Techniques are the basis of all economic activity. Between the development of a new technique and its application in industry or commerce, however, there is a route to be followed, which presents limits imposed by patents and technical standards. Currently, the technical standardization system and the patent system regulate the use of techniques in the market. While standardization determined technical outlines, by establishing standards, in the limits within it is recommended, or permitted, the exercise of an economic activity; patents set limits on the exclusive use of certain technique in the exercise of economic activities. Despite being characterized as systems appropriate to a market economy, the interrelation of them generate tensions in the market, which may in effect cause negative effects on trade, innovation, technology transfer and development. The wine sector has faced challenges in this regard. On one hand, some standardization bodies ignore the most advanced prior art and establish standards that limit the use of new technologies. In such situations, if a product or a process is patented, nonetheless, does not observe the technical prescription of a standard, especially when compliance is compulsory, the exclusive right to use the technology, in the exercise economic activities, granted by the patent, became unfeasible – once the noncompliance of the standards may correspond to a legal violation. On the other hand, patented techniques are involved in technical standards. In such cases, if the patent covers the technical content of a standard, it means, if the standard incorporates a patent, another source of tension arises: for the user of a standard to comply with the prescribed requirements, he needs to obtain authorization of the patent holder, without which he may incur infringement. As a consequence, if the user does not get a license to use the technology incorporated into the standard, he is unable to comply with the standard and, therefore, his rights to exercise an economic activity can become impracticable. Thus, patent incorporated into technical standards can generate high barriers to entry in standardized (or technically regulated) markets. These characteristics of contemporary patent and technical standards systems, and the effects of their interrelation in the market, are the result of a set of changes occurred over the centuries, especially from the Middle Ages. In order to understand the relationship between patents and standards, and the origins of the tensions inherent in it, especially in the wine sector, this paper analyzes the transformations of these systems, from the Medieval to the Contemporary Periods. Initially, it is examined the medieval patent system, when the letters patent (privileges of corporations, individual monopolies and privileges of inventions) conferred the right to exercise an economic activity, with or without exclusivity. In the second part, it is evaluated the changes in the patent system, particularly based on the principle of freedom of trade and industry, when the privileges of invention were strengthened and the corporations declined. The analysis of the contemporary patent system and the formation of the technical standards system is carried out in the third part. In the conclusion remarks, the current challenges of the tensions inherent to the relationship between patents and standards are highlighted, through concrete examples, especially in regard to the technical limits imposed on freedom of trade and industry in the wine sector.

**Keywords**: Patents; Intellectual Property; Technical Standards; Innovation; Technology Transfer; Wine Market.