



In the European Union, one of our most enriching characteristics can be attributed to the wealth of diversity that exists between one member state and the next and from one geographical region to another. This variety is embodied in the cultural aspects of our 28 individual countries. Our local ingredients are often a labour of love or livelihood, which have been re-worked, mastered and perfected by craftsmen going back over hundreds, if not thousands, of years and they are a question of deep pride.

The uniqueness of the geography in which these products are found is reflected in the final product and caters for their irreplaceable properties. You can really taste the sun-soaked soil of Puglia in its spicy golden olive oil and you can savour the fern-topped knolls of the Black Forest in its smoky Schwarzwälder Schinken ham. It is because of the distinct flavour of each of these ingredients that we are keen to preserve the high quality and exclusivity that they have come to represent.

The EU works to protect and preserve tradition and heritage and has created quality schemes to ensure this. To date more than 1300 food products' names have been registered under the EU's quality labels for agricultural products and foodstuff (PDO, PGI and TSG). All types of products are covered from meat, dairy and fish, to bread, cakes, biscuits, confectionary and beverages. In addition there are over 1900 wines carrying a PDO or a PGI label and some 343 spirit drinks carrying the GI label. More and more of these products are available outside Europe.

When you see a product with one of these labels you can be sure of its quality. You know that the product will be truly distinctive and will feature taste characteristics retained from its local region. You can be certain that such a product is genuine and was made with care and a deep respect for its history. A product carrying one of these labels will have seductive flavors and its own true personality.

Why are the GI protection schemes required?

With such a diverse range of food and beverage products in Europe that encompass rich traditions and value time-honoured production methods, the European Union has created protection schemes that clearly identify these products as being of genuine quality. The three

EU schemes work to encourage diverse agricultural production, protect product names from imitation and help consumers by giving them information on the unique character of these products.

The schemes are also open to non-European producers. This ensures that products of high quality which originate in countries outside the EU can enjoy the same level of protection as EU quality products.

The quality labelling system guarantees:

- Quality
- Exceptional taste
- Tradition and authenticity
- Defined ingredients from specific locations (for PDO products)

What are the different kinds of GI schemes?

Take a close look at these quality logos. Become familiar with what they look like and what they represent. These logos clearly identify products as being of true excellence as it is not easy to receive such protection. The entire life cycle of a product, all the elements within it and the region in which it is produced are examined before they receive this mark of quality.

The three logos representing the EU's GI schemes are:



Protected Designation of Origin (PDO) A PDO label indicates a foodstuff, wine or spirit that originates in a specific town, region or country, that has characteristics that are particularly linked to the place of origin through inherent natural or human factors, and which is produced, processed and prepared in the defined geographical area. Famous examples include Jamón de Teruel from Spain and Comté cheese from France.

PDO products are linked with territory, so they must be produced, processed and prepared in a specific region using traditional production methods. The quality or characteristics of the product must be due essentially or exclusively to its place or origin, i.e., climate, the nature of the soil and local know-how – a sense of place apparent in the flavour of the food. An example of this is the characteristically rich and full flavor of PDO Noord-



Hollandse Gouda cheese which owes to its North-Holland cows, pastures and traditional recipe.



Protected Geographical Indication (PGI)

PGI covers names of products originating in a specific place, region or country which are recognised for their quality and other characteristics closely linked to the defined geographical area. The label also marks the products as being produced and/or processed and/or prepared in the area in question. Famous examples include Mortadella Bologna from Italy and Melton Mowbray pork pies from the English town of the same name.

While for PDO products the quality is strongly linked to the origin, such immediate nexus does not have to be established for the product to earn the PGI protection. It is sufficient that a product's reputation, or a given quality or other characteristic are essentially attributable to a designated geographic area. The connection between the characteristics and origin may not be as strong as with PDO. Moreover, it is sufficient that the reputation of the product is essentially related to the origin, regardless whether the characteristics of the product are or are not inherent in this geographical area. Therefore, the connection between the quality of the product and the origin does not have to be demonstrated repeatedly.



Traditional Speciality Guaranteed (TSG)

TSG products are those with distinctive features that have traditional ingredients or are made using traditional methods. These products have specific characteristics that set them apart from similar foodstuffs. Examples include specialty Belgian beers, such as Gueuze and Kriek, and Kalakukko, a Finnish bread with fish and meat baked inside it.



EU Organic Label

Since 2010, all pre-packaged organic products produced in the EU must show the EU organic logo on its packaging. This gives consumers peace of mind that the product has been manufactured based on a number of principles and practices designed to work with the land naturally, to minimise human impact on the environment and based on the standards set by the European Union.

Information about where the agricultural produce contained in the product was farmed must also be included, as 95% of the agricultural products must have been organically produced for it to bear the organic sticker.

Find Out More

To find out more about the EU's quality policy and access the complete list of PDO, PGI and TSG products, visit the following websites:

- EU Quality Policy: <http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/quality>
- DOOR database of registered PDO and PGI products: <http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/quality/door>
- E-Bacchus database of GI wines: http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/wine/e-bacchus/index_en.htm
- E-Spirits database of GI spirits: <http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/spirits>

