

INFLUENCE OF THE WINE SECTOR ON TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract: *Wine tourism is the priority form of tourism for a series of countries. It must be integrated and adapted to the tourist market necessities worldwide, to increase the number of tourists. Investigations carried out in the field of wine tourism should be integrated with those conducted globally. At the same time, it is necessary to integrate the two industries: wine and tourism. Wine production and tourism are essentially on opposite ends of the industrial spectrum, while the characteristics of each activity are different from a microeconomic perspective. On one end, wine production is a primary and partially secondary activity based on industry, characterised by being dependent on supply prices and by producing a standardised and homogeneous product, relying on capital increase to create wealth. At the other end of the industrial spectrum, tourism is a services industry characterised as a heterogeneous service determined by demand, by obtaining prices, maximising profit, and relying on profits to create wealth. Wine tourism may generate substantial earnings, thus contributing to the development of regions and making the labour market and the companies conducting their activities in this sector more dynamic. By allotting various funds, one may increase wine quality and readjust the supply of tourist services, thus determining an increase in location popularity and incomes, implicitly. This paper approaches the interaction between wine tourism and wine production. It is due to the fact that wine tourism development is in the charge of wine producers, most often small and medium enterprises. Hence, the increase in wine quality is one of the challenges for the interested parties in wine enterprise development. The article aims to determine the influence of the wine sector on the development of tourism in the world's leading countries in wine production. In order to achieve the objective, the statistical data for the period 2016-2021 regarding the evolution of wine production in 22 countries with the highest volume of wine production were analyzed. Travel and tourism competitiveness index and International tourist arrivals were analyzed for the same 22 countries. The results of the research showed that the countries with the highest volume of wine production have the highest International tourism inbound receipts. The countries leading the world in wine production such as Italy, Spain, France, USA among the top 5 countries with the largest International tourist arrivals.*

Keywords: wine tourism, development, tourists, wine tasting, vine and wine.

JEL Classification: L83; Q26; Z32.

1. Introduction

Wine has become a lifestyle product for an increasing number of consumers. Visiting cellars has become a leisure and tourism activity among wine connoisseurs. Wine tourists visit cellars not only for wine tasting but also to admire the landscapes and get an insight into the traditions and heritage of the wine-producing area. Producers can demonstrate their wine-production process and display the vines and gardens for visitors of the cellars. Specifically, wine tourism may prove effective in increasing brand awareness and loyalty among cellar tourists, which may contribute to higher incomes.

Wine tourism is the priority form of tourism for a series of countries, hence the need to integrate and adapt it to the global tourist market needs, to increase the number of foreign tourists; the investigations in the field of wine tourism should be integrated with the ones conducted worldwide. At the same time though, there is a need to integrate the two industries (i.e., wine and tourism). Wine production and tourism are essentially on opposite ends of the industrial spectrum, while the characteristics of each activity are different from a microeconomic perspective. On one end, wine production is a primary and partially secondary activity based on industry, characterised by being dependent on supply prices and by producing a standardised and homogeneous product, relying on capital increase to create wealth. At the other end of the industrial spectrum, tourism is a services industry characterised as a heterogeneous service determined by demand, by obtaining prices, maximising profit, and relying on profits to create wealth.

2. Wine culture and art

Whereas the exact date and place of wine emergence are unknown, from time immemorial there are numerous wine-related mentions in works by writers, painters, scientists and politicians alike. It is well known the wine was used in medicine, festivities, religious ceremonies, and public events.

In ancient Egypt, wine was widely appreciated; it was the beverage of choice for rich people and high priests during their meals, which were part of religious rituals. Furthermore, wine represented important and expensive trading merchandise. The Egyptian civilisation was probably the first to have used wine in religious ceremonials and economic activity. However, the Greeks were the ones who disseminated vine culture across Western Europe, up to France (Johnson, 2004, p. 25).

In Greece, wine has been known from time immemorial. Greeks used to dilute wine using water before drinking it. This practice allowed them to increase the amount of wine, considered an expensive product; it also prevented them from becoming intoxicated, mostly during long afternoon debates, which were an inherent part of Greek cultural relations. It is indisputable that Greeks were considered moderate wine lovers; they did not prefer drunken escapades but focused on the friendly and

social atmosphere of communication during celebrations. They were aware of the risks entailed by excessive intake of strong alcoholic beverages (Johnson & Robinson, 2015, p. 15).

Romans adopted many Greek traditions, including the possibility of getting pleasure from wine. In the Roman culture, wine became a daily food tradition; it was related to religious ceremonies and luxury banquets. Greeks cultivated vines in the Italian peninsula long before the flourishing period of the Roman Empire; they founded harbours for wine commerce and other merchandise trade in the Mediterranean Sea. Romans extended the vineyards in their provinces. They cultivated vines in France (Bordeaux), Germany, Spain, and even Great Britain (the western limit of the empire). Romans along with the Gauls are said to have invented the wooden barrel to facilitate wine trade and shipment over long distances. The expansion of the Roman Empire and the simultaneous increase in surfaces where the vines were cultivated disseminated wine availability to several social classes. However, only wealthy people had access to the best types of wine.

Wine is a symbol of the area where it was created. No other product reflects better the history, geography, and culture of its area of origin. Every year produces unique wines that bring together various human and climatic processes. Wine is simple and complex at the same time: it is a momentary euphoria of the senses, but also the excellent expression of a moment in time and a piece of land.

The concept of wine tourism development and its various influences on various aspects of the local community (business, environmental and social) have been widely discussed, especially as fears of depletion and degradation of natural resources increase. The wine industry and one of its sub-sectors, wine tourism, is increasingly mentioned in the discussion on sustainability, and not only in terms of environmental concerns. Ohmart (2008), for example, explains that one of the goals of sustainable viticulture is to contribute to the local community in a positive way, while leaving a smaller impact on the environment. Hall and Mitchell (2000) and Hall et al. (2004) explored the development of wine tourism in terms of the opportunities and challenges of this concept as a business activity. Alonso and Liu (2012) in their research are concerned with exploring the potential of wine tourism, but also with the government's possibilities to support wine producers in organizing the activity with limited resources to use wine marketing opportunities among tourists.

Torres et al. (2020) in their research identified the key factors in the adoption of wine tourism. Five factors influence tourists: word of mouth recommendations, the attractiveness of products, tourist services, information available on the Internet and recommendations of tour operators. Tour operators and travel services are key factors in increasing the number of wine tourists, but the attractiveness of the products has a stronger influence in the long run.

Tafel and Szolnoki (2020) explored the impact of German wine regions as tourism destinations that are developing sustainably through job creation, while preserving the heritage of a region. Tafel and Szolnoki (2020) estimated the economic impact of tourism in German wine regions to help stakeholders make the right policy and

investment decisions. They have developed a multiplier model that allows the assessment of the economic impact of wine tourism. The results of Tafel and Szolnoki's research (2020) show that tourism in the German wine regions has an economic impact of EUR 26.4 billion, ensuring their primary income for 384,878 people. Proper investment in this profitable market could help balance regional economic disparities and achieve sustainable tourism development in the country (Tafel and Szolnoki, 2020).

3. The wine sector and its influence on tourism development

Wine tourism emerged at the crossroads between vine culture and tourism as a specialised form of travel, as a popular form of rest, which went on to become one of the most encouraging directions of global tourism expansion. Wine has become synonymous with the individual ambience of regional cultures worldwide. Wine is one of the best expressions of specific characteristics of a region, of the civilisation layering, of its culture and environment. The regions with a viticulture tradition have understood that wine is far more than an alcoholic beverage: it is a story, a history, and a civilisation, and it embodies rural tradition and urban charm (Santos et al., 2022). By developing local-based leisure activities, vineyards can contribute to the sustainable development of the local community (Tănase et al., 2022).

The traditionally long connexion between the culture of wine, vines, and humans has provided every coming generation with the pleasure of observing and highlighting its significance. Based on this connexion, tourism emerged concerning viticulture, wine tourism and rural tourism (Soare, 2007, p. 52).

Wine tourism has been defined by Hall and Macionis (1998) as comprising visits to vineyards, wine factories, wine festivals, and wine tasting shows, all accompanied by the exploitation of the advantages featured by a wine-production region. All of the above are the primary motivating factors for visitors. This definition relies on studies of the information obtained from tourists and visitors to wine festivals (Hall et al., 2004, p. 3).

Wine, food products, tourism, and arts comprise the fundamental elements of the wine tourist product, usually provided along with the lifestyle desired by tourists, precisely to experience it. This product-based approach is featured in the definition provided by Australia Grape and Wine Incorporated (1998): visits to wine factories and wine regions to experience the unique qualities of the lifestyle associated with wine pleasure and cultural activities, gastronomy, and landscapes. Precisely this definition and approach generated a series of studies focusing on the products and destinations specific to wine tourism (Sharma, 2005, p. 48).

The most significant particularity of wine tourism concerns wine production and exploration of regional traditions at the same time. Wine tourism intensifies in areas with a rich culture and history. In 1953, the first wine road was inaugurated in Alsace, France (Morrison, 2013, p. 488).

Wine tourism development is in close connexion not only with the field of winemaking in a certain region, but also with the rich history of the places visited by

tourists, and with the interest in vine culture (i.e., increase in vineyards, wine production and consumption) (Popov, 2009, p. 82).

Due to historical reasons and geographical, climatic, environmental, cultural, and political conditions, the European continent is the largest high-quality alcoholic products manufacturer and exporter. It is also one of the most frequented regions in the world because it comprises the highest number of cultural and historical monuments, and the level of services provided is high.

The greatest wine producers in the world are Italy, Spain, France, and the United States of America by production volume. US wine has a 300-year-old tradition. In recent years, the wine production dynamic in the US has followed an ascending trend. A tendency has been noted to reduce vine-cultivated surfaces, but the number of wine producers has remained almost constant.

Table 1: Wine production volume in 2016-2021

| | Country | Production volume mln. hectolitres | | | | | | Variation | Variation |
|----|--------------------|------------------------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|-------------------------|-------------------|
| | | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2021/2020 In mln. hl | 2021/2020 in % |
| 1 | Italy | 50.9 | 42.5 | 54.8 | 47.5 | 49.1 | 44.5 | -4.5 | -9.0% |
| 2 | Spain | 39.7 | 32.5 | 44.9 | 33.7 | 40.7 | 35.0 | -5.7 | -14.0% |
| 3 | France | 45.4 | 36.4 | 49.2 | 42.2 | 46.7 | 34.2 | -12.4 | -27.0% |
| 4 | USA | 24.9 | 24.5 | 26.1 | 25.6 | 22.8 | 24.1 | 1.3 | 6.0% |
| 5 | Australia | 13.1 | 13.7 | 12.7 | 12.0 | 10.9 | 14.2 | 3.3 | 30.0% |
| 6 | Chile | 10.1 | 9.5 | 12.9 | 11.9 | 10.3 | 13.4 | 3.1 | 30.0% |
| 7 | Argentina | 9.4 | 11.8 | 14.5 | 13.0 | 10.8 | 12.5 | 1.7 | 16.0% |
| 8 | South Africa | 10.5 | 10.8 | 9.5 | 9.7 | 10.4 | 10.6 | 0.2 | 2.0% |
| 9 | Germany | 9.0 | 7.5 | 10.3 | 8.2 | 8.4 | 8.8 | 0.4 | 4.0% |
| 10 | China | 13.2 | 11.6 | 9.3 | 7.8 | 6.6 | 6.8 | 0.2 | 3.0% |
| 11 | Portugal | 6.0 | 6.7 | 6.1 | 6.5 | 6.4 | 6.5 | 0.1 | 1.0% |
| 12 | Romania | 3.3 | 4.3 | 5.1 | 3.8 | 3.8 | 5.3 | 1.4 | 37.0% |
| 13 | Russia | 5.2 | 4.5 | 4.3 | 4.6 | 4.4 | 4.5 | 0.1 | 2.0% |
| 14 | Brazil | 1.3 | 3.6 | 3.1 | 2.2 | 2.3 | 3.6 | 1.3 | 60.0% |
| 15 | Hungary | 2.8 | 2.9 | 3.6 | 2.7 | 2.9 | 3.1 | 0.2 | 6.0% |
| 16 | New Zealand | 3.1 | 2.9 | 3.0 | 3.0 | 3.3 | 2.7 | -0.6 | -19.0% |
| 17 | Austria | 2.0 | 2.5 | 2.8 | 2.5 | 2.4 | 2.3 | -0.1 | -4.0% |
| 18 | Georgia | 0.9 | 1.0 | 1.7 | 1.8 | 1.8 | 2.2 | 0.4 | 22.0% |
| 19 | Greece | 2.5 | 2.6 | 2.2 | 2.4 | 2.3 | 1.7 | -0.6 | -26.0% |
| 20 | Moldova | 1.5 | 1.8 | 1.9 | 1.5 | 0.9 | 1.1 | 0.2 | 20.0% |
| 21 | Bulgaria | 1.2 | 1.2 | 1.1 | 0.9 | 0.8 | 0.9 | 0.1 | 7.0% |
| 22 | Switzerland | 1.1 | 0.8 | 1.1 | 1.0 | 0.8 | 0.8 | -0.1 | -10.0% |
| | Other countries | 12.9 | 12.4 | 13.8 | 13.5 | 13.2 | 14.2 | 1.0 | 7.6% |
| | Total | 270 | 248 | 294 | 258 | 262 | 253 | -9.0 | -3.4% |

Source: Elaborated by the authors based on the data provided by the International Organisation of Vine and Wine

According to preliminary data from the International Organisation of Vine and Wine, the global wine production in 2021 decreased by 4% compared to the previous

year, due to the unfavourable climate conditions. significant decreases in wine production have been recorded all over the world, except for South-Eastern Europe, where Romania has recorded an increase of around 37%, while the Republic of Moldova has recorded an increase of 20% concerning the volume of 2021 production.

The wine production volume of the great producers such as Italy, Spain, and France has been affected by detrimental weather conditions; however, increases in countries like the United States of America, Australia, Chile, Argentina, Romania, and Brazil compensate for some of the reductions.

Between 2019 and 2021, the weighting of wine production volume specific to European Union countries has accounted for 59, 63, and 57%, respectively, of the total wine volume, with Italy, Spain, and France ranking among the top wine producers. In the same period, overseas producers contributed with 25, 23, and 27%, respectively: The United States of America and Australia ranked the 4th and the 5th, while Chile, Argentina, and South Africa ranked the 6th the 7th and the 8th. Despite the trend of looking for wines from the new world, the European region still dominates world production, accounting for a higher percentage. The wine-making region of the new world, on the other hand, has recorded a slight decrease in the volume of production in 2019 and 2020, which is due primarily to the significant reduction in wine production in the United States, Australia, Chile, and Argentina. However, the weighting within the global production volume hides other substantial changes in wine production. Relevantly, the wine producers from the new world, namely Australia, California, New Zealand, Argentina, Chile, and South Africa have improved considerably the quality of wine, insofar as they replaced not only the sales of cheaper European wines on their domestic market but also on the premium export market, especially to the United Kingdom and Scandinavia.

4. The international experience of wine tourism development

Table 2: Travel and tourism competitiveness index in the countries specialising in wine tourism (in 2019)

| Rank | Country | Score | Ranking change compared to 2017 |
|------|-------------|-------|---------------------------------|
| 1 | Spain | 5.4 | 0 |
| 2 | France | 5.4 | 0 |
| 3 | Germany | 5.4 | 0 |
| 5 | USA | 5.3 | 1 |
| 7 | Australia | 5.1 | 0 |
| 8 | Italy | 5.1 | 0 |
| 10 | Switzerland | 5.0 | 0 |
| 11 | Austria | 5.0 | 1 |
| 12 | Portugal | 4.9 | 2 |
| 13 | China | 4.9 | 2 |
| 18 | New Zealand | 4.7 | -2 |
| 25 | Greece | 4.5 | -1 |

| | | | |
|-----|--------------|-----|----|
| 32 | Brazil | 4.5 | -5 |
| 39 | Russia | 4.3 | 4 |
| 45 | Bulgaria | 4.2 | 0 |
| 50 | Argentina | 4.2 | 0 |
| 52 | Chile | 4.1 | -4 |
| 56 | Romania | 4.0 | 8 |
| 61 | South Africa | 4.0 | -8 |
| 68 | Georgia | 3.9 | 2 |
| 74 | Hungary | 3.8 | 3 |
| 103 | Moldova | 3.3 | 14 |

Source: Elaborated by the authors based on The Travel & Tourism Competitiveness Report 2019

Every two years, an index is published called the travel and tourism competitiveness index. The most recent travel in tourism competitiveness index dates from 2019. The purpose of this report is to carry out a comprehensive analysis of the economies of 136 countries worldwide enter determine the factors and policies influencing tourism development in various countries. For the countries with a significant wine production sector, we feature the travel and tourism competitiveness index in Table 2.

This index includes four groups of factors analysed such as the regulatory framework of travel and tourism, the business community in the field of travel and tourism, the structure in the field of travel and tourism, and the human, cultural, and natural resources in travel and tourism. In its turn, each group contains a series of indicators.

The three first places are occupied by European countries with a well-developed wine production industry, specialising in wine tourism, such as Spain, France, and Germany, but the greatest wine producer (Italy) ranks only eighth in tourist competitiveness. Italy has a lower score than the leaders concerning factors such as business community, security, and human resources.

Table 3: International tourist arrivals (in 2019)

| Country | International tourist arrivals (million) | International tourism inbound receipts (million US\$) | T&T industry GDP (million US\$) | T&T industry employment (thousand) |
|-------------|--|---|---------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Spain | 81.8 | 68,114.1 | 78,464.0 | 958.1 |
| France | 86.9 | 60,680.7 | 109,404.9 | 1,296.0 |
| Germany | 37.5 | 39,823.4 | 138,987.8 | 3,065.3 |
| USA | 76.9 | 210,747.0 | 554,872.9 | 5,793.4 |
| Australia | 8.8 | 41,731.9 | 42,562.4 | 567.9 |
| Italy | 58.3 | 44,233.2 | 117,336.8 | 1,543.1 |
| Switzerland | 11.1 | 16,273.8 | 19,079.1 | 173.0 |
| Austria | 29.5 | 20,460.0 | 35,298.8 | 392.7 |
| Portugal | 21.2 | 17,118.7 | 16,905.0 | 389.2 |
| China | 60.7 | 32,617.3 | 382,287.3 | 28,660.2 |

| | | | | |
|--------------|------|----------|----------|---------|
| New Zealand | 3.6 | 10,593.2 | 11,798.9 | 224.5 |
| Greece | 27.2 | 16,527.7 | 18,309.9 | 485.5 |
| Brazil | 6.6 | 5,809.2 | 55,845.5 | 2,442.8 |
| Russia | 24.4 | 8,944.6 | 19,400.0 | 839.3 |
| Bulgaria | 8.9 | 4,045.0 | 2,026.9 | 93.0 |
| Argentina | 6.7 | 5,374.6 | 19,130.9 | 628.9 |
| Chile | 6.5 | 3,634.3 | 9,401.3 | 272.4 |
| Romania | 2.8 | 2,527.1 | 3,687.7 | 222.5 |
| South Africa | 10.3 | 8,817.7 | 10,499.1 | 687.3 |
| Georgia | 4.0 | 2,704.3 | 1,703.5 | 151.3 |
| Hungary | 15.8 | 6,170.4 | 4,021.2 | 221.0 |
| Moldova | 0.15 | 319.4 | 103.2 | 10.3 |

Source: Elaborated by the authors based on The Travel & Tourism Competitiveness Report 2019

Germany ranks 9th by wine production volume and the third in the world by the travel and tourism competitiveness index.

The success it enjoys may be ascribed to the unique offer of cultural resources and business trips, combined with a strong labour market and a well-developed tourist services infrastructure.

The presence of the wine sector in Romania is not sufficient for wine tourism to exist and develop. It is necessary to improve the infrastructure for elaborating and promoting an efficient policy in the country. At the same time, the products must benefit from world recognition. The earnings from such sales represent a significant source of revenue for tourism and wine industry activity.

The top 4 wine producers in the world Italy, Spain, France, USA are also among the top 4 countries with the largest International tourism inbound receipts. At the same time, China, which ranks only tenth in the world among wine producers, with an annual production of 6.8 million hectoliters, has T&T industry GDP that exceeds 3 times T&T industry GDP in Italy. Italy having the largest volume of wine production in the world (Table 3). According to International tourist arrivals, the same countries are among the top 5 in the world. Italy is on the 5th place, being surpassed by China, which ranks 4th in this indicator.

5. In conclusion

Wine tourism is a form of marketing for wine and grape promotion and trade; it may be combined with all sorts of activities accompanying grape cultivation and wine product promotion, from agricultural producers and cellars to customers. In addition, wine tourism increases the effectiveness of marketing communication among economic units in the domestic and foreign markets of wine products and wine regions.

The countries with the highest volume of wine production record the highest International tourism inbound receipts. The world leaders in wine production such

as Italy, Spain, France, USA are also in the top 5 countries with the largest International tourist arrivals.

The specialised development of services due to tourism allows an increase in the number of accommodation options in the region, a multiplication of sightseeing spots, an improvement and dissemination of tourist products for wine tours, festivals, trips, tastings and presentations.

Wine tourism management should pay particular attention to wine intake, and the improvement of tourists' cultural relations with the local population and the grape and wine producers by elaborating on tourist products and by creating wine festivals and celebrations. Tourists should have the possibility to enjoy not only wine tastings but also meetings with representatives of producers within the wine sector and to promote the activities focusing on participation in the wine-production process. By developing local-based leisure activities, vineyards can contribute to the sustainable development of the local community.

Wine tourism management should not be limited to wine culture education issues, though it is significant. It should not be self-sufficient, but it should be combined with the use of the leisure potential of vineyards in the natural environment, the final purpose being to provide the possibility of recovering one's physical and spiritual forces.

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