

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

(2023/C 158/07)

This communication is published in accordance with Article 17(5) of Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2019/33 ⁽¹⁾.

COMMUNICATING THE APPROVAL OF A STANDARD AMENDMENT

‘Vallée du Torgan’

PGI-FR-A1112-AM02

Date of communication: 24.2.2023

DESCRIPTION OF AND REASONS FOR THE APPROVED AMENDMENT

1. Area in immediate proximity

Chapter I, section 4.2 – Area in proximity – of the specification for the protected geographical indication ‘Vallée du Torgan’ has been amended. The list of municipalities making up the area in immediate proximity has been updated, without any changes, in accordance with the 2022 Official Geographical Code.

This editorial amendment allows the geographical area to be identified with reference to the 2022 version of the Official Geographical Code, which is updated by the National Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies (INSEE), and gives the delimitation of the geographical area legal certainty.

The single document has been updated at the point entitled ‘Further conditions – area in immediate proximity’.

2. Vine varieties

Chapter I, section 5 – Vine varieties – of the specification for the protected geographical indication ‘Vallée du Torgan’ has been amended. The list of varieties selected for the production of the protected geographical indication ‘Vallée du Torgan’ has been amended as follows:

— Introduction of 13 varieties considered to be ‘resistant’ to vine diseases:

Artaban N, Cabernet Blanc B, Cabernet Cortis N, Floréal B, Monarch N, Muscaris B, Prior N, Saphira B, Soreli B, Souvignier Gris Rs, Sauvignac B, Vidoc N, Voltis B.

— Introduction of 14 varieties with the potential to adapt to climate change:

Agiorgitiko N, Alvarinho B, Assyrtiko B, Calabrese N, Carricante B, Fiano B, Montepulciano N, Moschofilero Rs, Parrellada B, Primitivo N, Roditis Rs, Touriga Nacional N, Verdejo B, Xinomavro N.

These varieties are resistant to drought and fungal diseases. With similar physiological and oenological properties to the varieties used in the production of the PGI, they reduce the need for plant protection products. They do not affect the characteristics of the PGI wines.

⁽¹⁾ OJ L 9, 11.1.2019, p. 2.

— Deletion of the following grape varieties: Altesse B, Mondeuse N.

These amendments have been carried over to the 'Wine grape varieties' section of the single document.

3. Inspection body

Chapter III of the specification for the protected geographical indication 'Vallée du Torgan' has been amended to simplify the section entitled 'Inspection body', specifying that compliance with the product specification must be checked on the basis of an approved control plan and by a third-party body delegated by the INAO and offering guarantees of competence, impartiality and independence.

This simplification does not affect the single document.

SINGLE DOCUMENT

1. Name(s)

Vallée du Torgan

2. Geographical indication type

PGI - Protected geographical indication

3. Categories of grapevine products

1. Wine

4. Description of the wine(s)

BRIEF WRITTEN DESCRIPTION

The protected geographical indication 'Vallée du Torgan' covers still red, rosé, *gris*, *gris de gris* and white wines.

The term '*gris*' is used to refer to rosé wine that is very pale pink in colour. The term '*gris de gris*' is used to refer to '*gris*' wine made exclusively from 'G' grape varieties.

Wines bearing the protected geographical indication 'Vallée du Torgan' have a maximum volatile acidity content of 13,26 meq/l (0,65 g/l expressed as H₂SO₄), or 15,30 meq/l (0,75 g/l in H₂SO₄) in the case of wines for which malolactic fermentation is complete by the time they reach the bottling stage.

The (minimum or maximum) levels for total alcoholic strength by volume, total acidity, and total sulphur dioxide are those set by EU legislation.

The red wines have varying colour intensity. In terms of aroma and taste, they are Mediterranean in character, combining notes of red fruit and *garrigues*, which often develop spicy hints as they mature. The structure of the wines varies depending on age and wine-making profiles, but they tend to have fine, ripe tannins.

The rosés range from the palest grey in the case of the *gris de gris* wines, to deeper shades of pink depending on the grape varieties and maceration techniques used. These wines have the intense freshness that is characteristic of fruity or flowery notes.

The white wines are mostly pale yellow in colour. They are balanced, between unctuous and fresh, with strong fruity aromas, usually of white fruit such as peach or apricot.

General analytical characteristics	
Maximum total alcoholic strength (in % volume)	
Minimum actual alcoholic strength (in % volume)	11
Minimum total acidity	
Maximum volatile acidity (in milliequivalents per litre)	
Maximum total sulphur dioxide (in milligrams per litre)	

5. **Wine-making practices**

5.1. *Specific oenological practices*

All wine-making practices followed must comply with the requirements laid down at EU level and in the Rural and Maritime Fishing Code.

5.2. *Maximum yields*

1. Red wines

80 hectolitres per hectare

2. Rosé and white wines

90 hectolitres per hectare

6. **Demarcated geographical area**

The harvesting of the grapes and the production and development of wines bearing the 'Vallée du Torgan' PGI must take place in the territory of the following municipalities in the department of Aude: Paziols, Tuchan.

7. **Wine grape variety(-ies)**

Agiorgitiko N

Alicante Henri Bouschet N

Alvarinho - Albariño

Artaban N

Assyrtiko B

Bourboulenc B - Doucillon blanc

Cabernet Blanc B

Cabernet Cortis N

Cabernet Franc N

Cabernet Sauvignon N

Calabrese N

Carignan N

Carignan blanc B

Carmenère N

Carricante

Chardonnay B

Chasan B

Chenanson N

Chenin B

Cinsaut N - Cinsault
Clairette B
Clairette rose Rs
Colombard B
Côt N - Malbec
Fiano
Floreale B
Gamay N
Gewürztraminer Rs
Grenache N
Grenache blanc B
Grenache gris G
Gros Manseng B
Macabeu B - Macabeo
Marsanne B
Marselan N
Mauzac B
Merlot N
Monarch N
Montepulciano
Morrastel N - Minustellu, Graciano
Moschofilero Rs
Mourvèdre N - Monastrell
Muscaris B
Muscat d'Alexandrie B - Muscat, Moscato
Muscat de Hambourg N - Muscat, Moscato
Muscat à petits grains blancs B – Muscat, Moscato
Muscat à petits grains rouges Rg - Muscat, Moscato
Nielluccio N - Nielluciu
Négrette N
Parrellada B
Petit Manseng B
Petit Verdot N
Pinot Blanc B
Pinot Gris G
Pinot Noir N
Piquepoul blanc B
Portan N
Primitivo N - Zinfandel
Prior N
Riesling B
Roditis Rs
Roussanne B
Saphira B

Sauvignac
Sauvignon B - Sauvignon blanc
Sauvignon Gris G - Fié gris
Semillon B
Soreli B
Souvignier Gris Rs
Sylvaner B
Syrah N - Shiraz
Tempranillo N
Terret blanc B
Touriga Nacional N
Ugni Blanc B
Verdejo B
Vermentino B - Rolle
Vidoc N
Viognier B
Voltis B
Xinomavro N

8. Description of the link(s)

8.1. Specificity of the geographical area and specificity of the product

Located some thirty kilometres from the Mediterranean Sea as the crow flies and east of the Massif des Corbières in the department of Aude, in the south of France (Languedoc-Roussillon), the geographical area comprises the communes of Tuchan and Paziols in the foothills of Mont Tauch (917 m). The landscape consists of a central, 'valley-like' area, surrounded by steep slopes. With over 1 200 hectares under vines in the two municipalities, vines are the main crop.

The northern boundary is marked by a narrow pass, after which the road continues towards Villeneuve. To the east, the Serre d'en Mouysset limestone plateau forms a barrier to the sea air. To the south, there is a very windy road towards the border with the Department of Pyrénées-Orientales. Finally, access to the west is through a steep gorge that follows the Verdoube river in the direction of the village of Cucugnan.

'Vallée du Torgan' PGI owes its name to the Torgan stream that flows down Mont Tauch and joins the Verdoube.

The complex geological history of this area has given rise to a great variety of soils. Of the twenty soils that have been thus defined, the most common are the schists in the north of the area, the calcareous colluvials or 'grèzes' in the foothills of Mont Tauch, the Triassic marls, the puddingstones or conglomerates formed by water-worn pebbles in the high areas of Paziols and east of Tuchan: they are all quite stony and of low to medium depth. Finally, the central area consists of gravelly terraces and deeper clay-limestone soils.

The climate is classified as being Mediterranean, and it is hot and dry. Annual precipitation is on average around 700 mm, with rainfall being concentrated on a limited number of days in autumn and spring, often taking the form of thunderstorms and heavy showers. Sunshine levels are significant. A strong northerly wind called the 'Tramontane' (up to 200 windy days a year) can make its presence felt for several days in a row, reaching speeds of more than 80 km/h. This dry wind helps combat mildew during the growing period and limits the risk of *Botrytis cinerea* during the harvest.

During the 19th century, winegrowing took precedence over other agricultural activities, in particular the cultivation of cereals and olive trees, which had been damaged by severe frosts during very harsh winters.

After the 1907 wine crisis the winegrowers came together, building the Tuchan cooperative winery in 1913 and the Paziols one in the following year. This area is particularly suitable to winegrowing.

In February 1987, '*vin de pays du Torgan*' was given recognition in five municipalities in the department. Since 1990, it has been limited to the two municipalities of Tuchan and Paziols for reasons of geographical consistency and product characteristics.

The vine varieties used to produce '*Vallée du Torgan*' PGI wines are adapted to the ecological conditions in the area: first of all, the traditional Mediterranean varieties Carignan and Grenache Noir, both of which are perfectly adapted to the severe water restriction during the summer and to the thin, shallow soils on the slopes. The range is completed by other traditional white and *gris* Grenache varieties, Maccabeu, Cinsault, Muscat d'Alexandrie and Muscat à petit grain.

Replanting work has been ongoing for the last 15 years, by selecting varieties that are particularly suited to the soil and climate in the area. Merlot has been playing a leading role so far. It has been planted on the deepest soils, in particular on an alluvial sector along the Verdoubert river in Paziols. This enables the production of wines that add flexibility and finesse to the blends. Marselan (planted on slightly thinner soils) and Syrah provide strong aromas and complexity to the characteristics of the wines.

The strict rules governing production guarantee the ripeness of the grapes and the quality of the product.

The fact that the varieties are harvested at peak ripeness makes the wine more concentrated, while preserving the flexibility, freshness and intensity of the fruit. The wines are either single variety or blended.

Torgan wine production ranges from 5 000 hl to 10 000 hl per year, most of which is made by the Tuchan-Paziols cooperative winery and another private winery. The volumes produced are highly dependent on summer drought conditions.

The three colours of wine are produced, but reds account for the majority. The rosé wines are constantly being developed, with one original feature being the *gris de gris* wines, essentially produced from the Grenache *gris* grapes that are very common in the area.

8.2. Causal link between the specificity of the geographical area and the specificity of the product

'*Vallée du Torgan*' PGI wines have a strong identity which is derived from the specific characteristics of the production area. The low to medium depth of the soils, the markedly Mediterranean climate and the hilly vineyards located between 100 and 300 m above sea level ensure that vine vigour is controlled and that there is an average annual difference of about ten days for grape ripeness compared to coastal vineyards.

The warm, dry and strictly Mediterranean climate with abundant sunshine encourages the PGI varieties to ripen to perfection, resulting in reds with red fruit and *garrigue* aromas and fine, ripe tannins, as well as rosés, *gris* and white wines that strike a balance between unctuousness, freshness and aromatic expression.

'*Vallée du Torgan*' wine production also benefits from the initiative of companies with well-structured sales teams promoting these wines on the traditional French markets, to large retailers, as well as on export markets.

Thanks to this distribution network with strong links to the production area, '*Vallée du Torgan*' wines have earned a reputation over the last 20 years that allows them to plan on increasing their production to meet the needs of new markets.

As almost the only crops in this area, the vines are a hallmark of its landscape and drivers for the economy in the two municipalities.

The mosaic of small plot vineyards is a major contributor to ensuring areas are kept clear in a forest landscape that is prone to fires, thus playing a key role in biodiversity conservation.

All of the improvements made by the winegrowers over several generations have thus made it possible to promote wine tourism, which in turn enhances the reputation of the products and raises their profile.

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

Area in immediate proximity

Legal framework:

National legislation

Type of further condition:

Derogation concerning production in the demarcated geographical area

Description of the condition:

The area in immediate proximity, defined by derogation for the making and development of wines qualifying for the protected geographical indication 'Vallée du Torgan', comprises the following municipalities bordering the geographical area, based on the official Geographical Code in force as at 1 January 2022:

Department of Aude:

Albas, Albières, Auriac, Bouisse, Cascastel-des-Corbières, Coustouge, Cucugnan, Davejean, Dernacueillette, Duilhac-sous-Peyrepertuse, Durban-Corbières, Embres-et-Castelmaure, Félines-Termenès, Fontjoncouse, Fraissé-des-Corbières, Jonquières, Lairière, Lanet, Laroque-de-Fa, Maisons, Massac, Montgaillard, Montjoi, Mouthoumet, Padern, Palairac, Quintillan, Rouffiac-des-Corbières, Saint-Jean-de-Barrou, Saint-Laurent-de-la-Cabrerisse, Salza, Soulatgé, Termes, Thézan-des-Corbières, Vigneville, Villeneuve-les-Corbières, Villeroque-Termenès, Villesèque-des-Corbières.

Department of Pyrénées-Orientales:

Ansignan, Bélesta, Caramany, Cases-de-Pène, Cassagnes, Caudiès-de-Fenouillèdes, Espira-de-l'Agly, Estagel, Fenouillet, Fosse, Lansac, Latour-de-France, Lesquerde, Maury, Montner, Opoul-Périllos, Peyrestortes, Pia, Planèzes, Prugnanes, Rasiuguères, Rivesaltes, Saint-Arnac, Saint-Martin-de-Fenouillet, Saint-Paul-de-Fenouillet, Salses-le-Château, Tautavel, Vingrau, Vira.

Legal framework:

National legislation

Type of further condition:

Additional provisions relating to labelling

Description of the condition:

The protected geographical indication 'Vallée du Torgan' may be supplemented by the name of one or more grape varieties.

The protected geographical indication 'Vallée du Torgan' may be supplemented by the terms 'primeur' or 'nouveau'.

The European Union PGI logo must appear on the label if the words 'Indication géographique protégée' (Protected geographical indication) are replaced by the traditional term 'Vin de Pays'.

Link to the product specification

https://info.agriculture.gouv.fr/gedei/site/bo-agri/document_administratif-5e316de2-332d-4137-9b0b-d3174f0bbdec
