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Principles, Historical Aspects and Varieties of Wine Tourism

Wine tourism is a specialized form of tourism aimed to introduce the history, technology and culture of alcohol consumption in the local areas, to encourage tasting and purchase of the alcoholic beverages directly from the manufacturer. Wine, as many other typical products, constitutes an important component of the tourist market. Wine tourism represents a particular type of tourism, whose principal feature is given by the wine and the wine-production territories. From the tourist point of view, in fact, wine may constitute the main attraction of a territory or an asset that contributes, together with the other resources and attractions, as well as with other typical products, to the definition of its offer.

Wine tourism includes:

1. Visiting the plantations of the vineyards;
2. Tasting rooms and cellars;
3. Restaurants that offer wine tasting services;
4. Visiting wine festivals;
5. Visiting other special events connected with wine consumption.

The modern word “wine” is an early borrowing from Latin “vinum” – “wine” or “grape”, “grape vine”. The earliest evidences of wine production by fermentation of the grapes were found in Georgia and dated 8 – 5 millennium BC in Iran and Armenia.

Wine tourism as a special kind of tourism appeared in the beginning of the last century, but in recent years there has been a boom in wine tours in Europe, America and Asia. Pioneers in generating the ideas of the wine and culinary tours are considered the Italians and French. According to the international news agencies there is a growing popularity of wine tourism in the world. At present, the

profitability of this business in Europe is around 2.5 billion euro per year, and in California is 1.5 billion dollars. Experts believe that wine tourism uses only 20% of its capacity.

Wine tours can be:

1. Cultural and educational;
2. Recreational and therapeutic;
3. Wine rural green tourism and agro-tourism;
4. Wine and entertainment;
5. Educational and scientific.

The most common form of the wine tourism trips is visiting the wineries with wine tasting. The travel “Wine Route” involves visiting vineyards, wine cellars, restaurants and currently attracts a huge number of the tourists. During gastronomic tours the tourists can get acquainted with the gastronomic products and explore the culture of wine consumption.

Wine therapy is a set of medical, health and beauty technologies which use the therapeutic properties of wine grapes, leaves and seeds. Such therapeutic tours are frequently organized in Europe and the USA. These tours can cost from 1,000 to 3,000 euro.

Practice shows that there is an increasing flow of the tourists who prefer entertaining tours with festivals and national holidays visiting. These holidays are extremely popular in Europe: France, Germany, and in Ukraine – Transcarpathian region.

French wine traces its history to the 6th century BC. France has the second highest rates after Spain in the Earth by total area of its vineyards; it is the largest wine producer in the world. France produces varieties of wine: Cabernet Sauvignon, Chardonnay, Pinot Noir, and etc. The major wine regions of the country are Alsace, Beaujolais, Bordeaux, Burgundy, Chablis, Champagne, Loire, and Provence.

Wine tourism in Italy stretches over 900 hectares of vineyards. For the lovers of fine wine the gastronomic tours to Italy are a great opportunity to sample hundreds of varieties. There are 20 distinguished Italian wine regions.

Spain is considered the third largest wine producer in the world and ranks the first place in area occupied with vineyard land. An average volume of wine production is around 40 million hectolitres per year. 39 wine-producing regions on the mainland and 2 islands are registered there.

An average year Georgia offers for the wine market 1 million hectolitres of wine. Wine tour in Georgia is an outstanding part of tourism industry. Wine tour usually involves the visit to a vineyard (usually rural), showing winery, review of manufacturing wine technology. The most popular area is Kakheti.

The USA in terms of wine production possesses the fourth place in the world. It is one of the leading manufacturers of ordinary table wines. The USA supplies wine in 165 countries. The majority of vineyards (90%) are located in California. 46 states produce wine.

A key condition for the development of wine tourism in Ukraine is a company associated with the production and sale of alcoholic beverages, especially wine sector. The share of trade in Ukraine is 20%.

There 4 main regions of wine tourism which are popular in Ukraine:

1. The Crimean area;
2. The Transcarpathian area;
3. The Black Sea area;
4. The Sea of Azov region.

There are more than 110 wine factories and more than 1,000 farms and farmers with 1 million employees involved in Ukrainian wine market. The production cycle is 1.5 – 5 years. The amount of market is approximately 2.4 million UAH.

References:

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