

WINE TOURISM

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Abstract

In spite of tight relationship between wine production and tourism, dating back in early history, these two high-income industries have existed separately for a long time. Bearing in mind such a fact, the current study aimed to collect the existing knowledge and brightful tips on wine tourism, a complex phenomenon yet pretty underdeveloped in the Western Balkans as a whole, particularly if compared to the examples of rather good practice in wine-producing countries such as France, Italy and Spain.

Key Words: *wine, tourism, wine tourism, wine culture*

JEL classification: Z32

Introduction

The term *wine tourism* is regularly used in two industries – wine and tourism. For the tourism industry, wine actually represents a strong motivating factor for the visitors that makes a certain destination attractive. For the wine industry, wine tourism is more than important link with the consumers. Since they are rather interested for a first-hand grape/wine story, direct sale often enables plenty of wineries a good solid income (Getz, 2000).

There is a long-standing relationship between wine and tourism. A visit to the vineyards was quite a common thing in ancient Rome and Greece (Jović & Petrović, 2000). However, the travelers developed a specific interest in wine only in the mid of 19th century. Such a trend may be explained by traffic (with stress on railway) and social revolution.

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In other words, new middle class sought quality wines, along with the aristocracy (Hall et al., 2000).

Wine production and tourism have existed separately for a long time (Domine, 2001). Nowadays it is necessary to establish and/or maintain a real (formal) connection between tourism (as a movement and consumption outside the place of residence for the purpose of meeting recreational and cultural needs) and wine production (as an agricultural activity). Wine tourism is thoroughly claimed to provide a fully (complete) sensory experience, described through five sense types as followed:

- *sense of taste* (local gastronomic specialties, fresh grapes, vegetables from the surrounding gardens);
- *sense of smell* (grapes, wine fermentation, fresh rural air, mowed grass, hay, the smell of flowers);
- *sense of sight* (wine colour, spacious vineyards, specific architecture of stone settlements, colourful wine festivals);
- *sense of touch* (practical production experience, bottle design, grape picking);
- *sense of hearing* (bottling wine, music that goes in line with wine).

Without a doubt, wine tourism is a complex phenomenon (Panov et al., 2006). It is authentically cultivated (includes a lifestyle associated with wine and food); offers a good reason for numerous festivals dedicated to wine; acts on the architecture of the village; may be easily considered as educational; strongly provides the opportunity of knowledge acquiring in regard to the types of wine, technology of wine production and wine evaluation. Such a kind of tourism usually favourites good mood and lively emotions. Also, wine and food, along with attractive (catchy) surrounding, may deeply encourage romance.

There is no universal definition of wine tourism. The specificity of tourism, as an economic activity, must be seriously taken into account. There are two key points: while the first one is related to the connection between viticulture and wine production with agriculture, the other one deals with the impact of the local surrounding area on the economy (winemakers, travel agencies and tourists). Defining wine tourism, Hall et al. (2000) have pointed out the importance of tourists' visit to vineyards, wineries, wine festivals and exhibitions; wine tasting as both attraction and experience; the wine region itself as the primary motive. Similarly, Getz and Brown (2006) define wine tourism as an inspiring journey associated with the attractiveness of wineries and wine-growing areas, types of niche

marketing, destination development, direct sales and marketing opportunities for the wine industry. Vineyards must possess some elements of attraction such as aesthetic, historical, ethnographic and/or cultural specificities. Tourist visits result not only in economic outcomes, but also in acquaintance with these elements of attraction. Johnson (1997) summarises that wine tourism is a visit to vineyards, wineries, wine festivals and exhibitions organised for the purpose of recreation.

Wine tourism offers a wide range of experiences for those visiting wineries and wine regions like wine tasting, wine and food, enjoying the surrounding area, recreation and/or cultural activities in the wine region. Actually, it well incorporates wine culture of the region: from vineyards over cellars to a glass and all aspects of the tourism industry. The tourists are genially provided with unique sensory experience and intriguing opportunity to get to know with particular wine-growing area and its specific characteristics (Dodd & Beverland, 2001).

A tourist comes to a certain area to encounter and experience its character, food, lifestyle, and cultural attractions; also, to rest and relax. A tourist tends to have a great fun (being far away from any kind of stress including urban way of life); to change the surrounding for a good and/or to experience romance. Consequently, primary motives are mainly related to entertainment; education on the wine, winery and wine-growing area; wine tasting and shopping; food and wine; socialising with other people; visiting art galleries, museums, historic sites, parks, monasteries, etc.

When making a tourist offer, it must be kept in mind that tourists do not visit a wine region just to buy a single bottle of wine (Charters & Ali-Knight, 2002). On the contrary, they expect a full (complete) sensory experience followed by some new information about the region of choice. The tourists must be given the opportunity to relax and move away from a routine of the city life. A visit to an exciting winery is nothing else than a step forward. Actually, the offer must pay a huge attention also to the accommodation; restaurants; hospitality; the value, quality and authenticity of attractions; maps (followed by any additional tourist information about the area); etc. There are plenty of ways how a winery – wine cellar may become truly special and worth remembering for the visitors: the design and layout of the winery; entrance to the cellar; fitting the winery into the landscape; interior; the service and atmosphere created by the staff; quality product – wine.

In Serbia, wine tourism is currently at the very beginning of its development. For such a reason, there is a real need for continuous education of substantial quality. Both the owners and managers of wineries have to become familiar with basic concepts of wine tourism and wine routes. A fruitful cooperation with tourist organisations and agencies is simply a necessity. As time goes on, the tourists worldwide, who are undoubtedly getting more and more sophisticated, intensively look for an enlightening offer.

Successful business equally takes care about the appearance of a winery and the staff behavior. The relevant tips include opening hours clearly displayed at the entrance; a well-maintained parking lot; the surrounding area leaving a positive (charming) impression; the winery exterior that massively reflects a product's image (historical, folk, rustic, modern or authentic); the entrance to the cellar and its interior in conformity with the product. Special attention must be paid to outdoor facilities – the area where the tourists are like to spend their own time. First of all, the kids need to be ideally safe while they play (Hall, 2005). This gives an opportunity to the parents of being much more relaxed and prone to the leisure activities of choice. At least some of them may opt to curiously taste different types of wine. Additionally, the design of entrances and windows may contribute to a great extent to the overall impression of the site, if smartly arranged. The same is particularly true for the entrance of the wine cellar that needs to be inviting and to finely address various sense types. The wall space might have a specific role.

If creatively organised, it has potential to (silently) transfer knowledge (information) related to the wine in rather informal way. Such an approach may put some light on old (valuable and rare) paintings, collections of winery products (both the existing and previous one/s) and various certificates, winning medals and diplomas achieved either at domestic/international exhibitions or competitions. The visitors may also benefit from so-called educational posters covering different topics such as grape varieties; harvesting; the way of making wine; the way the climate affects the taste; the year in the vineyard – key data (numbers); from a vine to the bottle; etc. A connection with local artists is pretty welcomed. In other words, there is a space for wine in practically any exhibition of paintings, sculptures and ceramics – art and wine ideally go together. There is a strict must when it comes to the staff: by default of good practice, the staff members are expected to know quite a lot about wine and winery

products, to have a respectable culture of consuming wine and to be familiar as a whole with the ongoing cultural offer in the surrounding area.

Wine can influence the choice of tourist destination in a number of ways. Basic human needs are partly met by rest and travel, interaction with people, depending on lifestyle, life stage and experience – all these together genially shape specific travel motivation. According to Brown and Getz (2005), such a motivation generically includes a couple of different types: intellectual (learning, exploring and discovering), social (related to friendship and interpersonal relationships, the need to instill respect), competence-mastery (achievement, refinement, challenges and competitions) and stimulus-avoidance (rest and relaxation).

Wine route represents a special form of sale of wine, catering, tourist and agricultural products of a certain wine region. The route is complemented by natural beauties, peculiarities of the area through which a road leads, cultural and historical sites and features of the wine-growing area. Development of a wine route standardly includes: defining a tourist offer; defining a course of the wine route; arranging the reception area for the guests; arranging the yard; setting up signin posts; promotions; extending the tourist offer, etc. For all this, one must have knowledge and skills in wine market and marketing, architecture, spatial architecture, law, hospitality, viticulture and winemaking, etc.

Benefits of the wine route may be literally numerous: the enhanced tourist offer; the extended tourist season throughout the year; the increased employment of the workforce, with the aim to preserve and restore the original ambience and traditional heritage; merging natural, cultural, sociological, demographic and production features of the particular area into a harmonious whole; economic development and increased employment in the area; allowing the winemakers to sell wines and other products at their doorstep; allowing the visitors to acknowledge the quality of the product and to happily return home; the improved tourist image of the region as a whole – a massive step up.

Wine culture

Wine culture includes complex knowledge about wine, its history, vineyards, cellars, oenophilia, wine philosophy and the role of wine in hospitality and tourism (Mijatović, 2012; Zoričić, 2009) .

This culture encompasses refining, improving and perfecting the cultural consumption and knowledge of wine including our relationship to wine. It has to be permanently promoted by organising courses for hospitality workers; publishing and printing wine brochures; opening wine shops with professional staff; organising tourist trips through wine-growing areas; offering and organising promotions of new wine products at fairs (Mitchell et al., 2012).

Within wine culture, combining wine and food in the right way represents a particularly sensitive issue. In France, there is a saying: "Tell me what you drink and I'll tell you who you are." François de la Rochefoucauld, a French poet, convincingly added: "Eating is a necessity, but to eat intelligently is an art."

Pairing food with wine is a pure pleasure. There must be a balance – harmony in which neither food nor wine prevails. The French call it *taste education* (Subić et al., 2010).

Food products in tourism

Food and drink tourism are becoming a crucial part of cultural tourism. Local food and drinks allow tourists a rare opportunity to gain authentic and unique experience. MacDonald and Deneault (2001) claim that tourists immerse themselves in the culture they are visiting through authentic and engaging experiences with people, cuisine, wine and other cultural activities, while Hall and Sharples (2003) refer to food tourism as a special interest tourism. There is also so-called gourmet tourism where food is a key motive for traveling. A tourist travels to a certain destination with the primary motive to visit a particular restaurant or winery.

Wine stands out as the most valuable food product in tourism differing from all other agricultural products (Hall & Macionis, 1998). According to some data, tourism and hospitality account for about 11.3% and 8% of the wine and all other agricultural products consumptions, respectively.

Wine as a food product

There are over 650 components/compounds in wine. Wine is a complex mixture of natural organic compounds belonging to various structural classes. The quality of wine is determined by its visual and organoleptic characteristics (taste and aroma). The fruit composition and consequently

resulting wine composition are affected by a number of factors including grape variety, soil and microclimatic conditions, viticultural practices and winemaking techniques (Almela et al., 1996; Dai et al., 2011; Giovinazzo & Grieco, 2015).

The group of compounds that have a great impact on the quality of red wines are phenolic compounds, in particular, anthocyanins and tannins as they contribute to the wine colour, mouthfeel and stability (Downey et al., 2006; Kennedy et al., 2006). Wine polyphenols generate special interest, not only because of their impact on wine quality, but also due to their antioxidant and free radical scavenging properties which support positive health effects (Pereira et al., 2013). They have demonstrated antioxidant, antibacterial, antiviral, anti-inflammatory and antiallergenic effects (Cook & Samman, 1996; Fukumoto & Mazza, 2000).

If consumed moderately, it does not incite (lead to) alcoholism; it has nutritional, prophylactic and healing value (Cindrić et al., 2000; Quideau et al., 2011). Wine is a drink of laughter and oblivion; the truth is hidden in it (Budić-Stanković, 2003).

Moderate consumption of wine reduces the onset of Alzheimer's disease; helps with osteoporosis, type 2 diabetes, gallstones, cancers, allergies and migraines; contributes to maintaining collagen fibers of blood vessels and connective tissues. It also reduces blood cholesterol and eliminates excess of free radicals due to the presence of polyphenolic compounds, naturally occurring antioxidants. (Čakar et al., 2017, 2018; Dimitrić Marković et al., 2017; Đorđević et al., 2017a, 2017b, 2018; Pantelić et al., 2016; Pejin et al., 2015, 2016, 2017; Popović-Đorđević et al., 2017; Stanimirović et al., 2018, 2019; Vujović et al., 2015, 2016a, 2016b, 2016c, 2017). In view of the fact that resveratrol has health promotion properties, there is increasing interest in producing wines with higher contents of this compound and a higher nutritional value (Bavaresco et al., 2016). Resveratrol is found in the grape skin and it is synthesised as a grapevine response to fungal infection, abiotic stress and UV irradiation (Burns et al., 2002; Konstadinović et al., 2012).

Wine tourism marketing

Marketing is of paramount importance to wineries and wine producers. Main elements of wine marketing include product, location and

distribution, price, promotion, advertising, sales promotion, public relations and personal sale.

The main product in wine tourism is wine. However, all other services offered to guests (such as wine tasting, food, tour of natural and cultural heritage in winery surroundings) may be considered as its products. A product is not only what a tourist can taste and feel, but a whole experience that a tourist takes home. Design sells wine through designed package and good market communication (Panov et al., 2006).

Sale can be direct or indirect. Direct sale is the most common, indirect sale is through subordinates – wine shops and restaurants. As the most dynamic element of marketing, the price is determined by the market. It also depends on the quality and attractiveness of a product. Finally, the payment capability of the tourists is commonly taken into account.

Promotion implies communication with the consumers for the purpose of stimulating and improving product placement. The means of communication are advertising, promotions, public relations, personal sale and direct marketing.

A winery has to genially excite the visitors' attention with striking signposts and recognisable symbols. Being available in info centers, tourist organisations, hotels and restaurants, advertising material has a role (mission) to promote quality food and drinks. On a regular basis, this material should be updated each single year. There is a must to include all curiosities of the surrounding area. Only in such a way the tourists may completely satisfy their needs (Gómez & Molina, 2012; Jević, 2019).

Specialised wine magazines, lively festivities organised to celebrate grape and wine, followed by souvenirs, glasses, jars and postcards may greatly contribute to the fruitful promotion of a winery (Ivkov-Džigurski et al., 2008). Cooperation with newspaper(s), radio & TV stations and tourist agencies may certainly play a promising role, too.

To improve sale, a winery may, from time to time, lower the prices of some products, give vouchers with discounts, sponsor some giveaways, etc. Public relations imply beneficial contacts with journalists and making statements to the media. Without a doubt, the public has to be promptly informed of all events, manifestations and activities. Such a kind of relations also includes active participation at wine fairs.

Personal sale ensures a direct contact between a seller and a potential buyer. It is the best form of sale since it potentially establishes closeness and trust between these two parties. Ideally, a buyer will be smoothly given the opportunity to get to know with the product of choice in detail (Čerović, 2003).

Benefits from wine tourism

Spending money on wine tourism has a multiplying effect (Savić, 2014). The tourists visit a particular wine-growing area, buy goods and services. As a consequence, the means are injected into local economy. The more money, the greater economic benefit. Wine tourism may open up new jobs, especially for young people, strongly encouraging them to stay on their homeland and overcome the consequences of structural change (Carlsen & Charters, 2006). At the same time, it may lead to improvements in the infrastructure, services and facilities used by the locals. Has proven potential to create financial benefits and increase the employment in a particular region (Hall & Mitchell, 2000).

Furthermore, wine tourism may create favourable conditions for development of new products, facilities and services. Through effective development policy, planning and research, it brightly ensures the preservation of the surrounding area, heritage and native culture. Some of the visitors, who were once among the travelers, being attracted by a quality of life, became permanent residents. Wine tourism may stimulate the establishment of new and improvement of existing transport services in the region (Pivac, 2008).

It may also provide education and management opportunities for the locals. People may get to know each other, collaborate and connect with other people and places. All these activities may generate new and powerful ideas (Savić, 2012).

Conclusion

In terms of both economy and development, wine tourism may be considered as particularly promising business. The fact it does not depend on the season brings a huge advantage. There is a firm need for more wineries in wine-growing areas. Wineries (founded on the basis of good practice) are expected to provide the tourists with full (complete)

experience through suitable accommodation, tasteful food and drinks, friendly staff, along with variety and authentic scenery.

The development of wine tourism may contribute to the development of partnerships with similar entrepreneurs; strong cooperation with tourism organisations; finding complementary entrepreneurs with the products capable to further enhance the impressions and experience of the guests. It should definitely offer autochthone grape varieties and wines made out of these varieties (Avramov et al., 2000).

Wine tourists are well known to expect an outstanding and complex product. Such an urge may contribute to the development of a destination image, increase the amount of money the visitors are willing to spend, attract new visitors and, finally, create additional off-season demand(s).

It is very important to adequately plan the development of wine tourism. Effective marketing, infrastructure and quality products can easily take the visitors back to the likeable destination (Iorio & Corsale, 2010).

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