

Wines of France – 2



Quality Levels and Appellation System. In 1935 numerous laws were passed to control the quality of French wine. They established the *Appellation d'Origine Contrôlée* system, which is governed by a powerful oversight board (*Institut National des Appellations d'Origine - INAO*). Consequently, France has one of the oldest systems for protected designation of origin for wine in the world, and strict laws concerning winemaking and production. Many other European systems are modeled after it. The word "appellation" has been put to use by other countries, sometimes in a much looser sense. European Union wine laws have also adopted the term.

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Table wine

- *Vin de France* – A wine that is not subject to the AOC rules, but is still subject to the EU wine laws. For example *Vin de Pays d'Oc* from the Languedoc region (or *Vin de Pays des Côtes de Gascogne* from Gascony), and subject to less strict rules than AOC wines. For instance, it allows producers to distinguish wines that are made using grape varieties or procedures other than those required by the AOC rules, without having to use the simple and commercially non-viable table wine classification. In order to maintain a distinction from *Vin de Table*, the producers have to submit the wine for analysis and tasting, and the wines have to be made from certain varieties or blends.

Quality Wine Produced in a Specific Region (QWPSR):

- *Vin Délimité de Qualité Supérieure* (VDQS) – Less strict than AOC, usually used for smaller areas or as a "waiting room" for potential AOCs.
- *Appellation d'Origine Contrôlée* (AOC) – Wine from a particular area with many other restrictions, including grape varieties and winemaking methods.

The total French production for the 2005 vintage was 43.8 million hl, of which 9.4 million hl was destined for various quality levels. 7% was red or rosé. The proportion of white wine was 93.3% of the AOC wine being produced.

In years with less favorable vintages, the proportion of white wine tends to be a little lower. The proportion of *Vin de Table* has increased in the past decades, while the proportion of AOC has increased. The proportion of *Vin de France* has increased considerably. In 2005 there were 472 different wine AOCs in France.

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Source: Adapted from Wikipedia

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