Transmission of an established  
 geographical indication for a spirit drink

Whisky d'Alsace  
 EU: PGI-FR-01982  
 Submitted on 11-10-2017

PGI  
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**1. F technical file**

1. Designation and type
2. Name (s)

Whisky d'Alsace (fr)

Whisky alsacien (fr)

1. Category

2. Whisky or Whiskey

1. Country of the applicant France
2. Language of the application:

French

1. Type of geographical indication:

PGI — Protected Geographical Indication

1. Contact details

1.2.1. Name and position of the applicant

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| Name and position of the applicant | Syndicat des distillateurs et des liquoristes d'Alsace |
| Legal status, size and composition (in the case of legal persons) | A professional trade association consisting of fruit producers, fruit traders, brewers and distilleries involved in the development of spirits in Alsace |
| Nationality | France |
| Address | 12, avenue de la Foire aux vins  68 000 COLMAR  FRANCE |
| Country | France |
| Telephone | (33) (0) 783312437 |
| E-mail address (es) | syndicatdistillateuralsace@gmail.com |

1.2.2. Intermediary’s contact details

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| --- | --- |
| Name of the intermediary | Ministry of Agriculture and Food |
| Address | Direction Générale de la Performance Économique 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. Detailed information on the competent control authority

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| Name of competent control authority | Institut national de l’origine et de la qualité (INAO) |
| Address | 12 rue Henri Rol-Tanguy |
|  | 93555 Montuil-sous-Bois  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

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| Heading — Name of the product | Whisky d’Alsace |
| Physical, chemical and/or organoleptic characteristics | 1. Organoleptic characteristics: The ‘Whisky of Alsace’ is clear and bright. The flavours evoke leather, roasting, malt, settlement and fruit notes. In young whiskys, the aromatic notes of the ‘Whisky d’Alsace’ are clear and fairly pronounced. Depending on the period of ageing and the type of wood used, these aromatic notes will become more complex, and the colour of the whisky will vary from gold yellow to amber. 2. Physico-chemical characteristics: At the time of sale to the consumer, the ‘Whisky d’Alsace’ has an alcoholic strength by volume of at least 40 % at most 65 %.   The content of volatile substances is equal to or greater than 150 g/hl of pure alcohol. |
| Specific characteristics (in comparison with other spirit drinks of the same category) | "Alsace Whiskey" is produced exclusively from malted barley which is saccharified by the action of malt diastase alone, without the addition of exogenous enzymes. Barley, because of its high starch content is extremely suitable for making whiskey. The saccharification of starch under the action of diastase alone preserves the aromatic specificity of this cereal. Malted barley develops specific flavor precursors in the must that will characterize the spirit with malty notes.  The must contains only malted barley, water and yeast, it is not heated and no chemical product is added to accelerate or delay fermentation. Carrying out fermentation under these conditions makes it possible to have a must of the desired aromatic and malty potential. The addition of water during the brewing process is used by every operator in order to optimise this potential. Fermented must is then distilled according to the principle of discontinued distillation, with stills in which the part that comes in contact with the vapours upstream of the neck is made of copper. Such fermented must has an alcoholic strength by volume between 60 % and 80 % of pure alcohol.  Discontinued distillation preserves the essence of the flavours of the fermented must evoking the malt and the fruit while excluding some compounds which would add inappropriate aromatic notes. Similarly, the catalytic properties of copper allow certain undesirable compounds to be removed. Distillation to a limited alcoholic strength by volume guarantees a high content of specific volatile substances (more than 150 g/HAP), which are responsible for the aromatic complexity of the spirits, their suitability for ageing and their persistence in the mouth.  This aging in oak barrels in the Alsatian weather conditions gives the "Alsace whiskey" its colour and new aromatic notes of leather, roasting and wood that will become more complex in proportion to the duration of the stay in the barrel while the distillate will soften. The absence of any colouring by caramel makes it possible to preserve the colour obtained by the only effect of the wood.  The reduction operations, where appropriate, are carried out using water from the area and have the objective of bringing the alcoholic strength between 40 and 65 %, a level which makes it possible to highlight the flavourings better. The know-how of the farmers and to reduce the alcoholic strength of the distillate — a spirit at the level desired depending on the characteristics of the water — is a decisive factor in terms of achieving the desired organoleptic criteria. |

1. Defining the geographical area

1.4.1. Description of the defined geographical area

The crushing of malted barley, the brewing of milling, the fermentation of the must, the distillation of fermented must, the ageing of spirits and the reduction are all carried out in the geographical area. The water used for brewing, the fermentation of the must and the reduction of the alcoholic strength by volume of the spirit is provided in the geographical area.

The geographical area is the territory of the municipalities of the region of Alsace, distributed in both departments:

* Bas-Rhin;
* Haut-Rhin.

1.4.2. NUTS area

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

1.5. Method for obtaining the spirit drink

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| Title — Type of method | Commodity |
| Method | The raw materials used for the ‘Whisky d’Alsace ’ are only malted barley, water and yeast. GM varieties of barley are prohibited. |

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| Title — Type of method | Crushing and brewing |
| Method | The grains are crushed to obtain a coarse grind.  This grind, brewed with water, undergoes saccharification under the action of malt diastase. The use of exogenous enzymes for the saccharification of malted barley is prohibited. |

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| Title — Type of method | Fermentation |
| Method | The addition of yeast is allowed for the fermentation of malt must.  The must is fermented without heating or addition of chemical product for accelerating or delayng the fermentation.  Any addition or concentration used to increase the natural content of must sugar is prohibited. |

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| Title — Type of method | Distillation |
| Method | Fermented must is distilled according to the principle of discontinued distillation, either simple or mulit-stage with a reflux.  1 simple distillation with or without without reflux  — description of the distillation equipment:  The still consists of a boiler ‘cucurbite’, a capitals, a head, with or without a water condenser, and a coil with a refrigerant.  All the parts in contact with the vapours upstream of the neck are made of copper: cucurbite and head.  The total capacity of the stills must not be higher than 25 hl.  The presence of a copper catalyst is authorised to capture ethyl carbamate.  — Heating method:  The fermented must is heaetd with a naked flame or through the introduction of vapour in a double external casing.  — Description of the procedure:  The vapours derived from fermented must rise to the head of the still where they are partly condensed. Part of it is condensed and returns towards the cucurbite, while another part of the vapours comes from the gooseneck with and is directed towards the refrigerant at the outlet of which the the distillate drips (which is the phenomenon of demotion).  This method consists of several distillations:  • the former consists of the distillation of fermented must and produces the vinasses, which can be distilled again;  • the last consists of the distillation of vinasses and allows to obtain spirits.  — maximum alcoholic strength by volume:  The alcoholic strength of the extract is reduced during distillation and the beginning and ending fractions of the distillation may be excluded according to their actual alcoholic strength by volume. The beginning fractions are eliminated, while the ending ones are separated from the spirit and can be reintroduced with the fermented must in one of the following distillations.  This distillation method is authorised for the ‘Whisky d’Alsace’ ‘single malt’.  On leaving the still and at the end of the distillation process, the spirit presents an alcoholic strength by volume between 60 % and 80 % of pure alcohol.  2 Discontinued multi-stage distillation with reflux:  description of distillation materials:  Distillation is carried out by means of stills consisting of a boiler called cucurbite and a column with at most 3 trays. On top of the column, there is a water exchange and a gooseneck linked to a condensation/refrigerant system.  All the parts in contact with the vapours going through of the neck are made of copper: cucurbite, column and trays.  The presence of a copper catalyst is permitted to trap ethyl carbamate.  The trays can be disengaged and in this case, as the trays can not retain liquid and allow the sparging of the vapors, the multi-stage distillation is transformed into a simple distillation.  The total capacity of the stills must not be higher than 25 hl.  Method of heating:  The fermented must is heated either with naked fire or by introducing water vapour in double external casing.  — description of the procedure:  The vapours derived from fermented must rise to the trays where they are partly condensed. The vapours then progress towards the gooseneck, a part of them flows back to the water exchanger where it condenses and then back down into the column while another part of the vapours goes to the refrigerant at the outlet of which will flow the distillate.  This method consists of several distillation:  • the former consist of the distillation of fermented must and permits to produce vinasses which may be distilled again;  • Distillation is to be carried out with the trays and the heat treatment is necessarily engaged. It consists of the distillation of vinasses and enables to obtain spirit.  — maximum alcoholic strength by volume:  The alcoholic strength of the extract is reduced during distillation and the beginning and ending fractions of the distillation may be excluded according to their actual alcoholic strength by volume. The beginning fractions are eliminated, while the ending ones are separated from the spirit and can be reintroduced with the fermented must in one of the following distillations.  This distillation method is authorised for the ‘Whisky d’Alsace’ ‘single malt’.  On leaving the still and at the end of the distillation process, the spirit presents an alcoholic strength by volume between 60 % and 80 % of pure alcohol. |

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| Title — Type of method | Ageing |
| Method | The eaux-de-vie are aged in aging cellars whose hygrometry and temperature are regulated naturally without installation other than the insulation and ventilation of the premises.  Spirits are aged in oak wood containers of a capacity not less than 700 litres over a period of at least 3 years from the date of entry under wood.  Breeding for over 3 years may be carried out on containers of wood from other kinds.  The minimum duration set out above must be uninterrupted, with the exception of any handling necessary for realising the products. |

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| Title — Type of method | Reduction |
| Method | The alcoholic strength of spirits is reduced by the addition of water to reach an alcoholic strength by volume of between 40 % and 65 %. |

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| Title — Type of method | Finishing |
| Method | Colouring is prohibited.  The " Whisky d’Alsace" has an obscuration value less than or equal to 2% vol. The obscuration, expressed in% vol. is obtained by the difference between the real alcoholic strength by volume and the gross alcoholic strength by volume.  According to European regulations and to the provisions of these specifications, whisky must not be sweetened or flavoured or contain additives. |

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

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| Heading — Name of the product |  |
| Detailed information on the geographical area or origin relevant for the link. | The physical factors of the link:  The dominant character of the terrain in Alsace is the significant topographic contrast between the Rhine plain and the eastern side of the Vosge mountain.  The tempered semi-continental alsacien climate is characterised by high frequent variations in temperature and rain.  This alsacian climate is reinforced by the shelter of the Vosges, which accentuates the continental climate of the area and contributes to major modification in ventilation conditions. This shelter is accentuated by a specific meteorological phenomenon which limits rain: the foehn a strong hot and dry wind, is created by the encounter of atmospheric circulation (the wind) and the terrain (the Vosges chain).  Alsatian owns an inexhaustible resource: water. Through its rivers and its underground reserves, it has shaped the landscape and created a variety of natural environments.  The human factors of the link:  The first Alsatian brewery was founded in 1260. Thanks to the production of cereals and the abundance of water in the region, the brewing activity, was developed to reach an industrial dimension at the beginning of the 19th century. Today, public houses composed of family businesses, some of which have large groups, produce more than 50 % of the French beer production.  The history of distillation in Alsace dates back to the XV century (the first mention of an Alsatian spirit is in the accounts of the work Notre Dame), and is initially the result of the raw material found in abundance in the region. It started with fruit, small berries and aromatic plants. More recently, other goods have been used: such as malt must. It is along the rivers that the distilleries have installed and developed. Influenced by the Scottish and Irish practices, introduced by the monks in Alsace, during the different evangelising waves, the Alsatian distillers were able to take advantage of the fact that regional houses could be established as a result of the ‘Whisky of Alsace’. The production was developed above all in the 1990s.  There were 5 distilleries in 2012 producing the ‘Whisky of Alsace’, with an overall production equivalent to 7000 litres, which is rising steadily.  The whisky of Alsace is obtained exclusively from malted barley, water and yeast. The crushing of malted barley is carried out by the brewer before saccharification. The fermentation of the must takes place without heating or addition of chemical products to accelerate or delay the fermentation. It is only sugars from the malted cereal that are fermented (enrichment is prohibited).  The distilling tools used derive from this distillation heritage of fruit spirits. Traditional stills with simple discontinuous distillation and stills with up to 3 trays, with multi-stage reflux distillation are available. The distillation method consists of a succession of several distillations. The parts upstream of the gooseneck, in contact with the product, are made of copper. They have a capacity of 2,500 litres maximum.  The malt spirits are aged from an ageing stock, with a humidity and a temperature which are naturally regulated without other installation than insulation and ventilation of the premises. They are aged exclusively in oak wood containers of a capacity of 700 litres or lower over a period of at least 3 years from the date of entry under wood. Ageing beyond 3 years may be carried out in wood containers of other essences. |
| Specific characteristics of the spirit drink attributable to the geographical area | The ‘ Whisky d’Alsace’ is clear and bright. The flavours evoke leather, roasting, malt, settlement and fruit notes. In young whiskys, the aromatic notes of the ‘Whisky d’Alsace’ are clear and fairly pronounced. Depending on the period of ageing and the type of wood used, these aromatic notes will become more complex, and the colour of the whisky will vary from gold yellow to amber.  The ‘Whisky of Alsace’ presents, at the time of marketing to the consumer, an alcoholic strength by volume between 40 % and 65 %.  Reputation of whisky d’Alsace  ‘Whisky d’Alsace’ enjoys a very good reputation at both the national and international levels. Very positive assessments have been published in the specialist press (whisky magazine, Spirit business...) or at events relating to whisky such as ‘Whisky Live’, in Paris.  Alsatian Whiskey is now rooted in regional traditions as witnessed by the historian Roland Oberlé in his book "Alsace, the flavors of a terroir" which dedicates a chapter to spirits and Whiskey of Alsace. |
| Causal link between the geographical area and the product | The “Whisky d’Alsace” is the result of the encounter of two historical expertise in Alsace: brewing and distilling activity which are still in place today and are dominant in the economy of the region.  The common denominator of these two activities is water: it is used as a basis for making malt must, but also and in large quantities for the cooling of distillates and, of course, makes it possible to reduce whiskys for marketing purposes. Alsace naturally display an abundance of underground surface and water essential for quality brewing and distillation.  The quality of the must achieved, without additions, from malted barley crushed in the area and water, allows the transformation of barley sugars into ethyl alcohol, excellent support for aromatic compounds characterizing malted barley .  A number of distillation operations will enable alcohol to be concentrated and to identify the aromatic compounds sought for the ‘Alsatian Whisky’.  The stills used and the distillation method are typical of the Alsace region. Due to its size and the presence of copper for some parts, the still allows to preserve the quality of the must of malt. Derived from the very old heritage of distilling in the region and influenced by the proximity of Germany, the high control of their tool by Alsatian distillers makes it possible to obtain a malted barley spirit with particular characteristics, such as the persistence of aromas.  The ageing in oak casks for a period of 3 years will naturally have an impact on the colour of the ‘Whisky of Alsace’ and its organoleptic characteristics as well. The limited size of these containers makes it possible to promote trade. The differences in the temperature specific to Alsace are favourable to the production of the ‘whisky d’Alsace’ and allow the development of the aromatic components sought in the ‘Whisky of Alsace’. In young whisky, the notes of leather, roasting, malt and fruit are free and quite pronounced. The ageing period and the type of wood used will make these flavourings more complex.  Lastly, the reduction in the ‘whisky d’Alsace’ makes it possible to reduce its alcoholic strength by volume from 40 to 65 %, making it easier to highlight the flavours.  The reputation and wealth of the ‘Whisky d’Alsace’ are also based on the fact that the region has a very rich culinary culture and was able to incorporate this spirits into its gastronomy as a beverage but also as an ingredient in recipes. |

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

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| Title | Single malt |
| Description of the rule | The Geographical Indication "Whisky d’Alsace" or "Whisky Alsacien" can be integrated by a complementary mention appearing next to the Geographical Indication and in the same typography. The mention "single malt" can be used when the "Whisky d’Alsace" or "Whisky Alsacien" is derived from a must stirred and fermented in the same place and distilled in one and the same distillery.  The use of this mention is reserved to the ‘Whisky d’Alsace’ produced from a discontinued simple distillation. |

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| Title | Age reference |
| Description of the rule | The age of whisky may be mentioned only on the basis of a minimum ageing period of 6 years. |

2. **other information**  2.1. Supporting material

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| File name: | CdC IG Whisky Alsace BO.pdf |
| Description | Specifications of the GI Whisky d’Alsace |
| Type of document | Specification: |

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| File name: | WhiskyAlsace\_joe\_20150114\_0026.pdf |
| Description | Approval Order of the GI Whisky d’Alsace |
| Type of document | Specification: |

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| File name: | NAF WhiskyAlsace 20171004.doc |
| Description | Note from the French authorities |
| Type of document | Specification: |

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| File name: | CDC\_whiskydAlsace\_octobre2017.doc |
| Description | Proposal for amended product specifications |
| Type of document | Specification: |

2.2. Link to the product specification

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| Link: | https://info.agriculture.gouv.fr/gedei/site/bo-agri/document\_administratif-24f8f547-8609-4e4e-be81-306cbba67730 |
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