

## Technical File

### *Pfälzer Weinbrand*

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**Geographical indication to be registered:** *Pfälzer Weinbrand*

**Category of spirit drink:** Brandy or *Weinbrand*

### **Description of the spirit drink**

*Pfälzer Weinbrand* is produced exclusively in the Pfalz region by distilling wine or fortified wine originating from the specific wine-growing area in the Pfalz and then maturing the resulting wine distillates in oak barrels.

- Physical, chemical and/or organoleptic characteristics

= Actual alcohol content of the ready-to-drink spirit: at least 38 % by volume

= Clarity: clear

= Colour: golden yellow to golden brown depending on the barrels used

= Odour: the smooth, mild odour that is typical of *Weinbrand*, marked by the fruitiness that is characteristic of its region of origin — the specific wine-growing area in the Pfalz — and the distinctive notes of beverages stored in wooden barrels

= Taste: the smooth, mild taste that is typical of *Weinbrand*, marked by the fruitiness that is characteristic of the specific wine-growing area in the Pfalz, and the distinctive taste of beverages stored in wooden barrels

- = Ingredients used other than wines/wine distillates: food additives or other substances  
Caramel sugar syrup and glucose-fructose syrup to round off the taste, with wine-distillate-based plum extracts as *bonificateurs* and water to reduce to drinking strength.

The maximum total content of sweetening products, expressed as invert sugar, in one litre of ready-for-use product is 20 g.

Caramel, which under EU legislation may be used to adjust the colouring of wine distillates matured in wooden barrels, is not used in *Pfälzer Weinbrand*.

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

- = *Pfälzer Weinbrand* is produced exclusively in the Pfalz region from wines originating from the specific wine-growing area in the Pfalz. The wines used to make *Pfälzer Weinbrand* are produced from the vine varieties that are typical of the region, such as Müller-Thurgau.
- = *Pfälzer Weinbrand* is produced solely by distilling wine or fortified wine at less than 86 % by volume, or wine distillate at less than 86 % by volume. Under EU spirit drinks legislation, *Weinbrand* may be distilled at up to 94.8 % by volume, provided that wine distillate does not exceed 50 % of the finished product. A lower distillation limit results in a higher content of volatile substances.
- = The wines or fortified wines used to produce *Pfälzer Weinbrand* are still partly distilled using traditional two-stage batch distillation in pot stills and partly in a one-stage process at small-scale distilleries (known as *Abfindungsbrennereien*). Only occasionally are column stills also used for distillation.
- = At 38 % by volume, the minimum alcohol content of *Pfälzer Weinbrand* is higher than the minimum alcohol content prescribed for *Weinbrand* under EU law (36 % by volume). The sensory characteristics of the *Weinbrand* are enhanced as a result.
- = The wine distillates used to make *Pfälzer Weinbrand* are matured for at least 12 months in oak barrels with a capacity of less than 1 000 l. Larger oak barrels ('casks') are not used.
- = Caramel, which under EU legislation may be used to colour *Weinbrand*, is not used

in *Pfälzer Weinbrand*.

- = Ready-to-drink *Pfälzer Weinbrand* may only be put on the market in containers bearing an official inspection number issued, as is the case for *Deutscher Weinbrand*, in the manner prescribed by spirit drinks legislation.

## **Geographical area**

*Pfälzer Weinbrand* is produced only in the 'Pfalz region' from wines originating from the specific wine-growing area in the Pfalz.

The 'Pfalz region' comprises the urban districts of Frankenthal (Pfalz), Kaiserslautern, Landau in der Pfalz, Ludwigshafen am Rhein, Mainz, Neustadt/Weinstraße, Pirmasens, Speyer, Worms and Zweibrücken as well as the rural districts of Alzey-Worms, Bad Dürkheim, Donnersbergkreis, Germersheim, Kaiserslautern, Kusel, Rhein-Pfalz-Kreis, Mainz-Bingen, Südliche Weinstraße and Südwestpfalz.

The specific wine-growing area in the Pfalz is demarcated by wine legislation.

The wine distillate used for plum extract production may be obtained outside the Pfalz region and made using wines not originating from the specific wine-growing area in the Pfalz.

The reduction of the high-percentage, matured wine distillate(s) to drinking strength by adding water, the bottling of the product or decanting into other suitable sale containers, and the labelling and packaging of the product may also take place outside the Pfalz region.

## **Method used to obtain the spirit drink**

Some *Pfälzer Weinbrand* producers are distilleries linked to vineyards, and therefore based in the specific wine-growing area in the Pfalz. At these distilleries, the first stage of production is to produce wine or fortified wine from their own grapes. These wines are often obtained from the Müller-Thurgau grape variety, which is typical of the specific wine-growing area in the Pfalz.

Other manufacturers of *Pfälzer Weinbrand* are distilleries located in the Pfalz region but outside the specific wine-growing area in the Pfalz. These distilleries begin by purchasing wines or fortified wines originating from the specific wine-growing area in the Pfalz.

The distillation of the wines or fortified wines, which is either the first or the second stage of the production process depending on the producer, is today performed using a range of distillation

processes and several different types of equipment.

Traditional two-stage distillation over an open flame is still partly used in some cases. In this process, in the first stripping or the first distillation, the low wines or raw distillate are slowly heated to gently evaporate the flavourings and alcohol. The alcohol vapours cool off in pipes and condense. Each distillate has a maximum alcohol content of 72 % by volume. In the second distillation, the heart (known as ‘fine brandy’) is separated from the head and tail. This ‘fine brandy’ is a clear liquid, enriched with the flavourings of the wine. This heart or middle run has an alcohol content ranging from a minimum of 52 % and maximum of 86 % by volume.

In other cases, the wine or fortified wine is distilled at small-scale distilleries (*Abfindungsbrennereien*). As excise legislation only allows these distilleries to use stills with a maximum capacity of 150 l and three enrichment trays, the wine is distilled in a single-step process.

Finally, as is usual for *Weinbrand* or brandy, there is usually also the possibility of distilling once or twice in larger pot stills, with or without enrichment trays, or in column stills.

The wine distillate is stored for at least 12 months in oak barrels with a capacity of less than 1 000 l. The particular characteristics of the wood gradually give the *Weinbrand* stored in these barrels its bouquet and aroma and its yellowish-to-golden-brown colour. As each barrel is different, the distillates are blended several times while they mature.

As soon as the distillates have matured, they are mixed once again, with the distiller combining distillates of various origins and years in a genuine blend.

Once the wine distillate has spent the necessary maturation period in the oak barrels, glucose-fructose syrup or caramel sugar syrup is added to round off the taste. The next step is to refine the flavour of the *Weinbrand* by adding plum extract to the sweetened wine distillate. This plum extract (*bonificateur*) is obtained using wine distillates of less than 86 % alcohol by volume. Once sweetened and mixed with plum extract, the wine distillate is then watered down to drinking strength.

After being left to settle for around two months, the penultimate step is to filter the cooled product and either bottle it or decant it into other suitable containers. The final step is to label and package the containers.

The established procedure for obtaining an official inspection number must be conducted prior to labelling.

## Link with the geographical environment or origin

- Details of the geographical area or origin relevant to the link

Unlike *Deutscher Weinbrand*, which is, for the most part, not produced from German wines, *Pfälzer Weinbrand* is the first region-specific *Weinbrand*, made using only wines originating from the specific wine-growing area in the Pfalz. This affords the product its characteristic fruitiness, shaped by the vine varieties that are typical of the Pfalz region.

There is a long-standing tradition of *Weinbrand* production in the Pfalz region.

The name *Pfälzer Weinbrand* has been protected EU-wide as a geographical indication since 20 May 2008, when Regulation (EC) No 110/2008, on spirit drinks, entered into force.

- Specific characteristics of the spirit drink attributable to the geographical area

Due to the use of grapes from wine-growing zone A, the wines of the vine varieties whose use is permitted in the production of *Pfälzer Weinbrand* are fruity and refreshingly crisp. The must weights required to produce it fall within the category of ‘quality wine’, a testament to its exceptional quality.

## European Union or national/regional provisions

As well as EU, federal and — as the case may be — federal state law specifically concerning spirit drinks and wine, the production and marketing of *Pfälzer Weinbrand* is subject to general EU and federal law on food.

## Applicant

- Member State: Federal Republic of Germany
- Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture  
Rochusstraße 1, D-53123 Bonn, Germany  
Tel.: 0049 (0)228 99 529-0  
Fax: 0049 (0)228 55 529-4262  
E-mail: [poststelle@bmel.bund.de](mailto:poststelle@bmel.bund.de)

## Supplement to the geographical indication

### Specific labelling rules

a) Basic rules on supplements to the *Pfälzer Weinbrand* geographical indication:

Under EU spirit drinks legislation, the name *Pfälzer Weinbrand* may be supplemented to include only

- the terms laid down in sections (b) and (c), or
- terms other than those specified in sections (b) and (c) that can be shown to have been in common use on 20 February 2008.

b) Supplement through other geographical indications:

Products that display the name of a smaller geographical or political entity within the specific wine-growing area in the Pfalz (e.g. Bad Dürkheimer Weinbrand or Landauer Weinbrand) alongside the *Pfälzer Weinbrand* geographical indication are produced by distilleries or producers based in those regions or locations and are made exclusively from wines originating in them.

c) Supplements with non-geographical terms:

- Where the name *Pfälzer Weinbrand* is supplemented with details of the product's maturation or ageing, the wine distillates used must have been matured for at least 13 months in oak barrels with a capacity of less than 1 000 l. Pursuant to EU spirit drinks law, age is determined by the wine distillate with the shortest maturation time.
- Indications of age are subject to the following rules:
  - = Products matured for at least 13 months may be labelled as 'mature' with an additional heading specifying the actual maturation period; for example, 'aged for 12 months' or 'aged for 24 months'.
  - = Products matured for at least two years may be labelled as 'old', and those matured for at least three years may be classed as 'very old'.
  - = If a *Pfälzer Weinbrand* is marketed with one of the following abbreviations, which are used internationally mainly for cognac, the usual minimum maturation periods in place for cognac are applicable by analogy. Specifically, the following minimum maturation periods apply:
    - V.O. or VO ('very old'): Minimum maturation of 2 years
    - V.S.O.P. or VSOP ('very superior old pale'): Minimum maturation of 4 years
    - V.V.S.O.P. or VVSOP: Minimum maturation of 5 years
    - X.O. or XO ('extra old'): Minimum maturation of 6 years
    - Goethe: Minimum maturation of 8 years
- If quality terms (such as 'fine', 'premium' or 'table') are added to the *Pfälzer Weinbrand* geographical indication, the product is significantly different from standard varieties in terms of quality, material worth or a maturation period that sets the product apart from

the average product of the same kind. Examples include:

- = the exclusive use of monovarietal wines;
  - = the use of organically grown grapes;
  - = an alcohol content of over 40 % by volume in conjunction with additional quality criteria;
  - = no addition of *bonificateurs*.
- If the *Weinbrand* is made from monovarietal — e.g. Müller-Thurgau — wines, the grape variety and also the year of harvest may be stated.
  - Products made entirely in the same undertaking — i.e. distilled, diluted to drinking strength and bottled — may be additionally labelled as ‘distilled and bottled at the distillery’. If the distillery forms part of a wine-growing estate, this may also be stated accordingly, using terms such as ‘distilled from our own wines and bottled at our own distillery’.

### **Validity**

This technical file is considered to be the generally accepted position of the commercial operators concerned from the date of its publication on the website of the Federal Office for Agriculture and Food.