

guest editorial

special issue Wine tourism in Mediterranean



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This issue of *TOURISM: An International Interdisciplinary Journal* is devoted to wine tourism development in Mediterranean. The Mediterranean is now the most visited area of the world in terms of tourist arrivals, but significantly challenged to rejuvenate existing and add new products in order to deal with seasonality, distribute demand geographically and effectively compete with new destinations. One of the more lucrative products that all of the Mediterranean destinations are developing to this end is wine tourism. Yet, although wine tourism has received a significant amount of attention from researchers over the last decade, most of the published work has drawn on examples from New World countries, such as Canada, United States, Australia and South Africa. Yet, Mediterranean countries can be considered the cradle of wine production as well as tourism, and for many of the Mediterranean destinations the wine tourism product is of extreme importance.

Recognizing this gap, the Institute for Tourism, Zagreb has taken up the opportunity offered by the organizers of the International Conference on Tourism Development and Management held on Kos Island, from 11th to 14th September 2009, to organize a session devoted to Wine Tourism in the Mediterranean Region. This special issue emerged from the two sessions dedicated to the topic with specific focus on the scope and practice of wine tourism research and the state of wine tourism development in the region.

The issue begins with Steve Charter's paper that sets the stage by comparing the world of wine tourism in Mediterranean to that of the New World in terms of the production context, appellation systems, attitudes to business ownership and co-operation, the commitment to tourism shown by wine producers, changing consumption patterns and the motivation to develop wine tourism as well as the outworking of wine tourism in practice, including aspects such as events, education and the reception of visitors.

Two papers in this special issue deal with the supply side of wine tourism. Shor and Mansfeld investigated the spatial behavior of Israeli wine tourists with the aim to profile this market segment and investigate the relationship between wine tourism consumer behavior and wine tourism. Similarly, the aims of Romano and Natilli paper were twofold - to profile Italian wine tourists but, more importantly, to present a novel methodological approach used to this end which was piloted in the region of Tuscany.

Then, a number of papers dedicated to demand side follow. Most of these papers have focused on the winery owners in terms of their willingness to be involved in tourism and expectation that they have. In this, the authors loosely followed the approach adopted by Getz and Brown in their paper "Benchmarking wine tourism development: The case of the Okanagan Valley" published in 2006, that enables comparison for the purpose of

benchmarking and enhancing life-cycle theory. Two of these demand side papers were dedicated to wine tourism in Spain. Lopes, Sánchez Cañizares and Rodríguez García, after outlining the strategic approach to wine tourism development via Official Spanish Wine Route Network developed in Spain since 2000s, investigated the impact of Montilla-Moriles route, located in the Córdoba province in the southern Spanish region of Andalusia, a region with well developed tourism industry. In the similar vein, Alonso and O'Neill have focused their investigation on the wine roads created in one of the most important Spanish wine regions - La Mancha, La Rioja and Penedès – which differ in terms of proximity to main tourist flows. The paper of Bojnec and Jurinčić outlines the wine tourism development in Slovenia with a specific focus on the determinants in the life-cycle of wine tourist product development and the growth of the wineries entrepreneurship in the Goriška Brda wine district situated on the Slovenian border with Italy. The factors of compatibility of wine tourism with the dominant sun and sea product was investigated by Tomljenović and Razović, taking as a case study the area of Middle Dalmatia with well developed tourism sector. Finally, Sevil and Yüncü outlined the wine tourism development in Turkey, a country that is among the world leading grape producers but lagging behind in wine production and, as such, present the case of the very incipient stage of wine tourism development.

I would like to thank all the authors for their contribution and hope that this special issue will generate more research into wine tourism development in Mediterranean.

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