

# Introduction to France

France produces huge volumes of wine in a wide range of styles. It is therefore more practical to cover these wines in a number of short chapters rather than in one long chapter. In this brief introduction we cover the wine laws that apply throughout France, and show how the different wine regions relate to each other on the map.

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## FRENCH WINE LAWS

The geographical indications (GIs) below are common to all the wine regions in France. Where additional labelling terms exist, these will be covered in Chapters 13 to 21.

### PDO Wines

The French for PDO is **Appellation d'origine protégée (AOP)** but the traditional term **Appellation d'origine contrôlée (AC or AOC)** is more widely seen on wine labels. It is common for one plot of land to be covered by both a generic and a more prestigious appellation. Each year the producer can choose which appellation they wish to use, a decision often influenced by the quality of the vintage. In Chapters 13 to 21 PDO wines will be referred to as 'appellation' wines.

### PGI Wines

The French for PGI is **Indication géographique protégée (IGP)**. Many producers use this term on their wine labels although the traditional term **Vin de Pays (VdP)** is also often seen.

### Vin de France

Wines without a GI are termed **Vin de France**.

