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GEOGRAPHICAL INDICATION

'LICOR DE HIERBAS DE GALICIA'

TECHNICAL FILE

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GEOGRAPHICAL INDICATION TO BE REGISTERED

'Licor de hierbas de Galicia'

CATEGORY OF SPIRIT DRINK

Liqueur: Category 32 of Annex II to Regulation (EC) No 110/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 January 2008 on the definition, description, presentation, labelling and the protection of geographical indications of spirit drinks and repealing Council Regulation (EEC) No 1576/1989.

DESCRIPTION OF THE SPIRIT DRINK

'Licor de hierbas de Galicia' is a traditional spirit drink made in Galicia. It is based on the grape marc spirit protected by the geographical indication 'Orujo de Galicia' and ethyl alcohol of agricultural origin. Preparation involves maceration in alcohol of its characteristic herbs and/or distillation of grape marc in the presence of those herbs. The

final product must have an alcohol strength of between a minimum of 20 % vol. and a maximum of 40 % vol. Sugar content must be at least 100 g per litre. In the blend of alcohols, the minimum content of the grape marc spirit protected by the geographical indication 'Orujo de Galicia' must be 25 % of the total absolute alcohol. The ethyl alcohol of agricultural origin must comply with the specifications in point 1 of Annex I to Regulation (EC) No 110/2008.

Physico-chemical characteristics

The chemical composition of 'Licor de hierbas de Galicia' must be as follows:

Parameters	Maximum	Minimum
Alcoholic strength (% vol.)	40	20
Methanol, g/hl a.a.	950	50
Total acidity expressed as acetic acid, g/hl a.a.	150	-
Acetaldehyde (ethanal), g/hl a.a.	150	-
Ethyl acetate, g/hl a.a.	250	-
Total higher alcohols g/hl a.a.	600	60
Copper, mg/1 sample	9	-
Sugar content g/1	-	100

(g/hl a.a. = grams/100 litres of absolute alcohol)

Organoleptic characteristics

'Licor de hierbas de Galicia' has the following organoleptic characteristics:

- Appearance: translucent and clear.

- Colour: ranging from straw-coloured to greenish-yellow.

- Aroma: intense, smooth, delicate, flavoursome, full, with floral notes, balsamic, and hints of the grape marc spirit on which it is based, complemented by its characteristic herbs. Absence of damp, burned or unclean odours and acidic notes.

- Taste: it may have different levels of sweetness that will affect the liqueur's intensity, with a range of herbal tones and balsamic notes.

The presence of the grape marc spirit 'Orujo de Galicia' is what sets 'Licor de hierbas de Galicia' apart. This is apparent both directly through the presence of grape marc spirit and in the way that macerating the herbs in 'Orujo de Galicia' brings out particular elements of its aroma and flavour.

The grape varieties used as raw material — more than thirty different varieties — are mainly varieties that are traditionally cultivated in Galicia, and which have a limited presence in other areas. These indigenous varieties account for over 90 % of the harvest by volume and have a different volatility as regards their varietal composition (esters, terpenes, pyrazines, phenols and aldehydes). As a result, the interaction of the herbs and the grape marc spirit is not only a process of using alcohol to extract components of the herbs. It also produces other, simultaneous reactions, such as esterification and hydrolysis, between the components of the different herbs and the grape marc spirit. These affect the resulting organoleptic features of the liqueur. In this way, producing herbal liqueur with alcohol or with other grape marc spirits would give a different end result. There would not be the aforementioned reactions creating the sensory and analytical features of the herbal liqueurs from Galicia, which confer its authenticity and uniqueness.

GEOGRAPHICAL AREA CONCERNED

The area covered by the geographical indication 'Licor de hierbas de Galicia' comprises the whole of the Autonomous Community of Galicia. The grapes and the by-products of wine-making (marc and lees) must be produced in this area. Distillation and manufacture of 'Licor de hierbas de Galicia' must also be carried out there.

METHOD FOR OBTAINING THE SPIRIT DRINK

'Licor de hierbas de Galicia' is made from the spirit drink protected by the geographical indication 'Orujo de Galicia' and ethyl alcohol of agricultural origin. Manufacture may involve maceration of the herbs, distillation in the presence of the herbs, or a combination of the two methods.

For the maceration method, the herbs are added either to the grape marc spirit or to the ethyl alcohol of agricultural origin, or to a blend of the two.

In the case of distillation in the presence of the herbs, the grape marc is distilled in accordance with the rules and procedures stipulated in the regulations for the geographical indication 'Orujo de Galicia'. The herbs are added to the distillation apparatus.

The apparatus used for distilling may include traditional types of pot still. Any other apparatus may be used provided that good quality distillates are obtained through steam heating, with the particular characteristics of grape marc spirits of Galicia being retained. Batch distillation is carried out in the presence of the marc at less than 86 % volume. Within the same limit, redistillation of the first distillate and methanol removal are permitted.

A minimum of three plant species are used in the manufacture of 'Licor de hierbas de Galicia'. Any species appropriate for culinary use is permitted. The following are among the most traditional: mint, camomile, lemon verbena, rosemary, oregano, thyme, coriander, orange blossom, fennel, liquorice, nutmeg and cinnamon. Plants must comply with the legislation in force and be fit for human consumption.

One or more of the products permitted under Regulation (EC) No 110/2008 are used for sweetening.

Permitted food colourings may also be used.

The manufacturing process uses natural flavourings only. It is expressly forbidden to add aromas and/or flavouring preparations, extracts or essences of any type.

LINK WITH THE GEOGRAPHICAL ENVIRONMENT OR ORIGIN

Registration of the geographical indication 'Licor de hierbas de Galicia' is supported by the specific characteristics of the product and the reputation that it has gained on the market as a result of those characteristics.

'Licor de hierbas de Galicia' is a spirit drink with certain specific characteristics resulting from two factors. Firstly there is the production process using the traditional know-how of local manufacturers, passed down the generations. Then there are raw materials used: grape marc, on its own or blended with ethyl alcohol of agricultural origin, obtained from by-products of wine-making. A high percentage of the grape varieties used are those traditionally cultivated in the Autonomous Community of Galicia and rarely found outside the region. Indeed, they are produced in climatic and soil conditions very different from those in other parts of Spain. The specific characteristics of 'Licor de hierbas de Galicia' are described in the section called 'Description of the spirit drink' in this document. They are undoubtedly the reason for the high reputation of the drink in Spain.

This reputation dates back a very long time. The custom of making liqueurs by macerating various products in spirits began, according to records, in the country houses and manors of Galicia in the 18th century. It followed a pattern common in Europe at the time, which associated social sophistication with a preference for certain food and drinks, among which were those of a certain alcoholic strength that were imported or contained exotic ingredients. The key was exclusivity. For this reason, those liqueurs produced by infusion in wealthy homes were based on vinous alcohols that were considered refined and befitting the upper classes, namely 'fortifying spirits' ['holandas' in Spanish]. These distillates were barely being produced in Galicia, where grape marc was distilled, and for this reason, their use and consumption was a sign of distinction.

In the 18th century in Galicia, there was a steady supply of 'fortifying spirits', which arrived from other areas of Spain, and above all from overseas, promoting the

development of home-made liqueurs. Even though the recipe books that we still have date from the 19th century, there is every indication that these drinks were made with aromatic herbs and fruits.

Indeed, the 19th century, and in particular its second half, was the golden age of Galician liqueurs. The three culinary reference works preserved from Galicia of this time contain various recipes for products made from the maceration of herbs — either in mixtures of varying proportions (generally sugar, anise, coriander, cinnamon and lemon) or made with a single ingredient (anise, coriander, rose etc.). One sign of the prestige held in society by its production and consumption is its presence in culinary competitions and in regional and national exhibitions.

In the programmes for these events it is easy to find winemakers — but also landowners and landlords — displaying their liqueurs. The oldest-documented of these is a producer of what is now the 'Ribeiro' PDO, who won the prize at the National Agricultural Exhibition held in Madrid in 1857 for a spirit flavoured through infusion with various herbs.

The public's affection for these drinks meant that they featured regularly in the range offered by Galician alcohol businesses almost since their inception; in the administrative archives of the 19th century, we even have two applications for the patenting of recipes and production processes. Its consumption in these years increased due to the spreading of the once-sophisticated tastes of the upper classes and the trend for sweet food and drinks; the popular belief that attributed medicinal qualities to these distillates also had an influence.

These therapeutic qualities promoted the sale of the liqueurs in pharmacies, and its production increased in the homes of ordinary Galicians; some used spirits similar to the old 'fortifying spirits' with their own mixtures of herbs. These grape marc spirits were produced on the family farm and mixed with herbs that came mainly from the surrounding area.

We do not know the precise production processes but the traditional recipe has been passed down to us from generation to generation: the mixture of herbs and sugar is

placed into a container of spirits; it is covered and left to rest for at least a fortnight, with occasional stirring; and finally it is filtered. The existence of industrial patents implies that modern factories began producing this type of product in the late 19th century.

There are records of the existence of a stable and sufficient production of liqueurs in the early decades of the 20th century. Thus, in the 1920s, when Spanish law recognised a distinct tax regime for the home distilling that was happening in Galicia, there was a split in production between production for one's own consumption and production for the market.

This regime significantly limited sales, which remained contingent on production in modern facilities with all safeguards. However, in the long run, this meant that traditional production was able to continue, as the industrial facilities had to find mechanical ways of imitating the old techniques. Nevertheless, we can confirm that in the 1940s there was a wide selection of herbal liqueurs on the market that were made in this type of facility, which offered a sufficiently broad range of aromatic distillates (orange, coffee, herbs, anise, etc.) and a thriving export market, targeted especially at the Spanish and Latin American markets. The use in brands and labelling of images and names associated with Galicia (such as the brands *Terriña*, *Anduriña* or *La rapaciña* or the provincial coats of arms of Eloy Viso) are a sign of the growing reputation of the product beyond the borders of Galicia and of its identification with this area as a guarantee of quality.

Almost since the inception of modern cuisine, these herbal distillates have been identified as one of the typical products of Galicia, and are the standard drink for desserts. For this reason it is easy to find it on both the menus of Galician and Spanish restaurants all over the world as well as in the range on offer in large distillate retailers — and therefore in many of the world's specialist shops. But herbal liqueurs are not only known for their distinctiveness. Because of their quality and originality, reference has been made to them for some time now in all types of publications, such as travel guides to Galicia (including to Spain, such as *Fodor's*), websites that follow trends (*The Spruce*, *Gourmetour*, *Time out*) or specialised publications (*Oxford Handbook of Food*

Fermentation, Wine & Spirits, Decanter). Moreover, in recent decades, the traditional producers have been joined by the most prestigious wineries in Galicia. This has made it possible to promote the reputation of this product to new customers, since it is presented to global distribution circles and opinion formers as something that comes hand-in-hand with the famous wines of Galicia.

The effort made by producers to modernise and improve quality have earned significant recognition in their attempts to combine quality and tradition. This has resulted in a plethora of citations and accolades, as can be seen in the high ratings in reference publications such as the *Guía Peñín* (Fillaboa, Devanceiros) or Luís Paadín's wine guide. Every year, an array of regional and national prizes (Gallaecia, Cata de los licores tradicionales de Galicia [Tasting of Galicia's traditional liqueurs]) promote improvements in quality.

In recent years, society trends have meant that herbal liqueurs have once again recovered the visibility that — to some extent — they had lost in recent decades all over Europe. New pairings and changes in preferences are now coming from the world of cocktails. 'Licor de hierbas de Galicia' — alongside European bestsellers — is very much part of this trend (*El País*, 12.08.2015).

For its part, and in order to safeguard production and defend local traditions, the Consellería de Política Agroalimentaria y Desarrollo Rural (Department for Agri-food Policy and Rural Development) of the Regional Government of Galicia gave its support to the creation of a quality mark and, through the Order of 8 September 2004, it recognised the 'Licor de hierbas de Galicia'/'Licor de Herbas de Galicia' geographical indication.

EUROPEAN UNION OR NATIONAL/REGIONAL PROVISIONS

- Regulation (EC) No 110/2008 of 15 January 2008 on the definition, description, presentation, labelling and the protection of geographical indications of spirit drinks and repealing Council Regulation (EEC) No 1576/89.

- Order of the Consellería de Medio Rural [Environment Department] of 3 January 2012 approving the regulations for the geographical indications of 'Orujo de Galicia', 'Aguardiente de Hierbas de Galicia', 'Licor de hierbas de Galicia' and 'Licor Café de Galicia', and of their joint Regulatory Council, the Regulatory Council for Geographical Indications of Traditional Spirit Drinks and Liqueurs of Galicia (*Diario Oficial de Galicia* No 10, 16 January 2012).

That Order establishes the following requirements:

- The Regulatory Council for Traditional Spirit Drinks and Liqueurs of Galicia, the governing body for the geographical indications, is required to maintain three registers, which must be kept up to date:

a) Register of producers of by-products from wine-making (wineries)

b) Register of distillers

c) Register of manufacturers and packagers

- Operators included in the different registers are responsible for the traceability of the raw materials and products, and for compliance with the regulations applicable to their field of activity. Manufacturers must provide evidence that each batch intended for sale complies with the specifications in this document, as well as other applicable regulations.

- Only natural and legal persons appearing in the Regulatory Council's registers may produce, manufacture, package or market, as applicable, liqueurs eligible for the geographical indication 'Licor de hierbas de Galicia'.

- It is the exclusive right of the companies listed in the appropriate registers of the Regulatory Council to use the name of the geographical indication 'Licor de hierbas de Galicia', with its symbols, emblems and logos, in publicity, advertising, documentation and labelling.

- In the case of liqueurs to be protected by the geographical indication, production units included in the different registers must ensure a clear separation from other, unprotected, products. This applies in the handling and storage of grape marc and lees, and in distillation, manufacture and packaging. There must be clear identification on vats or storage containers for grape marc intended for distillation to produce spirit drinks that are used to make 'Licor de hierbas de Galicia', as well as on the containers of the spirit drinks and liqueurs.

- Owners of production units included in the different registers, whether natural or legal persons, shall be required to issue the declarations below. The purpose is to enable monitoring of the production, manufacture and packaging processes, as well as the volume of stocks. Where necessary, the following declarations should also guarantee the origin and quality of the products covered by the geographical indication.

a) Grape marc producers:

- Quantity of by-products (marc and lees)

- Sales of by-products: quantities and customers

- Stocks of by-products at the time of declaration. When the by-product stocks held at the time of declaration are fully used up, a statement must be presented detailing quantities of dispatched stocks and their destinations.

b) Distillers:

- Declaration of stocks of different distillates

- Quarterly declaration of by-product acquisitions, with indication of origins

- Quarterly declaration of grape marc spirit sales

c) Manufacturers and packagers:

- Declaration of stocks by product type

- Quarterly declaration of grape marc spirit acquisitions

- Quarterly declaration of sales of 'Licor de hierbas de Galicia'

SPECIFIC LABELLING RULES

The name of the geographical indication must feature prominently on the product labelling. Use of the logo, which appears in the annex to this document, is optional. The obligatory information stated in the applicable legislation must also appear.

Labels intended for use must be approved by the Regulatory Council to ensure compliance with the specific regulations applicable. Labels may not be used which, for any reason, might confuse the consumer or tarnish the good name of the geographical indication 'Licor de hierbas de Galicia'.

All packaging used to dispatch the beverage covered by this geographical indication to the end consumer must include a seal or secondary label issued by the Regulatory Council. These must be fixed to packaging in a way that prevents them from being used a second time. The aforementioned label must include the geographical indication logo. Both versions of the latter can be found in the annex to this document.

APPLICANT

Name: Consejo Regulador de las Indicaciones Geográficas de los Aguardientes y Licores Tradicionales de Galicia [Regulatory Council for Geographical Indications of Traditional Spirit Drinks and Liqueurs of Galicia].

Address: Pazo de Quián-Sergude 15.881 Boqueixón (A Coruña) Galicia - Spain

E-mail: orujo@orujodegalicia.org

Telephone: 0034 981511566

Fax No: 0034 981511934

MONITORING COMPLIANCE WITH THE TECHNICAL FILE

The monitoring authority responsible for ensuring compliance with the conditions stated in this technical file is Ingacal (Instituto Galego da Calidade Alimentaria) [Galician Institute of Food Quality]. Ingacal is a public body which reports to the Environment Department of the Regional Government of Galicia. Its contact details are:

Name: Instituto Galego da Calidade Alimentaria (Ingacal)

Address: Pazo de Quián s/n. Sergude. 15881- Boqueixón (A Coruña)

Telephone: 0034 881 997 276

Fax No: 0034 981 546 676

E-mail: ingacal@xunta.es

ANNEX

Logos of the geographical indication

‘Licor de hierbas de Galicia’



