



C/2024/1918

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Publication of an approved standard amendment to a product specification of a geographical indication in the sector of spirit drinks, as referred to in Article 8(2) and (3) of Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2021/1235

(C/2024/1918)

This communication is published in accordance with Article 8(5) of Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2021/1235 ⁽¹⁾.

COMMUNICATION OF STANDARD AMENDMENT MODIFYING THE SINGLE DOCUMENT

‘Сливенска перла (Сливенска гроздова ракия / Гроздова ракия от Сливен) / Slivenska perla (Slivenska grozdova rakya / Grozdova rakya from Sliven)’

EU No: PGI-BG-01855-AM01

Submitted on 8 December 2023

1. Name of the product

‘Сливенска перла (Сливенска гроздова ракия / Гроздова ракия от Сливен) / Slivenska perla (Slivenska grozdova rakya / Grozdova rakya from Sliven)’

2. Member State

Bulgaria

3. Sender

Ministry of the Economy and Industry

4. Amendment

4.1. Explanation that the amendments fall under the definition of the standard amendment as provided for in Article 31 of Regulation (EU) 2019/787

The amendments do not involve a change to the name or part of the name of the geographical indication, the legal name or the category of the spirit drink; there is no risk to the reputation or any other characteristic of the spirit drink essentially attributable also to the geographical origin; and the amendments do not entail restrictions on the marketing of the product.

After a producer of the drink communicated the amendments, the national Bulgarian amendment procedure was enacted by Order No RD-27-4/27.10.2017 approving the spirit drink with a geographical indication Сливенска перла (Сливенска гроздова ракия / Гроздова ракия от Сливен) / Slivenska perla (Slivenska grozdova rakya / Grozdova rakya from Sliven), issued by the Minister for the Economy in accordance with Section VII ‘Geographical indication’ of Chapter 9 ‘Spirit drinks’ of the Wine and Spirit Drinks Act, (State Gazette No 45, 2012). Under the national amendment procedure, the amendment is published in two national daily publications and interested parties have the opportunity to raise objections. No objections were raised. The Minister for the Economy and Industry issued a new Order No RD-16-617/02.06.2023, which was published in the non-official section of State Gazette No 55 of 27 June 2023 (p. 34). After publication in the State Gazette, the order was published on the official website of the Ministry of the Economy and Industry, together with the subsequent update and full version of the product specification.

4.2. Description of and reasons for the amendment

Description

The amendment to the specification of Сливенска перла (Сливенска гроздова ракия / Гроздова ракия от Сливен) / Slivenska perla (Slivenska grozdova rakya / Grozdova rakya from Sliven) includes the following.

⁽¹⁾ OJ L 270, 29.7.2021, p. 1.

- 1.2.1. The geographical area has been extended to include the village of Tenevo in the region of Yamvol, the villages of Topolitsa and Troyanovo in the region of Burgas. The productive vineyard area has increased from 3 863,011 hectares to 4 010 hectares. The amendment is necessary due to a change of producer. The new producer also cultivates his own vineyards, both in the existing geographical area and nearby in a bordering area, where the terrain, soil and climate conditions offer a similar terroir. The amendment affects point 2.7: Concise definition of the geographical area for the single document / product specification.
- 1.2.2. The following white varieties have been added to the list of grapes used to produce the drink: Ugni Blanc, Aligote and Prosecco/Glera. The purpose of the amendment is to preserve and maintain the winegrowers' production potential by including white grape varieties with similar qualities, thereby enhancing the physical, chemical and organoleptic character of the drink. The amendment to the single document / product specification concerns point 2.6: Description of the spirit drink - in the part on the specific characteristics (compared to other spirit drinks in the same category). It also concerns point 2.10: Description of the link between the spirit drink and its geographical origin, including, where appropriate, the specific elements of the product description or production method justifying the link.
- 1.2.3. The DK-2 type continuous distillation and rectification plant, which produced 9 000 litres every 24 hours, has been replaced by a DK-5 type, which is the same sort of continuous distillation and rectification plant, producing 24 000 litres every 24 hours, and two DK-1 type continuous distillation and rectification plants, producing 90 000 litres every 24 hours. The technological equipment has been replaced in order to modernise and increase production capacity. This does not affect the authenticity of the production method or the good production practices in place. The change helps to preserve the traditional character and reputation of the drink, and to meet consumer expectations regarding the quality of the product. The amendment to the single document / product specification concerns point 2.6: Description of the spirit drink – the part relating to the specific characteristics (compared to other spirit drinks of the same category) and point 2.9: Method of production of the spirit drink

Summary of the reasons why the amendment is required

The first national order approving Сливенска перла (Сливенска гроздова ракия / Гроздова ракия от Сливен) / Slivenska perla (Slivenska grozdova rakya / Grozdova rakya from Sliven) was issued in 2003. In the last 20 years, there have been changes, including a change in the ownership of the land, which have affected the vineyards and the grape varieties grown there. The producer of the drink has also changed. The addition of new grape varieties allows for greater flexibility and ensures that sufficient volumes will be produced to meet demand. At the same time, the appropriate production technology is fully maintained and the quality enhanced of Сливенска перла (Сливенска гроздова ракия / Гроздова ракия от Сливен) / Slivenska perla (Slivenska grozdova rakya / Grozdova rakya from Sliven). Over the years, the producer has made changes to the vessels used, including their volume, and to the machinery and other equipment. This did not mean changes to the production method. The amendment as a whole requires an update to the geographical indication.

The amendment affects the single document.

SINGLE DOCUMENT

1. Name(s)

Сливенска перла (Сливенска гроздова ракия / Гроздова ракия от Сливен) / Slivenska perla (Slivenska grozdova rakya / Grozdova rakya from Sliven)

2. Applicant country

Bulgaria

3. Geographical indication type

Geographical indication

4. Category or categories of the spirit drink

4. Wine spirit

5. Description of the spirit drink

Physical, chemical and organoleptic characteristics as well as specific characteristics of the product compared to spirit drinks of the same category

The minimum alcoholic strength of the drink is 40 % vol. The production rule is 100 kilograms of grapes produce no more than 75 litres of wine, and that distillation is to a maximum of 65 % vol.

— Physical, chemical and/or organoleptic characteristics

Сливенска перла (Сливенска гроздова ракия / Гроздова ракия от Сливен) / Slivenska perla (Slivenska grozdova rakya / Grozdova rakya from Sliven) is a wine spirit. It is a vivid pale yellow to amber in colour, with a persistent muscat aroma and aftertaste, combining rose and geranium, accompanied by characteristic oily touches. It is flavoursome, full-bodied and smooth. A limited number of special lines are matured in oak barrels.

The organoleptic qualities of the drink result from the volatile substances that it contains. Based on a number of variants produced, it has been ascertained that the best organoleptic profile is obtained with a minimum of 128 grams per hectolitre of absolute alcohol. The aroma derives from the content of esters and aldehydes, which vary according to the climate conditions during the year. The warmer the year, the lower the ester content. The flavour characteristics derive from the content of higher alcohols.

— Specific characteristics (compared to spirit drinks of the same category)

Сливенска перла (Сливенска гроздова ракия / Гроздова ракия от Сливен) / Slivenska perla (Slivenska grozdova rakya / Grozdova rakya from Sliven) was one of the first special wine spirits produced in Bulgaria. It is produced by distilling wine made from blends of the following grape varieties: Muscat Ottonel, Tamyanka, Perle de csaba, Ugni Blanc, Aligote and Prosecco/Glera. The temperature is strictly controlled during fermentation, as is the technology used. Distillation takes place in a DK-5 type continuous distillation and rectification plant, producing 24 000 litres every 24 hours, and in two DK-1 type continuous distillation and rectification plants, producing 90 000 litres every 24 hours. The wine enters the distillation column at a set temperature. During distillation, reflux is produced, part of which is drawn off with the distillate. It is also essential that the distillate itself is collected at an alcoholic strength of 62-65 % vol. It is then graded for storage and/or maturation in oak barrels.

6. Concise definition of the geographical area

The geographical area of Сливенска перла (Сливенска гроздова ракия / Гроздова ракия от Сливен) / Slivenska perla (Slivenska grozdova rakya / Grozdova rakya from Sliven) covers part of south-eastern Bulgaria. To the north are the, relatively low, slopes of the eastern part of the Stara Planina mountains. To the west lie the Sredna Gora mountains. To the south is the valley of the Tundzha River and the Thracian lowlands. The area comprises the following localities:

- municipality of Sliven – 9 localities (micro-regions): the town of Sliven and the villages of Gavrilovo, Gergevets, Gorno Aleksandrovo, Dragodanovo, Kaloyanovo, Nikolaevo, Strupets and Chintulovo;
- municipality of Nova Zagora, region of Sliven - five localities (micro-regions): the villages of Nauchen, Karanovo, Korten, Konyovo and Sadievo;
- municipality of Tvarditsa, region of Sliven - 2 localities (micro-regions): the town of Shivachevo and village of Sborishte;
- municipality of Tundzha, region of Yambol - 1 locality (micro-region): village of Tenevo;
- municipality of Aytos, region of Burgas - 1 locality (micro-region): village of Topolitsa;
- municipality of Kameno, region of Burgas - 1 locality (micro-region): village of Troyanovo.

The total vineyard area is 4 010 hectares.

7. Method of production of the spirit drink

According to the producers, the grapes are harvested manually when they reach technological ripeness, with a minimum sugar content of 19 %. Within 24 hours of being harvested, the grapes are processed. They are destemmed and pressed. The grape pulp is chilled and left to macerate for 72-96 hours. Contact with the grape solids results in the extraction of the aromatic substances found in the grape skins. Controlled alcoholic fermentation takes place. The resulting wine is distilled as soon as possible in a DK-5 type continuous distillation and rectification plant, producing 24 000 litres every 24 hours, and in two DK-1 type continuous distillation and rectification plants, producing 90 000 litres every 24 hours.

The distillate produced is held in stainless steel vessels, although the best batches are matured in oak barrels. A number of the barrels have become neutral with age. Some of the barrels are made of Strandzha oak (*Quercus hartwissiana* Stev). In Europe, this wood is found exclusively within the Strandzha mountain massif.

Contact with the wood enhances the colour, aroma and flavour of the distillates.

The distillate is then blended with treated softened water to produce the desired alcoholic strength of 40 % vol. Finally, the wine spirit Сливенска перла (Сливенска гроздова ракия/Гроздова ракия от Сливен) / Slivenska perla (Slivenska grozdova rakya / Grozdova rakya from Sliven) is bottled. There is no restriction requiring bottling to take place exclusively in the defined geographical area.

8. Specific rules concerning packaging

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9. Specific labelling rules

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10. Description of the link between the spirit drink and its geographical origin, including, where appropriate, the specific elements of the product description or production method justifying the link

The geographical area of Сливенска перла (Сливенска гроздова ракия / Гроздова ракия от Сливен) / Slivenska perla (Slivenska grozdova rakya / Grozdova rakya from Sliven) has a typical mountain climate. It is bordered to the north by the slopes of the Stara Planina mountains. There is significant rainfall and the average daytime temperature is high. The soils are sandy. These conditions produce high quality grapes. They contain significant amounts of aromatic substances. Harvest takes place when the sugar and acidity are at their optimum level. The process of alcoholic fermentation is strictly controlled, as is the temperature. The specific characteristics of the distillation process were established in 1979 and have been strictly respected. These include: design of the distillation facilities, the proportion of reflux, temperatures and levels of alcohol, as well as the alcoholic strength at which the distillate is drawn off, which is 62-65 % vol. Experienced practitioners preserve the traditions of producing a quality product with the character and style of a special wine spirit. The characteristics of the product are the pale yellow to amber colour and pleasing aroma combining rose and geranium, accompanied by characteristic oily touches, with a smooth and full flavour. For the special limited lines of the product, the contact with oak enriches the aroma with subtle oaky notes on the finish, while conferring a flavoursome sweetness and enhancing the smoothness.

Link to the product specification

<https://www.mi.government.bg/library/zapoved-za-utvarzhdavane-na-vinena-destilatna-spirtna-napitka-grozdova-rakiya-s-geografsko-ukazanie-slivenska-slivenska-perla-slivenska-grozdova-rakiya-grozdova-rakiya-ot-sliven-2/>