**TECHNICAL FILE**

**GEOGRAPHICAL INDICATION**

***'Südtiroler Zwetschgeler / Zwetschgeler dell'Alto Adige'***

1. **Name of the spirit drink including the geographical indication:**

*'Südtiroler Zwetschgeler / Zwetschgeler dell'Alto Adige'*

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

Fruit spirit obtained from plums (*Prunus domestica L.*)

The name *‘Südtiroler Zwetschgeler’ / ‘Zwetschgeler dell'Alto Adige’* is exclusively reserved for fruit spirit obtained from raw materials from plums fermented in the Autonomous Province of Südtirol/Alto Adige, distilled and diluted to the required alcoholic strength in facilities located in the Autonomous Province of Südtirol/Alto Adige. The designation may be complemented by a reference to the variety or sub-variety, or to a more limited area of the Autonomous Province of Südtirol-Alto Adige, if the fruit was cultivated in the Autonomous Province of Südtirol-Alto Adige and at least 85 % of the fruit is from the specified area, variety or sub-variety.

1. **Description of the spirit drink**:
2. ***Main physical, chemical and/or organoleptic properties of the category:***

*'Südtiroler Zwetschgeler / Zwetschgeler dell'Alto Adige'* fruit spirit is obtained exclusively from the must of plums (*Prunus domestica L.*) fermented and distilled using direct heat or steam. It must have:

a methanol content not exceeding 1 000 grams per hectolitre of 100 % vol. alcohol;

a content of volatile compounds other than ethyl and methyl alcohol of not less than 200 grams per hectolitre of 100 % vol. alcohol;

a minimum alcoholic strength by volume of 40 %;

a maximum hydrogen cyanide content of 5 grams per hectolitre of 100 % vol. alcohol.

*'Südtiroler Zwetschgeler / Zwetschgeler dell'Alto Adige'* is crystal clear in colour. It has intense fruit on the nose, with delicate almond notes. On the palate it is clean and fine with elegant and complex notes of ripe plum pulp.

1. ***Specific characteristics of the spirit drink as compared to the relevant category***

The name *‘Südtiroler Zwetschgeler’ / ‘Zwetschgeler dell'Alto Adige’* is reserved for fruit spirit obtained from the distillation of plums (*Prunus domestica L.*). It must have:

an ethyl acetate content of less than 250 grams per hectolitre of 100 % vol. alcohol;

a total aldehyde content of less than 250 grams per hectolitre of 100 % vol. alcohol.

1. ***Geographical area concerned:***

Post-harvest ripening, mashing, fermentation and distillation, as well as subsequent phases such as reduction in alcohol content and any ageing traditionally take place within the Autonomous Province of Südtirol/Alto Adige.

1. ***Method for obtaining the spirit drink***

The fruit spirit *‘Südtiroler Zwetschgeler’ / ‘Zwetschgeler dell’Alto Adige’* is obtained from the must of plums fermented and distilled in batch or continuous stills, using direct heat or steam after adding water to the still, with separation of the heads and tails.

*‘Südtiroler Zwetschgeler’ / ‘Zwetschgeler dell’Alto Adige’* is produced from ripe, partially or fully stoned, plums. This gives rise to a perfect plum balanced between 'fruity' notes and typical flavours reminiscent of 'bitter almond'.

The level of ripeness of the fruit has a particular effect on the taste and the aroma. The Alto Adige distillers take care to ensure the uniform ripeness of the plums post-harvest.

Mashing, fermentation, distillation, reduction in alcohol content and any ageing must take place in the Autonomous Province of Südtirol/Alto Adige.

The distillation of the fermented mash, in continuous or batch stills, must take place at less than 86% vol. Improving the quality characteristics of the product by using appropriate distilling equipment to reduce specifically the content of methyl alcohol is permitted. Compliance with the limits must be evidenced by stamped registers in which the quantities and alcohol content of the mash sent for distillation are recorded each day.

In making *‘Südtiroler Zwetschgeler’/‘Zwetschgeler dell'Alto Adige’* fruit spirits, the following additives are allowed:

* sugars, in a maximum amount of 20 grams per litre, expressed as invert sugar in accordance with the definitions provided in point 3(a), (b) and (c) of Annex I to Regulation EC No 110/2008;
* caramel, only for fruit spirits aged for at least twelve months, in accordance with EU and national legislation.

*‘Südtiroler Zwetschgeler’ / ‘Zwetschgeler dell’Alto Adige’* fruit spirits may be aged in barrels, vats and other wooden containers.

1. ***Details bearing out the link with the geographical environment or the geographical origin:***

History

The production of *‘Südtiroler Zwetschgeler’ / ‘Zwetschgeler dell’Alto Adige’* fruit spirit has a long tradition in Südtirol-Alto Adige, as documented by numerous historical sources (see Mader, Karl, *'Der Obstbau, die Obstproduktion und der Obsthandel im deutschen Südtirol'* (Coltivazione e esportazione della Williams Christbirne in Alto Adige e la produzione di distillato di prugne e ciliegie in Val Venosta e Valle Isarco nel 1894) (Genossenschafts-Verband, Bozen [Bolzano] 1894). This speciality arises from being a border and transit region. The meeting and mingling of different cultural spheres in the area has led to an exchange of local traditions, some of which – such as the distillation of plums – have taken root and have become part of the area's cultural heritage. Time and the experience of local farmers have enabled the Zwetschgeler dell'Alto Adige to distinguish itself through a more delicate, round flavour and less intrusive almond flavours, which delicately complement the fruity notes rather than being predominant. Having been part of *Felix Austria* has enriched the Südtirol/Alto Adige area with Balkan traditions. Plum distillate is typical of the Balkans, where it is known as Slivovitz. Trade within central Europe brought it to the area, where it became part of local tradition. Zwetschgeler is a typical distillate from the region's countryside, and is distinguished from its Balkan cousin by its more refined flavour.

The methods described above are the fruit of folk wisdom developed over generations, which not only can be identified at the consumption stage but is also attested by the very large number of prizes won by products made in the area. The particular mix of mineral salts in the local water is connected to the region's specific geology. The water from local sources runs through volcanic, metamorphic and dolomite rock. The dry residue from spring water is different in each of the region's micro-zones, which makes unified mapping of the analysis values of local water very complicated. However, the common distinguishing characteristic is the use of very high quality local water.

*‘Südtiroler Zwetschgeler’ / ‘Zwetschgeler dell’Alto Adige’* fruit spirit therefore owes its particular qualities to the selection of the raw material and traditional processing methods, a production phase that takes place exclusively in an area of high environmental value (the Autonomous Province of Südtirol/Alto Adige), the centuries-old experience of the master distillers and the continuous improvement of the production cycle.

The production methods are detailed below:

Preparation of the must:

* partial or total stoning prior to distillation;
* crushing and fermentation of healthy, ripe plums;
* low to medium temperature fermentation of the mash, helped by the particular climatic conditions in Südtirol/Alto Adige, which encourage subtle flavours to develop during the fermentation process;

Distillation of the must:

* using traditional batch or continuous stills using direct heat or steam after adding water to the still, with separation of the heads and tails.

Reduction in alcohol content:

* takes place using potable water from the Südtirol/Alto Adige Region or may be done using softened, but not demineralised, water from the same provenance. Water from the Südtirol/Alto Adige Region is characterised by the particular geological formation of the mountains. Granite or porphyry igneous rock lies beneath a layer of dolomite, a sedimentary rock. The mineral salts in the water come from these two geological strata. These mineral salts influence the aroma and taste of the fruit spirit. A significant quantity of water is added to reduce the alcohol content, making up half of the final fruit spirit.
* Once the process of reducing the alcohol content has been completed, the product is filtered to ensure its clarity and stability. That operation and the way it is done are particularly delicate and important for maintaining the distillate's characteristic fruity notes.

Ageing:

* *‘Südtiroler Zwetschgeler’ / ‘Zwetschgeler dell’Alto Adige’* fruit spirit was traditionally aged in wooden containers/barrels; these containers were widespread throughout the area due to the availability of wood suitable for this purpose and the presence of one or more coopers in almost every village. Small wooden barrels, known as ‘Lagelen’, were also used to transport the fruit spirit.

The raw materials used can be traced from the accompanying documents and records of the distillers.

1. ***Requirements laid down by Community and/or national and/or regional provisions:***

Presidential Decree No 297 of 16 July 1997.

1. ***Name and address of applicant***

Südtiroler Hofbrennereien e.V. Distillatori Artigianali dell’Alto Adige;

Juval 1 B, 39020 Castelbello-Ciardes (BZ)

1. ***Supplement to the geographical indication and specific labelling rules:***

*‘Südtiroler Zwetschgeler’ / ‘Zwetschgeler dell’Alto Adige’* must be labelled in compliance with Legislative Decree No 109 of 27 January 1992, as amended.

The term *‘Südtiroler Zwetschgeler’ / ‘Zwetschgeler dell’Alto Adige’* may be complemented by a reference:

1. to the name of a variety or sub-variety of plum (*Prunus domestica L.*) if at least 85 % of the fruit consists of that variety and the fruit was grown in the Autonomous Province of Südtirol/Alto Adige;
2. to the name of a more limited area of the Autonomous Province of Südtirol-Alto Adige, if the fruit was cultivated in the Autonomous Province of Südtirol-Alto Adige, at least 85 % of it in the specified, more limited area of that Province;
3. fruit spirits that meet the requirements for more than one reference under points (a) and (b) above may also use both references; in this case, the name of the more limited area of the Autonomous Province of Südtirol-Alto Adige should be stated before the name of the variety or sub-variety of plums.