

## «Madeira Rum» Certification Process

«Madeira Rum» is a typical regional drink, which has seen its quality recognized with the status of Geographical Indication (GI), protected by national and community legislation as an authentic product of the Autonomous Region of Madeira.

In view of its GI status, «Rum da Madeira» is subject to a rigorous certification process that aims, on the one hand, to ensure a high standard of quality and in accordance with the legally defined specifications for this traditional product, and on the other, guarantee its genuineness and authenticity, thus safeguarding the legitimate interest of consumers.

All economic agents (EA) who intend to produce «Madeira Rum» must be registered with IVBAM and, simultaneously, all «Madeira Rum» that is marketed must be subject to certification before being placed on the market, which aims to ensure that each batch of marketed rum complies with the required specifications.

This certification process is transversal to the entire production process, which follows a set of controls carried out by IVBAM as a certifying entity (not only of an administrative nature, but also of a physical nature through on-the-spot checks at the producers' premises), from the sugar cane to the final bottled product, also going through all the intermediate stages, namely the aging process.

In short, we can say that the certification of «Madeira Rum» implies the fulfilment of the following requirements / controls:

### **Controlling the entry of sugarcane**

During the working campaign, IVBAM carries out checks on the sugar cane that enters the premises of the EA, verifying the identity of the farmer and assisting the weighing of his cane, collecting a sample of the cane at the end for later determination of the brix degree (saccharimetric) by the Vitivinícola Laboratory of IVBAM. It should be noted that these are completely random controls, that is, without any prior notice, and that they take place throughout the entire production process.

### **End-of-production control**

At the end of the production process, EA must declare to IVBAM the quantities of processed sugar cane and the corresponding quantities of produced «Madeira Rum», as well as the clear and unambiguous identification of the containers where it is stored. In possession of this information, an IVBAM control team visits the EA facilities, to confirm the declared quantities and to collect the necessary samples for further analysis at the IVBAM Vitivinicultural Laboratory, to assess its physical-chemical indicators. Having verified the conformity of the entire process, the DSCC authorizes the entry of this new rum into the stocks of the EA in question, updating the respective current accounts, which will henceforth be kept permanently updated based on the operations carried out (aging / bottling / marketing) and retail.

### **Current account control**

All the EA «Madeira Rum» in stock is duly identified and quantified in a current account, separately by category of rum, with specific current accounts for the special categories of «Madeira Rum», such as rum with indication of the year of production and rum with age indication (3 years, 6 years, 9 years, 15 years...). These current accounts are constantly being updated, naturally reflecting the real time stock according to sales, but also reflecting the real time dynamic process of the rums age evolution.

### **Aging of «Madeira Rum»**

For EA to commercialize a certain rum as “aged”, namely with an indication of the year of production (ex: 2010 rum, etc.) or with an indication of age (ex: 12 years, etc.), this aging process must be controlled by IVBAM.

For this purpose, at the start of any batch of rum aging process, the EA is required to inform IVBAM of its intention, for them to monitor this process, not only administratively through the current account, but also performing on-the-spot checks, in order to verify the quantities and conformity of the containers (aging is only valid if carried out in oak wood casks), not only at the beginning, but also throughout the entire aging process, thus ensuring that the specified aging period is strictly adhered to. It should also be noted that this procedure is completely random and without prior notice: the IVBAM control team can appear on the EA premises in any stage of the aging process, so they do not know in advance when they will be controlled or the batches of rum that will be subjected to such control. Naturally and for the sake of the results, the end of an aging process must also be communicated to IVBAM.

### **Physical-Chemical and Sensory Analysis**

Before commercialization, all «Madeira Rum» batches are subjected to a physical-chemical analysis at the IVBAM wine laboratory, which is accredited by the Portuguese Institute of Accreditation (IPAC) according to NP EN ISO / IEC 17025, where the physical-chemical parameters are checked for compliance with the legislation in force. In parallel, all batches are also subjected to sensory analysis at the IVBAM Chamber of tasters, where the product’s conformity with respect to the organoleptic characteristics defined for the GI «Rum da Madeira» is attested.

Naturally, «Madeira Rum» can only be marketed if it is doubly approved, both in terms of physical-chemical analysis and in sensory analysis.

### **Labelling approval**

All marketed «Madeira rum» has its label previously approved by IVBAM. The EA submit the labelling approval request and IVBAM assesses its conformity based on all applicable national and community legislation, namely in terms of the mandatory indications, proceeding to its approval when there is a compliance in all parameters.

In addition, during the bottling process, an administrative check is always carried out, confirming whether the used label corresponds to the approved version and whether it is suitable for the type of rum in question and the market it is intended for. In parallel to this administrative check, there is a random on-the-spot check without prior notice, to confirm that the label on the bottles is in fact the IVBAM approved version.

### **Excise Stamps**

When introduced for consumption on the national market, all «Madeira Rum» bottled in containers with a capacity of more than 200 ml is required to bear on each bottle a special stamp from the Tax and Customs Authority (AT), for the purposes of controlling the settlement excise duty (IEC). These stamps are supplied by IVBAM to the EA producers of «Madeira Rum» and, in practical terms, they work as a guaranteed seal, as each stamp is unique, with a numbering and a series that differentiate them from each other, thus assisting in the control of product traceability. The use of these stamps is mandatorily communicated by EA to IVBAM in each bottling, and this information is 100% controlled by IVBAM in administrative terms (stock control, records of their application through the number and series of each stamp, namely in which bottling and what type of rum it was applied, etc.), but also through random on-the-spot checks and without prior notice, to confirm that the stamps placed on the bottles match the information provided by the EA.

## **Bottling**

The bottling operations for «Madeira Rum» must be communicated to IVBAM by the EA, citing specifically the type of rum in question, the approval sample number, the batch number, the bottles quantity and capacity, used labelling, used number and series of stamps (when applicable), etc. IVBAM is responsible for controlling these operations, namely through an administrative control at 100% of the bottling procedures, regarding updating the current-accounts and verifying the conformity of other items, such as labelling, stamps, physical-chemical and sensory quality control, etc. In parallel to the administrative control, an on-the-spot check may be carried out at the EA premises, also random and without prior notice, to confirm the veracity of the provided information, namely the labelling, the stamps numbering, the batch number, etc.

## **Marketing**

The «Madeira Rum» AE producers are also required to inform IVBAM of this product's marketing, allowing them to monitor the sector's evolution, while simultaneously producing relevant statistical information, which can later be released to the sector itself, to other official entities with an interest in the matter and even to the public.

Alongside this certification process, «Madeira Rum» is also subject to a Control Plan (annual), which includes other controls that reinforce GI's compliance guarantee, namely post-certification ones that consist of reanalysing an already certified batch, subjecting it to new physical-chemical and / or sensory analysis in order to reconfirm the conformity of the product and, above all, to compare the new results with the initial certification analysis, ensuring that the marketed batch unequivocally corresponds to the approved one.

This type of control is carried out on three fronts:

on the **bottling line**: without notice, the IVBAM control team shows up at the EA premises and takes a sample of the «Madeira Rum» that is currently being bottled, still on the bottling line itself;

at the EA **warehouse**: without notice, the IVBAM control team appears at the EA premises and takes a sample of any chosen "Madeira Rum" that is in the warehouse ready to be released for consumption;

in the **market / trade**: IVBAM purchases random bottles of «Madeira Rum» for sale in commercial establishments.

Through the traceability data that identifies the chosen bottle (number of certification sample / number of stamps / batch number / labelling / etc.), IVBAM compares the new physical-chemical and sensory results with the initial sample, thus being able to validate the compliance of the process.

In short, this entire certification process and the annual Control Plan itself, are an asset for both parties involved. For IVBAM, as a certifying entity that looks after the prestige of the GI «Rum da Madeira» and the consequent strengthening of the regional economy, but also for the producers, as a tool to fight unfair competition. It's a win-win situation for everyone involved, especially for the consumers, preventing them from being harmed or misled, namely as to the authenticity of their purchase.

# Madeira Rum Control and Certification Stages

