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Wine tourism among Generations X and Y

Abstract

This paper examines the wine tourism experience from the perspective of young adults, specifically Generation X and Y consumers. Both the wine industry and wine tourism destinations have a particular interest in learning more about these age cohorts, as wine consumption and wine-related travel have been dominated by older adults. Little research has focused on Gen X and Y and how they might become more involved. Accordingly, in this paper their motivation for taking a winery tour, level of ego-involvement with wine, and how they got involved with wine in the first place are all assessed. Data were obtained using a self-completed questionnaire of customers of a wine tour company called Wine for Dudes that operates in Margaret River, Western Australia. These young wine tourists displayed a low level of ego-involvement with wine; they were mostly interested in learning about wine in a social context. The findings reinforces previous research indicating that many wine lovers (especially females and young consumers) are primarily interested in the hedonistic pleasure and social experiences associated with wine. The paper concludes with a theoretical discussion of how young wine consumers become involved with wine and wine tourism, including suggestions for further research.

Keywords:

wine tourism; Generations X and Y; ego-involvement

Introduction

Research on wine tourism, both supply and demand sides, has been expanding rapidly (Carlsen & Charters, 2006). Within the literature on demand for wine and wine tourism, generational (age) differences relating to wine consumption and tourism have emerged as an important issue. This is partly because older consumers and tourists have obviously been dominant, but both wine and tourism-related businesses are clearly hoping that younger generations will take up wine consumption and wine-related travel to the same extent as the Baby-Boom generation. The basic problem is a paucity of research focusing on young wine consumers and wine tourists, and little or not theory to explain how they might become involved. In this context, the overall purpose of the paper is to investigate factors such as age and ego involvement in the wine consumption pattern and to explore how your people are becoming involved with wine and, therefore, wine tourism.

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In the ensuing section the literature on age (and to some extent, gender) related to wine consumption and wine tourism is reviewed. This discussion underscores the importance of the research problem. Next, the ego-involvement concept is discussed. It has been employed in many studies of tourism (e.g., Madrigal, Havitz & Howard, 1992; Gursoy & Gavcar, 2003; Gross & Brown, 2006), leisure pursuits (Havitz & Mannell, 2005; Kim, Scott & Crompton, 1997) and in wine tourism (Brown, Havitz, & Getz, 2007). Involvement provides the theoretical foundation for examining motivation, behavior and preferences. Of particular importance is the question of how people become involved with wine and wine tourism in the first place.

The central part of this paper describes the research method and presents analysis of findings from a survey of young wine tourists in Western Australia. A tour operator called Wine for Dudes cooperated in the research, enabling a very focused sample of young adults. Results presented in this paper include a profile of respondents, examination of motives for taking the tour, assessment of their levels of involvement with wine, and consideration of how they became interested in wine. In the conclusions the apparently low level of involvement among this sample is discussed in the context of implications for the wine and wine tourism industry. A number of propositions are put forward to guide future research.

Age, wine, and wine tourism

There has been a long-standing concern about the older average age of wine consumers. Kaplan, Smith and Weiss (1996) believed that only 10% of wine drinkers consumed 90% of all the wine, and this core was predominantly an older segment. NFO Research Inc. in 1997 reported that 33% of wine (excluding coolers) in America was consumed by those aged sixty or older, whereas this cohort consumed only 15% of all alcoholic beverages. Fully 68% of wine was consumed by those aged 40 plus, and only 4% was consumed by those in their twenties. Cartiere (1997) observed that the proportion of wine drinkers aged 35 plus had increased from 53% to nearly 70% since the mid-1980s, reflecting closely the shifting bulge of the baby-boom generation.

The 1997 Wine Market Council survey (cited in Hammett, 1997) found that the "next generation" was a marginal consumer and was not accounting for any growth in wine consumption. The Council then "set out a strategy to build image and mindshare for the next generation of wine consumers". Howard and Stonier (2001) said that the 30% of the Australian population born 1961-1980 (which includes Gen X) showed enormous scope for becoming greater wine consumers, and that they were primarily influenced by friends and family, wine reviews, and visits to wineries. Mitchell and Hall (2001) reported that male baby boomers were more likely to participate in wine club activities and to have a large wine cellar, while Gen Y respondents were least likely to have a wine cellar.

More recent data, however, suggests a profound market shift, at least in the USA. Results of consumer research by the Wine Market Council (2006) reveal that per capita wine consumption (in gallons per adult) declined from 1980 through 1990 but subsequently increased steadily to reach an all-time high in 2006. Adoption of wine in early adulthood by the "Millennial Generation" accounted for much of the resurgence, although older "Baby Boomers" continued to dominate the core wine drinking segment. "Millennials" have also been called Generation Y or the "Echo Boom" - being sons and daughters of Baby Boomers. The oldest in Generation Y turned 27 in 2004. The Council concluded that Generation Y would eventually come to equal the Baby Boomers in their domination of wine consumption, whereas Generation X was much smaller and showed less interest.

Bruwer, Li and Reid (2001) noted that wine consumers can be demographically similar but significantly different in terms of attitudes, consumption behavior, and lifestyle. Their segmentation of wine consumers, based on research in Australia, generated 5 "lifestyle segments" that exhibited significant age and gender differences (two had female majorities, two had male majorities and one was equal), although that study did not touch upon wine-related travel.

Hall, Sharples, Cambourne and Macionis (2000) find that wine tourists are thought to be mostly aged 30 to 50 years. Mitchell and Hall (2001a) reported on a survey conducted at New Zealand wineries, with a focus on age and gender differences. Females were younger overall, with half being in the 25-39 age cohort compared to only 31.5% for males, and the researchers believed that did reflect patterns of wine consumption in the general New Zealand and Australian populations. Additional analysis by Mitchell and Hall (2001b) revealed that male Baby Boomers were more likely to participate in wine club activities, which correlated with increased wine knowledge. The researchers also equated advanced knowledge with commitment and interest in wine.

Houghton (2001) concludes that wine festivals are a good way to attract younger visitors to wineries, although there is a difference between wine drinking at festivals and wine tasting on tours. Bruwer (2002) suggested that the cellar-door experiences can be a positive platform for reaching or engaging Gen X, but, for some younger wine tourists, the cellar door can be an intimidating experience. Fountain and Charters (2004) concluded that both Gen X and Gen Y prefer a more social, holistic wine tourism experience as opposed to focusing on the wine, and that Gen Y is ill at ease in the cellar door environment. This conclusion seems to be corroborated by Hall, Binney and O'Mahony (2004) who found that, in a hospitality setting, quality of wine is more important to older guests and younger consumers prefer a relaxing environment.

Getz and Brown (2006) determined that wine tourism is an aspect of cultural tourism, and that age and gender variables are important in determining preferences for wine tourism experiences and destinations. More females than males are likely to visit wineries, but they are searching for a different experience. Females will want more of an enjoyable social experience, knowledgeable staff, excellent customer service and a pleasant ambience. Males, especially older ones, are likely to be more knowledgeable visitors who will be specifically interested in, and more critical of the wines.

Charters and Fountain (2006) examined younger wine tourists (Gen X and Y) at wineries in Western Australia, employing participant observation. Pertinent to the current research is the observation (or perception) of the younger winery visitors that they are not treated the same as older visitors, and in particular, were given poorer quality wines to taste. This led to higher dissatisfaction with the experience.

Ego-involvement and wine

Brown, Havitz, and Getz (2007) studied wine consumers in Calgary, Canada. They generated four market segments through factor and cluster analysis, and there were significant age and gender differences among the clusters. Older males in their sample were revealed to be considerably more involved with wine when compared to younger or female respondents. Their higher level of ego involvement translated into higher wine consumption and a higher level of actual travel for wine-related purposes. Their preferences for wine region features was also different. The sample was largely of older consumers, and Gen Y was hardly represented at all.

Havitz and Dimanche (1997, p. 246), derived from Rothschild (1984, p. 216), define ego-involvement as "...an unobservable state of motivation, arousal or interest toward a recreational activity or associated product, evoked by a particular stimulus or situation, and which has drive properties". With regard to leisure, travel and lifestyle pursuits, it has been confirmed that people's preferences, behavior and satisfaction are affected by their level of involvement with products and pursuits, including wine. How consumers actually become involved is another question, and more difficult to answer.

Although a uni-dimensional scale is often used (Zaichhowsky, 1985), Kyle and Chick (2002) said there is a general consensus that leisure involvement is best conceptualized as a multidimensional construct with the following dimensions being most important:

- Attraction: perceived importance or interest in an activity or product, and the pleasure derived from doing or consuming it
- Sign: unspoken elements that the activity or product consumption conveys about the person
- Centrality to lifestyle: referring to both social contexts and the role of the activity or product in the person's lifestyle

Sparks (2007) incorporated involvement into structural equation modeling to develop a predictive model of planned wine tourism behavior. Her research, covering Australians who have visited a wine region, reveals three dimensions of the wine tourism experience similar to those of Getz and Brown (2004) but including personal development. Within the context of Theory of Planned Behavior (from Ajzen 1991) the same study determines the importance of reference groups that provide a positive "subjective norm" to talking a wine tour, and that has particular relevance to the current study of Gen X and Gen Y tourists.

In the light of the overall purpose of this paper and the literature review, the specific aims guiding this study are to: 1) examine the motivations of young wine tourists; 2) test the level of ego involvement with wine among Gen. X and Y wine tourists and 3) consider the question of how young people become involved with wine and wine tourism.

Method

The "Wine Involvement Scale" (WIS) used in this current research was developed by Brown, Havitz, and Getz (2007). It utilizes six items from the very popular Laurent and Kapferer (1985) Consumer Involvement Profile (CIP), plus twelve wine-specific items derived from a focus group with wine consumers and an extensive literature review. The CIP incorporates four interrelated domains pertaining to importance/pleasure, sign, risk probability and risk consequence. Risk is stressed in the CIP, compared to Kyle and Chick's three domains, under the belief that involvement leads to increased concern about making consumption mistakes, thereby modifying consumption behavior. However, many factorial studies have failed to detect a separate risk domain, so it might be encompassed by the others. The items contained in the WIS are listed in Table 1 and are intended to measure respondents' levels of ego-involvement with wine by reference to both behavior and attitudes/values. At least four items were intended to cover each of the domains of importance/pleasure, centrality to lifestyle, sign and risk. In addition to the WIS, a short 12 item scale was used to ascertain motivation or reasons to participate in wine tour, tapping social, learning and entertainment dimension and a scale of 13 item was used to investigate how consumers get involved with wine at the first place.

The questionnaire was short and easily completed in ten minutes, consisting of four sections with close ended questions. On all items in the WIS, motivation and the reasons for involvement with wine scale respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement or disagreement with 1 meaning strong disagreement and 5 strong agreement. Personal information was obtained at the end of the questionnaire, on respondents' age, gender, marital status and children living at home, employment status, education and household income. Provision for writing in respondents' occupations and for additional comments was made on the questionnaire.

Surveys took place in Margaret River, Western Australia, over the period November 2005 to February 2006, incorporating the peak tourism season of December and January. Cooperation with a tour company allowed the collection of data, albeit in small numbers, among a group of young adults actually taking a winery tour. A copy of the survey instrument was handed over to the Wine for Dudes. Their bus driver/tour leader distributed them towards the end of each tour and participation in the survey was completely voluntary. Upon completion, respondents handed back the questionnaire to the driver or returned by post to the Wine for Dudes office. In this way, a convenience sample of 159 respondents was achieved.

A profile of respondents is provided in Table 1, and reflecting the target marketing of the tour company (and suiting the purpose of this study) it is a relatively homogeneous, youthful group of mostly Gen X and Y respondents. This has a substantial bearing on the analysis. Ages ranged from 17 years through 58 years, with a mode of 23/24 (18 respondents each) and an average of 27.58 years; the median age was 26. Ninety-nine were under the age of 30 years, and only 7 were 40 years or more. The sample is gender-balanced, with 70 males and 69 females (plus 20 not indicated). The largest portion (n = 103) were employed full-time, followed by students (23) - some of whom worked part-time. Twenty-two percent were married and it can be conjectured that many respondents were therefore traveling as couples. But only 5 respondents (3.7%) had children living at home. Education levels were high, with 46.4% indicating having completed (or in progress of completing) university, 31.2% college, and 22.5% high school. Income levels were not particularly high, which reflects the younger age of respondents; 88% indicated a total annual household income of under \$80,000, and the largest cohort (36.8%) was in the \$40,000-\$59,000 range.

Table 1

PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS
(N = 159 but response rates varied for each question)

Socio-demographic characteristics	n	%
Age	140	
Under 29	99	70.7
30-39	34	24.3
40-49	4	2.9
50-59	3	2.1
Gender	139	
Females	69	49.6
Males	70	50.4

Table 1 **CONTINUED**

Employment status	141	
Student	28	19.9
Employed full time	103	73.0
Employed part time	9	6.4
Retired	1	0.7
Education (highest level completed or in progress)	138	
High School	31	22.5
College	43	31.2
University	64	46.4
Household income	125	
Under \$20,000	18	14.4
\$20-39,000	22	17.6
\$40-59,000	46	36.8
\$60-79,000	24	19.2
\$80-99,000	9	7.2
\$100-119,000	6	4.8

Results and discussion

Table 2 displays responses to the motivation items. The most important reasons for respondents in participating to the wine tour and wine tasting experience were: "To have fun." (mean: 4.65); "To see the famous Margaret River wine region." (mean: 4.27); "To try something different." (mean: 4.22), and "To learn about wine." (mean: 4.09). This certainly conforms to classic seeking-escaping theory (Iso-Ahola, 1983; Mannell and Iso-Ahola, 1987), with novelty seeking (something different) and hedonism (fun) constituting "escapism" (or a search for optimal arousal), and the wine (especially learning about it) and the famous wine region with its well-known wineries constituting the specific attractions or experiences being sought (otherwise called "pull" factors).

The social dimension is shown to be somewhat important to this sample of mostly Gen X and Y wine tourists, judging by the mean of 3.76 on the statement: "To have a social outing with friends." , which is a fundamental human need in Maslow's (1954) hierarchy. The social dimension is an aspect of both seeking and escaping which Iso-Ahola asserted are continuously interacting, and is extremely important in explaining leisure and travel behavior in general. However, note that it was not family oriented ("To do something with my family."), and less about meeting people than going out with existing friends to do something perceived to be fun as well as informative. In this sense wine tourism constitutes "edutainment" for the respondents.

The learning experienced they desired is related to pleasure-seeking, or hedonism - it is not linked to employment careers. In this motive, or "driver", we can see the beginnings of ego-involvement, or at least the necessary precondition. The interest or involvement demonstrated in this sample is not with specific wine products or brands, but with wine in a social context. That is quite different from the ego-involvement revealed by Brown, Havitz, and Getz (2007) which, for many older males, is shown to be involvement with wine as a central life interest, important to their self identity, and leading to self-actualizing wine tourism experiences.

Table 2
MOTIVES FOR PARTICIPATION IN WINE TOUR

Statements	N	Frequency (%)*					Mean	SD
		1	2	3	4	5		
To have fun	154	1.3	1.3	1.9	22.1	73.4	4.65	0.710
To see the famous Margaret River wine region	152	0.0	5.3	12.5	32.2	50.0	4.27	0.876
To try something different	152	3.3	5.3	9.9	28.9	52.6	4.22	1.043
To learn about wine	152	1.3	5.3	19.1	32.2	42.1	4.09	0.969
To have a social outing with friends	152	11.2	7.2	18.4	21.1	42.1	3.76	1.362
I heard that the tour was a good one	53	5.7	3.8	37.7	22.6	30.2	3.68	1.123
To visit wineries I have heard about	151	13.9	16.6	21.2	20.5	27.8	3.32	1.397
The brochure made it look fun	51	11.8	9.8	29.4	33.3	15.7	3.31	1.208
To meet people	153	11.8	23.5	32.0	20.3	12.4	2.98	1.189
To drink a lot	151	19.9	23.8	22.5	21.9	11.9	2.82	1.307
To visit specific wineries I have had wine from	151	25.8	22.5	21.9	14.6	15.2	2.71	1.393
To do something with my family	141	66.7	8.5	9.2	5.7	9.9	1.84	1.366

*1 = strongly disagree, 5= strongly agree

As already discussed in the method section, the Wine Involvement Scale (WIS) is premised on the theory that levels of involvement are reflected in behavior and attitudes/values within the previously discussed domains of importance/pleasure, centrality, sign and risk. Table 4 displays the responses broken down by the frequency of responses (in percentage), mean values and standard deviations (SD). An examination of the means reveals that the highest level of agreement was with the statement "For me, drinking wine is a particularly pleasurable experience." With a mean value of 4.18. This, along with a moderately high level of agreement with the statement "I have a strong interest in wine" (3.52) demonstrates that many of these Gen X and Y wine tourists were already wine lovers. Respondents' presumed inexperience and lack of sophistication propelled them to "...learn more about wine" (mean = 3.84).

However, respondents were not yet highly involved in terms of lifestyle centrality as evidenced by the low mean (2.68) for the statements "Wine represents a central life interest for me." and "I have invested a great deal in my interest in wine." (mean = 2.08). Nor is this sample highly involved in terms of "sign", or self-identity, witness the low means given to these two statements: "My interest in wine says a lot about the type of person I am." (mean = 2.20) and "My interest in wine has been very rewarding." (mean = 2.86). In other words, involvement with wine was confined to the pleasure it brings, especially in a social context; it is a low level of involvement in terms of lifestyle centrality and self identity.

The "risk" domain is manifested in two statements that attracted moderately high means: "Deciding which wine to buy is an important decision" (mean = 3.61) and "It is annoying to buy a wine that is different from what I had expected" (mean = 3.59). While it can be concluded that this attention to the importance of purchase decisions reflects a degree of involvement with wine, it is clearly associated with the interest/pleasure domain and not lifestyle centrality or self-identity. The Gen X and Y respondents loved wine, and wanted to learn more about it – as long as it is a fun, socially rewarding thing to do. They were not yet committed to wine.

Table 3

RESPONSE TO THE WIS SCALE – FREQUENCIES, MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATION

Statements	N	Frequency (%)*					Mean	SD
		1	2	3	4	5		
For me, drinking wine is a particularly pleasurable experience	159	0.6	3.8	15.7	37.1	42.8	4.18	0.875
I wish to learn more about wine	153	3.9	7.8	19.6	37.9	30.7	3.84	1.073
Deciding which wine to buy is an important decision	155	4.5	9.7	27.1	37.4	21.3	3.61	1.065
It is annoying to buy a wine that is different from what I had expected	155	7.7	11.0	21.9	32.9	26.5	3.59	1.210
I like to purchase wine to match the occasion	154	5.2	11.7	23.4	39.0	20.8	3.58	1.101
I have a strong interest in wine	155	4.5	10.3	33.5	32.3	19.4	3.52	1.059
My interest in wine makes me want to visit wine regions	152	11.2	18.4	26.3	24.3	19.7	3.23	1.274
Understanding the complexity of wine production provides an exciting challenge for me	152	7.9	22.4	27.0	30.9	11.8	3.16	1.142
My spouse/partner is also interested in wine	140	22.1	7.1	31.4	22.1	17.1	3.05	1.369
Many of my friends share my interest in wine	154	13.6	20.8	33.1	26.0	6.5	2.91	1.128
My interest in wine has been very rewarding	152	12.5	28.9	30.3	16.4	11.8	2.86	1.191
Wine represents a central life interest for me	155	18.7	23.9	34.8	15.5	7.1	2.68	1.155
I find conversations about wine very enjoyable	152	19.7	24.3	30.9	23.0	2.0	2.63	1.102
I like to gain the health benefits associated with drinking wine	157	21.7	31.8	25.5	12.7	8.3	2.54	1.201
I am knowledgeable about wine	155	27.1	26.5	29.7	14.2	2.6	2.39	1.107
Much of my leisure time is devoted to wine-related activities	154	37.7	26.6	15.6	16.2	3.9	2.22	1.222
My interest in wine says a lot about the type of person I am	151	35.1	24.5	27.2	11.9	1.3	2.20	1.089
I have invested a great deal in my interest in wine	154	35.1	37.7	14.9	9.1	3.2	2.08	1.076
People come to me for advice about wine	152	47.4	23.7	11.8	12.5	4.6	2.03	1.231

*1 = strongly disagree, 5= strongly agree

Exploratory factor analysis was conducted through SPSS to identify the existence of any underlying patterns of responses on the involvement scale. We used principal component analysis as the extraction method, with Varimax rotation and Kaiser normalization. The initial result was a four factor solution for the 19 items/statements. However, using the internal consistency measure Cronbach's Alpha, it was discovered that factor four produced a value of 0.504 (significantly lower than the recommended 0.7). This factor was eliminated from the analysis, including the following items/statements: "I like to purchase wine to match the occasion"; "It is annoying to buy a wine that is different from what I had expected", and "My spouse/partner is also interested in wine".

A three-factor solution with acceptable internal consistency, encompassing 16 statements, was selected. The factors and factor loadings are shown in Table 4. Only factor loadings of 0.5 or greater are shown, as these are considered to be significant. Negative loadings have been omitted, as have loadings that were similar on two or more factors. Table 5 specifies the percentage of variance that is explained by each of the three factors. This table also lists the eigenvalues, which are all greater than 1.0. The total variance explained is 60.77%, and factor 1 accounts for 27.04% of total variance.

Table 4

FACTOR ANALYSIS OF THE WINE INVOLVEMENT SCALE

Statements	F1: Centrality	F2: Learning	F3: Interest
Wine represents a central life interest for me	0.781		
I have a strong interest in wine	0.749		
For me, drinking wine is a particularly pleasurable experience	0.741		
I have invested a great deal in my interest in wine	0.741		
My interest in wine has been very rewarding	0.739		
I like to gain the health benefits associated with drinking wine	0.690		
I wish to learn more about wine		0.793	
Deciding which wine to buy is an important decision		0.719	
I find conversations about wine very enjoyable		0.668	
Understanding the complexity of wine production provides an exciting challenge for me		0.620	
My interest in wine says a lot about the type of person I am			0.819
People come to me for advice about wine			0.679
I am knowledgeable about wine			0.555
Many of my friends share my interest in wine			0.518
Eigenvalues	4.326	2.787	2.610
Percent of variance explained	27.040	17.419	16.315
Cumulative percent	27.040	44.460	60.774

The first factor consists of six items and has been called "Centrality" as the highest loading was for the statement "Wine represents a central life interest for me." Factor two has been labeled "Learning" and consists of four items, three of which have moderately high means. Although wine is pleasurable for Generation X and Y, it is not central to their lifestyle. Their pleasure and interest in wine motivates them to learn more about it. Factor three is called "Sign/Self Identity" reflecting the highest factor loading for the item "My interest in wine says a lot about the type of person I am."

Compared to the factors achieved by Brown, Havitz and Getz (2007), the current factors are not as well defined. The "Centrality" factor is a mix of pleasure and interest (being the only two highly-valued dimensions in terms of their means), but is a clear rejection of the notion that wine is in any way central to their lifestyle. The means for Factor 2 show that learning is highly valued, while those for Factor 3 reveal that wine is not important to their self identity.

The main conclusion is that the sample of Gen X and Y wine tourists were relatively homogeneous and not highly involved with wine. As well, the involvement displayed by the Gen X and Y respondents reflected only interest/pleasure, and the desire to learn more. Presumably this is a necessary precondition for high ego-involvement in terms of lifestyle centrality and self-identity, but there is no evidence found in these data to indicate that such an evolution occurs.

How do wine drinkers get started was tapped into a scale consisting of 13 items. This is an important marketing question, and there also might be clues in the responses regarding how involvement begins and evolves. Table 5 displays the resultant frequency of response, means and standard deviations. A priori it was expected that family (mean = 2.70) and peer/friend influences (2.62) would explain their interest in wine, but they were very minor influences. So, too, was exposure while traveling abroad (1.82), advertising (1.40), and perceived health benefits (2.13). The factor of highest importance to the Gen X and Gen Y respondents was a desire for new experiences (4.19), which corresponds to novelty seeking and escapism in motivational terms. However, the experiences desired are specified, namely fine dining with wine (4.05), and to a lesser extent different lifestyles and cultures (3.44) and meeting people (3.30).

Table 5
FACTORS EXPLAINING INVOLVEMENT

Statements	N	Frequency (%)*					Mean	SD
		1	2	3	4	5		
I am always looking for new experiences	151	2.0	4.0	15.2	31.1	47.7	4.19	0.969
Fine dining with wine really appeals to me	152	3.9	7.2	14.5	28.9	45.4	4.05	1.118
Wine tourism is a great way to experience different lifestyles and cultures	151	6.0	13.9	29.8	30.5	19.9	3.44	1.135
Wine drinking is a great way to meet people	151	6.6	13.2	37.7	27.8	14.6	3.30	1.083
Wine is sophisticated, compared to other alcoholic beverages	150	18.0	14.0	26.0	28.0	14.0	3.06	1.307
At a certain age, drinking wine became more socially acceptable	153	20.9	12.4	22.9	32.7	11.1	3.01	1.320
My family always drank wine so it was natural for me to start	153	27.5	17.6	23.5	20.3	11.1	2.70	1.358
My friends were drinking wine so I tried it	152	19.7	30.9	25.0	16.4	7.9	2.62	1.201
I loved the taste of wine the first time I tried it	149	28.2	24.2	30.9	11.4	5.4	2.42	1.169
When I was younger I thought wine was NOT cool	152	42.8	25.0	14.5	8.6	9.2	2.16	1.314
I wanted the health benefits from drinking wine	150	44.0	20.0	21.3	8.0	6.7	2.13	1.251
I started to drink wine while traveling abroad	152	54.6	25.7	7.9	6.6	5.3	1.82	1.157
I started to drink wine in response to wine advertising	151	69.5	23.2	5.3	2.0		1.40	0.684

*1 = strongly disagree, 5= strongly agree

Conclusions

The findings, while being somewhat unique in examining the Gen X and Gen Y wine tourists, do fit well with theoretical conclusions from previous research on wine involvement and wine tourism. Roberts and Sparks (2006) report on results from a large

study by the Australian Sustainable Tourism Cooperative Research Centre on Good Living Tourism. Focus groups were employed to identify eight "enhancement factors" which provide context to the wine tourism experience, namely: authenticity; value for money; service interactions; setting and surroundings; product offerings; information dissemination; personal growth – learning experiences; and indulgence – lifestyle.

A more generic theory of travel and tourism needs and motivation, as discussed by Ryan (2002, p. 35) based on Beard and Ragheb (1983), is also relevant. Interactions between personality, lifestyle, life stage and experience shape specific travel motivations, and these include the basics needs (see Maslow, 1954) called intellectual (to learn, discover, explore); social (linked to friendship and interpersonal relationships, plus the need for esteem for others); competence-mastery (to achieve, master, challenge and compete), and stimulus-avoidance (to escape or relax). The Wine for Dudes results confirm the intellectual, social, and stimulus-avoidance motivations. Indeed, the general seeking-escaping model of Iso Ahola (1983) is largely reflected in the research findings. Competence-mastery might be a part of the wine learning process, but is probably more of a higher order need (i.e., self actualization in Maslow's terminology) associated with the highly involved wine consumer.

The respondents were a relatively homogeneous group in terms of age and an overall low level of ego-involvement with wine. Responses to the Wine Involvement Scale, which covers the four theoretical domains of lifestyle centrality, interest/pleasure, sign (or self identity), and risk, reveal the Gen X and Gen Y tourists to be involved with wine only in terms of interest/pleasure, which appears to generate a strong interest in learning more.

This research provides some insights into how younger wine consumers might become involved with wine in the first instance and perhaps become more involved over time. In this context, it is assumed that exposure to wine and the ability to consume it precedes interest and preference formation, that a combination of personal and social motivations leads to a desire to learn more about wine and this might engender higher levels of ego-involvement. It is evident that higher involvement with wine leads to wine tourism. To guide future research a number of propositions can be stated.

P1: The pleasure associated with wine among young people is only in part related to taste and the association of wine with good food; it is also very much a social experience.

The present study strongly suggests that interest and pleasure are the dominant involvement domains for Gen X and Y, not lifestyle centrality or self-identity. This proposition also reflects one of the conclusions of Sparks (2007), who reports that food and wine involvement and normative influences, especially one's peer group, are significant predictors of wine tourism.

P2: A desire to learn more about wine is both a precondition for higher levels of involvement with wine, and a motivator of wine tourism experiences.

Wine tourism and growing involvement with wine are therefore mutually reinforcing processes. However, other ways of learning about wine might substitute for wine tourism.

P3: The lifestyle centrality and self-identity dimensions of ego-involvement with wine are somewhat independent of the interest and pleasure dimensions.

The current research reinforces conclusions of previous research including that of Brown, Havitz and Getz (2007) that many wine lovers (especially females and young consumers) are primarily interested in the hedonistic pleasure and social experiences associated with wine (and food) and do not necessarily progress beyond that level – even if they become active wine tourists.

Additional benefits will come from more extensive comparisons by age and gender in larger populations of wine tourists, and especially when differences can be tested against varying levels of ego-involvement with wine. Ideally, longitudinal research on the evolution of involvement with wine and wine tourism is desired.

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