TECHNICAL FILE FOR THE GEOGRAPHICAL INDICATION (GI) 'APERITIVO CAFÉ DE ALCOY'

A.- Name and category:

*Name:* 'Aperitivo Café de Alcoy'

*Category:* Other spirit drinks

B.- Description:

'Aperitivo Café de Alcoy' is a spirit drink obtained by macerating roasted coffee in neutral alcohol of agricultural origin. It has an alcoholic strength of between 15 and 25 per cent volume and is dark brown in colour.

The roasted coffee flavour, with nothing added, is an essential feature of the product.

*Physical, chemical and/or organoleptic characteristics:*

Alcoholic strength: between 15 and 25 percent volume

*Appearance:* dark brown colour, translucent

*Aroma:* coffee aroma

*Taste:* a dry, slightly bitter aperitif, with a strong coffee flavour

C.- Definition of the geographical area concerned:

The Province of Alicante in the Autonomous Community of Valencia.

D.- Method of production:

'Aperitivo Café de Alcoy' is made by macerating roasted coffee in neutral alcohol of agricultural origin.

Any variety of *Coffea arabica* may be used, from any of the world's producer countries.

The use of torrefacto coffee is prohibited.

Once it has been roasted, the coffee is macerated in neutral alcohol of agricultural origin and then water is added until the permitted strength is obtained.

The product must not be disturbed between maceration, which must last for at least nine days, and filtering.

The minimum time between the start of maceration and the bottling process is ten days.

To obtain the typical dark brown colour the approved colouring agent caramel (E150 a-d) may be used.

The use of flavouring extracts or essences is not permitted.

Bottling is not subject to any geographical restrictions.

E.- Link with the geographical environment or geographical origin

'Aperitivo Café de Alcoy' has been produced since the mid-19th century. (The first documentary reference dates from 1844). It is a spirit drink with a long tradition in the area, which originated in the textile factories.

The town of Alcoy was one of the centres of the area's industrial revolution. In the 19th century, when the local manufacturing industry was in full expansion, the factory workers would take a brass container of coffee to work, to help them stay alert.

When the weather was cold, they would add a few drops of cane spirit, rum or brandy, to keep warm.

It was found that, after a few hours when the mixture had cooled, it acquired a characteristic flavour. This became popular, and the first workers' *cantinas* [bars] and street vendors began to set up shop near the factories.

In response to growing demand, commercial production began.

Although the drink originated in Alcoy, over the years it has become firmly established in Alicante Province. The tradition and know-how of the area's commercial producers is reflected in the fact that 'Aperitivo café de Alcoy' is recognised as a spirit drink typical of Alicante.

Its consumption is closely linked with Alcoy's traditional 'Moors and Christians' festival (recognised within Spain as being of international tourist interest) and is indeed considered a distinctive feature of the town's festivities. It is a spirit drink associated with social gatherings and festivities and can be consumed neat, with chilled soda as an aperitif, or with cola or iced lemonade, inter alia.

In 1511 spirits of this type were consumed during festivities linked with the religious celebration of Saint George's day (in 1276 the people of Alcoy were besieged by a Moorish commander and Saint George appeared and came to their rescue), which gradually evolved into today's festival: Saint George banished the Moors, hence the groups of 'Moors and Christians'. Everything is organised by the *Asociación de San Jorge* which inter alia preserves the traditions, including the custom of consuming spirit drinks.

Of all the spirits available, the people of Alcoy prefer to liven up their festivals with the drink that has been an iconic feature of their industrial history. In the mid-19th century, the weavers and cloth-sellers of the town's textile industry kept their bodies warm and their minds alert with this dark elixir.

There are countless references to Aperitivo Café Licor in the press. One of the oldest dates from 1925, a time when consumption of the drink was frowned upon by the health, political and religious authorities. Thus the newspaper 'La Voz del pueblo de Alcoy' reported that '*Alcoy es víctima de ese veneno legalizado y con el nombre de café gelat, café licor y café blanco sufre una plaga y un peligro (…) si estuviera en nuestras manos suprimir esa arma mortífera, de una plumada lo haríamos aunque llorasen doscientos expendedores y se entristecieran cuatro mil consumidores...*' [Alcoy has fallen victim to this legalised venom and the huge quantities of *café gelat, café licor* and *café blanco* are a scourge and a hazard (...) we would ban this lethal weapon at the stroke of a pen if we could, even though we'd upset two hundred sellers and four thousand consumers]

'Aperitivo Café de Alcoy' is the main ingredient in a number of typical local blends, each with a different name: with cola ('plis play'), iced lemonade ('mentira'), beer ('negreta') or horchata ('pingüino' or 'barraqueta').

Over the years, the link between the area and 'Aperitivo Café de Alcoy' has been reflected in songs sung at recreational and sporting events. There are up to 56 recorded titles, most of them in Valencian.

The following example makes fun of one of Alcoy's mayors (Marqués de Sant Jordi de Alcoy), who wanted to ban the drink.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| UN MARQUÉS, NI MÉS NI MENYS!  “Un marqués, ni més ni menys, quina atrocitat  s´ha empenyat, en Alcoi, prohibir el café gelat  i ara nosaltres les órdenes acatant  en lloc de menuda se´ns la fem gran” | UN MARQUÉS ¡NADA MENOS!  “Un marqués, ¡nada menos!, ¡qué atrocidad!  Se ha empeñado, en Alcoy, prohibir el café helado  y ahora nosotros las órdenes acatando  en lugar de pequeña nos lo tomamos grande |

The one below is a football chant, the song of the local team, the Club Deportivo Alcoyano, which also mentions 'Aperitivo Café de Alcoy':

“¡Vamos Deportivo!

¡Vamos Campeón!

Olvida la Segunda

y a Primera División.

Saca la botella

de café licor

y canta con nosotros:

¡Deportivo Campeón!

'Aperitivo Café de Alcoy' has also found its way into expressions, sayings and proverbs. In the following poem for example, Enric Berenguer Espí, a native of Alcoy, encapsulates the past and present significance of the drink (this has not been translated into Spanish here, to retain the metre):

AUTORRETRAT DEL CAFÉ GELAT

Vaig náixer café gelat

i batejat en Alcoi;

ningú sap els anys que fa

i qui es l ínventor tampoc

M´han criat entre “sellers”

fugint d´escorcolladors,

tot es portava en secret,

no estava a l´alcanç de molts

Avui estic ja prou millor

m´anuncien per tot arreu

m´han posat Café Licor

i sóc el que més es beu.

Done més que teixir mantes

o que negociar en draps;

la fàbrica te la plantes

en quatre metres quadrats.

'Aperitivo Café de Alcoy' is also present in other forms of art, for example the work of painters from Alcoy and elsewhere in the *comarca*, such as Julio Pascual Espinós, José Pérez Pérez, Antonio Torregrosa, Ignacio Trelis, Francesc Gisbert Torregrossa and Carlos Merchán.

All the texts, songs, proverbs and popular expressions mentioned are taken from 'El Café gelat o café licor' by Josep Tormo Colomina, ISBN 978-84-697-0929-0.

F.- Legislation

* Regulation (EC) No 110/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 January 2008 on the definition, description, presentation labelling and the protection of geographical indications of spirit drinks and repealing Council Regulation (EEC) No 1576/89.

**G.- Name and contact details of the application**

Consejo Regulador de las Denominaciones Específicas Bebidas Espirituosas Tradicionales de Alicante

C/ Monjas, 6 03002 Alicante

Tel 638978359

E-mail: [crde-beta@crde-beta.com](mailto:crde-beta@crde-beta.com)

**H.- Labelling**

The labels must bear the 'Specific Designation' 'Aperitivo Café de Alcoy'.

The product must also carry a conformity mark, identified by an alphanumeric code, to be affixed at the bottling plant in such a way that it cannot be reused and assuring traceability.

The conformity mark must bear the logo and the words 'Consejo Regulador Denominaciones Específicas' and 'Bebidas Espirituosas Tradicionales de Alicante'.

**I.- Inspection**

**I.1.- Competent authority**

Dirección General de Desarrollo Rural y Política Agraria Común

C/Castán Tobeñas, 77.- 46018 Valencia

Tel: 961247305

Fax: 961247933

E-mail: [area\_calidad@gva.es](mailto:area_calidad@gva.es)

**I.2.- Tasks**

Organoleptic and analytical testing

Annual checks on the spirit drink produced each season, with sampling of batches of 'Aperitivo café de Alcoy' for sensory and physico-chemical analysis, for the purposes of checking compliance with the requirements of section B and the other points in this technical file.

Inspection methods

The aforementioned checks must be carried out at least once a year, by random sampling based on risk analysis or by systematic sampling.

Proof that the 'Café Licor de Alcoy' has been produced in accordance with the specification for the Geographical Indication must be established by verifying, every year:

- that records are kept by operator, which note inter alia the variety of coffee used and that it has been roasted without the addition of any substances.

- that systems are in place for checking, monitoring and recording the production operations employed and verifying that these meet the requirements of the legislation and guarantee traceability, of both the bottled drink and the raw materials.

- that operators produce 'Aperitivo Café de Alcoy' in accordance with this specification and store it in suitable facilities to ensure optimum conservation.

- that the operators carry out monitoring during the storage phase in order to ensure that the physical, chemical and organoleptic characteristics of the product remain unimpaired.