

WINE TOURISM – AN OPPORTUNITY FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF WINE INDUSTRY

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The specific activities of tourism must be applied in the wine industry. Wine tourism is an opportunity for the development of the wine industry. Wine is often associated with relaxation, communication with friends, hospitality. On vacation, tourists want hospitality, looking to relax with friends, learn new things, to explore, to discover. Wine tourism is a form of tourism. Visits to wineries, attending a wine route are products of wine tourism. Wine tourism, development and marketing of wine tourism represent a relatively recent phenomenon. In Europe, wine tourism was often associated with the official wine routes and wine roads. Studies and research on wine tourism were performed for the first time in 1990; the first conference, which was focused on the wine tourism, was held in Australia in 1998. The works done in that period were comparative studies with descriptive character that were highlighting the need to study this new activity. This area has been studied by researchers around the world, such as: Dodd 1995; Peters 1997, Skinner 2000 in the USA; Thevenin 1996, Frochot 2000 in France; Beverland 1998. Australia is a pioneer in this field; it has developed a national strategy for wine tourism (King, 1998) and is currently implementing it to develop this area.

The main reasons for visiting a vineyard, a winery, a wine region can be diverse, including: visiting wine factories (wineries), participation in festivals devoted to wine and/or traditional food, shows, sightseeing and other attractions, recreation, visiting relatives and friends. Ancillary activities, promotional activities and facilities offered to tourists have a big role in the conquest of new segments of tourists.

Table 1 Specific Visitor Motivations to Visit Wine Route Estate

Wine purchasing	Meeting the winemaker
Wine tasting/sampling	Socializing with family/friends
Country setting/vineyards	Festivals or events
Winery tour	Eating at winery (restaurant/cafe)
Learning about wine and winemaking	Entertainment

After identifying the needs and wishes of the consumers, a winery may develop its marketing plan. In Table 2 there are some promotion activities that can be applied by a winery in order to achieve the proposed sales.

Table 2 Promotional Activities Used by Wineries to Increase/Maintain Cellar-Door Sales

Wine tastings	Newsletters	Wine club membership	Jazz festival
Wine festivals	Internet	Regional radio adverts	Valentine's Day
Wine shows	Newspapers adverts	Television adverts	Hot air balloons airplane banners

Direct mail order list	Other magazine adverts	Sport promotions	Wine route Promotional activities
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Charters and Ali-Knight (2002) divided wine tourists into five segments: “Wine Lovers”, “Connoisseurs”, who are a sub-segment of “Wine Lovers”, “Wine Interested”, “Wine Novices”, and “Hangers-on”, who visit a winery as a part of the group having no interest in wine. Each of these five categories has specific reasons to visit wineries. A “Wine Lover” visits a vineyard to taste wine, buy wine, learn about wine, how to pick grapes, how wine is produced. Reasons to visit wineries by “Wine Novices” are less defined: the attractions of ancillary activities offered by winery such as excursions in the grapery or to eat in the wine cellar restaurant.

Table 3 Wine Tourism Market Segment Descriptions

Wine lovers	Extremely interested in wines and winemaking; Wineries may be sole purpose of visit to destination; Likely to be mature with high income and high educational levels; Likely to be regular purchaser of wine; Will have visited other wine regions; Highly likely to purchase at winery and add name to any mailing list.
Wine interested	High interest in wine but not sole purpose of visit to destination; Moderate to high income bracket, tend to be university educated; Potential for repeat purchase of wine through having visited winery.
Curious tourists	Moderately interested in wine but not familiar with winemaking; Wineries seen as “just another attraction” Moderate income and education; Winery tour a by-product of visit to region as visiting was for unrelated purposes.

Wine tourism is an important collateral activity to wine industry that can contribute to the development of this industry.

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