

Canon Law Guidelines:

The guiding directions in the preparation of wine to be used for Holy Mass may be summed up as follows: -

- (1) The wines must be natural in the strictest sense and the sugar present in the final article should in all cases have been present during the original fermentation.
- (2) The alcohol in the final wine shall be entirely the product of fermentation of that wine, except where the wine would become diseased were its alcoholic strength not raised. This can be taken to apply only to wines derived from musts which had at least 250- 260 g/li of extract prior to fermentation – in which case they would, if left to nature, give a sweetish wine. However, as this type of wine is known not to keep due to micro-organisms other than yeasts operating on the remaining sugars, only in this case is fortification with pure grape spirit or grape brandy allowed (dop brandy or spirit derived from grapes or skins, but addition of water is presumably not allowed). Also, the spirit must be added during the course of fermentation.
- (3) No material or chemical may be added to the must or wine except where, were it not added, the wine would in the normal course of events either not keep or break (“Casse”). The following are allowed: -
 - (i) Yeast starters (pure yeast cultures grown on grape juice).
 - (ia) Citric acid or tartaric acid where the acidity is too low to keep the wine (but not, therefore, in fortified wine).
 - (ii) S O 2
 - (iii) Clarifying materials such as gelatine, tannin, isinglas, bentonite, Spanish clay etc., in fact, any fining agent which will definitely not remain in the wine (i.e. tannin should not be added in excess of the gelatine)
- (4) All substances which are present to an appreciable extent in the final wine must have been present during at least part of the fermentation.

The following rules must therefore, be observed in the making of the wine which is offered for use at Holy Mass:

1. The wine used for the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass should be of the best quality:
2. The wine must be the result of a purely natural process of fermentation of grape juice and unadulterated:

3. Citric acid and tartaric acid up to 3 lbs. per ton of grapes are permitted only when the acidity is so low that the wine may not be resistant to microbial attack, or cannot give a clear fermentation or may be subject to "Casse":
4. In the case of dry wines (containing less than 2% sugar), no materials other than sulphur dioxide, citric acid (when necessary) and fining agents may be added to the wine.
5. In the case of sweet wines, (containing more than 20 grams of sugar per litre), it is permitted to bring the alcohol to 17% or 18% by volume provided: -
 - (a) that the alcohol is pure grape alcohol (derived from wines which were not made or derived from grape skins):
 - (b) that were the alcohol not added, the wine would by natural fermentation still have given a sweet wine, i.e. this can be practised in the case of very ripe grapes or very sweet musts:
 - (c) that the alcohol added be not more than that produced by fermentation;
 - (d) that the alcohol be added during fermentation.
6. No sugar, raisins or other sweetening agent (jeripico) may be added to an existing wine which has already fermented dry.
7. (a) In order to achieve such high sugar concentration, raisins may be added prior to fermentation or wine may be made from raisins themselves provided that in all cases fermentation is carried out subsequently to their introduction.
 - (b) Concentrated grape juice may be permitted but its use cannot be recommended as much of the natural flavouring materials is destroyed.
 - (c) Sugar other than natural grape sugar is definitely not permitted.
 - (d) Air drying of the grapes prior to fermentation in order to bring the sugar concentration up, is permitted and recommended.
8. Use of sulphur dioxide up to the legal quantity of 350 m.g. per litre is permitted as the only preservative other than alcohol as outlined above.
9. The colour of the wine shall be entirely due to the natural colour of the grape and that derived from a clean oak barrel with whatever changes ageing may bring about. Synthetic dyes, or even the addition of anthocyanins and flavours is, therefore, not permitted except where those are taken up by the wine from the skins and wood in the natural course of events.
