

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

GENERATING DESTINATIONS BASED ON WINE TOURISM EXPERIENCES FOR THE FAMILY SECTOR

Ginesa Martínez del Vas

Universidad Católica San Antonio de Murcia

gmvas@ucam.edu

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2713-0636>

Miguel Ángel Beltrán Bueno

Universidad Católica San Antonio de Murcia

mabeltran@ucam.edu

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3899-2397>

Laura Rubia Albert

Patronato de Turismo de la Diputación de Tarragona

lrubia@dipta.cat

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6797-9765>

1. INTRODUCTION

Wine tourism has grown in the past few decades in Spain. According to some authors (Serrano, 2015; Salvat, 2018), wine tourism presents itself as a particularly attractive activity for wine companies due to the resulting revenues coming from it. Thus, it's hardly noticeable how many winery companies have taken profit from this opportunity (Gilbert, 1992; ACEVIN, 2018a; Salvat, 2018).

On the other hand, an increasing number of wine producer companies are providing specific proposals focused on the family market. According to Canalis et al. (2016) family tourism is a growing market, well valued due to its reliability in many touristic destinations, which in turn is affecting promoting new products, and adapted services, by the wine sector.

The economic effect produced by the family sector has raised over €18,552 million in 2019; that is, an increase of 1.3 % over the past years. Such increase in expenses by families is due to an increase of 5.84% in average staying, 13.35% of traveling members, and also the higher number of traveling families (an extra 2.05%) (Europapress, 2019).

The social and economic changes of the last decades have drastically transformed the family structure and its travel behavior, requiring a review of its characteristics and needs by public administrations and private companies that focus on this segment (Schänzel and Yeoman, 2015).

In this context, wineries acquire a highly valuable innovation component. Many authors agree that innovation fosters competitiveness, growth, efficiency, and business success, achieving positive effects in companies and organizations such as cost reduction,

attracting new customers, and/or improving the level of consumer satisfaction (Antón and Duro, 2009; Barbosa de Sousa and Dominique-Ferreira, 2012; Córdoba, Castillo and Castillo, 2018). The UNWTO (2019) remarks on the great value of tourism innovation, indicating that the introduction of new components or perfecting existing ones brings advantages to tourism stakeholders and improves the value of experiences, bringing competitiveness and sustainability to the tourism sector and the territory.

2. OBJECTIVE

The main goal of this work consists of obtaining key indicators that influence the configuration of the family wine-tourism-based products to identify the features that define the segment under study. To this end, this study carries out a theoretical review of wine tourism and the characteristics and preferences of the family tourism segment.

3.METHODOLOGY

To address the objective of this research, 57 corporative wineries websites contents that already provide any service or activity focused in the family sector have been analyzed throughout July and August 2019. Two different Spanish regions have been selected, both holding a Qualified Designation of Origin Certificate: La Rioja and El Priorat.

In addition, the international regions have been investigated, such as Bordeaux (France) and Napa Valley-Sonoma (United States), as these are two of the most visited international wine regions. Thus, some comparing trends can be obtained from these pioneering regions.

On the other hand, 10 wineries with the highest level of innovation were visited, and a series of semi-structured interviews were conducted. The observation technique was also applied during these visits.

4. RESULTS

When analyzing the main particularities of these experiences, a wide variety of wine tourism proposals comes to light, being the main categories the following: scavengers hunt, workshops, physical activities, creativity and ingenuity activities, animals related activities', playground areas, and museums.

12 out of the 57 experiences already analyzed offer an activity exclusive for children or part of the visit is carried out separately.

However, the vast majority of proposals are designed to be shared by parents or other family members and children together. 51 experiences are included in this type of proposal.

For families, the price factor is relevant and, for this reason, this is an indicator that needs to be studied in the analysis for creating wine-tourism-based experiences aimed at the family segment. Specifically, 36 of the experiences offer a special price for children. This analysis also shows that wineries are taking advantage of the combination of different tourism products (culture, entertainment, music, nature, sport, etc.) to offer varied and more attractive experiences. It should also be noted that most of the identified experiences are led by a professional from the winery (in 45 cases).

As for the most used resources by these wineries, 38 out of 57 take place inside the facilities, 36 out of 57 in outdoor spaces, and 18 out of 57 combines both.

Regarding innovation and use of technological elements (mobile applications, iPad, 4D, QR codes, audiovisuals, and light and sound animation), only 8 out of 57 experiences were identified.

On the other hand, from the interviews and visits to the wineries, it is also clear that the additional value focuses on offering special attention to families but especially to children. In almost all cases, it is stressed that if the children are happy and enjoy the experience, so are the parents.

In general, experiences aimed at families are not economically profitable for the wineries, as the cost of hiring guides or monitors is high. However, most of them claim to obtain beneficial indirect effects such as increased demand, improved image and positioning, and wine sales.

In less than half of the cases, they combine the family visits with some other external tourist services. Regarding marketing actions, most of them base their communication strategy on their website. In some cases, they also offer their services via specific or hotels in their area. Finally, as a remarkable aspect of the interviews, more collaboration between wineries and tourist establishments is necessary.

5. CONCLUSIONS

The main conclusion of the study is that there is a great variety in the generation of family wine-tourism-based experiences by Spanish wineries, which is an incipient economic activity and a good business opportunity. The wineries under analysis conceive the family segment as an opportunity for differentiation and diversification of their offer. In the same way, they are a means of promotion since, in many cases, families or some members of the same family repeat with other friends or return to consume another experience without children.

The most common elements of the experiences identified are play, sensory and participatory experiences, wine culture, interaction, and the use of elements adapted to children (language, graphic materials, spaces, etc.). Other aspects such as greater professionalization of the sector and the use of knowledge-based tools (market research, competitor analysis, or specialized advice) will be key to overcoming the most common obstacles.

The study also shows a large number of experiences where there is active customer participation. Craft workshops, vintage activities, and bike rides are some examples.

Since family is an incipient segment, the innovation is rather incremental and limited. However, the innovative potential is high as an increase in demand and indirect economic benefits are recognized in most of them. Furthermore, few technological innovations have been observed, but those identified are well accepted as they generate added value in the creation of new experiences, especially in aspects that are currently deficient, such as communication, booking, and the sale of experiences.