

BRANDY

DEFINITION

Brandy is a spirit obtained from the distillation of fermented grape juice and suitably aged in wood.

- The spirit distilled from any other fruit other than grapes are fruit brandies and must be named after the fruit combined with the name 'brandy'; e.g. Cherry Brandy, Peach Brandy, Apricot Brandy.
- These fruit brandies are classified as eaux-de-vie and also known as alcools blanc.

ORIGIN

- Distillation of wine started in the 16th century
- Probably at La Rochelle, a river port (river Charente) on the western coast of France
- Dutch called it Brandewijn
- Germans as Branntwein

Both of these mean Burnt wine

COGNAC

- Of all the brandies produced in the world, Cognac is the most famous and most prestigious.
- Brandy produced from grapes grown in the vineyards of the delimited district of Cognac, surrounding the ancient town of Cognac, on the Charente river.

- Modern delimitation done in 1909. A decree made to protect Cognac from intimation and accordingly to get Cognac name, the spirit must be made entirely from grapes grown in the delimited region.

THE COGNAC DISTRICT

Charente's Sub-divisions (in order of quality)

- *Grande Champagne*: 14.65% land area
- *Petite Champagne*: 15.98% land area
- *Borderies*: 4.53% land area
- *Bois*: 64.84% land area
(*Fins Bois, Bons Bois, Bois Ordinaires*)

THE COGNAC DISTRICT

Climate

- Temperate and damp
- Hot summers
- Good rainfall in winters

Soil

- Chalk and limestone
- More the lime, better the Cognac

GRAPE VARIETIES FOR COGNAC

All White Grapes

- St. Emillion (elsewhere Ugni Blanc)
- Folle Blanche
- Colombard

PRODUCTION OF COGNAC

Grapes pressed twice, pips & stalks are not crushed (for less tannin)



The wine produced is fruity, thin, harsh, slightly acid and unpleasant

(8% to 10% al v/v)



Fermentation takes up to 10 days



Passed through settling bins (Racking)



Distilled in alembic = 30% al v/v



Distilled again in alembic = 70% al v/v



Aged in Limousine oak (rich in tannin)



= amber tone, delicate and mellow with
a natural bouquet of grapes



Coupage (Blending)



Dilution with distilled water





Colour adjustment with caramel



Packaging

TYPES OF COGNAC

- **Grand Champagne** – It is the cognac produced entirely from brandies, made from the grapes grown in Grande Champagne region.
- **Petite Champagne** – Made entirely from brandies produced from grapes grown in the Petite Champagne region.
- **Fine Champagne** – It is the blend of brandies produced from grapes grown in Grande Champagne (minimum 50%) and Petit Champagne areas.

GRADATION OF COGNAC

- the Alphabet System
- the Star System
- some Legal Terms

❖ **ALPHABET SYSTEM**

- C - cognac
- E - especial
- F - fine

- V - very
- S - superior
- P - pale
- O - old
- X - extra

❖ **ALPHABET & STAR SYSTEM**

- Cognac laws is governed by 'The Bureau National Interprofessionnel Du Cognac'.
- VS or *** - Very Special demand a minimum age of 3 years.
- Reserve / VO / VSOP - Youngest brandy in the blend to be at least 4 ½ years.
- Extra/ Napoleon - Youngest brandy in the blend to be 6 years.

BRAND NAMES

- Martell
- Hennessy
- Rémy Martin
- Courvoiser

*These four brands jointly have a 75% market-share

BRAND NAMES

- Bisquit

- Camus
- Moyet
- Hine
- Otard
- Polignac
- Salignac
- Delamain
- Prunier

ARMAGNAC

(second only to Cognac)

- Region – Department of Gers, south-east of Bordeaux
- Centre of trade – City of Condom
- Grapes – same as cognac (folle blanche is also known as piquepoul)

How Armagnac is different from Cognac

- **Soil** – best Armagnac's from sandy soil
- **Distillation** – in Armagnac Still
- **Proof** – Distilled at around 53% al v/v
- **Character** – stronger fruity nose & flavour, more pungent and heavier
- **Maturation** – in black oak of Gascony

BRAND NAMES

- Delord
- Castagnon
- Larresingle
- Claverie
- Mattiac
- H.A.Sempé
- Samalens
- Chabot
- Laubade

MORE DETAILS

- The delimited areas of Armagnac identified in 1909 are Bas-Armagnac, Tenareze & Haut-Armagnac.
- Armagnac is marketed in basquaise, a flagon-shaped bottle.
- Armagnac is the country of the three musketeers, and it is frequently capitalised on for marketing.

USES OF BRANDY

- After-dinner spirit – served in a brandy balloon/snifter/inhaler
- Coffee is laced or chased
- With hot water – antidote for cough & cold
- With soda – in a tall glass – any time of the day
- Flambé
- Kitchen – puddings, cakes, etc.
- Mixed drinks