C/2024/5575

19.9.2024

Publication of an application for registration of a name pursuant to Article 97(3) of Regulation (EU) No 1308/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council in the wine sector

(C/2024/5575)

Within 3 months from the date of this publication, the authorities of a Member State or of a Third Country, or a natural or legal person having a legitimate interest and established or resident in a Third Country, may lodge, in accordance with Article 17 of Regulation (EU) 2024/1143 of the European Parliament and of the Council [1], an opposition with the Commission.

The product specification complying with Article 94 of Regulation (EU) No 1308/2013 is found in the Union register of geographical indications.

SINGLE DOCUMENT

'Sussex'

PDO-GB-02365

Date of application: 27.7.2017

1. **Name to be registered**

Sussex

2. **Third Country to which the demarcated area belongs**

United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

3. **Geographical indication type**

PDO

4. **Categories of grapevine products**

1. Wine

5. Quality sparkling wine

5. **Description of the wines**

Wine Category 1: Wine

Organoleptic characteristics:

'Sussex' still wine

Visual appearance:

Mostly pale yellow or lime through to pale golden for the white wines. Rosé wines can be blush - pale pink, rose petal, wild strawberry and pale through to mid salmon; with the red's appearing mostly pale ruby / violet through to mid ruby / violet and purple red hues.

The wine will be free from visible haze and sediment and clear to the observer.

Aroma and taste:

[1] Regulation (EU) 2024/1143 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 April 2024 on geographical indications for wine, spirit drinks and agricultural products, as well as traditional specialities guaranteed and optional quality terms for agricultural products, amending Regulations (EU) No 1308/2013, (EU) 2019/787 and (EU) 2019/1753 and repealing Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012 (OJ L, 2024/1143, 23.4.2024, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/1143/oj).

Characteristics such as lemon, lime, elderflower and other floral notes, apple, pear and gooseberry strongly apparent in the white wines. Rosé wines can be delicate and floral with hints of white flowers, rose petals, melon and strawberry. Reds will generally be lighter in style with soft tannins and hints of red and black fruits, leather, juicy plums and wild berry on the palate.

Analytical characteristics:

Reducing sugars: no set parameters.

The characteristics below for which no values are specified are in line with the limits laid down in the EU Regulations

General analytical characteristics	
Maximum total alcoholic strength (in % volume)	
Minimum actual alcoholic strength (in % volume)	10 %
Minimum total acidity	5 g/l for white wine and rosé and 4 g/l for still red expressed as tartaric acid
Maximum volatile acidity (in milliequivalents per litre)	
Maximum total sulphur dioxide (in milligrams per litre)	

Wine category 5: Quality sparkling wine

Organoleptic characteristics:

'Sussex' sparkling wine

Visual appearance:

For chardonnay dominant blends, the colour can range from light lemon or pale golden, through to deep golden hues, depending on the age of the wine. For pinot blends the colour can range from pale gold or honey to deep golden hues that are more common, depending on the age of the wine. Rosé wines range from a blush (rose petal) hue to a stronger salmon pink, sometimes with a slight golden hue for wines with more age. Red wines will be from light red to dark mostly pale ruby / violet through to mid ruby / violet and purple red hues.

All the wines will be clear and free from visible haze and sediment.

Aroma and taste:

crisp lemon citrus and green apple acidity from the chardonnays, while the pinots can have a more earthy mix of red berry and baked apple flavours. The longer on-lees bottle aging produces wines with developed autolytic notes of brioche, fresh toast, melon, baked brioche and honey aromas on the nose and palate. Sparkling reds have soft tannins and hints of red and black fruits, leather, juicy plums and wild berry on the palate.

All the wines will demonstrate a fine and persistent mousse, synonymous with 'Traditional Method' sparkling wine.

Analytical characteristics:

Reducing sugars: no set parameters.

The characteristics below for which no values are specified are in line with the limits laid down in the EU Regulations

General analytical characteristics	
Maximum total alcoholic strength (in % volume)	
Minimum actual alcoholic strength (in % volume)	11 %

Minimum total acidity	a minimum of 6 grams per litre expressed as tartaric acid
Maximum volatile acidity (in milliequivalents per litre)	
Maximum total sulphur dioxide (in milligrams per litre)	

6. **Wine making practices**

a. *Essential oenological practices*

Wine Category 1: Wine

Minimum natural alcoholic strength:

The minimum natural alcoholic strength shall not be less than 8 % (before enrichment – set out by EU rules as amended).

Enrichment:

The process of enrichment (in accordance with the procedures laid down in Annex VIII Part 1A of (EU) Regulation 1308/2013 as amended) shall not increase total alcoholic strength by more than 3 % volume. In exceptional years, enrichment up to 3,5 % by volume may be authorised. The actual alcoholic strength of the finished enriched wine shall not be less than 10 % volume.

Acidification, de-acidification:

The conditions and limits on acidification/de-acidification are those laid down for the production of wine. De-acidification of fresh grapes, grape must, grape must in fermentation and new wine still in fermentation is permitted. De-acidification of wines is permitted only up to a limit of 1 g/l expressed as tartaric acid. Acidification is not allowed, but in exceptional years and at the discretion of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland Government this may be authorised.

Sweetening:

Sweetening after fermentation is a separate process from enrichment. The total alcoholic strength of the wine can be raised by sweetening by up to 4 % volume, subject to a limit of 13,5 % for enriched wines.

Sweetening must conform to the conditions of Annex I D, of (EU)Regulation 2019/934 concerning the production of Wine and must take place in the PDO. The sweet reserve used shall be limited to grape must, concentrated grape must, or rectified concentrated grape must which, with the exception of rectified concentrated grape must, shall originate in the same PDO as the wine being sweetened.

Wine category 5: Quality sparkling wine

Minimum permitted sugar levels at harvest: Grapes will have a minimum natural alcohol level of 8 % (62 °Oeschle, 15,0 Brix).

Grapes between 7,5 % - 8 % potential alcohol can be used as part of reserve wines, to be blended with acceptable grapes, where in combination they would pass the minimum alcohol rules.

These limits are for the vineyard as a whole, not a single grape variety or pressing.

Vintage declaration: 85 % of the grapes used to make Sussex sparkling wine must be of the nominated year of any vintage.

Single variety wines: Must contain at least 90 % of the stated variety - Blanc de Blancs will contain at least 90 % Chardonnay. Blanc de Noirs will similarly contain no less than 90 % as a combination of either Pinot Noir and/or Pinot Meunier.

Pressing: The pressing will be of whole bunches only, except for Rosé, which may be made from wine made from partially crushed grapes.

— The maximum press pressure used is 1,6 bar.

— The maximum yield is 66,67 l/100 kg.

Vinification: In addition to the rules specified above and otherwise by the Sussex Wine Producers (SWP), the wines must meet the minimum standards as specified by the EU legislation in force for Traditional Method Quality Sparkling Wine (as defined by EU regulation 1308/2013 and the legislation in force).

Malolactic fermentation: Will be at the discretion of the winemaker.

Tirage: The total alcoholic strength of each cuvée intended for preparation shall not be less than 10 % vol.

The addition of tirage liqueur may not cause an increase in the total alcoholic strength of the cuvée of more than 1,5 % vol. This is measured by calculating the difference between the total alcoholic strength of the cuvée and the total alcoholic strength of the Sussex sparkling wine before any expedition liqueur is added.

The tirage liqueur used for the production of Sussex sparkling wine may contain only:

— Sucrose

— Concentrated grape must

— Rectified concentrated grape must (RCM)

— Grape must or partially fermented grape must

— Wine

Any wine used must be sourced from the same Protected Designated Origin as the cuvée to which it is added.

Tirage may be done by the winery or by an approved mobile bottling unit.

Bottle: The choice of bottle is at the discretion of the winery (but must comply with EU regulations).

Note: At bottling, 2 bottles of cuvée, plus 2 bottles of each separate days bottling must be kept and indelibly marked for traceability.

Maturation: The minimum time a Sussex sparkling wine must stay in the bottle prior to release is 15 months*.

(Note*: Of this time there must be a minimum of 12 months on tirage lees, in which case the wine must have a further 3 months post disgorgement time to make up the 15 months.)

Disgorgement: The practice used for disgorgement must be carried out in accordance with EU Regulations that fulfils the Traditional Method quality sparkling wine definition.

Expedition Liqueur: is at the discretion of the winery within the EU regulations then in force. Any must or wine used must be sourced from the same Protected Designated Origin as the cuvée to which it is added.

b. *Maximum yields*

Wine Category 1: Wine

Under normal conditions the maximum harvest yield shall be 12 tonnes per hectare.

The absolute maximum harvest yield is 14,0 tonnes per hectare*.

(Note*: This level will only be authorized in exceptional circumstances, when it can be proved to the SWP that sugar levels, acidity and flavour are not being jeopardised, or in fact where conditions are such that reducing yield could be detrimental to the quality of the crop. Notification of such an increase will be sent by SWP to producers, the scheme manager and Wine Standards.)

Wine category 5: Quality sparkling wine

Of the must, before enrichment, is 80 hl/ha measured on a vineyard basis.

7. **Demarcated geographical area**

East and West Sussex

Sussex still wine is made from grapes grown within the administrative boundaries of the counties of East and West Sussex.

Sussex sparkling is a Traditional Method quality sparkling white or rosé wine made from classic sparkling wine grape varieties grown within the administrative boundaries of the counties of East and West Sussex

8. **Main wine grapes varieties**

Wine Category 1: Wine

The following grape varieties are permitted:

Acolon; Albarino; Auxerrois; Bacchus; Chardonnay; Dornfelder; Gamay; Huxelrebe; Muller Thurgau; Orion; Ortega; Pinot Blanc; Pinot Gris; Pinot Meunier; Pinot Noir; Pinot Noir Précoce; Regent; Regner; Reichensteiner; Riesling; Rondo; Roter Veltliner; Schonburger; Siegerrebe; Solaris.

Wine category 5: Quality sparkling wine

shall be made principally from the following grape varieties:

Chardonnay, Pinot Noir, Pinot Meunier

In addition, Arbanne, Pinot Gris, Pinot Blanc, Petit Meslier and Pinot Noir Précoce may be used.

9. **Description of the links**

9.1. *Details of the geographical area (natural and human factors)*

Natural factors

Soils

The majority of Sussex vineyards are based either on the chalk of the South Downs or on the mineral rich greensands to the north. This major geological feature that runs through East and West Sussex has a significant calcareous influence.

The South Downs are now the England's largest National Park. They rise out of the sea at Beachy Head in East Sussex, run through West Sussex and on into Hampshire, dominating the landscape of the region's southern boundary with the English Channel. This cretaceous geological phenomenon is the result of aeons of years of the chalky deposits left by marine organisms over 100 million years ago. They were heaved upwards tectonically at the same time as the Alps to form this ridge of hills, the South Downs, that are in fact part of the same band of chalk, an extension of the Paris Basin, which runs through northern France, into southern England.

Climate

Sussex benefits from a high altitude and is also recognised as one of the driest and warmest areas in England albeit with cool evening breezes. It is classified as having a 'semi-continental climate', with average rainfall typically between 600-850 mm per annum. Areas of Sussex still hold records for the longest sunshine hours in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, with Growing Degree Days (GDDs) (as defined by Coombe and Dry 2004), during the growing season of April to October, of around 970-1050.

Human factors

Winemaking skills in Sussex have developed rapidly over recent years, bolstered by the expansion of Plumpton College, who's degree and masters level courses in Viticulture and Oenology are validated by the Royal Agricultural University (Cirencester). Many of the winemakers and vineyard managers working in Sussex have attended courses at Plumpton College which is a centre of excellence for wine education in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and located just north of Brighton in Sussex. It is the only wine school based in a cool climate wine region with a research department offering a bachelor's and master's degree programmes in Oenology. The winemakers of Sussex have developed higher analytical standards for the wine produced and longer bottle ageing for Sussex sparkling wine, an independent qualitative assessment for both still and sparkling wine. They have limited the number of grape varieties and introduced higher natural alcohol levels in the grapes used to produce Sussex wines. The grapes used for sparkling wine are harvested by hand and pressed in whole bunches.

9.2. *Details of the quality or characteristics of the wine which are essentially or exclusively due to the geographical environment*

Still wines have notes such as lemon, lime, elderflower and other floral notes, apple, pear and gooseberry strongly apparent in the white wines. Rosé wines can be delicate and floral with hints of white flowers, rose petals, melon and strawberry. Reds will generally be lighter in style with soft hints of red and black fruits, leather, juicy plums and wild berry on the palate.

Sparkling wines have crisp lemon citrus and green apple acidity from the chardonnays, while the pinots can have a more earthy mix of red berry and baked apple flavours, The longer on-lees bottle aging produces wines with developed autolytic notes of brioche, fresh toast, melon, baked brioche and honey aromas on the nose and palate. Sparkling reds have hints of red and black fruits, leather, juicy plums and wild berry on the palate.

9.3. *Link between the characteristics of the geographical area and the quality of the wine*

The high latitude of the Sussex vineyards gives the opportunity to have a longer growing season, enabling grapes to mature to full phenolic ripeness, and the wide diurnal temperature range providing ideal growing conditions for Traditional Method quality sparkling and still wine production.

The warm days and cooler evenings and a long growing season give rise to sparkling wines with refreshing natural acidity that are clean and fresh, yet have depth and are complex, with a richness in character. Red sparkling wines are generally light in style. Still wines have prominent floral and fruit driven flavours.

The effect of chalk in the soils on Sussex still and sparkling wine should not be underestimated and imparts a distinctive character into the wine. Chalk consists of calcite formed from the shells of these marine organisms, which are highly porous and act as a reservoir (storing an estimated 300-400 litres of water per m^3) that provides the vines with a steady supply of water, even in the driest summers. Chalk draws in water through capillary action. The effort required by the vines to tap into this water supply puts the vines under just enough water stress in the growing season to achieve that delicate balance of ripeness, acidity and berry aroma potential.

The greensand soils to the north of the South Downs also provide free draining soils ideal for viticulture.

The particular terroir of Sussex produces a wide selection of mainly light (low alcohol) still wines from crisp dry whites to fruity red wines and elegant rosé wines. The warm, dry maritime climate, free draining soils of Sussex and the addition of cool evening breezes mean the grapes develop high levels of natural acidity crucial for sparkling wine.

These inherent natural and human factors, particularly the calcareous soils, an exceptional sunshine record and the moderate annual rainfall of 600-850 mm, make Sussex an ideal region to produce grapes of outstanding quality for still and sparkling wines.

10. **Essential further conditions**

10.1. *Specific packaging requirements*

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10.2. *Specific labelling requirements*

Wine Category 1: Wine

After a wine has qualified as 'Sussex' still wine can be complemented by the additional terms 'Still' or 'Origin' on the label.

Vintage Years – the 85 % rule (above) applies.

Defined geographical area – The words 'Produce of England' or 'Made in England' must be included on the label.

The term *'protected designation of origin'* must appear on the label.

The Sussex emblem may be displayed on the label.



All labelling showing sugar and alcohol content must follow EU regulations.

Wine category 5: Quality sparkling wine

The name 'Sussex' on sparkling wine can be complemented by the addition of 'Sparkling' 'Classic' or 'Origin' on the label. The terms 'bottle-fermented', 'traditional method', 'bottle fermented in the traditional method' or 'traditional' can also be added the label,

Vintage Years – the 85 % rule (above) applies.

Defined geographical area – The words 'Produce of England' or 'Made in England' must be included on the label.

The term *'protected designation of origin'* must appear on the label.

The Sussex emblem may be displayed on the label.



All labelling showing sugar and alcohol content must follow EU regulations.

10.3. *Additional requirements*

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Reference to the publication of the specification

https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/protected-geographical-food-and-drink-names-uk-applications-and-consultations