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## Wine Tourism: Terminological Issues, Consumers and Development Opportunities

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**Abstract:**

**Purpose:** The article presents a review of world literature on wine tourism and the analysis of the concepts related to it.

**Design/Methodology/Approach:** Review article.

**Findings:** Attention has been drawn to the differences between Old and New World countries in defining the terms of this form of tourism. It has been shown that they are conditioned by socio-economic and cultural factors. Attention has also been paid to the diversity of motives of those tourists who visit wine-growing regions in different countries.

**Practical Implications:** The article stresses the significance of developing wine tourism as a factor of socio-economic development of regions.

**Originality/Value:** The article presents review of contemporary world literature on the issue of wine tourism.

**Keywords:** Wine tourism, enotourism, regional development.

**JEL codes:** O13, O44, R11.

**Paper type:** Research article.

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## 1. Introduction

Ever since the beginning of the last decade of the twentieth century wine tourism has been developing more and more rapidly and has become an important part of the world tourism. The economic significance of wine tourism is highly justified by the data. In Australia, in 2009 the revenues of this sector amounted to 7.1 billion AUD, while in the USA they reached \$ 2.1 billion, and the wine regions of California hosted 20.1 million tourists. Moreover, the number of people employed in American wine tourists service sector (excluding people employed in viticulture and wine production) exceeded 50 000 (Quadri-Feliti and Fiore, 2012).

Therefore, wine tourism has become the subject of extensive study in various countries, including Australia (Charters and Ali-Knight, 2002; Alant and Bruwer, 2004; Carlsen, 2004; Sparks, 2007), Canada (Carmichael, 2005; Getz over Brown in 2006; Poitras and Getz, 2006), Greece (Karafolas, 2007; Alebaki and Iakovidou, 2011, Nella and Cristou, 2014), Italy (Pikkemaat *et al.*, 2009; Presenza, Miguzzi and Petrillo, 2010), Israel (Shor and Mansfeld, 2009), New Zealand (Hall, 1996; Hall *et al.*, 2000; Hall, 2005), Slovenia (Jurinčič and Bojnec, 2009), Spain (Alonso and O'Neil, 2009; Sheridan, Alonso and Scherrer, 2009), USA (Taylor, Barber and Deale, 2010; Quadri-Feliti, 2012).

The article aims at:

- 1/ Presenting terminological problems regarding enotourism;
- 2/ Presenting the typology of wine tourism consumers;
- 3/ Discussing of the benefits and threats related to the development of wine tourism.

## 2. The Beginnings of Wine Tourism

Modern wine tourism has historically distant roots and its origins can be traced to ancient Greece and Rome (Hall, 1996). What should be pointed out however, is the fact that it was not until the beginning of the second half of the nineteenth century that wine became of a special interest to tourists.

As Hall *et al.* (2000) state, it results from three facts, firstly, an increase in the access to communication due to the expansion of railway network; secondly, an increase in the wealth of the bourgeoisie – a newly established middle class of that time; thirdly, the historically first Bordeaux Wine Official Classification prepared for the World Exhibition in Paris in 1855.

This classification was so well prepared by the wine traders that it has remained in effect with hardly any changes till today

([http://www.wineonline.pl/news,30,klasyfikacja\\_bordeaux\\_1855](http://www.wineonline.pl/news,30,klasyfikacja_bordeaux_1855)).

It constituted a great marketing tool for promoting specific vineyards and wine producers, and thus encouraged people to set off for trips whose main theme were the issues associated with wine.

The development of this form of tourism contributed to creating the first wine routes: “La route de grands cru” in France in 1934 and “Deutsche Weinstrasse” in Germany in 1935 (Mardare, 2015b). Other countries were setting up wine routes in their areas within the subsequent years. This form of wine tourism popularisation is currently common in most of the countries in which vines are grown and wine is produced (Hall *et al.*, 2000; Getz and Brown, 2006).

Wine routes play a very important role in both local and regional development. Such way of promoting wine regions is very useful when experiencing socio-economic hardship. Their existence greatly contributes to the development of markets and stimulates rural population. Local communities and even entire regions may be positively activated by imitating the actions of local leaders (Hall, 1996; Telfer, 2000; Karafolas, 2007; Jurinčič and Bojnec, 2009; Pikkemmat *et al.*, 2009; Mazurkiewicz-Pizło, 2013).

Wine tourism is present in the areas of specific cultural landscape, which Peters defined as “winescape” (Telfer, 2000 p. 254). It is a unique agricultural landscape, which consists of three elements: vineyards, activities related to vine cultivation, collection and processing, as well as a place of wine production and storage.

Wine tourism is, thus, closely linked to cultural tourism. For this reason, there are numerous areas of cultural landscape shaped by the vines that have been listed at the UNESCO World Heritage Site. These include the Douro Valley in Portugal, a part of the Loire Valley in France or the Rhine Valley in Germany.

### **3. Wine Tourism or Enotourism – A Theoretical and Terminological Problem**

As the researchers indicate, both in relation to the very essence of wine tourism and the advancement of the research, there are substantial differences between the countries of the Old and New World (Hall and Mitchell, 2000; Frochot, 2000; Charters and Ali-Knight, 2002; Carlsen, 2004; Alonso and O'Neil 2009; Shor and Mansfeld, 2009). For many years a significantly higher level of wine tourism development concerned such countries as the United States, Canada, Australia and New Zealand.

The first world conference on the subject was held in Australia as early as in 1998. It was also Australia, where an attempt to define the concept of ‘wine tourism’ was made in the document entitled “Western Australian Wine Tourism Strategy” (Charters and Ali-Knight, 2002; Getz and Brown 2006): “*Travel for the purpose of*

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*experiencing wineries and wine regions and their links to the Australian lifestyle. Wine tourism encompass both service provisioning and destination marketing.”*

Basing on the research on wine tourism in the countries of the New World, Getz and Brown (2006) formulated their own definition which draws attention to three main aspects related to wine tourism: “*wine tourism*” is, *simultaneously a form of consumer behavior, a strategy by which destinations develop and market wine-related attractions and imagery, and a marketing opportunity for wineries to educate, and to sell their products, directly to consumers.*”

However, the literature related to wine tourism most frequently quotes the definition of Hall “*Visitation to vineyards, wineries, wine festivals and wine shows for which grape wine tasting and/or experiencing the attributes of a grape wine region are the prime motivating factors for visitors*” (Hall et al., 2000).

Carmichael (2005) emphasises strong links between wine tourism and rural areas: „*wine tourism is an example of rural tourism in which production and consumption come together to benefit both rural operators and visitors. Furthermore, wine tourism is a type of agri-tourism which is rapidly growing in popularity in many areas with favourable growing and marketing conditions.*”

All the above-mentioned definitions are based on the research conducted in the anglophone world countries (USA, Australia, New Zealand). As emphasised by Charters and Getz (2002), it is due to the limited number of studies of cross-cultural character. The authors also point out that the world wine tourism is developing on the basis of significantly different socio-economic and historical-cultural conditions.

#### **4. Typology of Consumers on the Wine Tourism Market**

Significant differences in the proposals for typology of wine tourists may constitute a manifestation of the very fact. Referring to the observation conducted in New Zealand. Hall (1996) identified three types of wine tourists that depended on the degree of interest in wine tourism, i.e., “wine lovers”, “wine interested” and the “curious tourist”. Corigliano, on the other hand, proposed, at the same time in Italy, the division referring to the lifestyle of tourists, and came up with such notions as: “the professional”, “the impassioned neophyte”, “the hanger-on” and “the drinker” (Charters and Getz, 2002).

It should be noted that, in the broader context, the Italian classification refers to the global wine consumption patterns. As Presenza, Minguzzi and Petrillo (2010) state, there are, at least, three styles of wine consumption: the European one, the American one and the Asian one.

The European way of approaching wine concerns its exceptional significance throughout history. The consumption of wine affects the perception of a person's

social status; provides specific family and social situations with their unique nature; defines personal tastes and points to the need of exploring something new.

In Asia, in turn, wine consumption is still quite limited and applies to people of a higher social status that enables them to appreciate the unique flavour and aroma of wine. Despite the traditional culinary customs that still exist in Japan, China or Taiwan, wine consumption has recently been growing slowly. In the USA it is the quality of the wine that constitutes the most important factor in its assessment and, unlike in other European countries, it is treated with less deference.

Referring to the analysis of the above-mentioned typology and emphasising the cognitive-educational motive that is popular with many wine tourists, Charters and Getz (2002) attempted to come up with a common denominator for various classifications.

Based on a research conducted in Western Australia, the authors proposed the division into “wine lovers” (people with extensive knowledge of wine); “the connoisseur” (tourists with high social status who are more (than “wine lovers”) interested in the knowledge about wine, and who make significant purchases of wine in a cellar door); “wine interest” (tourists who are interested in wine tasting in a cellar door, but have no previous interest in the knowledge about wine); “the wine novice” (“curious tourists” - as Hall calls them - who visit wineries whenever the opportunity arises and rather when a wine region is located in the immediate vicinity of the place of residence).

The authors point out that a similar classification of wine tourists have also been made in Europe, but with a very important reservation (Charters and Getz, 2002). Tourists with the highest level of knowledge about wine from Australia and New Zealand travel individually, whereas those from Europe, often travel in organised groups. Getz and Brown (2006) came to similar conclusions as, referring to the research done in British Columbia, Canada, they stated that wine tourists are not interested in participating in organised trips. This confirms earlier observations that there are significant cultural differences between the countries of the New World and Europe, which affect the behaviour of wine tourists.

Recent studies on wine tourists in Greece (Nella and Christou, 2014) allowed to distinguish three levels of involvement in wine tourism: low, medium and high. The differentiating factors were the level of education, the place of residence or gender, as well as age and personal income and expenditures on wine. From the economic point of view, wine tourism most value those tourists who are matured and wealthy and who are willing to make major purchases in the wineries.

On the example of Spain, Alonso and O'Neil (2009), Greece, Nella and Christou (2014) and Israel, Shor and Mansfeld (2009) claim that wider studies on wine tourism in Europe were introduced much later than in the New World. This is due to

the fact that, although these countries are very popular tourist destinations, it is not wine tourism that constitutes one of the main reasons for arrivals. These are, obviously, seaside holiday (Sun, See, Sand) and unique cultural values.

Frochot (2000) provides a similar explanation for this situation and he indicates that 80% of tourists in France point to culture, history and architecture to be the main motives of their tourist activity. Thus, in Bordeaux – one of the world's most famous wine regions – cuisine and wine are mentioned only as the fourth most important reason for tourist arrivals.

As Frochot (2000) explains, the French find it difficult to separate wine as a motive for arrivals from centuries-old heritage whose important part constitute the culture and traditions of wine. For this reason, research on wine tourism and its development as an economic sector are not as well developed as in the countries of the New World.

## **5. Benefits and Threats Related to the Development of Wine Tourism**

Wine tourism is currently developing very rapidly and is seen as both an important source of income and a useful factor for gaining competitive advantage in the region (Presenza, Minguzzi and Petrillo, 2010; Quadri-Felitti and Fiore, 2012). This particularly applies to agricultural regions, with a long tradition of wine, which are dominated by small wine producers (Sheridian, Alonso and Scherrer, 2009). These regions seek impulses for the development of the local economy, but their goal is not to compete and develop on a global scale but to preserve traditions and local culture associated with vine cultivation.

Creating the appropriate tourism facilities remains, however, an essential element for the development of wine tourism. It frequently takes a dozen or more years to create tourist infrastructure (Kowalczyk, 2010). The reason for such long process is the fact that the wine sector perceives tourist services as a secondary issue (Hall, 2005) and, furthermore, there is a significant risk of non-repayment of capital due to the negative effects associated with the seasonality of tourism.

Inclusion on the list of UNESCO is subject to many rigors concerning, among others maintaining the existing landscape unaltered. Thus, wine tourism has become part of the idea of sustainable tourism. As various authors state, wine tourism can be a good way to implement sustainable development of regions (Carmichael 2005; Getz and Brown, 2006; Poitras and Getz, 2006; Kowalczyk, 2010a; Taylor, Barber and Deal, 2010; Widawski, 2011; Mazurkiewicz-Pizło, 2013).

Unfortunately, as some researchers point out, wine tourism, especially mass tourism, can be the cause of environmental degradation, thus the damage of unique winescap (Carmichael, 2005; Barber, Taylor and Deale, 2010).

Preserving the unique environmental qualities of a region is associated with the concept of “terroir”. As Hall points out (1996), there is no precise English equivalent for the word. Terroir refers to unique (site-specific) geological and climate conditions, landform, soil and hydrological conditions. Viticulture consists an inherent element of this concept. It includes a number of items related to viticulture and local wine production technology.

The idea of appellation control, which originates from the concept of terroir, ensures that the wine meets high quality requirements and it specifies the geographic origin of the wine. In this way, the environmental elements combine with the economic aspects of both wine production and wine tourism development, because the reputation of wines from a particular region may be one of the main marketing tools.

This results from the fact that wine tourism development contributes to the creation of new workplaces in regions that are connected with producing wine and providing service to incoming tourists (Quadri-Felitti and Fiore 2012). Due to the foregoing phenomenon the inhabitants’ income and, what follows, their standard of living increase. Wine tourism development also promotes preservation of a region’s cultural and landscape values. The state of natural environment is not without significance too, since, as research indicates, wine tourists have strongly developed cognitive motivations for both cultural and natural tourist values (Charters and Ali-Knight, 2002; Carmichael, 2005; Getz and Brown, 2006; Pikkemat *et al.*, 2009; Widawski, 2011).

The owners of vineyards benefit from wine tourism development because they promote their vineyards, which increases their profits from additional sales, and identify the name of their wine with the region, thus gaining potential consumer for the future. Shopping for wine constituted one of the main reasons for arrivals to the region of the wine in various parts of the world (Alant and Bruwer, 2004; Carmichael, 2005; Jurinčič and Bojnec, 2009; Nella and Christou, 2014)

The development is also beneficial for local authorities who may create the image of a region and regional identity of inhabitants, encourage entrepreneurship and, thus, affect their region’s social and economic development (Carmichael, 2005; Poitras and Getz, 2006).

Obviously, like any other forms of activity, wine tourism, when developed in an ill manner, can lead to negative phenomena such as, among others, the formation of a monoculture that is sensitive to the market fluctuations, the impoverishment of a countryside, the negative impact on natural environment or social problems associated with excessive tourism traffic (commercialisation, nuisance in inhabitants’ daily lives) (Hall and Mitchell, 2000; Carmichael, 2005; Hall, 2005; Poitras and Getz, 2006; Taylor, Barber and Deale, 2010).

Despite the above-mentioned risks, many regions in Europe and the world are increasingly promoting their wine tourist offer, paying particular attention to the benefits of developing this form of tourism.

What causes such big differences in the level of wine tourism service between those regions and countries which possess all necessary conditions for growing grapes and making wine and whose ancient traditions were associated with the culture of winemaking?

## **6. Conclusion**

The article indicates that wine tourism has been an important and dynamically developing segment of tourism in the world. It occurs in areas where vines are grown and wine is produced. Due to cultural differences, this form of tourism is often understood and defined in a different way. This results in various typologies of people participating in wine tourism.

However, in each case, it is wine and the circumstances related to it that constitute the main interest of tourists. In many countries, wine tourism is treated as an important factor in the activation of rural areas and local development. In Europe, it still has a niche and complementary character due to other, cultural and recreational to name just a few, factors motivating tourists to come to a given region.

In the countries of the so-called New World it is often considered to be the most important factor in generating incoming tourist traffic due to the existence of modest anthropogenic values. Regardless of the location, wine tourism can support the implementation of sustainable development principles, but its uncontrolled development may cause environmental and socio-economic problems.

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