

## **The Madeira Wine Heritage Community Charter**

Charter for the Safeguarding of the Madeira Wine Traditions to be presented at the public meeting **Viticultura e tradições do Vinho Madeira: para um plano de salvaguarda**, Estreito de Câmara de Lobos (Madeira Island, Portugal) – 14<sup>th</sup> Dez. 2024.

At the public meeting **Viticultura e tradições do Vinho Madeira: para um plano de salvaguarda**, Estreito de Câmara de Lobos (Madeira Island, Portugal) – 14<sup>th</sup> Dez. 2024, all the individuals, in their own name, or representing groups and communities concerned with the inclusion of Madeira traditions onto UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity have adopted the following:

### **Introduction/preamble**

- Madeira wine traditions are an essential part of the cultural heritage of the Madeira Wine Heritage Community and a defining element of the identity of their members.
- Madeira wine traditions shall be safeguarded as living cultural heritage.
- Safeguarding measures of the Madeira wine traditions shall be based on the principles of UNESCO's Convention for the safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage.
- Safeguarding measures for the Madeira wine traditions shall be based on the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals.
- Safeguarding measures for the Madeira wine traditions as living cultural heritage shall be based on best practice through ecological, cultural, economic and social sustainability and supporting the environment.
- Safeguarding measures for the Madeira wine traditions should respect the rights of every community, group and the individuals involved.
- The Madeira wine traditions are fragile. Safeguarding measures with relevant resources and support must be put in place to ensure it be passed down to future generations.

## **Aims**

### *Article 1 Aim*

The purpose of this charter is to help safeguard Madeira wine traditions as living cultural heritage by the Madeira Wine Heritage Community as well as Portugal as the State Party concerned.

### *Article 2 Guiding principles*

The guiding principles for the transfer and transmission of the Madeira wine traditions must be designed by the Madeira Wine Heritage Community. They shall contribute to the safeguarding of the know-how, and the whole set of social practices and the cultural practices related. They shall also contribute to safeguarding the vineyard areas, vine landscape, phylogenetic heritage, architectonic heritage, ethnological heritage, historical documents and artistic works and other kinds of cultural heritage concerning Madeira wine in Portugal and in other countries where this beverage is also highly appreciated.

## **Definitions**

### *Article 3 Madeira wine*

Madeira is the most southerly territory of Portugal, located in the middle of the Atlantic. After its discovery around 1419, the colonists introduced *Vitis vinifera*, turning gradually wine into their main trading commodity over the next centuries. Even though tourism has been the main driver of the island's economy since the 20th century, Madeira wine is still produced, and remains a key part of its economy and is appreciated today. It is made exclusively with local cultivars, mostly Tinta Negra, Sercial, Boal, Verdelho and Malvasia, allowing a complete palette of flavours from dry to sweet, and with an alcohol content of between 17° and 22°. The wine-making process had been improved over the centuries, resulting in a beverage fortified naturally (*canteiro*) or by heat (*estufagem*), greatly improving with aging, sometimes for more than hundred years. This historical wine continues to be exported all round the world today from a handful of cellars supplied by the numerous small vineyards of the island, being crucial for local people to maintain their way of life. This distinct wine is the most identifiable cultural legacy of Madeira abroad, having been appreciated for centuries in several countries of Europe, America, Africa and Asia, being used as both a drink and a culinary ingredient.

### *Article 4 The Madeira Wine Heritage Community*

Madeira wine is important for the identity of not just one, but several communities and groups. We must mention, firstly, the inhabitants of the archipelago where knowledge and skill of the wine's preparation has been perpetuated for more than 250 years, along with the Madeiran diaspora around the World. The Madeira Wine Heritage Community also include many members that identify with the drink but may not have Madeiran ancestry or live in this outermost region of Portugal. The community is a very diffuse and diverse set of

individuals, groups and organizations, spread across more than 60 countries on all continents. All of which form the Madeira Wine Heritage Community, independently of where they live.

#### *Article 5 Intangible culture and living tradition*

Madeira wine traditions are to be understood as an intangible cultural heritage shared by the Madeira Wine Heritage Community. The intangible dimension of this oenological tradition lies not only in the vast know-how that makes it unique, but also in a very ancient “degustation code” and a “storytelling”, refined by each generation. The specialist knowledge related to the production of Madeira wine is in the hands of a small group of vine growers and wine makers closely linked to a micro terroir of just over 400 hectares in size. The “degustation code” (how to drink Madeira wine and how to use it as an ingredient) is shared by a vast group of *aficionados*, spread across all continents. The “storytelling” is, in turn, what gives all parties involved the feeling of belonging to the same heritage community, despite the ocean between them, being dispersed throughout the world. It is fundamentally a consensual and aggregating way of explaining Madeira wine, which originates from the sea. The narrative is built around a happy accident that led to the discovery of the beneficial effect of heating on wine, after several boat trips in the tropics. Heat, a humoral element of the ancients, is thus elevated to the basic principle of the aging process that makes Madeira wine unique. It serves as a connecting thread between the zero degree of this tradition that is the legendary “*vinho de roda*” and current production methods. This creationist narrative, perfected over several generations, gives everyone a sense of identity and continuity.

#### *Article 6 Geographical location and range*

Most Madeirans consider the Madeira wine a significant component and take part in practices related to this beverage. This includes both those living on the island and expatriates in other countries, giving them a strong sense of continuity. Abroad, Madeira wine is significant for other communities connected with the Madeira archipelago, in America, in Europe, in Africa and in Asia, communities that have, for centuries, used this wine in their social practices as a drink and/or as a culinary element for ages, and have their own cultural heritage built upon it.

#### *Article 7 Detailed definition in the nomination document*

The main source for a comprehensive definition of Madeira’s wine traditions can be found in the document ‘Madeira wine traditions’, with the inscription:

“UNESCO, \_\_\_\_\_, section 1. Identification and definition of the element”.

#### *Article 8 Tradition bearers as stewards of the cultural heritage*

The intangible cultural heritage related to Madeira wine traditions is managed and transmitted by the bearers of the tradition and the practitioners themselves. They have the

right to recognize Madeira wine traditions as part of their cultural heritage and an essential component of their identity. This must form the basis on which principles for safeguarding measures are founded.

### **Safeguarding through practices**

#### *Article 9 Safeguarding through technical, cultural and social practices*

The main principle for the transfer of knowledge about the Madeira wine traditions is safeguarding through technical, cultural and social practices related to vine growing, wine making, degustation (tasting), culinary uses, artistic works and festive events.

#### *Article 10 Traditional knowledge*

The knowledge of the Madeira wine traditions has been transmitted from generation to generation. This perspective will form the basis of the future work on safeguarding. As far as possible, the cropping techniques, harvesting, processing, aging, degustation and cooking, when Madeira wine is used as culinary ingredient, must be based on traditional local knowledge.

#### *Article 11 Sustainability and the agro-ecosystem*

If tradition is to be maintained, the Madeira wine chain must be sustainable. To this end, the weakest links in the chain must be followed up on and supported, especially the vine growers. The charter should encourage programmes that guarantee the continuity of the tradition, in a sustainable way from an economic, social and cultural point of view, being fair to all those involved, especially the most vulnerable. They should also contribute to environmental sustainability, having virtuous effects on the landscape and the ecosystem.

### **Resources, support and underlying conditions**

#### *Article 12 Resources, support and underlying conditions*

To ensure best practice in promoting Madeira Wine traditions, members of the Madeira Wine Heritage Community should be supported, as far as possible, with regard to all aspects involved in safeguarding the cultivation and vinification/wine making process, ensuring that the raw material, the production process and the end result respect the matrix of traditional knowledge and practice. The support will be educational and technical, in order to provide a solid basis for acquiring the necessary knowledge, skills and learning practices. It will also be financial where necessary, to enable members of the Madeira Wine Heritage Community, in particular vine growers, to cope with the uncertainty of harvests increasingly threatened by climate change, the decline of viticulture in the face of demographic pressure, the increase in the real estate value of land due to the attractiveness of the Autonomous Region of Madeira as a tourist destination, and the lack of social appreciation of agriculture by younger generations. The

main focus of support should be on good agricultural practices and the environment, emphasizing the ecological responsibility of producers. This is a very important aspect in a region where vines, in some cases, cohabit with the Laurissilva Forest, a unique World Heritage site.

#### *Article 13 State parties are formally responsible*

According to the UNESCO Convention of Safeguarding the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, Portugal, as the State Party that supported the inscription of Madeira wine traditions on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, has the formal responsibility for taking the necessary measures to ensure the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage found on its territory. Safeguarding means here taking the measures to ensure the continued viability of Madeira wine traditions, including identification, documentation, research, preservation, protection, promotion, enhancement, transmission, particularly through formal and non-formal education. Considering the autonomy of the region recognized by the Portuguese Constitution, the regional institutions have to be involved in the implementation of such actions. They must do this with the greatest possible participation from all the communities, groups and individuals who create and maintain knowledge and practice related to Madeira wine traditions. Therefore, the Madeira Wine Heritage Community must be fully involved.

#### *Article 14 The involvement of the University of Madeira*

The University of Madeira will collaborate with the government of Portugal as the State Party, in representation of the whole Madeira Wine Heritage Community, within the framework of programmes aiming the safeguarding of Madeira wine traditions. The University of Madeira will collaborate with other international, national, regional, and local organizations, be they either governmental and/or non-governmental, to implement safeguarding measures. All the parties involved will together undertake this mission through actions that permit the identification, documentation, research, preservation, protection, promotion, enhancement, and transmission, particularly through formal and non-formal education. The University of Madeira will also contribute actively to mediate eventual conflicts of interests between members of the Madeira Wine Heritage Community.

#### *Article 15 Authoritative documents*

Alongside UNESCO's Convention on the protection of the intangible cultural heritage, the Madeira Wine Charter is based on the inscription of Madeira wine traditions on UNESCO's Representative List of Humanity's Intangible Cultural Heritage. With reference to the document: "Madeira wine traditions, inscription, UNESCO, \_\_\_\_".

These two documents, the Convention and the inscription text, are to be understood as the authoritative governing documents for future work on the safeguarding and management of Madeira wine traditions. The Charter takes effect when Madeira Wine

traditions are inscribed on UNESCO's Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.

*Article 16 International and national conservation plans*

The provisions in this charter must be followed up with periodic safeguarding plans at national level. Such plans must follow the government of Portugal's schedule for reporting to UNESCO. It must then be made clear which measures and programs have been implemented.

This, then, ensures proper safeguarding and the proper management of the Madeira wine traditions under the auspices of the responsible authorities and the Madeira Wine Heritage Community represented by the University of Madeira.