**TECHNICAL FILE**

**GEOGRAPHICAL INDICATION**

**‘GENEPÌ DELLA VALLE D’AOSTA’**

1. **Name of the spirit drink including the geographical indication:** *‘Genepì della Valle d’Aosta’*

**Category of the spirit drink including the geographical indication:** Liqueur

- Category 32 of Annex 2 to Regulation (EC) No 110/2008.

1. **Description of the spirit drink**

***a) Physical, chemical and/or organoleptic characteristics of the product***

*‘Genepì della Valle d’Aosta’* must have the following characteristics:

a1) Chemical properties

The minimum alcoholic strength by volume is 25 %. No colouring agents are added to the product.

The following active ingredients extracted from the plants may be found in *‘Genepì della Valle d’Aosta’*, although they are not all present at the same time: volatile substances (α/β thujone, α/β pinene, 1,8-cineol, borneol and sabinene) and bitter principles (terpene lactones), in varying ratios depending on the *Artemisia* species and preparation method used. The minimum sugar content is 100 g per litre of product expressed as invert sugar; sucrose or glucose syrup may be used.

a2) Physical properties

The liqueur has a transparent to translucent appearance, and it is either colourless or of a colour that can vary from light green to amber yellow.

a3) Organoleptic properties

It has an intense and lingering aroma with floral and fruity notes. Spicy and herbaceous notes of hay and citrus notes may be detected. It has a warm, mellow taste and may be sweet or dry. Bitter components may emerge, characteristic of the plant. Products obtained by suspension are colourless and the taste is less smooth.

***b) Specific characteristics of the spirit drink as compared to the relevant category***

The liqueur *‘Genepì della Valle d’Aosta’* is obtained by extracting the active ingredients of plants belonging to the species *Artemisia genipi* Weber (*= A. spicata* Wulfen), *A. umbelliformis* Lam. (*=A. mutellina* Vill.), *A. glacialis* L., *A. nivalis* Br.-Bl., and *A. petrosa* (Baumg) Jan., by maceration or suspension of the plants themselves in a water-alcohol solution, or by using flavouring preparations obtained by extraction from any of the plant species indicated. Production must take place entirely within the Valle d’Aosta.

The wormwood used must come from areas where the wild plants are gathered and/or where the plants are grown, which, in both cases, are situated in the defined geographical area referred to in paragraph c) below. The water used for production must come from water sources situated in the Valle d’Aosta.

***c) Geographical area concerned***

The optimum growing altitude, due to the specific climatic and morphological conditions of the alpine valleys in the Valle d’Aosta, has been identified as more than 1 400 metres above sea level on the exposed and sunny *Adret* (a term that in the [Valle d’Aosta](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aosta_Valley) means south-facing) slopes and more than 1 350 metres above sea level on the less sunny *Envers* (a term that in the [Valle d’Aosta](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aosta_Valley) means north-facing) slopes. The picking of wild and/or cultivated plants is permitted only within the Valle d’Aosta Region.

*‘Genepì della Valle d’Aosta’* liqueur must be produced in municipalities in the Valle d’Aosta Region.

***d) Method for obtaining the spirit drink***

The liqueur obtained by *maceration* is prepared using fresh or dried plants, left to steep in a water-alcohol solution with a minimum alcohol content of 55 % volume for a minimum of eight days. Extraction times may differ if extraction techniques other than maceration are used.

The liqueur may also be obtained by *suspension*, prepared using plants placed on special grills suspended over a *water-alcohol solution*, in hermetically sealed containers where the head space, saturated with alcohol, extracts the most volatile components from the plants.

After the extraction cycle, the macerate is *added to a water and sugar mixture* to complete the preparation of the liqueur.

It is possible to *distil some of the macerate in stills* and add the distillate when preparing the liqueur.

At the end of the preparation process, the alcoholic content of the liqueur may be adjusted if necessary by adding ethyl alcohol of agricultural origin or water.

During the preparation of *‘Genepì della Valle d’Aosta’*, the following plants may also be used: *Angelica archangelica* L., *Anthyllis vulneraria* L*.*, *Artemisia vulgaris* L., *Cinnamomum verum* [J.Presl](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jan_Svatopluk_Presl),[sin*.*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Synonym_%28taxonomy%29) *C. zeylanicum* [Blume](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carl_Ludwig_Blume), *Eugenia caryophyllata*Thunb., *Hyssopus officinalis* L*.*, *Juniperus communis* L*.*, *Matricaria* spp, *Melilotus officinalis* L*.* , *Melissa officinalis* [L.](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carl_Linnaeus), *Mentha* spp., *Hypericum perforatum* L*.,* *Lamium album* [L.](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carl_Linnaeus), *Origanum vulgare* L*.,* *Pinus sylvestris* L*.,* *Sambucus nigra* L.*,* *Satureja* spp, *Thymus* spp and *Verbena officinalis* L. The quantity of aromatic plants used to obtain the flavouring preparation must not be more than 10 % of the total quantity of *Artemisia* used.

The minimum quantity of dried plants, understood as the sum of all the plant species used (*Artemisia* + other herbs) or the corresponding content in the flavouring preparation used is 4 g/l in the finished liqueur.

The use of nature-identical or artificial flavourings is not permitted. The liquor may undergo a period of ageing in wood.

The packaging of the *‘Genepì della Valle d’Aosta’* liqueur may only take place in the area of production, as defined in point c), in order to guarantee that the characteristics of the product are maintained for the final consumer. The production and bottling of the spirit drink take place in the same production facility, thus avoiding transport of the product and possible deterioration as a result.

***e) Details bearing out the link with the geographical environment or the geographical origin***

Valle d’Aosta, which lies at the heart of the highest massif in the Alps, has a fairly dry and harsh continental climate, typical of the inner alpine valleys. From a mining point of view, the Valle d’Aosta is one of the richest and most varied regions in Italy, and certainly in the Alps. The following can be found there: granite, gneiss, limestone, dolomite, gypsum, calcareous schist, mica schist, serpentine, rare and extremely rare minerals, and violan, a mineral that cannot be found anywhere else in the world. The presence of these minerals ensures that there is a wide range of substrates, each with its own physical and chemical characteristics. This varied lithological composition has led to the diversification of habitats and thus the presence of a large number of plant species, including wormwood artemisia. The Valle d’Aosta is characterised by land that is entirely mountainous and with many high mountains of more than 3 000 m found in all the main valleys of the region. This has facilitated the spread of the wormwood artemisia species across a fairly wide area in relation to the total area of the region. The abundance and ubiquity of wormwood artemisia as a wild plant, and the resulting knowledge of the plant by a large part of the population, also aided by the practice of transhumance, are characteristic features of the Valle d’Aosta. In this region, there is also a great variability between and within the species of the plants concerned, as previously documented between 1904 and 1911 by the then director of the Chanousia botanical garden, Prof. Lino Vaccari, who identified several hybrids between the three species found in the Valle d’Aosta and identified several varieties for *Artemisia genipi* and *Artemisia glacialis*. *Artemisia*, which grows on glacial moraines and scree slopes, prefers light, well-drained soils which are rich in texture, poor in organic matter and relatively infertile situated at elevations above 1 300 metres. At lower elevations, the soils, which are generally more fertile, encourage the presence of fungi and therefore increase plant mortality.

Over the centuries, people in the Valle d’Aosta have used wormwood as a common treatment for many inflammatory and digestive ailments. They would even drink an infusion in water or milk for its tonic, digestive, antiseptic, sudatory and expectorant properties. Wormwood was therefore used in these parts to treat certain diseases and it was given the name ‘aspirine des montaganards’(3) to fight colds and influenza, but also to relieve ‘mountain sickness’, a slowdown in digestion caused by high altitudes and cold. These days, the liqueur, whether obtained by infusion or suspension, is still used as a digestive at the end of a meal. Given the great many properties of this plant, as substantiated in a number of articles published since 1881 when the first issue of the *Almanach de l’agriculteur valdôtain* came out (containing a full page advertisement, under the coat of arms of the Italian Alpine Club, in which the firm Paul Lanier d’Aoste extolled the virtues of its ***Artemisia glacialis***, which had been presented at the *Exposition Universelle de Paris* in 1878), spirit-making developed from the 19th century onwards, with demand growing in the 1960s in response to the increase in tourism.

Around the late 19th century and early 20th century, factories began to appear that produced a liqueur from the plant using the traditional method of maceration, known and used since time immemorial by inhabitants in the upper valleys of Valle d’Aosta.

***f) Requirements laid down by Community and/or national and/or regional provisions***

The wild plants must be picked in compliance with the relevant provisions of regional legislation (Regional Law No 45 of 7 December 2009 - Provisions for the protection and conservation of alpine flora) and with traceability methods that guarantee the origin of the plants.

***g) Name and address of applicant***

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