

OTHER ACTS

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

MAIN SPECIFICATIONS OF THE TECHNICAL FILE FOR 'RON DE GUATEMALA'

(2012/C 168/09)

INTRODUCTION

On 15 March 2010, the Asociación Nacional de Fabricantes de Alcoholes y Licores, a Guatemalan body established in accordance with Guatemalan law, applied for registration of 'Ron de Guatemala' as a geographical indication under Regulation (EC) No 110/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the definition, description, presentation, labelling and the protection of geographical indications of spirit drinks and repealing Council Regulation (EEC) No 1576/89.

In accordance with Article 17(5) of Regulation (EC) No 110/2008, the Commission must verify, within 12 months from the date of submission of the application referred to in paragraph 1, whether that application complies with this Regulation.

This verification has been carried out and, at the 107th meeting of the Committee for spirit drinks on 8 February 2012, the Commission stated, in accordance with Article 17(6), that the application complied with the Regulation.

As a result, the main specifications of the technical file will be published in the *Official Journal of the European Union*, C series.

In accordance with Article 17(7), any natural or legal person that has a legitimate interest may, within six months from the date of publication of the main specifications of the technical file, object to the registration of the geographical indication in Annex III on the grounds that the conditions laid down in the Regulation are not fulfilled. The objection, which must be duly substantiated, must be submitted to the Commission in one of the official languages of the European Union or accompanied by a translation into one of those languages.

SUMMARY SHEET G.I. 'RON DE GUATEMALA'

1. **Name:** 'Ron de Guatemala'
2. **Category of spirit drink:** Rum (category 1 of Annex II to Regulation (EC) No 110/2008)
3. **Description:**
An alcoholic drink made exclusively from raw materials obtained from sugar cane.

'Ron de Guatemala' comes in the following different varieties:

- Solera: rum from virgin sugar cane honey aged at altitude in white oak barrels,
- Solera Añejo: blend of rums from virgin sugar cane honeys aged at altitude in white oak barrels, obtained by blending *soleras* before bottling,
- Solera Reserva: blend of rums from virgin sugar cane honeys aged at altitude in white oak barrels seasoned by previous use for other products,

- Solera Gran Reserva: blend of rums from virgin sugar cane honeys aged at altitude in at least two types of barrels seasoned by previous use for different products,
- Solera Gran Reserva Especial: blend of rums from virgin sugar cane honeys aged at altitude in at least three types of white oak barrels seasoned by previous use for different products.

4. Physical, chemical and organoleptic properties:

The physical and chemical properties of 'Ron de Guatemala' must meet the following organic and chemical requirements:

Chemical requirements:

Alcoholic strength: from 37,5 % to 50 % vol.

Total sum of congeners (including acetaldehyde, acetic acid, ethyl acetate, higher alcohols) expressed in milligrams per 100 ml of anhydrous ethyl alcohol: more than or equal to 50.

Total acidity, expressed in milligrams of acetic acid per 100 ml of anhydrous ethyl alcohol: no more than 120.

Methanol, in milligrams per 100 ml of anhydrous ethyl alcohol: no more than 280.

Organoleptic requirements:

Appearance: transparent and clean appearance, liquid consistency, dense body.

Colour: determined by age. Hues ranging from amber and gold to reddish.

Aroma: the primary aromas come from the raw material used, namely the virgin honey extracted from sugar cane. The secondary aromas, which develop during the alcoholic fermentation, are powerfully vinous due to the action of the yeast. The tertiary aromas unfold during the aging process.

Flavour: generous and smooth flavour ranging from sweet to dry.

5. Geographical area:

The planting area of the sugar cane for the production of 'Ron de Guatemala' is located in the southern departments of Retalhuleu and Suchitepéquez, both bordering the Pacific Ocean. The ageing area is located in the city of Quetzaltenango, at more than 2 300 metres above sea level.

6. Method of production:

The production of 'Ron de Guatemala' is a multi-stage process.

Planting the sugar cane: the sugar cane reaches physiological maturity at 12 months of age.

Harvesting: the sugar cane is harvested through manual cutting and mechanical collecting, from the end of the rainy period in November until May.

Pressing at plants: once the sugar cane is cut, it is pressed in mills within a maximum of 36 hours. Producing the virgin sugar cane honey at processing plants involves several stages:

- shredding: the sugars are released from the cane by using different shredding techniques to break up the cells,
- pressing in mills: juice is extracted by repeatedly pressing the cane in mills,
- producing the virgin sugar cane honey: the virgin sugar cane honey is obtained through a process of evaporation to remove the water and thus concentrate the sugar content,
- purifying: the virgin sugar cane honey is purified by a process of liming, which works by flocculation and decantation.

Fermentation: the fermentation process is induced by adding yeast of the *Saccharomyces cerevisiae* strain to the juice. This strain of yeast is obtained from pineapple.

Distillation: the distillation process takes place in continuous column stills without extraction. The fermented must is heated by steam to a point at which the alcohol turns into alcohol vapour. After passing through condensers, it turns liquid again, thus producing raw rum.

Ageing: the alcoholic strength is brought down to the legal limit of 60° by adding water from nearby springs. The rum is then stored in barrels of American and European white oak which have previously held products such as American whisky, cognac or sherry. The barrels are kept in warehouses that are not hermetically closed.

The last stage involves the assembly. The different rums are blended together, water is added to lower the alcoholic strength, and the resulting blend is stored in wooden containers, which allows the rums to gain balance.

7. Geographical link:

The specificity of 'Ron de Guatemala' lies in the combination of many factors stemming from the agro-ecological conditions of both the planting area of the sugar cane and the ageing area, as well as from the authentic character of the production process, which brings together nature, tradition, art and science.

The cultivation area of the sugar cane bears the typical characteristics of tropical climates, with an average annual temperature of 26 °C, average relative humidity of 78 % and average annual rainfall of 2 600 mm to 3 600 mm. This produces cane crops with high sugar levels, which are essential for obtaining highly concentrated and effervescent juice of the best possible quality for the production of rum.

The clay soils favour the retention of moisture and the concentration of sugars in the cane.

The ageing area is situated at altitudes of over 2 400 metres. It has a cold and dry climate and an average annual temperature of 14,79 °C.

The cold and the lower oxygen levels at altitude slow down the chemical ageing process, which allows the aromas and flavours to develop with greater intensity.

8. Requirements of the national legislation:

'Ron de Guatemala' is protected as a designation of origin in the Intellectual Property Registry of Guatemala and meets the requirements legally laid down in Guatemalan Technical Standard COGUANOR NGO 33011, the Law on Spirits, Alcoholic and Fermented Beverages, Decree No 536 of the Congress of the Republic of Guatemala, and the Implementing Order of the Law on Spirits, Alcoholic and Fermented Beverages.

9. Applicant:

Asociación Nacional de Fabricantes de Alcoholes y Licores (ANFAL), with a registered office in the department of Guatemala, address Km. 16,5 Carretera Roosevelt, 4-81 zona 1 de Mixco, Guatemala.

10. Supervisory authority:

Laboratorio Nacional de Salud de Guatemala, in charge of verifying compliance with the technical file on the geographical indication 'Ron de Guatemala' prior to the sale of the product concerned.
