



C/2023/1470

8.12.2023

Publication of an application for approval of a Union amendment to a product specification for a name in the wine sector pursuant to Article 97(4) of Regulation (EU) No 1308/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council

(C/2023/1470)

This publication confers the right to oppose the application pursuant to Article 98 of Regulation (EU) No 1308/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council ⁽¹⁾ within three months from the date of this publication.

'Minervois-la-Livinière'

PDO-FR-A0667-AM02

Date of application: 23.9.2022

APPLICANT AND LEGITIMATE INTEREST

Syndicat du Cru Minervois-la-Livinière

The applicant group protects and manages the PDO and ensures compliance with its specification.

DESCRIPTION OF AND REASONS FOR THE AMENDMENT

Change to the name of the PDO

The PDO protection and management body and all operators concerned wish to distinguish their product from the 'parent' designation of origin, the PDO 'Minervois', by using only the name 'La Livinière'. This change of name is part of efforts to organise the various designations in this area into a hierarchy. The PDO 'La Livinière' complies with a specification and specific production conditions that set it apart. The geographical area for this designation is located in the heart of the Minervois, in the Petit Causse region, with its uniform, south-facing slopes, which form an amphitheatre that is usually spared the rain that can reach other parts of the Minervois. The human factor is a key element of the *terroir* of 'La Livinière' and has helped forge the identity of this designation, which explains the products' remarkable homogeneity.

This change of name affects several different points in the specification:

— The title of the specification for the designation.

— Chapter I of the specification:

1. Point I. – Name of the designation – states that 'only wines complying with the specific provisions laid down in the specification may use the controlled designation of origin "La Livinière", initially recognised as the controlled designation of origin "Minervois-La Livinière" by decree of 12 February 1999.'

This amendment has also been included under the section of the single document entitled 'New name'.

2. Point III – Colours and type of product. This amendment has also been included under the section of the single document entitled 'Description of the wine(s)'.
3. Point X – Link with the geographical area. This amendment has also been included under the section of the single document entitled 'Link with the geographical area'.
4. Point XII – Rules on presentation and labelling. This amendment has also been included under the section of the single document entitled 'Further conditions'.

⁽¹⁾ OJ L 347, 20.12.2013, p. 671.

SINGLE DOCUMENT

1. **New name**

La Livinière

2. **Geographical indication type**

PDO – Protected Designation of Origin

3. **Categories of grapevine product**

1. Wine

4. **Description of the wine(s)**1. *Analytical characteristics*

BRIEF WRITTEN DESCRIPTION

These are still, dry red wines. The wines have a minimum natural alcoholic strength by volume of 13 %, and the grapes are considered ripe if they have a sugar content less than or equal to 218 g/l of must. The wines ready to be marketed in bulk or packaged have a malic acid content less than or equal to 0,4 g/l. The wines ready to be marketed in bulk or packaged must have a fermentable sugar content (glucose and fructose): less than or equal to 3 g/l for wines with a natural alcoholic strength by volume less than or equal to 14 %; less than or equal to 4 g/l for wines with a natural alcoholic strength by volume greater than 14 %.

The total acidity, volatile acidity and total sulphur dioxide content, the maximum total alcoholic strength and the minimum actual alcoholic strength follow the limits laid down in the EU legislation.

General analytical characteristics

Maximum total alcoholic strength (in % volume)	
Minimum actual alcoholic strength (in % volume)	
Minimum total acidity	
Maximum volatile acidity (in milliequivalents per litre)	
Maximum total sulphur dioxide (in milligrams per litre)	

2. *Organoleptic characteristics*

BRIEF WRITTEN DESCRIPTION

The wines are produced by blending several varieties, in keeping with the tradition of the vineyards of the Languedoc, with most of the blend accounted for by the Grenache N, Mourvèdre N and Syrah N varieties. The wines have an intense purple colour, with shades of terra cotta, and a rich, dense body.

These are complex wines that evolve into notes of spices and cooked or candied fruit, complemented by scents of vanilla or cocoa when aged in oak barrels.

Always powerful and warm, they are long-lasting, concentrated and tannic, but always well balanced. These are wines that keep well, preserving their melt-in-the-mouth, velvety qualities, and that gentle heat and fruitiness so characteristic of the great wines of the South of France.

5. **Wine-making practices**

5.1. *Specific oenological practices*

Growing method

The minimum vine planting density is 4 000 plants per hectare. For vineyards planted after 31 July 2019, the minimum vine planting density is 4 200 plants per hectare.

The spacing between the rows is less than or equal to 2,50 m.

The area available for each plant must not exceed 2,5 m². This surface area is obtained by multiplying the spacing between the rows by the spacing between the plants.

Pruning must take place before phenological stage E (according to Baggionili), with three leaves unfolded on the first two buds.

The vines are pruned using spur pruning, with a maximum of 12 buds per plant; each spur has a maximum of two buds.

Single Guyot pruning may be used for the Syrah N variety, with a maximum of 10 buds per plant, including no more than six on the cane, and no more than two replacement spurs with a maximum of two buds each.

The foliage height for trained vines must provide 1,60 m² of external surface of vegetation cover for the production of 1 kg of grapes; this rule applies from 30 June each year.

The average maximum crop load per parcel is set at 7 000 kg per hectare.

Irrigation may be authorised.

Specific oenological practice

The wines are produced by blending the grapes, must or wines of at least two varieties.

The proportion of the Grenache N, Lledonner pelut N, Mourvèdre N and Syrah N varieties combined must be greater than or equal to 40 % of the blend.

The proportion of the Carignan N, Cinsaut N, Grenache N, Mourvèdre N and Syrah N varieties combined must be greater than or equal to 80 % of the blend, with no single variety accounting for more than 80 % of the blend.

The wines must be aged until at least 15 October of the year following the harvest.

The use of thermovinification, continuous fermentation tanks, marc-recycling tanks, vertical stemmers, screw-type separators or continuous presses is prohibited.

All wine-making practices followed must comply with the requirements laid down at EU level and in the Rural and Maritime Fishing Code.

5.2. *Maximum yields*

51 hectolitres per hectare

6. **Demarcated geographical area**

The grapes are harvested and the wines made, developed and aged in the following municipalities:

- Department of Aude: Azille;
- Department of Hérault: Azillanet, Cesseras, Félines-Minervois, La Livinière, Siran.

7. **Wine grape varieties**

Carignan N

Cinsaut N – Cinsault

Grenache N

Lledoner pelut N

Mourvèdre N – Monastrell

Piquepoul noir N

Rivairenc N – Aspiran noir

Syrah N – Shiraz

Terret noir N

8. Description of the link(s)

8.1. Description of the geographical area

The geographical area is located in the Petit Causse region, nestled against the foothills of the Montagne Noire mountain range, the most southerly part of the Cévennes region. The geographical area covers the territory of five municipalities in the Department of Hérault and one municipality in the Department of Aude, which are located in the South of France.

In this landscape of bright, open views and rugged terrain, vines alternate with hills covered in scrubland, pine, juniper and oak trees, interspersed with thalwegs or larger depressions.

The vineyards face south/south-east, at an altitude of between 120 m and 330 m.

The geographical area is bounded to the west by the River Ognon, a tributary of the Aude, and to the east by the Serre d'Oupia massif and the River Espène.

The geographical area belongs to a syncline filled with tertiary molassic sediment, cut by sandstone banks in the centre, conglomerates of lacustrine limestone to the north, and stony terraces scattered to the south.

The climate is characterised by low annual rainfall of between 400 mm and 500 mm and an annual temperature above 14° C, with more than 2 400 hours of sunshine per year.

The Petit Causse region is shielded from rain coming in from the west by the Laure Minervois hills, which form a natural barrier, while the massif of the Serre d'Oupia blocks maritime air arriving from the Mediterranean. A hot, dry region that experiences a significant water deficit in summer, it benefits nonetheless from cool nocturnal airflows that descend from the ridges of the Causse.

8.2. Information on the product and the human factors relevant to the link

Vines have been present in the Minervois since Roman times.

Winegrowing became established in the region after the Roman province of Gallia Narbonensis (Narbonne) was founded in 118 BC, thanks to its excellent trade links, including a Roman road linking Toulouse and Lodève, to the north of the Via Domitia.

The names of three municipalities testify to the wine-growing traditions of this era: La Livinière for 'Cella Vinaria' (wine cellar), Siran for 'Villa de Sirius', which takes its name from the first Roman legionnaire to settle in the region, and Félines for 'Figulina', a pottery (especially amphora) studio.

The opening of the Canal du Midi in 1680, improvements in the road network and the creation of the railways in the 19th century helped to develop winegrowing as a monoculture. This prosperity was subject to the vagaries of the phylloxera epidemic and to overproduction, which reached a high point with the wine-making crisis of 1907. The crisis incited a revolt by the winemakers of the South of France, but also prompted them to organise, chiefly by developing a cooperative system.

A wine-makers protection association was formed in the Minervois region in 1922. Initially recognised as a wine with the designation of origin 'Delimited wine of superior quality' in 1951, 'Minervois' was recognised as a controlled designation of origin by decree of 15 February 1985, after varietal conversion and the imposition of more precise production conditions.

The winemakers of La Livinière were always convinced, however, that their land and know-how would leave a mark on the originality of their red wine production. At the dawn of the 1970s, with the help of technical bodies and under the impetus of the wine cooperative of the municipality of La Livinière led by Maurice Piccinini, winemakers sought to ensure the best match between variety and planting site, optimising vine-pruning and training techniques, harvesting at optimum ripeness, and making improvements to wine-making techniques. Maurice Piccinini set up a protection association in 1988. The controlled designation of origin 'Minervois-La Livinière' was recognised in 1999.

In 2018, some 11 000 hl were produced by 45 producers, including two wine cooperatives, which produced 20 % of the volume.

The wines are produced by blending several varieties, in keeping with the tradition of the vineyards of the Languedoc, with most of the blend accounted for by the Grenache N, Mourvèdre N and Syrah N varieties.

Over the generations, producers have successfully adapted their wine-making techniques to extract the best from their grapes. Early on, a period of post-fermentation ageing in the tank was introduced, to produce a wine with complex aromas, and above all to ensure that the tannins become round and smooth. To achieve these goals, a minimum ageing period up to 15 October of the year following the harvest year was laid down in the specification.

8.3. *Causal interactions*

Shielded from maritime influences from the east and west, and with its south/south-east exposure, the geographical area enjoys a warm, dry climate. Nestled against the Montagne Noire mountain range, and with the effect of the altitudinal gradient, the area nonetheless enjoys cool night-time temperatures.

These specific conditions help the grapes to achieve optimal ripeness, a certain acidity, and a balance between alcohol and tannins.

The parcels on which the grapes are to be harvested are clearly demarcated. Preference is given to well-exposed, clay-limestone soils with a high stone content, which provide low natural yields. These conditions allow producers to match variety with location, which helps give these wines their particularly concentrated and powerful character.

The Grenache N variety provides warmth and roundness on the palate and favours stony terraces and marl. Syrah N is an early-budding variety that provides sweetness and fruity aromas. Cinsaut N and Carignan N are historical varieties. The former provides finesse, the latter, body and tannins. The Mourvèdre N variety provides delicate tannins and hints of spice.

The producers of this region have managed to take an evocative name of a place steeped in history and turn it into a modern and recognised controlled designation of origin.

The 'La Livinière' controlled designation of origin is one of the flagship wines of the Languedoc region.

Sealing the reputation and nobleness of this controlled designation of origin, the 'Livinage', created at the start of the 1990s, has become an unmissable event at which professionals from the wine industry and journalists gather to sample wines, meet producers and discover the area's rich diversity.

9. **Essential further conditions (packaging, labelling, other requirements)**

Legal framework:

National legislation

Type of further condition:

Additional provisions relating to labelling

Description of the condition:

The wines for which the 'La Livinière' controlled designation is claimed under the terms of this specification and which are presented using that designation cannot be declared after harvest, offered to the public, dispatched, marketed or sold unless the designation, accompanied by the words '*Appellation contrôlée*' [Controlled Designation], appear in the harvest declaration, in advertisements, catalogues, and on any labels, invoices or containers, in clearly visible characters.

The size of the letters of optional words whose use, under EU rules, may be regulated by the Member States, must not be larger in terms of height, width or depth than double the size of the letters forming the name of the controlled designation of origin.

Wines bearing the controlled designation of origin may specify on their label the broader geographical unit 'Languedoc'.

The size of the letters for this broader geographical unit must not be larger in terms of height or width than half the size of the letters forming the name of the controlled designation of origin.

Legal framework:

National legislation

Type of further condition:

Derogation concerning production in the demarcated geographical area

Description of the condition:

The area in immediate proximity, defined by derogation for the production, development and ageing of the wines, comprises all or part of the territory of the following municipalities of the Department of Aude:

- Pépieux;
- Peyriac-Minervois: the locality of Les Tuileries d'Affiac.

Link to the product specification

https://info.agriculture.gouv.fr/gedei/site/bo-agri/document_administratif-71b54b4c-4520-4c67-be83-bc7f50bb737b