

Tomás López-Guzmán,
Sandra María Sánchez Cañizares
and Rodríguez García

Wine routes in Spain: A case study

Abstract *Spain is a country with an enormous wine-growing tradition and with a huge tourist industry, although it has not made the importance of wine tourism profitable. Thus, it was not until 2000 that different official wine routes seemed to appear, with the main objective, amongst others, being to help develop rural areas where wine production is of crucial importance and to offer alternatives to traditional sun and beach tourism. In this paper, we will present an analysis of wine tourism in Spain based on the premise that wine (and regional cuisine) may be, and very frequently is, the main reason for visiting a certain area. To investigate this, we will present the results of an empirical study carried out in one of the official wine routes of Andalusia, a Spanish region where sun and beach tourism and cultural tourism represent a highly significant part of tourist activity. We have analysed how this tourist route is bringing about significant socioeconomic changes to the geographical area. To achieve this aim, we have conducted a survey of the companies involved in the wine route in order to ascertain their opinions on the impact and influence of the route. The main results of the study demonstrate the need to consolidate the development of such routes through collaboration between public institutions, ensuring the participation of all the different social actors involved.*

Keywords:

wine tourism; development economics; rural areas; tourist routes; Andalusia; Spain

Introduction

A number of changes in tourism patterns were seen during the early years of the twenty-first century. One major change is that holidays are becoming shorter, more frequent and are more spread out over the year. Supply is continuously adapting to this changing demand and new destinations and products are constantly appearing in an effort to meet the more demanding tastes of tourists. This is giving rise to "thematic tourism", with food and wine, often combined with other cultural elements, becoming increasingly popular as the main theme. In this respect, wine and tourism (linked to local cuisine) appear to provide the perfect symbiosis, allowing visitors to enjoy new products and new destinations and therefore bringing about the economic

Tomás López-Guzmán, University of Córdoba, Córdoba, Spain
Email: tomas.lopez@uco.es

Sandra María Sánchez, Cañizares University of Córdoba, Córdoba, Spain
Email: sandra.sanchez@uco.es

Juan Rodríguez García, University of Córdoba, Córdoba, Spain
Email: juan.rodriguez@uca.es

development of certain rural (and, occasionally, urban) areas within the requirements of sustainable development. As Stewart, Bramble, and Ziraldo (2008) argue that the increasing importance of wine tourism suggests and promotes the idea that wine and food can be, and often are, the main attraction in given areas, rather than a secondary (or added) attraction for the visitor. In this respect, it should be pointed out that wine is part of an area's cultural and social history, an element of the identity of its people. Indeed, this whole form of tourism can be justifiably termed "the wine landscape" (Brunori, & Rossi, 2001).

There is already a strong tradition of wine tourism in some countries, particularly those known in wine-making terms as New World countries (the Napa Valley in the United States, Canada, Chile, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa). Moreover, within wine tourism there has been a marked expansion in so-called "wine routes" intended for tourists, particularly in European countries, where different routes have been designed and developed in rural areas to consolidate wine tourism. This is part of an attempt to meet the demands of visitors who seek not only sun and beaches, but also other leisure pursuits. In most European countries, this type of product is intended to complement traditional tourist products and serves as a means of opening up new destinations in areas thus far uninvolved in tourism-related activities. Therefore, while some tourist wine routes in Spain are found close to traditional tourism destinations, the majority are located in geographical areas some distance from these traditional destinations. An example of this would be the case of wine tourism in La Rioja, a region internationally renowned for the quality of its wines.

In this context, the aim of this paper is to provide an analysis of the supply of wine tourism in Spain by focusing on one of the official designated wine routes in Andalusia. Following this introduction, a brief outline of literature written in the field of wine tourism is provided to contextualise the study. This is followed by an overview of Spanish tourism policies which have facilitated wine route development over the last decade and the criteria used in assessing the quality of these routes through which they are awarded official certification. To understand the context of the case study, a short description of the region is provided and, finally, results of the survey conducted are presented.

Wine tourism research: A brief overview

According to Getz, and Brown (2006a), wine tourism may be considered simultaneously as a form of consumer behaviour, a strategy by which destinations achieve local development and market local wines, and a marketing opportunity for wineries to sell their products directly to consumers. Hall, and Mitchell (2000) define wine tourism as visits to vineyards, wineries, wine festivals and wine shows, where wine tasting and/or experiencing the attributes of a wine region are the prime motivating factors for visitors.

Research into wine tourism, initially conducted mainly in Australia and New Zealand, dates back to the mid-1990s. Studies addressed both the socio-economic impact of

wine tourism in rural areas and the behaviour of the tourists participating in wine tourism (Hall, 1996; Getz, 2000). Two major books marked the start of research in this field: *Wine Tourism around the World* (Hall, Sharples, Cambourne, & Macionis, 2000) and *Explore Wine Tourism* (Getz, 2000). Subsequently, a number of regional, national and international wine tourism conferences (Berveland, 2000; Carlsen, 2004; Mitchell, & Hall, 2006) have gradually brought the subject of wine tourism to prominence in scientific literature, reflecting the importance of this form of thematic tourism in terms of product development and promotion, as well as for rural development. Two major theoretical studies have analysed the status of wine tourism (Carlsen, 2004; Mitchell, & Hall, 2006). In the Mediterranean, literature includes research carried out in Portugal (Correia, Passos Ascençao, & Charters, 2004), Greece (Karafolas, 2007), Italy (Montanari, 2009), Spain (Gilbert, 1992; Alonso, Sheridan, & Scherrer, 2008; Marzo-Navarro, & Pedraja-Iglesias, 2009; Scherrer, Alonso, & Sheridan, 2009) and Croatia (Tomljenovic, & Getz, 2009). One study focused on several Mediterranean countries (Hall, & Mitchell, 2000). However, wine tourism is a recent development in the area of science and there has therefore been little scientific analysis carried out in Spain and in European countries in general. Consequently, different studies, although making interesting contributions, still do not allow for comparisons to be made between results because of the different methodology employed. In particular, wine routes of Europe need to be investigated in some depth. Wine routes are characterised by a combination of natural attractions (mountains and other scenery), physical attractions (wineries), vineyards and marked roads and footpaths (Bruwer, 2003). There is thus a mix of cultural, social and environmental features that provide each wine route with a distinctive character (Bruwer, 2003).

Research into wine tourism supply presents a wide variety of studies carried out in different geographical areas. Bruwer (2003) presents a study carried out in South Africa, using face-to-face interviews as the research instrument. In this study - which had a response rate of 35% - infrastructures in the area, the structural dimension, nature, the scope of the product and employment linked to wine tourism are analysed. For their part, Correia et al. (2004) analysed the wine tourism supply in the Bairrada area of Portugal. This research was based on interviews which included both open-ended and closed questions, with the latter being measured using the Likert Scale. Telfer (2001) carried out a study into the wine tourism supply in the Niagara Wine Route, where 25 winery representatives were interviewed. The methodology used was in-depth interviews, as a means of analysing the relationship between wineries and other industries involved in tourism, concentrating on the strategic alliances which develop between these products. Finally, Alonso et al. (2008) proposed an analysis of the wine tourism offer in the Canary Islands, Spain, through a study of 23 bodegas using semi-structured, face-to-face interviews.

Faced with the different methodologies employed in different studies on wine tourism supply, Getz, and Brown (2006b) have proposed a series of measures and indicators, with the objective being to employ similar methodology so to allow comparisons to be made between studies carried out in different geographical areas. Therefore, the need

to introduce questions related to the analysis of viticulture and vineyards, different wine related events, hotel services, or other infrastructure in the area into research methodology is highlighted, among other aspects. Along these lines, this research also presents the application of this methodology in a wine-producing region of Canada where the research instrument consisted of a questionnaire personally handed into the different wineries – with responses from 23 of them. The impact of seasonality, the origin of visitors, the poor creation of jobs linked to wine tourism in the winery and the significant increase in sales in the winery itself were among the conclusions highlighted in this study. This same methodology was previously used by Tomljenović, and Getz (2009) in two regions of Croatia, which allowed for a comparison to be made between these areas of Canada and Croatia. The latter study used interviews and questionnaires including both open-ended and closed questions as its instrument of research.

Wine tourism in Spain

Although wine has always been a key element in the culture of Spanish people, the origins of wine tourism in Spain are uncertain. The first wine routes consisted simply of a map on which the locations of wineries were marked.

A first attempt at moving from the promotional to the more integrated wine route was made in La Rioja during the 1970s. This initiative was reproduced with varying degrees of success by other Spanish wine-producing areas. However, due to lack of expertise and the insufficient training of those providing services along the route, they generated few benefits for the rural area since there were only a few wine-related attractions available along these routes. A new impetus for wine route development was created with the foundation of the Spanish Association of Wine-Producing Towns (ACEVIN) in 1994. The ACEVIN was the first association to provide the training and methodology required to turn the various wine routes into a viable reality. This training also provided a firm base for achieving a high degree of coordination between various wineries in a given geographical area. Later on, efforts were made to give these wine routes the technical status of a tourist product. This was particularly relevant given Spain's importance as a holiday destination. It involved developing mechanisms for coordination between different routes and creating an overall quality product which would enhance Spain's cultural attractiveness by focusing on its winemaking tradition.

Building on these earlier attempts to develop fully integrated and well coordinated wine routes, the next significant impetus for their improvement came in 2000, with an initiative to develop the wine route certification scheme. The certification scheme was developed within the Comprehensive Spanish Tourism Quality Plan 2000–2006, drawn up by the Spanish Ministry of Tourism. The Plan comprised ten different programmes, one of which addressed "tourism product quality". The programme was aimed at fostering the design, creation and implementation of new tourism products, with a view to achieve product diversification and minimise the seasonality of tourist activity in Spain. One result of this programme was the resolute decision to create a network of "Official Wine Routes". The "Official Wine Route" was defined as "the integration of both existing and potential resources and services of interest to tourists in winemaking areas to form a single thematic concept, thus ensuring an authentic ex-

perience. The aim of this is to develop a product that embodies the identity of the destination, whilst enhancing the marketing of local products in general and guaranteeing a high level of customer satisfaction, with a view to fostering the overall economic and social development of the area" (Spanish Ministry of Tourism, 2000).

This tourist-oriented product is structured around the five subsystems which bring together the quality standards to be met by officially certified routes. The first subsystem is based on planning and management. This covers various aspects of the organisation of the route as a tourist product, stressing the need for a management body and a tourist watchdog and the need for training, retraining and professionalisation of human resources. The second subsystem is the destination. This subsystem analyses various aspects linked to the land and its resources as the basis for a tourist-oriented product, focusing on aspects such as infrastructure, availability of public services and accurate signposting of the route. The third subsystem is production and marketing. This subsystem addresses aspects of product placement and marketing. It stresses the need for a marketing plan, the design of a corporate image and the importance of an after-sales service. The fourth subsystem is related to tourist services. This subsystem focuses on various aspects related to adapting existing tourist services to meet the new requirements of the consumer. Wineries are, of course, an essential element, but there also has to be accommodation of adequate quality, an important local cuisine or additional tourist services (e.g. active tourism companies). The fifth subsystem is wine-related. This subsystem evaluates the extent to which the wine industry has adapted to the tourist service sector: the winery is obviously a key element, as are wine museums and visitor centres.

As the result of these official policies, the Official Spanish Wine Route Network was created, featuring 19 routes in total, 13 of which are certified and the remainder of which are in the process of certification. In Figure 1, the locations of the various Official Wine Routes in Spain are shown.

Figure 1
WINE ROUTES IN SPAIN



The aim of this new tourism product is to foster the sustainable economic and social development of a given rural area, with a view to improving the quality of life of its inhabitants. More specific goals include an overall increase in visitor numbers in the area where this product is developed and the generation of wealth through new, non-traditional activities in the local area. It should be stressed that these new tourist-oriented activities are not intended to become the primary economic support for the area, but rather are seen as complementary to primary-sector activities, such as the improvement of local infrastructure, which will in turn improve the quality of life of local residents (for example, the construction of new roads), and the diversification and lessening of the importance of seasonality in tourist activity in the area.

The implementation of this tourist product is divided into three separate phases: launch, development and consolidation (Spanish Ministry of Tourism, 2000). The launch phase begins when the various public and private organisations involved in the tourist product (hotels, restaurants, public administrations, wineries etc.) create a route management body and adapt the facilities and services of their members to the quality requirements laid out by the Spanish Ministry of Tourism. This first phase ends with the granting of the Wine Route Certificate. The development phase lasts one year and begins once the Wine Route certificate has been granted. During that year, the managing body implements all the measures laid out by the Spanish Ministry of Tourism for that type of product. If the outcome of the certification process is satisfactory, the wine route retains its official certification and proceeds to the next stage. However, if the outcome is negative, the route loses its official status and, as a penalty, will not be able to reapply for certification for at least one year. During the consolidation phase the route is subjected to ongoing inspections to ensure that, both, the managing body and the member organisations are continuing to meet all the requirements. If there is a negative evaluation at any stage, the route is given six months to address the issues raised and thus meet the minimum requirements. If the issues are successfully addressed, the route is allowed to retain its official status; if not, it will not be allowed to re-apply for official status for at least one year.

Study area:
Province of Córdoba,
Andalusia

In this paper, we present research carried out into wine tourism in one of the official Wine Routes in Spain, the *Montilla-Moriles* route, located in the *Córdoba* province in the southern Spanish region of Andalusia. This route covers the main wineries within the Denomination of Origin, which covers nine places including the city of Córdoba. The selection of this route is due to the importance of tourism in this geographical area, which is mainly attributable to heritage, with the city of *Córdoba* being a World Heritage Site. Therefore, to support this route, a new tourist product must be created which would aim to increase the number of overnight stays in the area. Most residents work in the agricultural sector and, to a lesser extent, in the services sector. A secondary sector is virtually non-existent in this area. With the exception of wine and olive oil production and construction, there is no major manufacturing activity.

Figure 2
MAP OF PROVINCE OF CORDOBA



Source: <http://www.luventicus.org/mapas/espanaprovincias/cordoba.html>

Road and rail links are relatively good. The area is close to three international airports, which is highly advantageous in attracting foreign visitors. Moreover, the area is relatively close to a number of major tourism destinations, including the *Costa del Sol*, a classic sun and beach destination, and the cities of *Córdoba*, *Granada* and *Seville*, all of which have been declared World Heritage sites and are visited by a large number of tourists.

Local wines enjoy considerable prestige and their quality is carefully controlled through the Denomination of Origin. Wine quality is due largely to clayey soils, a favourable climate and the positioning of the vineyards, in addition to centuries of experience combined with a willingness to use new technology. The wines themselves are of the sherry-like "*fino*" type: dry, pale-gold in colour and highly aromatic. The major grape varieties used are *Pedro Ximénez*, *Moscatel*, *Lairén*, *Airén*, *Baladi Verdejo* and *Montepila*. There are currently 60 wineries producing wines with a Denomination of Origin. While most of those are registered as limited companies (50%), there are also cooperatives (30%) and independent companies (20%).

The *Montilla-Moriles*¹ Official Wine Route came into existence in early 2001, following an agreement between the local council of the wine producing town *Montilla* and ACEVIN. In April 2001, the Association for the Promotion of Wine Tourism (AVINTUR) was created to serve as the body responsible for managing the *Montilla-Moriles* Wine Route. As previously mentioned, the creation of a management body responsible for developing a wine route is an essential requirement in obtaining certification, since the generation of strategic alliances between the various stakeholders is a key element for the success of any wine route. There are currently 49 public and private bodies involved in the wine route, mostly wineries and rural accommodation providers.

The *Montilla-Moriles* Wine Route is funded by a number of programmes, chief among which is the Tourism Development Plan, approved in July 2007 with a budget of

3.15 million euro. This programme is currently being implemented and will last until 2010. It aims to enhance the use of local resources and to adapt the wine industry to the requirements of tourism. The aims of the Plan are as follows: to define a uniform corporate image; to enhance the quality of the tourist product; to organise local tourist-oriented activities; to boost, coordinate and correctly structure the Wine Route product; to strengthen the tourism management body, AVINTUR and to ensure the competitiveness with other official Wine Routes in Spain

Methods

In order to achieve the aim of this study, a survey was carried out in the *Montilla-Moriles* area. All wineries operating in the *Montilla-Moriles* area were included in the study, regardless of whether or not they are members of the Official Wine Route. An empirical study was carried out in the *Montilla-Moriles* area in May and June 2009. The survey covered all 49 members of the Official Wine Route as well as 31 wineries which, although not members of the Official Wine Route, belong to the Denomination of Origin and also offer winery visits. This gave a total of 80 companies, of which 40 valid responses were obtained (i.e. 50% response rate). The questionnaire was personally handed to each of the companies along with a stamped self-addressed envelope so that responses could be returned anonymously.

The instrument for research was a questionnaire consisting of 17 items, made up of both closed and open ended questions. The questionnaire was designed for self completion. The questions aimed to gather information on employee training, the methods utilised to promote the company and the perceived demand for the company's product. It also asked the respondent to comment on the current status of tourism in the area. The results are based on descriptive statistical analysis techniques, as well as a bi-variant analysis using contingency tables to contrast independence or association between variables.

Results and discussion

The results and their subsequent discussion are presented alongside the main research question of the study. Therefore, a profile of businesses in the area is provided, followed by the type of business and educational background of its staff, winery-related aspects, tourist visits to wineries and status of wine tourism in the *Montilla-Moriles* area.

TYPE OF BUSINESS AND STAFF EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

Of those companies who responded to the questionnaire, most were wineries (65.5%), followed by accommodation providers (17.5%), restaurants (12.5%) and others (7.89%). Most companies were small in terms of employee numbers (Table 1). There was no clear association between the type of business and company size (contingency coefficient = 0.433; $p = 0.173$).

Table 1

NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES, INVESTMENT IN TRAINING AND STAFF TRAINING LEVELS

Company size	Percentage	Investment in training	Percentage	Educational background of most staff	Percentage
1-4 employees	38.5	Continuous	31.6	Primary education	39.5
5-9 employees	28.2	Occasional	63.2	Secondary education	55.3
10 or more employees	33.3	None	5	University graduate	5.3

Questions were also asked regarding the educational background of staff and the nature of the company's investment in staff training (continuous, occasional, none). The results (Table 1) indicated that most staff had studied to secondary school level, while very few employees were university graduates (5.3%). Even so, most companies stated that they invested occasionally in staff training; a total of 31.6% stated that they invested continuously in staff training; while only just over 5% said they never invested in staff training. Using the data obtained, we have attempted to establish some sort of link between the different variables used, with the objective, in this case, of obtaining more information on the link that may or may not exist between the type of business, the educational background of its employees and the investments made in staff training. No link was found between the type of business and either staff educational levels (contingency coefficient = 0.419; $p = 0.230$) or investment in staff training (contingency coefficient = 0.445; $p = 0.153$). Company size was also unlinked to staff educational background (γ coefficient = 0.292; $p = 0.212$). The independence hypothesis was also verified for investment in staff training and staff educational background (coefficient $\gamma = -0,344$; $p = 0,245$). However, the independence hypothesis was rejected for type of business as a function of company size and investment in staff training (γ coefficient = -0.477; $p = 0.055$). Investment in staff training was greater in companies with more staff (over 10 employees), and lower in companies with fewer staff.

WINERY-RELATED ASPECTS

Various questions focused on the tourist activities taking place at the wineries surveyed. The first question was whether the winery was generally open to the public for visits (Table 2). Most wineries were open to the public, either by appointment or for specific events. Only 7.5% of wineries did not allow public visits to their premises.

Table 2

WINERIES OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Wineries open to the public	Percentage
Yes, always	65.0
Yes, with prior reservation	25.0
Occasionally	10.0
None	0.0

All the wineries hosting public visits provide the visitor with explanations about the wine-making process, and almost all (96.7%) offer wine-tastings. These results allow us to state that the vast majority of wineries surveyed understand the need to make their product known to potential tourists. To this end, they are offering different kinds of wine-tastings.

A total of 20% of wineries stated that they did not sell wine directly to the visitor. However, the amount of wine sold directly to visitors by the winery represents in all cases a small proportion of overall sales. For 74.2% of the wineries surveyed, direct sales of this sort accounted for less than 10% of production, while only 6.5% claimed that these sales accounted for between 10% and 25% of total sales. This percentage was not exceeded by any winery. These figures differ significantly from those reported by other authors (Telfer, 2001; Getz, & Brown, 2006) who stress the importance of direct sales to tourists for small wineries. In view of the results obtained elsewhere, it would seem reasonable to assume that once the *Montilla-Moriles* Wine Route has been fully consolidated, direct sales from wineries will increase significantly.

The last question in this block concerned the methods used to advertise and promote the establishment. The results are shown in Table 3. Brochures are clearly the main channel for promotion, followed by internet presence and attendance at trade fairs and exhibitions. Commercial arrangements with travel agencies, through which agencies include a visit to the winery as part of their own routes and packages, are not widely used. This results also differs considerably from the results reported by other authors (Telfer, 2001; Getz, & Brown, 2006), who have highlighted the importance of agreements with tour operators to direct the flow of tourists towards the area in question. The *Montilla-Moriles* area is very close to major tourism destinations (for both Spanish and foreign tourists) offering sun and beaches but also cultural attractions. Wine tourism could therefore be an interesting addition to the tourist products already on offer at these destinations, both because of their accessibility and, more importantly, because of the potential market involved (Getz, & Brown, 2006). As Bruwer (2003) has pointed out, the distance between the wine-tourism destination and the place of residence (or the holiday accommodation) of the tourist is crucial. In this sense, the *Montilla-Moriles* area is very well placed, given the large number of tourists visiting nearby resorts every year.

Table 3

FORMS OF ADVERTISING AND PROMOTION OF THE WINERY

Media used	Percentage
Website	29.5
Brochures	34.1
Travel agencies	9.1
Trade fairs/exhibitions	27.3

Tourist visits to wineries

To assess tourism demand for wineries, we asked about the periods of peak and minimum demand, and about where their visitors came from. The respondents considered that the lowest number of visitors tended to be recorded either in winter (35% of

respondents) or in summer (30%). In our opinion, the low number of visitors to this area in summer reflects the poor promotion of this product in sun and beach destinations close by. A potential market is clearly emerging which, through adequate promotion, could be the target market of this product. The number of visitors also tended to be lower on weekdays (62.2% of respondents) in comparison with weekends. Peak demand was generally recorded on Spanish national holidays (at Easter and on public holidays). This response does not allow us to endorse the suggestion that the creation of this product would serve as a means of minimising the importance of seasonality of the demand in the *Córdoba* area since both Easter and public holidays are considered, in terms of this product, as high season.

As previously mentioned, demand currently tends to be lower in winter (and, to a lesser extent, in summer). Although summer is traditionally the main holiday season, this has not supposed an increase in visitor numbers to wineries. However, the possibility of coming to agreements with tour operators as a means of taking full advantage of the large flow of tourists visiting nearby beaches in summer should be kept in mind when developing wine tourism in this area.

In terms of visitor origin, most were from the region (27.5%), or from elsewhere in Spain (45%), which would account for the peak periods noted in the previous chart. Similar results are reported by Correia et al. (2004) for the area of Bairrada (Portugal) and by Getz, and Brown (2006a) for the Okanagan Valley area (Canada).

STATUS OF WINE TOURISM IN THE MONTILLA-MORILES AREA

This last block comprised six items relating specifically to the current state of wine tourism in the *Montilla-Moriles* area. The first question asked for an evaluation of the current situation of local tourism. The general opinion is that the current situation is average (57.5%) or poor (35%). These results are, in part, validated by the difficult economic situation which currently exists in this area.

The overall view of the current state of local tourism is clearly pessimistic: over 90% of respondents consider that the situation is average or poor. This opinion was not linked to the type of business (contingency coefficient = 0.196; $p = 0.952$), but the independence hypothesis was rejected for this variable with respect to number of employees (γ coefficient = -0.590; $p = 0.011$). The evaluation was more positive in businesses with a larger number of employees (over 10) and more pessimistic in companies with fewer staff.

The next item dealt with aspects of the area which could be improved in order to make it more attractive to tourists. Most respondents indicated, firstly, the need to increase local leisure activities. The second most popular suggestion was to improve the promotion and advertising of the area. One possible answer in the questionnaire was the improvement of road and rail links as a means of increasing tourism: none of the respondents selected this answer, suggesting that transport links are considered sufficient. This is a positive factor for the development of wine tourism in this area (Getz, & Brown, 2006a).

Given the pessimistic view of the situation, respondents were asked to identify the main obstacles to the development of tourism in the *Montilla-Moriles* area (Table 4). The answers clearly place the blame on the government for its lack of coordination, planning and interest. In light of this situation, 97.3% of respondents would like to see the implementation of a Professional Training Plan, since local tourism could be improved if employees were better qualified.

Table 4
**MAIN OBSTACLES TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF TOURISM
IN THE MONTILLA-MORILES AREA**

	Percentage
Lack of coordination at government level	42.5
Lack of long-term planning	22.5
Lack of interest of public authorities	20.0
Lack of youth initiatives	7.5
DK/NA	7.5

The businesses surveyed also displayed considerable interest in playing a more active role in decision making and land-use planning in the *Montilla-Moriles* area. A total of 70% of respondents belong to some sort of organisation (Table 5), whilst 20% are not involved at all in local development plans. This result confirms the importance that some authors attach to the creation of strategic alliances involving the various stakeholders in the local wine-tourism industry (Telfer, 2001).

Table 5
**MEMBERSHIP OF ORGANISATIONS INVOLVED
IN LOCAL LAND-USE PLANNING**

Membership	Percentage
Business associations	32.5
Cooperatives	2.5
Council associations	5.0
Tourism Initiative Centre (CIT)	20.0
Town Council	5.0
Rural Development Groups Rural (GDR)	5.0
None	20.0
DK/NA	10.0

Finally, it should be stressed that despite the negative evaluation of the current situation for tourism in the *Montilla-Moriles* area, businesses are displaying a very positive view of tourist satisfaction. A total of 60% consider tourists to be highly-satisfied, while 37.5% consider them to be moderately-satisfied and only 2.5% consider them to be dissatisfied. A link was detected between this variable and company size in terms of number of staff (γ coefficient = -0.600; $p = 0.07$). Again, companies with more than 10 employees voiced more favourable opinions, whilst smaller companies (1 to 4 employees) were more pessimistic.

Conclusions

Tourism is currently undergoing considerable changes in terms of both supply and demand, which reflect new consumer tastes and the emergence of new tourist destinations. New products are being created to meet the requirements of increasingly active and more motivated tourists. A successful product brings together local customs, local cuisine and – of course – local wines.

This paper has focused on a specific area of research within wine-tourism studies (Mitchell, & Hall, 2006), the wine tourism product and, more specifically, wine routes. The network of Official Wine Routes with quality certification, the criteria which must be met in order to be granted quality certification, and the current status of these criteria in Spain have been analysed.

The wine-tourism product on offer in one of Spain's Official Wine Routes, the *Montilla-Moriles* route in Andalusia, has also been analysed. This region is characterised by a considerable level of tourism (based primarily on sun, beaches and culture), and wine tourism is seen as a potential addition to the tourist products already on offer. The analysis was based on a field survey which highlighted, amongst other things, the small size of businesses (especially wineries) along the Wine Route, the seasonal nature of wine-tourism and the low level of direct wine sales to visitors as a percentage of overall sales. It has been suggested that tourism could be improved by reaching agreements with travel agents who are in a position to channel the flow of tourists from their holiday resorts to the wineries. However, support of this Wine Route has still not achieved the main objectives for which it was designed, and the expectations placed on its development have, generally speaking, not been fulfilled.

In our opinion, this tourist initiative could foster the socioeconomic development of the area, since there is already increasing interest in the food and wine of various areas (as elements of their cultural identity) and since the *Montilla-Moriles* area is located within a region where the "Mediterranean diet" is of particular importance.

Finally, and as a future line of research, we believe that there will have to be a comparison made between Spanish wine producing regions which are endorsed by an official Wine Route certificate and those other areas which, despite the presence of wine tourism, are not classified as official routes. The aim of this would be to analyse the different conceptions and attitudes of businesses and how, in this case, the certification of these routes has served to consolidate wine tourism in these areas.

Note:

¹ Further information on this Wine Route can be found at www.rutadelvinomontillamoriles.com

References

- Alonso, A.D., Sheridan, L., & Scherrer, P. (2008). Importance of tasting rooms for Canary Islands' wineries. *British Food Journal*, 110(10), 977-988.
- Berveland, M. (2000). Wine tourism: a tale of two Conferences. *International Journal of Wine Marketing*, 12(2), 63-74.

- Brunori, G., & Rossi, A. (2000). Synergy and coherence through collective action: some insights from wine routes in Tuscany. *Sociologia Rurales*, 40(4), 409-423.
- Bruwer, J. (2003). South Africa wine routes: some perspectives on the wine tourism industry's structural dimensions and wine tourism product. *Tourism Management*, 24, 423-435.
- Carlsen, J. (2004). A review of global wine tourism research. *Journal of Wine Research*, 15(1), 5-13.
- Correia, L., Passos Ascençao, M.J., & Charters, S. (2004). Wine routes in Portugal: a case study of the Bairrada Wine Route. *Journal of Wine Research*, 15(1), 15-25.
- Getz, D. (2000). *Explore Wine tourism, management, development and destinations*. London: Cognizant Communication Corporation.
- Getz, D., & Brown, G. (2006a). Critical success factors for wine tourism regions: a demand analysis. *Tourism Management*, 27, 146-158.
- Getz, D., & Brown, G. (2006b). Benchmarking wine tourism development. *International Journal of Wine Marketing*, 18(2), 78-97.
- Gilbert, D.C. (1992). Touristic development of a viticultural regions of Spain. *International Journal of Wine Marketing*, 4(2), 25-32.
- Hall, C. M. (1996). Wine tourism in New Zealand. In J. Higham (ed.), *Proceedings of tourism down under II: A research conference* (pp. 109-119). Dunedin: Centre for Tourism, University of Otago.
- Hall, C.M., Sharples, L., Cambourne, B., & Macionis, N. (eds.) (2000). *Wine tourism around the world: development, management and markets*. London: Editorial Elsevier.
- Hall, C.M., & Mitchell, R. (2000). Wine tourism in the Mediterranean: a tool for restructuring and development. *Thunderbird International Business Review*, 42(4), 445-465.
- Karafolas, S. (2007). Wine roads in Greece: A cooperation for the development of local tourism in rural areas. *Journal of Rural Cooperation*, 35(1), 71-90.
- Marzo-Navarro, M., & Pedraja-Iglesias, M. (2009). Wine tourism development from the perspective of the potential tourist in Spain. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 21(7), 816-835.
- Mitchell, R., & Hall, C.M. (2006). Wine tourism research: the state of play. *Tourism Review International*, 9(4), 307-332.
- Montanari, A. (2009). Geography of taste and local development in Abruzzo (Italy): Project to establish a training and research centre for the promotion of enogastronomic culture and tourism. *Journal of Heritage Tourism*, 4(2), 91-103.
- Scherrer, P.; Alonso, A., & Sheridon, L. (2009). Expanding the destination image: Wine tourism in the Canary Islands. *International Journal of Tourism Research*, 11(5), 451-463.
- Spanish Ministry of Tourism (2000). *Propuesta para la asistencia técnica para el desarrollo del estudio de definición del producto "Rutas del Vino de España"*. Madrid: Publications Service of Spanish Ministry of Tourism.
- Stewart, J.X., Bramble, L., & Ziraldo, D. (2008). Key challenges in wine and culinary tourism with practical recommendation. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 20(3), 303-312.
- Telfer, D.J. (2001). Strategic alliances along the Niagara Wine Route. *Tourism Management*, 22, 21-30.
- Tomljenovic, R., & Getz, D. (2009). Life-cycle stages in wine tourism development: A comparison of wine regions in Croatia. *Tourism Review International*, 13, 31-49.

Submitted: 10/24/2009

Accepted: 03/23/2010