**Technical Specifications**

**Geographical indication to be registered –**

**Aguardente de Vinho Alentejo**

Language in which the application is submitted: Portuguese (PT)

**1. Geographical indication to be registered**

Aguardente de Vinho Alentejo

**2. Category of the spirit drink**

Wine spirit.

**3. Applicant**

Alentejano Regional Wine-producing Committee

Legal Status: Cross-industry association governed by private law

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**4. National and EU Protection**

**Primary Protection in Portugal:** Decree-Law No 349/88 of 30 September

**Primary Protection in the European Union:** Regulation No 1576/1989 of 29 May 1989

1. **Description of the spirit drink**

**Physical, chemical and/or organoleptic characteristics**

The designation of origin ‘Aguardente de Vinho Alentejo’ may only be used for wine spirits distilled from wines made from grapes produced in the Alentejo demarcated region, produced and aged there and conforming to the physical, chemical and organoleptic characteristics laid down in the legislation applicable to the region.

**Physical and chemical characteristics:**

The ‘Alentejo’ wine spirit must have a minimum alcoholic strength by volume of 37.5 % vol. and must also respect the following parameters:

* Methanol value ≤ 200 g/hl of 100 % vol. alcohol
* Volatile substances ≥ 125 g/hl of 100 % vol. alcohol

**Organoleptic characteristics**

The ‘Alentejo’ wine spirit must meet the appropriate requirements for appearance, aroma and taste established by the CVRA.

The ‘Alentejo’ wine spirit must be clear in **appearance**, and colourless or between yellowish and topaz in colour.

The **aroma** of the ‘Alentejo’ wine spirit must be intense, complex and free of any marked defect. The aromatic descriptors may be: floral, fruity, alcohol, raisins, dried fruit, caramel, spices, toasted, woody or other aromas resulting from the process of ageing and evolution.

The **taste** of ‘Alentejo’ wine spirit must be free of any marked defect and reproduce the descriptors in aromatic terms: floral, fruity, alcohol, raisins, dried fruit, caramel, spices, toasted, woody or other aromas resulting from the process of ageing and evolution. The taste may also have the following descriptors: harsh (in young spirits), sweet, piquant, smooth, mild and a lingering finish in the mouth.

In organoleptic terms, in particular in the aroma and taste, the ‘Alentejo’ wine spirit must reflect the wine from which it was made.

The quantitative descriptive analysis is used to check whether the wine spirits submitted for organoleptic testing have the characteristics and quality required for certification.

Each of the nine parameters assessed, i.e. Appearance (Clarity and Colour), Aroma (Intensity and Complexity), Taste (Complexity, Balance, Adstringency/ Bitterness, Structure/ Body, Finish) is quantified on a continuous scale with a numerical score on the test sheet.

The decision of the sensory analysis laboratory in assessing the ‘Alentejo’ wine spirit is the result of the score given to each sample at the meeting of the taster panel. For the purposes of approval this score must be above the minimum value stipulated for the category concerned.

**Specific characteristics** (in comparison with spirit drinks in the samecategory)

‘Alentejo’ wine spirits must reflect the characteristics of the wine from which they are distilled.

The ‘Alentejo’ wine spirit is a young spirit, characterised by an intense aroma with notes of fruit, flowers, raisins, dried fruit, etc. or aromas developed through the ageing process: caramel, spices, toasted, raisins, dried fruit, etc.

In terms of taste, the ‘Alentejo’ wine spirit must reflect the well-balanced, mild and smooth flavours of a warm region, which make it possible to obtain a full-bodied spirit with an intense and lingering finish.

Type of oenological practice**: Cultivation practices**

The vines intended for the production of wines liable to be used for producing the wine spirit for the Alentejo designation of origin must be single varieties and trained to grow close to the ground.

The training may be in cordon, guyot or bush style.

In the case of regrafting, the vines can be registered for production three years afterwards, with a maximum limit of 80% success rate for the regrafting.

**6. Geographical area concerned**

The geographical area of production of the ‘Alentejo’ wine spirit is the whole geographical area of the Alentejo designation of origin, including the subregions, demarcated as follows:

1. **Borba subregion** -The south and south-eastern boundaries are defined by the Serra d'Ossa and itsfoothills, with this line extending to the national road No 4 which runs to the boundary of the municipality of Estremoz. The boundary of this municipality extends to the north as far as the Ramilo stream and follows the Ramilo road to the Estremoz-Sousel national road. From there it follows a straight line to the Estremoz -São Bento do Cortiço local road to Soliteira, continuing along the municipal road as far as the boundary of the municipality of Estremoz (São Lourenço-Santo Amaro municipal road). It continues along the boundary of the municipality of Estremoz until the Fonte Boa stream. It continues along this waterway as far as the Veiros-Sousel road and along the road to Santo Aleixo. The boundary in the north-west is the Tira Calças stream as far as its source (parcel 328), continuing south to the Asseca stream as far as the boundary of the municipality of Vila Viçosa. From this point it continues along the boundary of the parish of São Bartolomeu as far as the boundary of the parish of Pardais and from there to the border of the municipality of Alandroal. From this point it continues to Carrapatosa, at the junction with the national road Juromenha-Alandroal, as far as Moeda. From Moeda it continues by the Alandroal Terena road as far as Horta das Gordesas and continues by side road to the southwest as far as Mota. It follows the same road to the north, through Monte das Neves as far as the border of the parish of Bencatel. It continues to the border of the parish of Bencatel to the north-west as far as the foothills of the Serra d'Ossa;
2. **Évora subregion** — The northern boundary starts at the border of Herdade das Cortiçadas and adjacent to theÉvora-Montemor national road, following the São Matias stream to the Arraiolos-Évora road. From there, it continues along the public road until it crosses the Oliveirinha, where it continues along the national road until Igrejinha, where it crosses the Cabido stream at Coelheiros.

To the east the boundary starts at the Degebe river and runs until the Monte do Alcaide. To the south, it is delimited by the Monte do Alcaide public road, passing from São Manços to Torre de Coelheiro and from there on to Souseis. It continues along the Viana do Alentejo-Évora road as far as the Herdade da Chaminé junction and from there on to the Xarrama river. This river borders the area by the Monte das Flores railway station, from where it is delimited by the public road to the Évora-Alcáçovas road, and then on from the Mitra junction, following the public road as far as the exit for the Barrocal dam, and from there to the Herdade de Cabanas junction. The western border starts at the Herdade de Cabanas junction and follows the public road to Boa-Fé and from there to São Sebastião da Giesteira, meeting the northern boundary where the public road meets the boundary of Herdade das Cortiçadas. In the municipality of Montemor -o -Novo, the parish of Nossa Senhora da Vila;

1. **Granja/Amareleja subregion**  — This is delimited by the boundary of the municipality of Mourão (the total area of the three parishes: Mourão, Granja and Luz) and the total area of the parishes of Póvoa de São Miguel and Amareleja, of the Moura municipality. The subregion also includes the small area between the boundary of the parish of Póvoa de São Miguel and the course of the Ardila river to its mouth, which serves as a natural geographical delimitation;
2. **Moura subregion** - This is bordered to the north by the Guadiana river, the Ardila river and the Toutalgastream as far as the confluence of the boundaries of the parishes of Santo Amador, Santo Agostinho and Sobral da Adiça. To the east, the borders are those of the parishes of Santo Agostinho, Pias and São Salvador. To the south the border is marked by the Serpa road towards Vila Nova to the parish boundary. To the west, it starts at the boundary of the São Salvador parish until it meets the boundary of the Pias parish. To the west, it starts at the Guadiana river, following the boundary of the São João Baptista parish until the Brinches-Moura road. From the junction of Brinches-Moura road, it continues to the boundary of the parish of Pias, continuing on to the boundary of the parish of São Salvador as far as the Serpa-Vila Nova road;
3. **Portalegre subregion** - The southern limit of the region is defined by the Elvas-Torres das Vargens railway line to where it crosses the Seda stream. The eastern limit follows the Seda stream to its confluence with the Perdigoas stream, near Pisão. It follows the Perdigoas stream, continuing in a straight line to the northern boundary of the municipality of Portalegre, along the rocky massif granite which also extends to the north-west. In the municipality of Sousel and parish of Casa Branca, agricultural parcels Nos 15, 16, 21 and 22 in section N are included in the demarcated region. Areas with an altitude over 700 m are excluded;
4. **Redondo subregion** — The subregion is bordered to the north and northwest by the Serra d'Ossa and itsfoothills. It extends down along the Vale Figueira stream to the confluence with the Vale de Vasco and subsequently to the junction with the Montoito stream and from there to the boundary of the parish of Nossa Senhora de Machede, which borders the region to the west and meets again the foothills of the Serra d'Ossa in the north;
5. **Reguengos subregion** — The subregion is bordered to the north by the Vigia reservoir up to the boundary of the municipality of Reguengos, continuing onwards to where it meets the Degebe river. To the south-east and east of the river Guadiana and to the west it is bordered by the gravel patch that extends from Vendinha to Montoito;
6. **Vidigueira subregion** — The boundaries of the subregion correspond with the boundaries of the municipalities ofAlvito, Cuba and Vidigueira.

**Map of the Region**



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

**Distillation**

‘Alentejo’ wine spirit must be produced using wine eligible for the ‘Alentejo’ designation of origin and it must be distilled by the end of April in the wine-making year in which the wine is produced.

The natural alcoholic strength of the wines to be distilled is 11.5 % vol. for wine whites and 12 % vol. for red and rosé wines.

The systems used in the distillation may be continuous or discontinuous distillation:

**Conservation**

No additives may be used in the production of ‘Alentejo’ wine spirit, with the exception of distilled water to reduce the alcoholic strength to a minimum of 37.5 % volume and added caramel as a means of adjusting the colour, up to a maximum of 2 %.

**Ageing**

There is no compulsory ageing period for ‘Alentejo’ wine spirit.

‘Alentejo’ wine spirit may be marketed with the quality designation ‘Velha’ (Old) or ‘Reserva’ (Reserve), following a compulsory two-year ageing period in oak casks. There is a four-year compulsory ageing period in oak casks for the ‘Velhíssima’ (Very Old) quality designation.

This ageing must take place on premises located within the region.

**8. Link with the geographical environment or origin**

**Details of the geographical area relevant to the link**

The characteristic flatness of the Alentejo region and the corresponding absence of orographic barriers prevents condensation of moisture from the sea, reducing the expression of the Atlantic ocean in Alentejo. But it is precisely the few orographic elements of the Alentejo landscape that influence and distinguish the different subregions, and provide unique conditions for the cultivation of vines throughout the region.

The climate of the region is temperate with Mediterranean and Continental characteristics and with hot, dry springs and summers. Precipitation is mainly concentrated in the winter months and the annual average is 550-650 mm, with the exception of the Borba (750-850 mm) and Portalegre (900-1 000 mm) regions. The average annual temperature is 15.5-16 °C and the figures for annual hours of sunshine are very high (approximately 3 000 hours), particularly in the months leading up to the harvest, which contributes to the perfect maintenance of the grapes and the quality of the wines. These climatic conditions are very favourable for the synthesis and accumulation of sugars and the concentration of pigments in the pellicle on the bunches of grapes.

The soils in which vines intended for the production of ‘Alentejo’ wine spirit can be planted play an important part in giving them their distinctive character, quality and intrinsic characteristics.

The vines intended for the production of this spirit must now, or in the future, be planted in soils with the characteristics stated below with the exposition recommended for this type of production. In each of the subregions, the soils must have the following characteristics:

a) Borba — soils predominantly derived, either directly or indirectly, from crystalline limestone; some traces of shale, generally red;

1. Évora— brown and red Mediterranean soils of non-calcareous materials; non-humic litholic soils and lithosols;
2. Granja-Amareleja — brown and red Mediterranean soils of non-calcareous materials; red Mediterranean soils of calcareous materials and lithosols;
3. Moura - brown and red calcareous soils; calcareous muds; red Mediterranean soils of calcareous and non-calcareous materials and non-humic lithosols;
4. Portalegre— soils mainly of granite origin; some traces of shale derivatives and quartzites;
5. Redondo — soils derived mainly from volcanic rocks, including quartz diorites; some traces of shale derivatives, generally red;
6. Reguengos — soils derived mainly from volcanic rocks, including quartz diorites; some traces of shale derivatives and a small trace of soil derived from ‘ranas’;
7. Vidigueira — soils with varied compositions, mainly from volcanic or metamorphic rocks.

All of the aforementioned regions must exclude vineyards planted or to be planted in soils that are alluvial, colluviosol, black clay and yellowish-brown non-calcareous clay.

**Specific characteristics of the spirit drink attributable to its geographical area**

**Product information**

‘Alentejo’ wine spirit must reflect the characteristics of the marc used to produce it and which reflects the combination of the soil and climate conditions and the grape varieties in the Alentejo DO region.

The warm and dry conditions during the final phase of ripening of the grapes make it possible to obtain soft, full-bodied, structured wines rich in phenolic compounds and aromas that will serve as the basis for the production of wine spirits.

The ‘Alentejo’ wine spirit is a young spirit, characterised by an intense aroma with notes of fruit, flowers, raisins, dried fruit, etc. or aromas developed through the ageing process: caramel, spices, toasted, raisins, dried fruit, etc.

In terms of taste, the ‘Alentejo’ wine spirit must reflect the well-balanced, mild and smooth flavours of a warm region, which make it possible to obtain a full-bodied spirit with an intense and lingering finish.

The wines that may be distilled in order to obtain ‘Alentejo’ wine spirit must come from the varieties listed in the Product Specification for ‘Alentejo’ wine (E-Bacchus file number PDO-PT-A1542).

**Causal link**

The link between the characteristics of the wines suitable for producing wine spirit with the Alentejo designation of origin comes from the unique climate and soil conditions in the region and the product production process.

The varieties that are suitable for producing wines that can be used to make wine spirit eligible for the Alentejo designation of origin are decisive in determining the quality-related characteristics of those wines, particularly their aroma and taste. They are also an expression of the terroir of the region, contributing significantly to the uniqueness and typical features of the wines used to make wine spirit eligible for the Alentejo PDO.

1. **Supplement to the geographical indication**

Type of additional condition: Packaging within the demarcated area

**Description of the condition**:

Transportation of ‘Alentejo’ wine spirit outside national territory is only allowed when packaged and labelled in such a way as to obtain the necessary guarantees concerning the origin of the products.

Inspections and checks play a key role here and this could be compromised if the wine products are marketed in bulk, due to the human and financial impossibility of monitoring wine products effectively.

‘Alentejo’ wine spirit with the name of a subregion must come exclusively from wines made from grapes harvested and made into wine in that subregion and can only be transported out of the subregion when properly packaged and bearing the relevant guarantee seal.

The subregions of origin have a more restrictive character as regards the movement of wine products produced therein, as it is necessary for them to closely monitor their production, distillation and bottling in order not to disappoint expectations for purchasing specific subregion products.

**10. Specific labelling rules**

The labelling of 'Alentejo’ wine spirit has to be done in accordance with legal standards and those laid down by the certifying body to which it is first submitted for approval.

The label must bear the specific traditional words ‘Denominação de Origem Controlada’ or ‘DOC’ as stated in the national legislation.

1. **Contact Information:**

1. **Data relating to the applicant:**

Alentejano Regional Wine-producing Committee

Legal Status: Cross-industry association governed by private law

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1. **Details of the intermediary:**

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1250-165 Lisbon

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Telephone: + 351 213 506 700

Email: ivv@ivv.gov.pt

1. **Details of interested parties**

Alentejano Regional Wine-producing Committee

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1. **Information on the competent control authorities**

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1. **Information on the control bodies**

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