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PRODUCT SPECIFICATION – "MALTA"/"OF MALTA"
DECEMBER 2011

1 ***Name to be protected:***

"MALTA" or "OF MALTA"

2 ***Description of the wine:***

Red, white and rosé wines are produced following established norms for the production region.

Analytical characteristics

- Minimum total alcoholic strength by volume and actual alcoholic strength by volume:
  - Dry wines: a minimum total alcoholic strength by volume and a minimum actual alcoholic strength by volume of 11.0% vol. for white and rosé wines, and 11.5% vol. for red wines.
  - Medium dry wines: minimum total alcoholic strength by volume of 11.0% vol. and minimum actual alcoholic strength by volume of 10.0% vol. for white, rosé and red wines.
  - Sweet wines: minimum total alcoholic strength by volume of 13.0% vol. and minimum actual alcoholic strength by volume of 10.0% vol. for white, rosé and red wines.
  - Sparkling wines: a minimum total alcoholic strength by volume and a minimum actual alcoholic strength by volume of 11.0% vol. for white, rosé and red typologies.
- Minimum reduced dry extract: 15g/L for white wines and 14g/L for sparkling white wines; 17g/L for rosé wines and 16g/L for sparkling rosé wines; to 19g/L for red wines and 18g/L for sparkling red wines.
- Minimum titratable acidity expressed as tartaric acid: 4.5 g/L for dry white wines, 4.0g/L for other still white, rosé and red wines and 5.0g/L for sparkling white, rosé and red wines.
- Maximum volatile acidity (expressed as acetic acid): 1.2 g/L for red wines and 1.0 g/L for white and rosé wines.

Organoleptic characteristics:

- Clarity: Clear to brilliant.
- Colour: Light straw to golden yellow (for oak aged) white wines - pale to intense pink for rosé wines and ruby to intense red (with a brownish tint for aged wines) for red wines.
- Aroma and taste: Characteristic and harmonious. Typical of the variety in mono-varietal wines.

3 ***Specific oenological practices:***

The DO "MALTA" may be complemented with the specification "Frizzante", "Semi-Sparkling" or "Aerated Semi-Sparkling", "Novello", "Passito", "Imqadded" and "Liqueur Wine", applicable to the description of certain quality wine products other than quality sparkling wines, and the specification "Sparkling" applicable to the description of quality sparkling wines, under the conditions, established in the D.O.K. Wines Production Protocols Regulations, 2007 – Legal Notice 416 of 2007 and where applicable, as defined in Annex IXb of Council Regulation (EC) 1234/2008 and subsequent modifications.

The term “Late Harvest”, “Vendemmia Tardiva” or “Vendage Tardive” may be used for wines, 100% of which is obtained from grapes which have been left on the vine to undergo a partial drying process resulting in the concentration of grape sugars to a minimum natural alcoholic strength of 13.5% vol.

The term “Passito” may be used for wines, 100% of which is obtained from grapes which have undergone a drying process, in whole or in apart, on the plant or after harvest, resulting in the concentration of grape sugars to a minimum natural potential alcoholic strength of 18.0% vol. and of which the minimum actual alcoholic strength is 13.5% vol.

The term “Imqadded” may be used for wines, 100% of which is obtained from grapes which have undergone a drying process, in whole or in part, on the plant or after harvest, resulting in the concentration of grape sugars to a minimum natural potential alcoholic strength of 14.0% vol. and of which the minimum actual alcoholic strength is 13.5% vol.

DOK “Superior” white and rosé wines must possess a minimum natural alcoholic content and a minimum total alcoholic content in the wine put up for consumption of 12.0% vol whereas red wines must possess a natural alcoholic content and a minimum total alcoholic content in the wine put up for the consumption of 12.5% vol.

DOK “Riżerva” white wines must possess a minimum natural alcoholic content of the wines of 12.0% vol. and a minimum total alcoholic content of the wine put up for consumption of 12.0% vol. DOK “Riżerva” red wines must possess a minimum natural alcoholic content of 12.5% vol. and a minimum total alcoholic content of the wine put up for consumption of 12.5% vol. These wines must have a minimum ageing of twelve months in barrique and six months in the bottle before commercial release. Both typologies cannot be commercialized before twenty-four months have elapsed from the 1st of September of the vintage year. They must be aged for a minimum of six months in the bottle before commercial release. If the mention “Riżerva” is used on the wine label, it is obligatory also to specify the vintage year on the label.

For the elaboration of wine eligible for the mention of “Late Harvest” or “Vendemmia Tardiva” or “Vendage Tardive” or “Imqadded” or “Passito”, as described in the D.O.K. Wines Production Protocols Regulations, 2007 – Legal Notice 416 of 2007, any form of enrichment of the must or wine is prohibited except for the eventual possible addition, in the case of wines eligible for the mentions “Imqadded” and “Passito”, even after the 30th November of each year, of grapes of the same harvest with a maximum sugar concentration of 60%.

Enrichment is also strictly prohibited for the elaboration of wines eligible for the mention of “Superior” and “Riżerva”.

For monovarietal wines the minimum natural alcoholic strengths (% vol.) are as follows:

<u>White</u>	
Chardonnay, Sauvignon blanc, Viogner, Insolia	11.0%
Girgentina, Pinot bianco, Trebbiano, Chenin blanc, Vermentino, Moscato bianco, Moscato d’Alessandria, Moscato giallo	10.5 %
<u>Rosé</u>	
Ġellewża and Grenache	10.5%
Cabernet sauvignon, Cabernet franc, Carmenere, Carignan, Lambrusco, Graciano, Mourvedre, Pinot noir, Petit verdot, Tempranillo, Sangiovese, Montepulciano, Nero D’Avola, Negroamaro	11.0%
Merlot, Primitivo and Syrah	11.5%
<u>Red</u>:	
Cabernet sauvignon, Cabernet franc, Carmenere, Carignan, Grenache, Ġellewża, Lambrusco, Graciano, Mourvedre, Pinot noir, Petit verdot, Tempranillo, Sangiovese, Montepulciano, Nero D’Avola, Negroamaro	11.0%
Merlot, Primitivo and Syrah	11.5%

4 ***Demarcation of the geographical area:***

The production region is the island of Malta. Vines are cultivated in most areas, from coastal to inland with a higher concentration in the north and west.

5 ***Maximum yields:***

	hL/Ha	kg/Ha*
White:		
Chardonnay, Sauvignon blanc, Insolia, Viogner	84	12,000
Girgentina, Pinot bianco, Trebbiano, Chenin blanc, Vermentino, Moscato bianco, Moscato d'Alessandria, Moscato giallo	91	13,000
Rosé		
Grenache, Ġellewża, Syrah	91	13,000
Cabernet sauvignon, Cabernet franc, Carmenere, Carignan, Lambrusco, Graciano, Mourvedre, Pinot noir, Petit Verdot, Tempranillo, Sangiovese, Montepulciano, Nero D'Avola, Negroamaro, Merlot and Primitivo	84	12,000
Red:		
Cabernet sauvignon, Cabernet franc, Carmenere, Carignan, Grenache, Ġellewża, Lambrusco, Graciano, Mourvedre, Pinot noir, Petit Verdot, Tempranillo, Sangiovese, Montepulciano, Nero D'Avola, Negroamaro, Merlot and Primitivo	84	12,000
Syrah	91	13,000

**The maximum yields expressed as kg/Ha are not a legal requirement. A coefficient of 0.7, which expresses the average yield of grapes to wines has been utilised to translate the maximum yields, expressed as hL/Ha to kg/Ha.*

6 ***Wine grape variety or varieties:***

White: Chardonnay, Girgentina, Chenin blanc, Insolia, Pinot blanc, Sauvignon blanc, Trebbiano, Vermentino, Viogner, Moscato bianco, Moscato D'Alessandria, Moscato giallo.

Red and rosé: Cabernet franc, Cabernet sauvignon, Gellewża, Merlot, Syrah, Carignan, Carmenere, Grenache, Graciano, Lambrusco, Montepulciano, Nero D'Avola, Negroamaro, Mourvedre, Petit Verdot, Pinot noir, Primitivo, Sangiovese, Tempranillo.

7 ***Link with the geographical area:***

Malta's climate is typically Mediterranean and is much influenced by its surrounding sea. The monthly mean air temperature ranges from 9.9^{o}C (during the winter period) to 31.7^{o}C (during the summer period). The highest average daily temperatures are usually recorded in July whereas the lowest are recorded in February. The annual pattern of the rainy winters is followed by the dry, generally rainless summers. The average total rainfall of the Maltese Islands is around 600 mm. The months with the highest precipitation are November and December, amounting to around 36% of the total annual precipitation. The summer period between June and August represents barely 1.8% of the total rainfall. The periods January till May and September till October represent 38.4% and 23.7% of the total precipitation respectively.

The mean annual wind speed is 8.8 knots (nautical mile per hour) or 16.3 km/hr. However, there is considerable variation in the monthly averages. The most common wind direction is northwesterly which blows on an average of around 20.7% of the days in a year. Next in frequency are winds blowing from the West. These two main winds are cool and dry and help in keeping summer temperatures in check.

Soil types range from sandy to loam to clay; it is rarely deeper than one meter and is slightly to markedly alkaline. The underlying rock is mostly friable, porous limestone, which the roots can penetrate to access water. The soil in the area of the South of Malta, stretching from Wied Il-Għajn all the way round to Żurrieq, is mainly composed or "Terra Rossa" Soil. This is generally the most fertile soil on the island but has the disadvantage of being quite shallow (30cm to 40 cm). The central part of the island is generally Xerorendzina Soil (known also as "Bajjad" locally), or a mixture of Xerorendzina Soil (Bajjad) and Clay soil (Carbonate Raw Soil). This soil is generally of good depth (50cm to 100cm). However, being calcareous in nature, in certain areas where the "Bajjad" type is predominant, the amount of active lime in this type of soil may have adverse effects on the nutrient uptake of the vines. Notwithstanding the above, today, with the easy availability of irrigation systems, a large number of vineyards have been planted very successfully in the central part of Malta which is dominated by the Xerorendzina (Bajjad) type of soil. The northern side of Malta, including most of Gozo, is clay soil (Carbonate Raw Soil). In the past, most vineyards in these areas, especially the traditional (goblet type) non-irrigated vineyards, were planted specifically in this type of soil.

The combination of soil, climate and environment (salty due to sea proximity) gives well-structured white wines and intensely coloured (depending on variety) red wines. Properly harvested and processed red wines are characterized by sweet tannins and high alcohol levels of ca. 13% or more.

8 ***Applicable requirements:***

D.O.K. "MALTA" wines are subject to the following requirements:

a. Four times a year, the Viticulture and Oenology Unit within the Ministry for Resources and Rural Affairs collects wine samples from Maltese producers for analytical and organoleptic certification, to a certified laboratory and tasting panel, appointed by the same Ministry.
b. Wines that are certified to be in conformity with PDO status are assigned banderols that bear a control number. These banderols are issued by the Viticulture and Oenology Unit. The control number is obligatory and consists of three letters and a serial number. The first two letters, MT identify Malta as the country of origin, whereas the third letter represents the lot of banderols. PDO wines must possess a banderol emitted by the Viticulture and Oenology Unit, in order to be placed on the market.

9 ***Checks:***

Authority verifying compliance with the provision of the product specification:

Viticulture and Oenology Unit
Agricultural Directorate
Ingieret Road,
Għammieri, MRS 3300
Malta
Tel: +356 2950 4192/4235
E-mail: claudette.gambin@gov.mt

Duties of the authority:

- To carry out checks in wineries during the harvest to verify conformity of the grapes to the requirements for PDO classification in accordance with the D.O.K. Wine Production Protocols Regulations, 2007 – Legal Notice 416 of 2007.
- To carry out organoleptic and analytical testing for products covered by a PDO.
- To collect, check and store applications and approval certificates for PDO wines.
- To assign banderols to PDO wines – PDO wines must possess a banderol emitted by the Viticulture and Oenology Unit, in order to be placed on the market.
- To carry out an annual verification in accordance with the product specification that is a combination of sampling and random checks.