos de Ocón

Murillo de Río Leza

Muro de Aguas

Nalda

Ocón (La Villa)

Pradejón
Préjano
Quel
Ribafrecha
Rincón de Soto
Santa Engracia de Jubera (Northern area)
Santa Eulalia Bajera
Tudelilla
Villamediana de Iregua
Villarroya
Autonomous Community of Navarre
Andosilla
Aras
Azagra
Bargota
Mendavia
San Adrián
Sartaguda
Viana
RIOJA ALAVESA
Province of Álava
Baños de Ebro
Barriobusto
Cripán
Elciego
Elvillar de Alava
Labastida
Labraza
Laguardia
Lanciego
Lapuebla de La barca
Leza
Moreda de Alava
Navaridas
Oyón
Salinillas de Buradon
Samaniego
Villabuena de Álava

Yécora

Vineyards located in the municipality of Lodosa on the right bank of the Ebro, and entered in the Board's vineyard register as of 29 April 1991, shall remain registered as long as they continue to exist.

Any change to the boundaries of the municipalities included in the production area shall not mean that registered vineyards will be removed from the vineyard register.

The production area includes smaller geographical entities that are identified as 'viñedos singulares' [single vineyards]. These are smaller than a municipality and can consist of a single cadastral parcel or various different parcels. The vines must be at least 35 years old.

7. **Main wine grapes variety(ies)**

GARNACHA WHITE

ALARIJE – MALVASÍA RIOJANA

ALBILLO MAYOR – TURRUNTÉS

SAUVIGNON BLANC

TEMPRANILLO

WHITE TEMPRANILLO

VERDEJO

RED GRENACHE

CHARDONNAY

MACABEO – VIURA

WHITE MATURANA

RED MATURANA

MAZUELA

GRACIANO

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

WINE

Wines made from grapes from Rioja Alta are characterised by the special influence of the Atlantic climate. This gives the wines moderate alcoholic strength and body with high acidity. For this reason, the wines are suitable for barrel-ageing. The area has fewer hours of daylight during the growth cycle than the area further south covered by the Designation. It also has higher rainfall, which has a direct bearing on its acidity. These factors, together with the protection afforded by the Sierra de Cantabria, enhance the characteristics described in the wines, whether on their own or blended with wines from other areas. In the case of the area of Rioja Alavesa, the convergence of Atlantic and Mediterranean climates means that the wines have a rather higher alcoholic strength than those previously mentioned. They also have a lower acidity and are more versatile inasmuch as they are suitable for immediate consumption and for ageing. The protection from the Sierra de Cantabria, to the north, is even more significant. The hours of daylight are similar to those of Rioja Alta while the rainfall is rather lower. Their versatility also makes them ideal in the production of blended wines. Finally, for the wines from the southernmost area, Rioja Oriental, we find lower rainfall and a notably Mediterranean climate generally characterised by more sunshine. The wines have higher alcoholic strength and aroma and are ideal for blending to produce wines intended for ageing. At the same time, the climate conditions result in wines that can also be suitable for more immediate consumption.

Analysis of the soils covers three main types. Firstly, there are the clay-limestone soils found in the northernmost part of the area covered by the Designation. These represent the basic source for vine-growing, situated between Rioja Alavesa and Rioja Alta. Then, in the latter area and in Rioja Oriental, there are also the alluvial and iron-rich clay soils which produce wines with less body than those previously mentioned.

In economic terms, wine represents 20 % of the region's GDP. The ancient practice of wine-growing, and the vital importance of wine in the region, means dependence on its sustainability. Full advantage is therefore taken of the natural conditions described. In particular, there is the speciality of ageing wines which has resulted in one of the highest concentrations of oak barrels in the world.

QUALITY SPARKLING WINE

While the Designation is mainly known for the production of still wines, some wineries have nevertheless been producing quality sparkling wines by the traditional method since the mid-nineteenth century, hence the know-how and experience.

Freshness and acidity are two key elements in the production of quality sparkling wines. The Designation is situated within an area of cooler temperatures, according to the Winkler scale. This contributes to short growing cycles resulting in correct phenolic ripeness without reaching high levels of alcoholic strength: features that provide the ideal starting point for the production of these wines.

9. Essential further conditions

Legal framework

In national legislation

Type of further condition

Packaging in the demarcated geographical area

Description of the condition

Wines covered by the 'Rioja' Protected Designation of Origin must only be bottled at registered wineries that are registered with the Regulatory Board. Otherwise the wine will not be allowed to use the designation.

This requirement has been established in response to the fact that the quality of the wine finally offered to the consumer is at greater risk when the wine has been transported and bottled outside the production area than when these operations are conducted within the area. The requirement serves to protect the fine reputation of Rioja wine by strengthening control of its special characteristics and quality. It protects the Protected Designation of Origin from which all of the producers affected benefit. The decision was confirmed by a judgment of the Court of Justice of the European Union of 16 May 2000.

Legal framework

In national legislation

Type of further condition

Addition provisions relating to labelling

Description of the condition

The term 'RIOJA' must be prominently featured and just below 'RIOJA', there should be the following elements: 'Denominación de Origen Calificada' (Protected Designation of Origin); the stamp of the Regulatory Board; the trademark; and the name or business name of a registered winery or a trade name.

The terms 'barrel' and 'wood' must not be referred to in the marketing, advertising and labelling of wines before the ageing process is complete.

It is permitted to use the name of an area or municipality when the grape is from there and when it is produced, aged (as applicable) and bottled there. However, no more than 15 % of the grapes used to make the wine can come from registered vineyards located in municipalities bordering on the area or municipality where the operator is based and proof must be provided that the aforementioned 15 % of the grapes will be available on an exclusive basis for a period of at least 10 consecutive years.

In the case of quality sparkling wines, the expression 'Método Tradicional' [Traditional Method] must be featured immediately below the term referring to the sugar content and in a font size that must not exceed that which is used for the name 'Rioja'.

On the label featuring the mandatory information, the font size of the statement 'Método Tradicional' [Traditional Method] must not be smaller than 0,3 cm.

The term 'viñedo singular' [single vineyard] must be featured immediately below the term that is registered as a trademark, with a font size, thickness and colour no larger than that which is used for the name 'Rioja'.

Link to the product specification

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