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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/2025/2150)

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

'Les Baux de Provence'

PDO-FR-A0272-AM01

Date of communication: 15 January 2025

DESCRIPTION OF AND REASONS FOR THE APPROVED AMENDMENT

1. Geographical area and area in immediate proximity

In Section IV 'Areas and places in which the various operations take place' of Chapter I of the product specification for the 'Les Baux de Provence' designation, point 1 'Geographical area' has, without further change, been amended by adding a more precise phrase 'All the stages of production' before 'the grape harvest, vinification, processing and maturation of the wines'.

In Section IV 'Areas and places in which the various operations take place' of Chapter I of the product specification for the 'Les Baux de Provence' designation, point 1 'Geographical area' and point 3 'Area in immediate proximity' have, without further change, been amended by adding a reference to the 2023 Official Geographic Code.

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 amendments have been made to the single document, under the headings 'Geographical area' and 'Further conditions – area in immediate proximity'.

2. Demarcated parcel area

In the specification, Chapter I, Section IV 'Areas and places in which the various operations take place', point 2 'Demarcated parcel area' has been amended with the dates of approval by the competent national authority of the demarcated parcel area of the PDO in the geographical area of production. Parcels are demarcated by identifying the parcels within the geographical area of production that are suited to production of the product covered by the protected designation of origin in question. The geographical area has not changed.

This amendment does not affect the single document.

3. Rules on the proportion of grape varieties

Chapter I, Section V 'Grape varieties' of the specification has been amended as follows:

— for the rosé wines: to preserve the wine-making practices and the typical character of the rosé wines of 'Les Baux de Provence', the proportion of white grape varieties in the blend has been reduced from 50 % to 20 %.

— for the white wines: to avoid setting the proportion of secondary grape varieties with reference to a single grape variety, Roussanne B, which has low and sometimes irregular production, the specification has been amended to set a maximum proportion of 30 %.

These amendments do not affect the single document.

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

4. **Vineyard management**

In the specification, Chapter I, Section VI 'Vineyard management' has been amended to specify that chemical weed control on the soil surface of parcels is prohibited. This provision also applies to headlands and hill slopes of the parcels.

This amendment has been moved to the section 'Wine-making practices' of the single document.

5. **Method of producing rosé wines**

In the specification, Chapter I, Section X 'Link with the geographical area', point 2 'Information on product quality and characteristics' has been amended to specify that rosé wines are produced by pressing and the *saignée* technique.

The detail has been moved to the section 'Description of the wine(s)' in the single document.

6. **Date for placing on the market of red and white wines**

In the specification, Chapter I, Section IX 'Processing, production and maturation' has been amended to specify that the red and white wines are made available to consumers on the market when their maturation period comes to an end. This period lasts until 1 April of the year following that of the harvest for the white wines, and 15 September of the year following that of the harvest for the red wines.

These clarifications have been moved to the section 'Description of the wine(s)' in the single document.

7. **Deletion of a transitional measure regarding the area in immediate proximity**

In the specification, Chapter I, Section XI 'Transitional measures' has been amended to remove an obsolete transitional measure relating to the area in immediate proximity, which provided that, as a transitional measure, the wines could be processed, produced and maturated until the harvest of 2013 inclusive within the territory of Tarascon municipality in the department of Bouches-du-Rhône.

This deletion does not affect the single document.

8. **Declaration requirements**

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

This amendment does not affect the single document.

9. **Key points to be checked in the specification**

Chapter III of the product specification for the 'Les Baux de Provence' designation has been updated: the list of the main items to be checked has been brought into line with the inspection plan for the designation.

This amendment does not affect the single document.

10. **Reference to the inspection body**

Section II 'Reference to the inspection body' of Chapter III of the product specification has been updated to specify that checks on compliance with the specification must be carried out on the basis of an approved inspection plan and by a third-party body that guarantees competence, impartiality and independence, appointed by the National Institute of Origin and Quality (*Institut National de l'Origine et de la Qualité*, INAO).

This amendment does not affect the single document.

SINGLE DOCUMENT

1. **Name(s)**

Les Baux de Provence

2. **Geographical indication type**

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 wine; grape must other than that of heading 2009

2204 21 – in containers holding 2 litres or less

2204 21 06 – With a protected designation of origin (PDO)

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

Still red, rosé and white wines

BRIEF WRITTEN DESCRIPTION

The 'Les Baux de Provence' designation of origin covers still red, rosé and white wines.

The wines have a minimum natural alcoholic strength by volume of 11,5 %.

Red wines ready for packaging have a malic acid content not exceeding 0,4 grams per litre.

After fermentation, the wines have a fermentable sugar content (glucose and fructose) not exceeding 4 grammes per litre.

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

Thanks to the particularly favourable environmental, geological and soil conditions, the red wines, which represent 60 % of the production, have an ageing potential of 5 to 10 years. They are mainly made from Grenache N and Syrah N grape varieties (sometimes blended with Mourvèdre N and Cabernet Sauvignon N grape varieties). These wines combine robustness and elegance with a dark ruby and garnet colour, with an exuberant aroma of spices, 'jammy' black fruits and cocoa. The tannins are very elegant despite the robustness of the wines. The red wines are made available to consumers on the market when their maturation period comes to an end. This period lasts until 15 September of the year following that of the harvest.

The rosé wines (representing 30 % of the production) are more generally made from the Grenache N, Cinsaut N and Syrah varieties by pressing and the *saignée* technique. These wines have a colour ranging from salmon pink to peony. They are well-balanced, structured, rounded and full with fruity and floral aromas.

The white wines (representing 10 % of the production) are mainly made from a blend of the Vermentino B, Grenache Blanc B, Clairette B and, to a lesser extent, Roussanne B varieties. The Marsanne B variety and the more traditional Bourboulenc B and Ugni Blanc B varieties, which are well adapted to the geographical environment, sometimes complement the blend by adding additional aromatic complexity. These wines are characterised by their freshness and liveliness, very aromatic on the nose and in the mouth, having notes of stone fruits (e.g. peach, apricot), anise and rosemary. When aged in wood, the wines have toasted tones, with notes of ripe fruits and vanilla. The white wines are made available to consumers on the market when their maturation period comes to an end. This period lasts until 1 April of the year following that of the harvest.

General analytical characteristics

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

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

— Minimum total acidity: —

— Maximum volatile acidity (in milliequivalents per litre): —

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

5. **Winemaking practices**

5.1. *Specific oenological practices*

1.

Cultivation method

The minimum planting density of the vines is 4 000 plants per hectare. The spacing between the rows is 2,5 metres or less. Between plants in the same row, spacing is at least 0,8 metres.

— The vines are spur pruned, trained to gobelet or cordon de Royat, with a maximum of six spurs with one or two buds per plant.

— The Syrah N variety can be pruned to single Guyot with a maximum of eight buds per plant.

— Irrigation during the vine growing season is permitted only if persistent drought disrupts the sound physiological development of the vines and the ripening of the grapes. It is carried out exclusively using furrow or drip irrigation.

— In order to preserve the characteristics of the physical and biological environment, which is a fundamental part of the terroir, chemical weed control on the soil surface of parcels is prohibited. This provision also applies to headlands and hill slopes of the parcels.

2.

Specific oenological practice

— The use of wood chips is prohibited;

— The use of oenological charcoal, either alone or mixed in preparations, is prohibited in the production of rosé wines;

— Any practice that lowers the temperature of the harvested grapes to below 5 °C is forbidden;

— Any heat treatment of the grape harvest at a temperature above 40 °C is prohibited.

Besides the above provisions, the oenological practices adopted for the wines must comply with the obligations laid down by EU legislation and by the Rural and Fisheries Code.

5.2. *Maximum yields*

1.

50 hectolitres per hectare

6. **Demarcated geographical area**

All the stages of production, from the grape harvest, vinification, processing and maturation, take place within the geographical area, in the territory of the following municipalities of the department of Bouches-du-Rhône, based on the 2023 Official Geographic Code: Les Baux-de-Provence, Fontvieille, Maussane-les-Alpilles, Mouriès, Paradou, Saint-Etienne-du-Grès and Saint-Rémy-de-Provence.

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

Cabernet Sauvignon N

Carignan N

Clairette B

Counoise N

Grenache N

Grenache Blanc B

Marsanne B

Roussanne B

Ugni Blanc B

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

Description of the natural factors relevant to the link

The geographical area corresponds to the western part of the Alpilles mountain range, with peaks standing at 490 metres and the central part lying within the territory of Les Baux de Provence municipality.

This mountain range is made of limestone crags stretching from east to west for around 30 kilometres between the Rhône river, the Durance river and the Crau plain.

An eroded massif, the range is formed of picturesque bevelled crags in the marl-limestone formations of the Lower Cretaceous and the hard limestone of the Jurassic. It includes small flat and stony areas, and small troughs sunk into the argillites of the Upper Cretaceous and the sandy and limestone molasse of the Miocene, sheltering vineyards and traditional olive groves.

This topography gives rise to a Mediterranean climate with hot and dry summers and particularly rainy springs and autumns, with an average annual rainfall of 750 millimetres. The Mistral, a cold and often strong wind from the north, blows about a hundred days per year. The average solar radiation of this area is 2 800 hours per year.

Thanks to their sheltered position, the southern slopes of the Alpilles mountain range benefit from maritime influences, while the northern slopes, more open and exposed to the Mistral, are cooler.

Vine-growing soils develop on slanting slopes and stony colluvium surfaces, forming glacis, alluvial cones, scree or stratified slope deposits (*grèzes litées*). The vineyard parcels are mainly found on terraces or hillsides on both faces of the mountain range.

The geographical area spreads across the territory of seven municipalities in the department of Bouches-du-Rhône, and parcels intended for grape harvest are demarcated to prioritise well-drained foothills and stony terrains.

These rare and extraordinary landscapes with chiselled and shining crags, where vine and olive cultures have existed in symbiosis since ancient times, were immortalised by Van Gogh and inspired Alphonse Daudet from the heights of his Fontvieille windmill.

Description of the human factors relevant to the link

The history of this vineyard, as in Provence as a whole, began in around 600 B.C., when the Phocaeans founded Marseilles and introduced vines into France for the first time. From the 2nd century B.C., the Romans came to settle in Liguria, which was colonised by the Phocaeans four centuries earlier. The area of Romanin (straddling Saint-Andiol, Saint-Rémy-de-Provence and Orgon) was already a major vineyard thanks to Greek influence.

The history of the vineyard and its development have been similar to the rest of the main wine-growing areas in Provence.

The phylloxera crisis led to a boom in olive culture until the frost in 1956, which destroyed almost all the olive groves and gave vine culture a second chance to slowly reclaim the ground.

Right after the Second World War, Robert Faye, former owner of the 'Mas de la Dame', gave the vineyard a new lease of life on the advice of his friend Baron le Roy, one of the founding fathers of protected designations.

In 1956, wines produced in this region as far as Aix-en-Provence were recognised as *vin délimité de qualité supérieure* [designated high quality wine].

From then on, the Alpilles region enjoyed a special reputation under the name of 'Coteaux des Baux de Provence'.

The decree of 25 September 1972 repealed the decree of 1956, and all the municipalities covering the geographical area of 'Coteaux des Baux de Provence' were integrated into the geographical area of the *vin délimité de qualité supérieure* 'Coteaux d'Aix-en-Provence'.

The PDO 'Coteaux d'Aix-en-Provence' was recognised by the decree of 24 December 1985, which also established the specific geographical designation 'Les Baux de Provence'.

The producers of the geographical designation 'Les Baux de Provence' became aware of the geographical and climatic combination of their territory very early on. Convinced by this specificity and the unique know-how they have honed, these wine producers strive to make the originality of their wines known. Their effort resulted in the recognition of the PDO 'Les Baux de Provence' on 20 April 1995.

In its lofty setting, the village of Baux, located in the heart of the geographical area, gave its name to the term 'bauxite' as the ore was discovered there in 1821. It is an exceptional tourist attraction, thanks both to its rough terrains and the citadel founded on the ruins of a Gallic settlement. The village has a strong impact on the local wine industry and the business policy of the wine producers.

The vineyard of the PDO 'Les Baux de Provence', covering 325 hectares in 2009, reached an average annual production of 10 000 hectolitres produced by 14 properties and estates. Thanks to the particularly favourable environmental, geological and soil conditions, the red wines, which represent 60 % of the production, have an ageing potential of 5 to 10 years. They are mainly made from Grenache N and Syrah N grape varieties (sometimes blended with Mourvèdre N and Cabernet Sauvignon N grape varieties). These wines combine robustness and elegance with a dark ruby and garnet colour, with an exuberant aroma of spices, 'jammy' black fruits and cocoa. The tannins are very elegant despite the robustness of the wines.

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The white wines (representing 10 % of the production) are mainly made from a blend of the Vermentino B, Grenache Blanc B, Clairette B and, to a lesser extent, Roussanne B varieties. The Marsanne B variety and the more traditional Bourboulenc B and Ugni Blanc B varieties, which have been well adapted to the geographical environment, sometimes complement the blend by adding additional aromatic complexity. These wines are characterised by their freshness and liveliness, very aromatic on the nose and in the mouth, having notes of stone fruits (e.g. peach, apricot), anise and rosemary. When aged in wood, the wines have toasted tones, with notes of ripe fruits and vanilla. The vineyard is located in a conducive and characteristic environment, well known for its homogeneity. Vine-growing soils, formed on sloping stony and limestone deposits resulting from frost weathering, are very characteristic of this region. The clay-loam soil structure is sufficient to ensure a good water regime for the vines.

This territory stands out because of its subtle climatic variations, making it an early-ripening area with little frost and much warmth, having autumns and springs with abundant rainfall. The influence of the Mistral is clearly felt in this well-sheltered vineyard at the foot of the mountain crags. It dries and cools the atmosphere allowing good phenolic ripening, particularly for the most delicate Provençal grape varieties.

A Mediterranean climate endowed with abundant rainfall and wind, together with a terrain of hillsides and small troughs, and parcels with stony soils and a good water regime sheltered at the foot of Alpilles limestone crags, provide the whole vineyard with optimal conditions, in particular for late-ripening grape varieties such as the Mourvèdre N variety.

In addition to the inherent know-how in quality wine production, the community of producers has been able to make use of this area blessed with hillsides exposed to wind and warm weather, be they north-facing or south-facing.

These natural factors favourable to the vineyard, combined with human factors and yield control (maximum 50 hectolitres per hectare), make it possible to produce structured, complex and generous rosé wines, lively and aromatic white wines, and red wines suitable for ageing, with aromas of spices and black fruits, as well as silky tannins.

These characteristics are the source of reputation for these wines. Customers, professionals and individuals, regardless of their nationality, readily come to meet wine producers in their wine estates.

These wines appear most frequently in top-ranking restaurants in Paris and elsewhere in France, as well as in London (Waterside, Le Gavroche, Bibendum), Munich (Dallmayr), Geneva (Le Cygne) and Luxembourg (Le Gastronome, Clairefontaine).

The PDO enjoys an excellent reputation and the wines are sold outside France, in Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Spain and the United Kingdom, and are exported to Canada, the United States of America, Australia, New Zealand, Japan, Singapore and Switzerland.

9. **Essential further conditions (bottling, 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 vinification, processing and maturation of the wines, comprises the territory of the following municipalities in the department of Bouches-du-Rhône, on the basis of the 2023 Official Geographic Code: Eygalières and Mas-Blanc-des-Alpilles.

Link to the product specification

http://info.agriculture.gouv.fr/gedei/site/bo-agri/document_administratif-1af2db8a-21e0-4d2e-b0c9-f58e249a1c7a