

OTHER ACTS

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Publication of an application pursuant to Article 17(6) of 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

(2020/C 417/10)

This publication confers the right to oppose the application pursuant to Article 27 of Regulation (EU) No 2019/787 of the European Parliament and of the Council ⁽¹⁾

MAIN SPECIFICATIONS OF THE TECHNICAL FILE

‘VASI VADKÖRTE PÁLINKA’

File number: PGI-HU-02408 – 22.12.2017

1. Geographical indication to be registered

‘Vasi vadkörte pálinka’

2. Category of the spirit drink

Fruit spirit (category 9 in Annex II to Regulation (EC) No 110/2008)

3. Description of the spirit drink**3.1. Physical, chemical and/or organoleptic characteristics**

Chemical and physical characteristics:

Hydrocyanic acid content: maximum 5 g/hl of 100 % vol. alcohol

Copper content: maximum 9 mg/l of finished product

Organoleptic characteristics:

Clear, colourless.

Its aroma is characterised by discreet scentedness and tartness, alongside pronounced notes of pear, citrus and spice.

It has a dry, discreetly fresh and spicy taste, with mild honey, smoky notes, and a sharp finish; it may also have citrusy aromas, discreet tartness and a rustic character.

When resting it retains the characteristic taste and aroma of the fruit used.

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

The organoleptic characteristics of ‘Vasi vadkörte pálinka’ account for its uniqueness: its fresh, distinctive, slightly tart, citrusy flavour and taste, spicy, honey notes, and a texture that is more rustic than smooth thanks to the wild pear used in the mashing of ‘Vasi vadkörte pálinka’.

⁽¹⁾ OJ L 130, 17.5.2019, p. 1.

'Vasi vadkörte pálinka' is produced from the fruit of indigenous, State-recognised pear varieties grown within the administrative area of the counties listed in point 4. The basic ingredient of 'Vasi vadkörte pálinka' consists at least 75 % of wild pears, the remainder (at most 25 %) consisting of indigenous, State-recognised pear varieties (Bosc kobak, Conference, Clapp kedveltje, Hardenpont téli vajkörte, Tüskés körte, Sózó körte). The tangy tartness and the freshness of 'Vasi vadkörte pálinka' develop thanks to the low sugar content and the tartness of the wild pear, which accounts for at least 75 % of the mash and is difficult to harvest.

4. Geographical area concerned

'Vasi vadkörte pálinka' is produced within the administrative boundaries of Vas and Zala Counties. It may be mashed, fermented, distilled and rested in commercial pálinka distilleries located within this geographical area only.

5. Method for obtaining the spirit drink

The main stages in the production of the pálinka are as follows:

- (a) Selection and acceptance of the fruit;
- (b) Mashing and fermentation;
- (c) Distillation;
- (d) Resting and storage of the pálinka;
- (e) Production, treatment and blending of the pálinka.

a. Selection and acceptance of the fruit

In terms of variety, at least 75 % of the pears accepted must be wild pears (the common wild pear *Pyrus pyraster* subsp. *pyraster*); the remainder, at most 25 %, must consist of indigenous, recognised pear varieties.

The indigenous, State-recognised pear varieties are Bosc kobak, Conference, Clapp kedveltje, Hardenpont téli vajkörte, Tüskés körte and Sózó körte.

The pálinka is made from suitably ripened fruit, i.e. fruit with a dry matter content of at least 14 ref. %, of good or excellent quality. Quantitative acceptance of the fruit is based on weight. During acceptance, fruit quality is evaluated based on sampling. Organoleptic evaluation (ripeness – from ripe to overripe – healthy, clean, free from extraneous matter – soil, leaves, twigs, stones, metal or other material – and from mould or rot, etc.) and the examination of dry matter content form the basis of quality control and acceptance (sugar content and pH measurement). Also, the fruit must be accompanied by documents attesting to its origin. The supplier is required to declare the origin of the fruit and compliance with the withdrawal period.

b. Mashing and fermentation

Mashing:

The unique characteristic in the mashing of 'Vasi vadkörte pálinka' is the sugar content, which stands at 3-5 %, thanks to the low sugar content of the wild pear used in production.

Fermentation:

During fermentation, the temperature must be kept at 16-23 °C, and an optimum pH value of 2,8-3,2 must be achieved. The optimum duration of fermentation, depending on the internal qualities of the pears used, is 10 days.

The fermented mash must be distilled as soon as possible, or the basic conditions for proper storage must be ensured until such time as distillation can commence (the temperature must be as low as possible (0-10 °C), water seals must be used, and the containers must be filled to the brim).

c. Distillation

'Vasi vadkörte pálinka' can be prepared using a single-stage column distillation system or a traditional, pot-still distillation system. The alcoholic strength of the distilled product is 55-85 % V/V.

d. *Resting and storage of the pálinka*

After refining, the pálinka must be rested in stainless steel containers and stored in an undiluted state.

e. *Production, treatment and blending of the pálinka*

The pálinka must be cooled to a temperature of between -5 and -3 °C, and other impurities must then be removed by filtering them through a sheet filter. After filtration, the pálinka is stored until it heats up to 18-20 °C. The pálinka may be blended only so as to ensure that at least 75 % of the mash sugar supplied as raw material comes from wild pears and at most 25 % from the other pear varieties referred to above.

Before bottling, the alcoholic strength of the pálinka must be adjusted to a level suitable for consumption by adding drinking-grade water, taking account of the specified tolerance for the bottled product ($\pm 0,3$ % V/V).

6. **Link with the geographical environment or origin**

6.1. *Details of the geographical area or origin relevant to the link*

The wild pear – colloquially known as the field pear – is a pear species native to Vas and Zala Counties. It is mostly found in natural forest areas.

The western part of Vas and Zala Counties is located at the foot of the Alps, and the landscape becomes more undulating from west to east. Most of the area is covered in forest. The soils found here are mainly brown, chernozem-type, medium-consistency, slightly acidic soils. By virtue of their location, these counties form one of Hungary's wettest regions: the Alpokalja (Lower Alps), although annual precipitation decreases from west to east. The climate of these counties shows some variation: it is drier and more continental as one moves from western areas to the flatter east of the region, although the temperature around the region's extensive forested areas is lower than that of areas not covered by forest. The gently sloping surfaces of the foothills and adjacent areas form the wild-pear-growing area, which sees annual average precipitation of 600-800 mm, although there is little precipitation during the September and October ripening period. The area receives plentiful sunshine of 1 700-1 800 hours per year. Thanks to its proximity to the Alps, the area is slightly cooler than neighbouring counties.

The wild pear prefers south-facing, dry and sunny areas that are free from waterlogging and warm during the ripening period, these areas' more compact brown, chernozem-type soils, and forests with a lower crown cover. With the right soil and microclimate, such as those of the geographical area, the wild pear tree can survive for decades if not centuries. Varying weather conditions from one year to the next may affect yields.

6.2. *Specific characteristics of the spirit drink attributable to the geographical area*

The link between 'Vasi vadkörte pálinka' and the geographical area is based on the product's quality and reputation.

The fact that at least 75 % of the wild pears used for mashing originates in Vas and Zala Counties accounts for the unique organoleptic characteristics of 'Vasi vadkörte pálinka'.

These wild pears ripen well owing to the high number of sunshine hours and precipitation pattern. It takes skill to harvest the wild pear fruit: ripeness can be determined by colour and touch. The aim is to harvest as much fully ripe fruit as possible.

The brown, chernozem, slightly acidic-pH soils and the area's relatively cool climate explain the higher acid content of the wild pear fruit, which is reflected in the flavour components of the distillate: it gives the distillate its freshness and citrusy flavour and to some extent its tartness.

As the wild pear has a much lower sugar content than other fruits, a greater quantity of wild pear is required to produce a unit of pálinka than for ordinary pear pálinkas. The high proportion of wild fruit used to produce 'Vasi vadkörte pálinka' is apparent from its flavour components. The wild pear gives 'Vasi vadkörte pálinka' not only its characteristic tartness, but also its sharpness, rustic rather than smooth texture, and spicy, honey notes.

Since 'Vasi vadkörte pálinka' has a slightly tart taste, thanks to the high proportion of wild pears used, it takes great skill to determine when to separate the distillate from the head distillate, so that no flavours that might ruin the taste can enter the distillate.

The reputation of 'Vasi vadkörte pálinka' is attested to by the following awards it has won:

- gold medal at the Second Vas County Open Pálinka and Spirit Contest in 2011,
- silver medal at the Fourth Vas County Open Pálinka and Spirit Contest in 2013,
- silver medal at the Sixth Vas County Open Pálinka and Spirit Contest in 2015,
- gold medal at the Vas County Pome-Fruit Pálinka and Spirit Contest in 2015,
- silver medal at the Seventh Vas County Open Pálinka and Spirit Contest in 2016,
- bronze medal at the Vas County Pome-Fruit Pálinka and Spirit Contest in 2017.

'Vasi vadkörte pálinka' has featured at several large-scale national presentation and tasting events since 2006. These events include the annual Gyula Pálinka Festival, the Budapest Pálinka Festival, the Békéscsaba Beer and Pork Knuckle Festival, the Szombathely Savária Carnival, the Sopron Gastronomy Festival (Ízutazás) and, in Budapest, the international fairs Sirha, FeHoVa and OMÉK, the National Agriculture and Food Exhibition.

7. **European Union or national/regional provisions**

- Act XI of 1997 on the protection of trademarks and geographical indications,
- Act LXXIII of 2008 on pálinka, grape marc pálinka and the Pálinka National Council,
- Government Decree No 158/2009 of 30 July 2009 laying down the detailed rules for protecting the geographical indications of agricultural products and foodstuffs and on verifying the products,
- Government Decree No 22/2012 of 29 February 2012 on the National Food Chain Safety Office,
- Decree No 49/2013 of 29 April 2013 of the Minister for Rural Development on the limit values for certain contaminants and harmful materials of natural origin in food and on the requirements for certain materials and articles intended to come into contact with food.

8. **Applicant details**

8.1. *Member State, third country or legal/natural person*

Name: Birkás Pálinka Kft.

8.2. *Full address (street number and name, town/city and postal code, country)*

Address: Győrvár, 9821 Győrvár, Hrsz. 435, 9821 Hungary

Email: birkas@birkaspalinka.hu

Tel. +36 30 2563066

9. **Supplement to the geographical indication**

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10. **Specific labelling rules**

In addition to the elements specified in the legislation, the designation also contains the following:

- 'földrajzi árujelző' [geographical indication] (separate from the name),
 - the name 'Vasi vadkörte pálinka' must be included on the front and back labels.
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