Transmission of an established  
 geographical indication for a spirit drink

Quetsch d’Alsace  
 EU No: PGI-FR-02024  
 Submitted on 21-12-2017

PGI  
 ’

**1. F technical file**

1. Name and type
2. Name (s)

Quetsch d’Alsace (fr)

1. Category 9. Fruit spirit
2. Country of the applicant France
3. Application language:

French

1. Type of geographical indication:

PGI — Protected Geographical Indication

1. Contact details

1.2.1. Name and title of the applicant

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Name and title of the applicant | Syndicat des Distillateurs et des Liquoristes d’Alsace |
| Legal status, size and composition (in the case of legal persons) | A professional association consisting of fruit producers, fruit traders, brewers and distilleries involved in the production of eaux-de-vie d’Alsace |
| Nationality | France |
| Address | 12 Avenue de la Foire aux Vins  68000 COLMAR |
| Country | France |
| Telephone | (33) (0) 783312437 |
| E-mail address (es) | syndicatdistillateuralsace@gmail.com |

1.2.2. Intermediary’s contact details

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Name of the intermediary | Ministry of Agriculture and Food |
| Address | Direction Générale de la Performance Economique et Environnementale des Entreprises (DGPE)  Office for wines and other drinks  3 Rue Barbet de Jouy  75349 Paris Cedex 07 SP  France |
| Country | France |
| Telephone | (33) (0) 149554955 |
| E-mail address (es) | liste-cdc-vin-aop-DGPAAT@agriculture.gouv.fr |

1. Contact details of interested parties
2. Details of the competent control authority

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Name of competent control authority | Institut National de l'Origine et de la Qualité (INAO) |
| Address | 12, rue Henri Rol-Tanguy |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | TSA 30003  93555 Montreuil sous bois Cedex  France |
| Country | France |
| Telephone | (33) (0) 173303800 |
| E-mail address (es) | [info@inao.gouv.fr](mailto:info@inao.gouv.fr) |

1. Detailed information on the inspection bodies
2. Description of the spirit drink

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Title— Name of the product | Quetsch d’Alsace |
| Physical, chemical and/or organoleptic characteristics | 1. Organoleptic characteristics:   The ‘Quetsch d’Alsace’ is a white spirit with a clear, glossy and transparent appearance.  The olfactory and gustatory characteristics of this spirit must evoke the damson with a spicy note (cinnamon) and a pleasant persistence.   1. Physico-chemical characteristics:   The content of volatile substances is greater than 300 g/hl of pure alcohol.  The ‘Quetsch d’Alsace’ hass, at the time of marketing to the consumer, a minimum alcoholic strength by volume of 45 %. |
| Specific characteristics (compared with other spirit drinks of the same category) | The variety of damson (quetsche d’Alsace), the traditional production methods (limited planting density, grass and yield), and the area’s particular conditions (surveying and climate), enable the use of quality fruits (fresh, ripe, whole, and healthy). These conditions give fruit whith original flavourings which are elegant, and possess a rare finesse. All these elements are combined to constitute an exceptional aromatic potential that is apparent when it comes to producing the spirit.  The fermentation of must without heating, without increasing the natural content of sugar, preserves this aromatic potential which is expressed completely by distillation.  The The types of stills used and the serial distillation method, with an actual alcoholic strength by volume of between 60 % and 80 % enable the aromatic potential of the fruit must to be concentrated.  The The presence of copper in contact with vapours enables the removal of undesirable flavours.  There is therefore a high level of aromatic wealth in respect of spirits. This wealth is translated by a high level of specific volatile substances, which are responsible for the aromatic complexity of spirits.  Moreover, in order to bring to the consumer this aromatic power, the spirits are presented with a minimum alcoholic strength by volume of 45 %.  Finally, the spirits are not coloured to preserve the characteristics of white spirits and their clear, glossy and transparent appearance. |

1. Defining the geographical area

1.4.1. Description of the defined geographical area

The production of the fruits, their fermentation, the distillation of fermented fruit must, the period of rest and the finishing of spirits are provided in the territory of all the municipalities of the region of Alsace, which are spread over the two departments of Bas-Rhin et du Haut-Rhin.

1.4.2. NUTS area

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| FR | FRANCE |
| FR4 | EAST |
| FR42 | Alsace |
| FR421 | Bas-Rhin |
| FR422 | Haut-Rhin |

1.5. Method for obtaining the spirit drink

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Title — Type of method | Fruit |
| Method | The damsons used belong, within the species Prunus domestica, to the variety "Quetsche d'Alsace", it is fleshy plums of oblong shape, blue to purplish color with firm flesh and little juice. |
| Title — Type of method | Arranging of fruit and fruit trees |
| Method | The orchard is defined as all the pruniers of the ‘Quetsch d’Alsace’ variety used by the operator for the production of spirits, be it in isolated trees or in specialised fields.  The damsons for use in the production of ‘Quetsch d’Alsace’ are derived from trees from fruit trees with a planting density of less than 450 trees/ha.  The fruit trees must be planted on at least 2/3 of their surface. |
| Title — Type of method | Yield of fruit trees |
| Method | The maximum average yield of the fruit trees in production is verified by the ratio between the quantity of fruit produced and the number of trees used.  The average yield per tree must not be more than 150 kg of damsons. |
|
| Title — Type of method | Fruit harvest, transport and storage |
| Method | Fruit received at the distillery must have the following characteristics:   * The fruits are fresh: freezing or deep freezing is prohibited; * the fruits have a good shape: the fruits have a peel colour ranging from violet to blue and a marked colour of the flesh from yellow-green to yellow-orange; the taste has been maintained and the flavour is persistent in the mouth, and the flavour is balanced between sweet and acid; * the fruits are accepted whole and must not have undergone neither deterioration of the core or microbial change. |
| Title — Type of method | Fermentation |
| Method | The fruits are brewed gently to avoid grinding the kernels.  The fruit is fermented without heating.  Any addition or concentration intended to increase the natural content of sugar is prohibited.  The alcoholic yield is between 4 % and 7 % (between 4 and 7 litres of obtained pure alcohol for 100 kilograms of fruit). |
| Title — Type of method | Distillation |
| Method | Distillation is carried out using exclusively fruits harvested during the last harvest.  Fermented must is distilled according to the principle of serial distillation, either simple or several stages with a ‘reflux’ distillation.  Discontinuous intermittent distillation  The still consists of a so-called cucurbite boiler, a capital, a gooseneck, with or without a water condenser, and a coil with a cooling device.  All parts in contact with the vapors upstream of the gooseneck are obligatorily made of copper: cucurbite and capital.  The total capacity of the stills must not be higher than 25 hl.  The presence of a copper catalyst is allowed to trap ethyl carbamate.  Fermented fruit must is heated with naked fire or by introducing water vapour inside a double outer envelope.  The vapors that are derived from fermented must amount to and give rise to a capitals where they are condensed in part. Part of it is condensed to and reflects the fact that another part of the vapours comes from the neck with a swan, and it is directed towards the refrigerant at the outlet of which the comes coming out (which is the phenomenon of demotion).  This method consists of a sequence of two steps:  • The first consists of the distillation of fermented must and enables wheelbarrows;  • The second consists of the distillation of rows and it enables the spirits to be obtained.  The alcoholic strength of distillation was reduced during the distillation and fractions from the beginning and end of distillation may be separated according to their alcoholic strength by volume. During the second distillation, fractions from the beginning of distillation are systematically removed and the fractions for distillation are separated from spirits and may be taken back with fermented must of fruit or the wheelbarrows for one of the following distillation.  2.refusal of a number of stages with a number of stages with a reduction in the number of cases  Distillation is carried out by means of stills consisting of a boiler called that they are bite and a column with at most 3 trays. The column has been surmounted by a water exchange resin and then a swan neck which is linked to a condensation/refrigerant system.  All the parties in contact with the vapours upstream of the neck are bound by copper: bis, column and trays.  The presence of a copper catalyst is permitted to trap ethyl carbamate.  The vapors from the fermented must rise and reach the capital where they partially condense. Some of them condense and flow back to the cucurbite while another part of the vapors borrows the gooseneck and goes to the refrigerant at the exit of which will flow the distillate (it is the phenomenon of demotion )..  The total capacity of the stills must not be higher than 25 hl.  Fermented fruit must is heated with naked fire or by introducing water vapour inside a double outer envelope.  The vapours from the fermented must rise and reach the trays where they partially condense. The vapours then progress towards the gooseneck, some of them flow back to the water exchanger where it condenses and then back down into the column while another part of the vapour goes to the refrigerant at the outlet, from which will flow the distillate.  During distillation, the alcoholic strength of the distillate decreases. The fractions of the beginning and the end of the distillations are separated from the spirit. The start-of-distillation fractions are removed while the end-of-distillation fractions can be reintroduced with the fermented fruit juice during one of the following distillations.  On leaving the still and at the end of the distillation process, spirits have an alcoholic strength by volume of 60 % or less but not more than 80 %. |
| Title — Type of method | Rest period |
| Method | The rest period has a duration of at least 6 months, as from the date of distillation.  During this period, the spirits are stored in neutral containers, by:  tanks, in carboys or casks. |
| Title — Type of method | Finishing |
| Method | Sweetening is permitted up to a maximum of 10 g of sugar/litre, expressed as inverted sugars.  Colouring is prohibited. |

1. Link with the geographical environment of origin or the geographical origin

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Title — Name of the product | Quetsch d’Alsace |
| Detailed information on the geographical area or origin relevant for the link. | 1 Natural factors  The damson production area occupies the edge of the Alsatian ditch consisting of sub-Vosgian hills with a general east orientation. The temperate semi-continental Alsatian climate has strong thermal and rainfall amplitudes. This Alsatian climate is reinforced by the shelter effect of the Vosges which accentuates slightly the continental climate of the region and contributes to major modifications of the conditions of ventilation. This shelter effect is accentuated during a particular meteorological phenomenon that limits precipitations: the foehn "hot and dry wind", which is created by the meeting of the atmospheric circulation (the wind) and the terrain (the chain of the Vosges).  Alsace has many springs and the largest natural water reserve in Europe. The region is also characterized by very varied soils with acidic pH (ocher-podzolic soils, alluvial fluvial soils of the Rhine), neutral (eutrophic brown soils), or basic soils.  2 Human factors  The Damsons have been present in abundance throughout the whole of Alsace since ancient times. The success of this fruit, to be consumed fresh, dried and distilled, goes without saying. For the authors of the Table of Maximum of the city of Strasbourg in 1793, the "ordinary plums" could be sold to more than 3 sols messel while those "called quetschen" (damsons) could see their price rise up to 4 sols 6 deniers. Under the second empire, there are more than 800,000 damson trees in Alsace. At the end of the nineteenth century, Signeur identifies the damson in his encyclopedic dictionary of grocery as the "kind of plum of Alsace and Franche-Comté which is consumed fresh, or dried as well as the plum of Agen, and from which a highly appreciated spirit is produced in the east of France".  At the beginning of the 20th century Domont, the author of the modern Epicier, informed its members that ‘the true prune spirit is prepared in Alsace with a, fairly large, elongated purple plum, called Quetsche (damson)’.  In 1931, the authors of the Guide Una reported to their readers the quetsches of Niederbronn-les-Bains, in the Lower Rhine. In 1933, Curnonsky and Croze reported the quetsche of Alsace in their famous Trésor gastronomique de la France (gastronomic treasure of France). That same year, Alsace had a good million quetschiers, a figure that would last until the end of the 60s. The quetschiers then represent nearly a quarter of the fruit trees present in Alsace.  Arboriculture is currently a well-established agricultural activity in Alsace. Amongst the different varieties of kernel fruit, this is one of the most emblematic fruits in the region. Alsatian d’origin, the word quetsche (damson) comes from the German word ‘ZZetsche’, which is itself derived from the Greek ‘daaskêdo’, which means ‘plums of Damis’. It is celebrated at summer events and there are fairs organised in many villages, such as Buhl, Pfastatt, Willer-sur-Thur, Wittisheim and others. The damsons used for the spirit ‘Quetsche d’Alsace’ belong, within the species *prunus domestica*, to the local variety ‘Quetsche d’Alsace’. They consist of oblong plums, of a colour blue to violet, with firm flesh and slightly sweet.  The fruit sector is represented by a variety of operators, both professional producers and amateur producers. The damsons intended for the production of spirits come from isolated trees, from small or big orchards. The planting density is limited to 300 trees/ha. The fruit trees must be planted on at least 2/3 of the surface. The loading of trees is limited to 150 kg/tree. The fruits selected for distillation must be fresh, have a good quality defined by visual and organoleptic criteria and be of the same repute.  The ‘Quetsch d’Alsace’ spirit started in Alsace in the 18th century according to Paul Eschbach (Les Eaux-de-vie d’Alsace et d’ailleurs, 1993).  It is along the rivers that distillers settle and develop their activity. In Colmar, the manufacture of spirits was regulated at the beginning of the sixteenth century: in 1506, the register of expenditure and revenue of the city mentions a control of Wynnbrenner by the magistrate.  The passage of Alsace under German administration after 1870 diversified the types of stills used and allowed home distillation practices to be retained, unlike in many other French regions. This distinctive character stemmed from the large number of stills present in the farms of Alsace and the know-how of the local distillation operators. It is considered that around ten individuals per village used the spirit for their own consumption. Installed predominantly in the ‘Val de Villé’ and in the region of Colmar, today there are about 21 professional distilleries. In 1919, a Union of Alsatian distilleries and liqueurists was established.  The distillation tools used are derived from this inheritance. Traditional stills, double-distillation stills, column stills and batch stills with up to 3 trays, are available. The parts over the gooseneck, in contact with the product, are made of copper. They have a capacity of 2500 liters maximum. The rest period of the brandy must last at least 6 months. |
| Specific characteristics of the spirit drink attributable to the geographical area | The spirit ‘Quetsch d’Alsace’ is a white, crystal, glossy and transparent spirit.  The olfactory and gustatory characteristics of this type of fruit evoke the flavour of nuts and a long-lasting aroma.  The content of volatile substances is greater than 300 g/hl of pure alcohol. The ‘Quetsch d’Alsace’ has, at the time of marketing to the consumer, a minimum alcoholic strength by volume of 45 %.  The spirit "Quetsch d'Alsace" is often tasted either in the traditional way: at the temperature of the cup of coffee. It was once the digestive par excellence. In tasting with the famous pie quetsche, it develops all its aromatic intensity.  In addition to be a tasted as a spirit ‘Quetsch d’Alsace’ is also used as a culinary ingredient. It is cited in many food guides such as the Hachette Guide, which confirms its reputation.  The ‘Quetsch d’Alsace’ is part of the gastronomic culture of Alsace, as shown by its description in the Inventaire du Patrimoine Culinaire de la région Alsace. |
| Causal link between the geographical area and the product | The special conditions of the environment (surveying and climate) of Alsace are favourable to the cultivation of damsons.  The damson tree is a rustic tree and adapts to the variety of alsacien grounds. It marks the alsatian landscape, in particular through its place in the ‘green belt’ of the villages, an area where fruit trees are traditionally planted.  The presence of water in the region prevents trees from suffering from dry conditions. Furthermore, this abundance of surface waters has led to the substantial development of the distillation know-how.  The peculiar location in the Vosges, which offer shelter from the dominant winds from the western sectors promotes the development of the damson trees and give priority to farming on the upper part, thus enabling the fruit to grow completely, which allows the complete blossoming of the tree favorable to the good maturity of the fruit.  The alsatian semi-continental climate as well as general exposure to the east contribute to a long ripening of the fruits. The effect of foehn accentuates this ripening and preserves the health of the fruit. Thus, the quality of the fruit aromas, which are expressed thanks to a harvest at full maturity, on trees whose production has been controlled through strict production conditions, makes it possible to obtain a very high quality spirit.  The passage under German administration after 1870 and a specific regime from 1930 to Alsace made it possible to maintain home distillation which led to maintaining a high level of distillation technique. The quality of the damsons for the processing of spirits resulted in the development of distillation techniques for small travelling distillers, and then by professional distilleries throughout Alsatian.  The stills used and the distillation method are particular for the region of Alsace. Because of their size and the presence of copper for certain parts, the stills enable the quality of the fruit must to be preserved. Derived from the very ancient heritage of distillation in the region and influenced by the proximity of Germany, the high control of their equipment by the Alsatian distillers makes it possible to obtain a spirit with particular characteristics and persistent aromas. The temperature differences specific to the Alsatian climate are conducive to a good maturation of the "Quetsch of Alsace".  The content of volatile substances set in the specifications and the degree of consumption allow to assert the aromatic expression associated with the fruits characterizing the spirit "Quetsch d'Alsace".  The reputation and wealth of the ‘Quetsch d’Alsace’ are historically anchored to this region. Moreover, the region has a very rich culinary culture and widely uses this spirit in its gastronomy as a digestive beverage but also as an ingredient in recipes. |

1. Requirements under EU, national or regional regulation
2. Supplement to geographical indication
3. Specific rules concerning labelling

2. Other Information

2.1. Supporting material

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| File name: | CdC IG Quetsch Alsace BO.pdf |
| Description | Specifications for the Quetsch d’Alsace |
| Type of document | Specification: |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| File name: | QuetschAlsace\_joe\_20150114\_0036.pdf |
| Description: | Approval decree of the Quetsch d’Alsace |
| Type of document | Other document |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| File name: | RectificatifQuetschAlsace\_joe\_20150131\_0053.pdf |
| Description: | Amending decision relating to the decree  the approval of the Quetsch d’Alsace |
| Type of document | Other document |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| File name: | NAF QuetschAlsace 20171211.doc |
| Description: | Note from the French authorities. |
| Type of document | Other document |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| File name: | CDC\_QuetschdAlsace\_décembre2017.doc |
| Description: | Proposal for amended product specifications. |
| Type of document | Other document |

2.2. Link to the product specification

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Link: | https://info.agriculture.gouv.fr/gedei/site/bo-agri/document\_administratif-8473acdd-d440-42bb-bb11-cc21604968b4 |
|  |
|  |
|  |