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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

(C/2024/5919)

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

'Lirac'

PDO-FR-A0331-AM02

Date of communication: 24 July 2024

DESCRIPTION OF AND REASONS FOR THE APPROVED AMENDMENT

1. Geographical area and area in immediate proximity

The product specification for the 'Lirac' designation has been amended in Chapter I, Section IV 'Areas and places in which the various operations take place', point 1 'Geographical area' and point 3 'Area in immediate proximity', merely to add the reference to the Official Geographic Code of 1 January 2023.

This editorial amendment allows the geographical area to be identified with reference to the 2023 version of the Official Geographic Code, which is issued by the National Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies (INSEE), and gives the definition of the geographical area legal certainty.

The same reference has been added to the single document, under the headings 'Geographical area' and 'Additional conditions – area in immediate proximity'.

2. Labelling

Chapter I of the product specification for the designation 'Lirac' has been supplemented under Section XII 'Presentation and labelling rules', point 2 'Special provisions'. It now includes the labelling rules regarding reference to the broader geographical unit 'Vignobles de la Vallée du Rhône', as set out in the agreement signed between the protection and management bodies concerned. This information must appear in the same visual field as all the mandatory details, be printed in characters of the same graphic design and colour as those of the designation, and be no bigger than two thirds of the size of the designation.

This amendment has been added to the single document in the section on 'Additional conditions – Labelling'.

3. Declaration requirements

Chapter II of the product specification for the designation 'Lirac' has been updated: the obligations of operators to make declarations to the protection and management body have been brought into line with the inspection plan for the designation.

This update does not affect the single document.

4. Details of the inspection body

Chapter III, Section II, of the product specification, 'Details of the inspection body', has been updated to specify that checks on compliance with the product specification must be carried out on the basis of an approved inspection plan and by a third-party body offering guarantees of competence, impartiality and independence delegated by the INAO, the inspection authority.

This update does not affect the single document.

[1] OJ L 9, 11.1.2019, p. 2.

SINGLE DOCUMENT

1. **Name(s)**

Lirac

2. **Type of geographical indication**

PDO – protected designation of origin

3. **Categories of grapevine products**

1. Wine

3.1. *Combined Nomenclature code*

— 22 - BEVERAGES, SPIRITS AND VINEGAR

2204 - Wine of fresh grapes, including fortified wines; grape must, other than that of heading 2009

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

1. Still dry red wines

BRIEF WRITTEN DESCRIPTION

The colour of the red wines is very intense and dark. On the nose, there are complex aromas of red or black fruits in various stages of development, at times cooked, with notes of spice and leather. In the mouth, the wines are ample and balanced, with powerful, rounded tannins. These wines are particularly suitable for ageing.

At the time of packaging, the wines meet the following criteria:

— a minimum natural alcoholic strength by volume of 12,5 %

— fermentable sugar content ≤ 4 g/l if minimum natural alcoholic strength by volume ≤ 14 %

— fermentable sugar content ≤ 3 g/l if minimum natural alcoholic strength by volume > 14 %

— malic acid content ≤ 0,4 g/l

— amended colour intensity (OD 420 nm + OD 520 nm + OD 620 nm) ≥ 6

— total polyphenol index (OD 280 nm) ≥ 40

The other analytical criteria comply with the values established in EU legislation.

General analytical characteristics

— Maximum total alcoholic strength (in % volume): 14,5

— Minimum actual alcoholic strength (in % volume): —

— Minimum total acidity: in milliequivalents per litre

— Maximum volatile acidity (in milliequivalents per litre): 16,33

— Maximum total sulphur dioxide (in milligrams per litre): —

2. Still dry rosé wines

BRIEF WRITTEN DESCRIPTION

The rosé wines are mostly made by the *saignée* method. They are also ample and balanced wines, with fruity aromas of ripe red fruits. They are distinguished by their freshness and roundness.

At the time of packaging, the wines meet the following criteria:

— a minimum natural alcoholic strength by volume of 12 %

— fermentable sugar content ≤ 4 g/l if minimum natural alcoholic strength by volume ≤ 14 %

— fermentable sugar content ≤ 3 g/l if minimum natural alcoholic strength by volume > 14 %

The other analytical criteria comply with the values established in EU legislation.

General analytical characteristics

— Maximum total alcoholic strength (in % volume): 14

— Minimum actual alcoholic strength (in % volume): —

— Minimum total acidity: in milliequivalents per litre

— Maximum volatile acidity (in milliequivalents per litre): 16,33

— Maximum total sulphur dioxide (in milligrams per litre): —

3. Still dry white wines

BRIEF WRITTEN DESCRIPTION

The white wines are ample, with floral aromas characterised by garrigue and aromas of white fruits. They are noted for their long, pleasingly persistent aromas.

At the time of packaging, the wines meet the following criteria:

— a minimum natural alcoholic strength by volume of 12 %

— fermentable sugar content ≤ 4 g/l if minimum natural alcoholic strength by volume ≤ 14 %

— fermentable sugar content ≤ 3 g/l if minimum natural alcoholic strength by volume > 14 %

The other analytical criteria comply with the values established in EU legislation.

General analytical characteristics

— Maximum total alcoholic strength (in % volume): 14

— Minimum actual alcoholic strength (in % volume): —

— Minimum total acidity: in milliequivalents per litre

— Maximum volatile acidity (in milliequivalents per litre): 16,33

— Maximum total sulphur dioxide (in milligrams per litre): —

5. **Winemaking practices**

5.1. *Specific oenological practices*

1. Spacing between rows and plants

Cultivation method

The distance between the rows is ≤ 2,50 metres. The area available for each vine does not exceed 2,50 square metres. The distance between vines in the same row is between 0,80 metres and 1,25 metres.

2. Pruning of the vine

Cultivation method

The vines are spur pruned, trained to gobelet or cordon de Royat, with a maximum of six spurs per plant. Each spur has a maximum of two buds. The period for establishing the cordon de Royat is limited to 2 years.

Vines of the variety Viognier B may be pruned:

— either using the single Guyot method, with a maximum of eight buds on the cane and one or two spurs with a maximum of two buds on each spur;

— or using the double Guyot method, with a maximum of six buds on each cane and one or two spurs with a maximum of two buds on each spur.

3. Irrigation

Cultivation method

Irrigation may be authorised.

4. Cultivation method

Plastic mulching is prohibited.

No substantial alterations may be made to the shape and contours of the landscape or the natural pedological sequence of parcels intended for production of wine bearing the protected designation of origin.

5. Specific oenological practice

The use of wood chips is forbidden.

The use of oenological charcoal is forbidden for making rosé wines.

In addition to the above provision, all winemaking practices followed must also comply with the requirements laid down in EU legislation and in the Rural and Maritime Fishing Code.

6. Special arrangements for harvesting and transporting the harvested grapes

Cultivation method

Sorting of the harvested grapes is obligatory. It takes place either on the vine or in the winery, depending on whether special equipment is required.

When the harvested grapes are transported, the weight per container is limited to 4 000 kg.

5.2. *Maximum yields*

43 hectolitres per hectare

6. **Demarcated geographical area**

The grapes are harvested and the wines produced and matured in the following municipalities of the department of Gard, based on the 2023 Official Geographic Code: Lirac, Roquemaure, Saint-Geniès-de-Comolas and Saint-Laurent-des-Arbres.

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

Bourboulenc B - Doucillon blanc

Carignan N

Cinsaut N - Cinsault

Clairette B

Clairette rose Rs

Counoise N

Grenache N

Grenache blanc B

Grenache gris G

Marsanne B

Mourvèdre N - Monastrell

Piquepoul blanc B

Piquepoul noir N

Roussanne B

Syrah N - Shiraz

Ugni blanc B

Viognier B

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

8.1. *Natural and human factors relevant to the link*

Overlooking the right bank of the Rhône, the geographical area of the protected designation of origin 'Lirac' is at the heart of the 'Côte du Rhône' in the department of Gard: the cradle of the protected designation to which it gives its name. The area is formed of terraces and slopes, stretching north-east to south-west parallel to the direction of the river. It is located between the Rhône and the landscape of garrigue-covered limestone. The vineyards extend over demarcated parcels in four municipalities in the department of Gard, namely Lirac, Roquemaure, Saint-Géniès-de-Comolas and Saint-Laurent-des-Arbres, at an elevation of between 50 and 200 metres.

The climate is Mediterranean, with the effect of the Mistral. The annual rainfall is low: less than 700 millimetres. With 2 700 hours per year, sunshine is plentiful, especially in summer during the ripening period of the grapes. The Mistral, a strong, cold and dry wind from the north, blows for an average of 180 days per year.

The formation of the high terraces is known locally as 'villafranchienne': red clay soils containing large 'galets roulés' (smooth pebbles) are overlaid by skeletal soils of loess or clay-limestone (rendzina) on the slopes and lower areas. All of these soils are characterised by their sensitivity to summer drought.

The controlled designation of origin 'Lirac' was formally recognised by decree on 14 October 1947. It was the first of the 'Crus des Côtes du Rhône' permitted to produce wine in three colours: red, rosé and white.

In 2009, the vineyards covered an area of 750 hectares, producing an annual average of 20 000 hectolitres. Production is in the hands of around 50 operators. The wines are mostly red, representing 80 % of total production, with rosé representing 11 %.

8.2. *Causal interactions*

There is interaction between beneficial natural factors, practices shared by the producer community and local economic development factors. As a result, 'Lirac' wines can be identified by their originality and typicity associated with the terroir.

The different grape varieties used can find their ideal environment in each of the major soil types present on the parcels. The latter are carefully demarcated for production of the three colours of wine. Thanks to local expertise, white grape varieties tend to be planted on limestone soils, which are perfect for producing white wines. Red varieties are planted on deeper clay soils, which nevertheless have good drainage, enabling production of powerful, structured red wines.

Throughout the history of these vineyards, the different varieties have been selected for their ability to resist the intense summer heat. The range of grape varieties allows producers to optimise their blends according to the soil type and aspect of each parcel.

The Mediterranean climate of the Rhône valley is characterised by sunshine. Along with the scarcity of rain in summer, this allows the grapes to ripen well, with a high sugar content that naturally results in generous wines.

The Mistral is a powerful wind, cold yet dry. It prevents damp settling on the leaves, thereby providing a natural means of combating fungal diseases.

The port of Roquemaure played an important role in the development and reputation of the wines. Indeed, for a long time, it was the point of departure for 'Côte du Rhône' wines being shipped to Paris, England and Holland.

In the 18th century, Roquemaure was the most important port on the Rhône for the wine trade. Up to 2 000 containers of wine could be stored there, prior to being loaded and sent to French or European cities.

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 the wines, comprises the territory of the following municipalities, on the basis of the 2023 Official Geographic Code:

— Department of Ardèche: Saint-Just;

— Department of Drôme: Rochegude;

— Department of Gard: Les Angles, Aramon, Bagnols-sur-Cèze, Carsan, Castillon-du-Gard, Cavillargues, Chusclan, Codolet, Comps, Connaux, Cornillon, Domazan, Estézargues, Flaux, Fournès, Gaujac, Goudargues, Jonquières-Saint-Vincent, La Bastide-d'Engras, La Capelle-et-Masmolène, La Roque-sur-Cèze, Laudun-l'Ardoise, Meynes, Montfaucon, Montfrin, Orsan, Le Pin, Pont-Saint-Esprit, Pougnadoresse, Pouzilhac, Pujaut, Remoulins, Rochefort-du-Gard, Sabran, Saint-Alexandre, Saint-André-de-Roquepertuis, Saint-André-d'Olérargues, Saint-Bonnet-du-Gard, Saint-Christol-de-Rodières, Saint-Etienne-des-Sorts, Saint-Gervais, Saint-Hilaire-d'Ozilhan, Saint-Julien-de-Peyrolas, Saint-Laurent-de-Carnols, Saint-Laurent-la-Vernède, Saint-Marcel-de-Careiret, Saint-Michel-d'Euzet, Saint-Nazaire, Saint-Paulet-de-Caisson, Saint-Paul-les-Fonts, Saint-Pons-la-Calm, Saint-Victor-la-Coste, Salazac, Sauveterre, Saze, Sernhac, Tavel, Théziers, Tresques, Vallabrix, Valliguières, Vénéjan, Verfeuil, Vers-Pont-du-Gard and Villeneuve-lès-Avignon;

— Department of Vaucluse: Althen-des-Paluds, Aubignan, Avignon, Beaumes-de-Venise, Bédarrides, Bollène, Caderousse, Cairanne, Camaret-sur-Aigues, Caromb, Carpentras, Caumontsur-Durance, Châteauneuf-de-Gadagne, Châteauneuf-du-Pape, Courthézon, Entraigues-sur-la-Sorgue, Gigondas, Jonquerettes, Jonquières, Lafare, Lagarde-Paréol, Lamotte-du-Rhône, Lapalud, Loriol-du-Comtat, Mondragon, Monteux, Morières-lès-Avignon, Mornas, Orange, Pernes-les-Fontaines, Piolenc, Le Pontet, Rasteau, La Roque-Alric, Sablet, Saint-Hippolyte-le-Graveyron, Saint-Saturnin-lès-Avignon, Sainte-Cécile-les-Vignes, Sarrians, Séguret, Sérignan-du-Comtat, Sorgues, Suzette, Le Thor, Travaillan, Uchaux, Vacqueyras, Vedène and Violès.

Broader geographical unit

Legal framework:

National legislation

Type of further condition:

Additional provisions relating to labelling

Description of the condition:

The labels of wines with the protected designation of origin may specify the broader geographical unit 'Cru des Côtes du Rhône' or 'Vignobles de la Vallée du Rhône' in accordance with the conditions for use set out in the agreement signed between the various protection and management bodies concerned. This information must appear in the same visual field as all the mandatory details, be printed in characters of the same graphic design and colour as those of the designation, and be no bigger than two thirds of the size of the designation.

Link to the product specification

https://info.agriculture.gouv.fr/gedei/site/bo-agri/document_administratif-6a18f1f2-d1b5-420b-bdfb-a9f701721270