



The unique character and impeccable quality of Crémant d'Alsace has made it a considerable success, not just in Alsace itself but throughout France and in neighbouring countries. Today, Crémant d'Alsace is the market leader in at-home sales of AOC sparkling wines in France.

At the end of the last century, several companies in Alsace, established both in the vineyard area and in the cities of Strasbourg and Mulhouse, produced sparkling wines using the Champagne method. This tradition, somewhat in decline during the first half of the 20th century, was maintained until AOC Crémant d'Alsace status was awarded by the decree of 24th August 1976. This decree gives Alsace wine producers the new framework necessary for the production of quality sparkling wines, with requirements that are comparable to those imposed on Champagne producers themselves.

Today, over 500 producers belong to the Syndicat des Producteurs de Crémant d'Alsace (Crémant d'Alsace Producers' Union).

Crémant d'Alsace owes its elegance and originality to the unique character of the grape varieties of Alsace, allied to the natural advantages enjoyed by its vineyards : a dry and sunny climate, slopes that face the rising sun, and special geological characteristics.

Grapes for the production of Crémant d'Alsace are generally picked first, at the very start of the harvest, when they offer for vinification their optimum balance harmony.

Crémant d'Alsace wines are made from the following varieties :

- Most Blanc de Blanc Crémants come from the Pinot blanc, which makes them soft and delicate.
 - Riesling gives the Crémants a more lively fruit character, full of elegance and nobility.
 - Pinot gris makes Crémants rich and round, while Chardonnay brings style and lightness.
 - Pinot noir is the only variety to produce Crémant d'Alsace rosé or, more rarely, a Blanc de Noir full of charm and finesse.
- Wines destined for Crémant d'Alsace production can only be made from white or red grapes grown within the region of production of Alsace wines.
 - The starting date for the AOC Crémant d'Alsace harvest is fixed by the Regional Experts Committee for Alsace Wines, and is generally a few days before the harvest date for AOC Alsace still wines.
 - Before the harvest, winegrowers are obliged to declare to their town hall which vineyards are intended for the production of Crémant d'Alsace.
 - Each batch of grapes must be sufficiently ripe, with a minimum natural sugar content of 145 grams of sugar per litre, that is the equivalent of 8.5° potential alcohol.





- The maximum authorized annual yield for AOC Crémant d'Alsace in 2008 was 80hl/ha without PLC (= Plafond Limite de Classement, a reserve calculated annually by the INAO).
- 150 kg of grapes must be pressed to obtain 100 litres of juice destined for the production of Crémant d'Alsace, with compulsorily separation of the "rebêche", which must be at least 2% of the original volume entitled to the appellation.
- Grapes must be harvested manually and transported in containers holding less than 100 kgs, and put whole into the press.
- The equipment used to receive and crush the grapes must be specially inspected and approved by the INAO.
- Archimedes screws and chains must be removed from presses.
- A register of pressing must be kept.
- Crémant d'Alsace must undergo a secondary fermentation in bottle, which must take place exclusively in Alsace. The wine cannot be bottled before 1st January following the harvest. The length of bottle ageing on the lees cannot be less than 9 months.
- Before sale, all wines destined for AOC Crémant d'Alsace are subject to the analysis and tasting tests required by law for this appellation.

From less than 1 million bottles in 1979, the annual production of Crémant d'Alsace has grown spectacularly since 1980, to meet increasing demand not only in France but also on export markets. Actually, production of Crémant d'Alsace represented 33 million bottles, which is 22 % of all Alsace wines.

The surge in demand for Crémant d'Alsace explains its increasingly important share of Alsace wine production. Sales have multiplied by 14 in 26 years, up from 2.2 million bottles in 1982 to 30 million bottles today.



Belgium	2,13 million bottles
Germany	1,66 million bottles
Denmark	370 000 bottles
USA	296 000 bottles
Sweden	182 000 bottles
Switzerland	123 000 bottles
Nederland	103 000 bottles
Italia	67 000 bottles