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# Chapter 11

## Wine and the Law



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## Food Safety

- Generally regulation is complex; with focus being on the agents and chemicals added by grape growers and wine makers
- SO<sub>2</sub> is generally toxic at high levels. It's usage, even though small in wine, must be stated on a bottle regardless. It is often written as "contains sulfates".
  - SO<sub>2</sub> is a natural byproduct of the fermentation process, even in very small quantities, so if no SO<sub>2</sub> is actively added by the producer it will still likely state that it contains sulfates on the label.

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## Label Integrity

### Geographical Indications ('GIs')

- GIs = Product's region or place of origin, stated on the label
- Areas where grapes are grown will have defining influence on the style, and are thus protected.
  - Tight regulations are used to prevent fraud
- Developed by the WTO (World Trade Organisation) to regulate between countries and is used by all major wine producing regions.
  - **Defined boundaries and regional names ensure all countries use the same approach,** ie, 'Champagne' can only be used as a term for sparkling wines produced from the French Champagne wine region
- Two key notes for GI labels;
  1. More than 85% of the liquid in the bottle must come from the stated GI (can be some deviations, but this a rule of thumb)
  2. Significant variations between EU and non-EU countries for GI legislation

EU	Non-EU
<p>Two quality categories;</p> <p><b>Protected Designation of Origin (PDO)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Smaller areas/ tightly controlled / Defined regulations</li> <li>● 100% of the grapes must come from stated region</li> <li>● Stricter winemaking practices</li> <li>● Many do not state grape variety on label (ie, 'Chablis AC')</li> </ul> <p><b>Protected Geographical Indication (PGI)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Generally larger / fewer regulations</li> <li>● Allows producers to use non-traditional grape varieties as outside strict PDO regulations</li> <li>● Very diverse - can still have great wines outside of PDO borders made from same grape varieties and styles.</li> </ul> <p><b>Wines without GI</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Most flexible category for production (ie, multi-regional blends)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Each country developed own GI system <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Rarely stated on label (ie, Ward, AVA, Zone)</li> </ul> </li> <li>● No local laws to define and limit which grape varieties can be planted</li> </ul>

## Safe Consumption

Alcohol, while safe in moderation, is key concern for wine consumption.

- In some countries, alcohol is banned entirely due to local cultural and social laws.
  - Legal controls are implemented to set an age for youth purchase and consumption.
    - To prevent access from vulnerable age group
  - Legal limits are imposed on drivers by measuring milligrams of ethanol per millilitres of blood.
    - Alcohol impacts reaction times and increases risk-taking while driving.
  - Governments often publish sensible drinking guidelines and these are broken into fixed quantities (ie, units)
  - Limits are also places on marketing and advertising of alcohol to not encourage use and consumption.
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# Multiple Choice Practice Questions

- 1) What is a key reason for labelling wine with Geographical Indications (GIs)?
  - a) To enhance the flavour profile
  - b) To protect regional identity and prevent fraud
  - c) To increase alcohol content
  - d) To reduce production costs
  
- 2) Which of the following is true about the use of sulphates in wine production?
  - a) Sulphates are only added artificially
  - b) Sulphates must be disclosed on the label regardless of quantity
  - c) Sulphates improve the wine's colour
  - d) Sulphates are completely harmless at any level
  
- 3) How do governments typically manage alcohol consumption?
  - a) By making alcohol free for everyone
  - b) By imposing no restrictions at all
  - c) By setting legal drinking ages and publishing guidelines
  - d) By allowing unrestricted advertising
  
- 4) Which percentage of the liquid in a bottle must come from the stated Geographical Indication to follow the general rule of thumb?
  - a) 50%
  - b) 60%
  - c) 75%
  - d) 85%
  
- 5) Why might some countries entirely ban alcohol?
  - a) Due to cultural and social laws
  - b) Because it is too expensive
  - c) Due to its colour
  - d) Because it tastes bad

## Answers

1. **b) To protect regional identity and prevent fraud**
2. **b) Sulphates must be disclosed on the label regardless of quantity**
3. **c) By setting legal drinking ages and publishing guidelines**
4. **d) 85%**
5. **a) Due to cultural and social laws**