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# **Sustainable wine tourism development through the lens of dynamic capabilities and entrepreneurial action: An exploratory four-region perspective**

## **ABSTRACT**

This study contributes to the sustainable wine tourism literature in various ways. First, using a multi-country approach, the study empirically explores the perceived benefits gained from wine tourism, and the ways in which it could be developed sustainably. These dimensions are examined through the lens of the dynamic capabilities approach and entrepreneurial action. Subsequently, a theoretical framework is proposed to enhance understanding of the development of sustainable wine tourism. Unstructured, in-depth, face-to-face interviews were conducted with 56 winery owners and managers. The two theoretical frameworks help understand the various forms in which sensing and seizing can be materialised in opportunities for wine tourism development, and reconfiguring, or moving forward, to identify ways to achieve its sustainability. Stemming from the findings and the adoption of the theoretical contributions, a strategic toolkit is proposed, which provides guidance to various stakeholders in their efforts to develop a sustainable wine tourism industry.

**Keywords:** Wine tourism, sustainability, dynamic capabilities, entrepreneurial action, multi-country study

## **Introduction**

Since the 1990s, literature on wine tourism has grown exponentially (e.g., Byrd et al., 2016; Getz, 2000; Getz & Brown, 2004; Hall & Macionis, 1998; Hall et al., 2000). Wine tourism is viewed as special interest tourism (Brown & Getz, 2005), which encompasses the visiting of

vineyards to experience tangible (wine) and intangible (service) processes (O'Neill, Palmer, & Charters, 2002). Wine tourism can also be conceptualised in the context of visitors travelling to wineries, and what they experience at wine tourism destinations (Byrd et al., 2016). Winery visitors are characterised from being day-trippers residing at geographically close points to overnight travellers from outside the region (Byrd et al. 2016).

Reports and academic contributions have made a case for wine tourism and its socioeconomic benefits. For example, Tourism Australia (2017) reports on the developments following the launch of Restaurant Australia at the end of 2013, which has since triggered a twenty-five percent increase of international visitor expenditure of over one billion Australian dollars on food and wine. In Spain, approximately three million visitors travelled to wineries in 2016; on average, visitors spent 145 Euros per day during their stay, of which 34 Euros were spent specifically on wine purchases in the visited region (Statista, 2016). Duarte Alonso et al.'s (2015) research among wineries representing 10 countries revealed that, fundamentally, promotion of the wineries' products and increasing wine sales were the main perceived benefits winery owners and managers gained from wine tourism. On-site sales and developing winery-visitor relationships also emerged as critical benefits in Duarte Alonso and Liu's (2012) research. Furthermore, Gómez, Lopez, and Molina (2015) concluded that wine tourism complements other leisure activities, thereby contributing to the economic development of a country or region.

Extending from these impacts, the aspect of sustainability is crucial, notably, in maximising resources, or in addressing current or future challenges preventing the further development of wine tourism. Sustainability is viewed as the development that will help future generations with similar or better opportunities than those available to the current generation (Stern, 1995). In a similar vein, the United Nations Environment Program and the World Tourism Organisation (UNEP & WTO, 2005) defines sustainable tourism as tourism

that takes accountability regarding current or future environmental, social, or economic impacts, and focuses on the needs of host communities, industry, visitors and/or the local environment.

In the wine industry, sustainability is viewed as a significant source of competitive advantage, contributing to creating environmentally conscious and therefore positive imageries in the minds of consumers (Gázquez-Abad et al., 2015). In reviewing the work of Hall (2000), Poitras and Getz (2006) posit that sustainable wine tourism (SWT) rests on three pillars that are associated to “a general approach to tourism development” (p. 426) and planning. These pillars, social, environmental, and economic, are clearly reflected in the definitions presented by the UNEP and WTO (2015). However, other elements have been incorporated. Indeed, Montella (2017) suggests that SWT is strongly related to the distinctive characteristics of local places, communities and culture; the cultural element is also emphasised as part of wine tourism consumption (Mitchell, Charters, & Albrecht 2012). Extending from these notions, and apart from the three pillars referred to above, SWT also encompasses the links that are created between the winery and its surrounding elements, its products, brands, and winery visitors, including through the appreciation of and respect for the landscape. Thus, aligned with previous reports and academic studies, wine tourism can play a key role regionally and nationally, contributing to sustain “the economic and social bases of regions, as well as environmental dimensions” (Hall and Mitchell, 2000, p. 449).

While interest in wine tourism among researchers has increased, sustainability aspects concerning this leisure activity remain scantily examined (Gázquez-Abad et al., 2015). Earlier research (Duarte Alonso & Liu, 2012) acknowledged the lack of longitudinal studies that investigate SWT development, for instance, to ascertain the outcomes from involvement in this activity. In addition, despite the usefulness and merit of learning SWT practices and principles from different regions, including between southern versus northern hemisphere

wine regions or between developing versus more established wine regions, there is a paucity of such studies.

Another crucial knowledge gap is that, apart from few exceptions (e.g., Carmichael and Senese, 2012; Duarte Alonso & Liu 2012; Poitras & Getz, 2006), there is limited availability of conceptual frameworks to facilitate understanding of the various aspects surrounding SWT. While useful, efforts have predominantly focused on only one or two wine regions and within one country. Consequently, there is an absence of frameworks in SWT research conducted in recent years specifically geared towards understanding this dimension across several countries. Furthermore, few SWT studies published in recent years have considered theories that could contribute to more in-depth analysis, reflection, and understanding of contemporary developments in wine tourism and its sustainability. Indeed, gaps exist in understanding the need for agility, adaptability, weathering uncertainty, and overall, for coping with change. Among the few contributors in the last decade, Grimstad's (2011) conceptual research discussed environmental sustainability in the context of wine tourism clusters by considering both institutional and the resource-based theory. Thus, there is a need for new knowledge and advancement in the area of SWT.

This study contributes to the academic literature in various ways. First, it empirically examines SWT, and responds to commentary suggesting a knowledge gap in this field (Gázquez-Abad et al., 2015). Overall, the study is concerned with the perceived benefits gained from wine tourism development in the examined regions, and how SWT could be achieved. Second, the study employs a multi-country/region approach, which can provide valuable insights into how SWT is perceived across different geographic and socioeconomic environments. Third, the study will adopt entrepreneurial action theory (McMullen & Shepherd, 2006) and the dynamic capabilities approach (Teece, Pisano, & Shuen, 1997). This decision is in line with various studies that underline the links between socioeconomic

sustainability and these theories (e.g., Dean & McMullen, 2007; Shepherd & Patzelt, 2011; Zott, 2003).

The chosen qualitative approach presented in the methodology section highlights the qualitative data collection process conducted through face-to-face interviews with knowledgeable respondents involved with SWT. These participants perceived a number of potential benefits to be gained from wine tourism, where financial gains strongly complemented socioeconomic contributions. These benefits include, for instance, the preservation of family businesses, or the integration of local gastronomy into the wine tourism activities. Furthermore, the amalgamation of food-wine was perceived as fundamental in developing SWT, as was the ability to address capacity issues, build stronger collaboration, or in developing new infrastructure.

## **Literature Review**

### *Entrepreneurship*

Among other proposed conceptualisations, George and Zahra (2002) define entrepreneurship as the process and act through which business opportunities can be identified and pursued, with the ultimate goal to create wealth. At the centre of this process is the entrepreneur, the owner or manager of the business venture (Brockhaus, 1980). Apart from being a risk-taker, creating or reviving an existing business, an entrepreneur focuses on undertaking responsibilities and judgemental decisions that can have impacts on the use of resources and goods (Hébert & Link, 1989). A related term, entrepreneurial alertness, refers to the persistent scanning of the environment by entrepreneurs in order to identify market imperfections (Alvarez, 2005). Importantly, acting entrepreneurially is dependent upon various fundamental elements, including motivation, which is related to bearing uncertainty, and where knowledge is related to the level of perceiving uncertainty (McMullen &

Shepherd, 2006). In the context of wine tourism, uncertainty can be illustrated through perceived vulnerability in the form of marginal sales, inability to obtain resources or funds, effects from economic downturns, legal issues or costs of compliance (Duarte Alonso et al., 2015; Duarte Alonso & Liu, 2012; Hojman & Hunter-Jones, 2012).

The tourism literature discusses various entrepreneurial dimensions. For example, Lordkipanidze, Brezet, and Backman (2005) emphasise the significance of entrepreneurial behaviour in the tourism industry. They argue that tourism requires a high level of involvement by entrepreneurs, notably, through the diversification of tourism services or products to cater for increased demands “for new types of tourism needs” (p. 787). Conversely, these needs can result in “opportunities for more sustainable tourism” (Lordkipanidze et al., 2005, p. 787).

### *Entrepreneurial action theory*

The various alignments between tourism, sustainability, and entrepreneurial action (EA) underscore the merit of adopting this theory in the present study. Several academic contributions help illuminate the realms of entrepreneurial action theory (EAT), particularly seminal work of McMullen and Shepherd (2006). In their contribution, these authors proposed a conceptual model, whereby EA is “the outcome of the willingness to bear perceived uncertainty” (p. 134). Consequently, they refer to EA as “behavior in response to a judgmental decision under uncertainty about a possible opportunity for profit” (p. 134).

In reflecting on the work of McMullen and Shepherd (2006), Mitchell and Shepherd (2010) identified two stages of EA. The first, opportunity attention, also suggested as ‘third-person opportunities’, entails “questions of why opportunities are recognized and acted upon in general” (Mitchell & Shepherd 2010, p. 140). The second, opportunity evaluation, or ‘first-

person opportunities', concerns "questions of why opportunities are recognized and acted upon by specific individuals" (Mitchell & Shepherd, 2010, p. 140).

Some of the above notions can be understood in the context of wine tourism development and SWT. For instance, prior experience and knowledge of marketing wines directly to the public (e.g., cellar doors sales), coupled with a feasibility assessment with a view to become more involved in wine tourism offerings (e.g., tours, events), can all motivate winery entrepreneurs to transform evaluation into action. Alternatively, winery entrepreneurs may notice an opportunity to diversify and seize commercial opportunities, opening their winery doors or incrementing their offerings to cater for different groups of visitors.

As Dawson, Fountain, and Cohen (2011) found among winery owners and managers, financial benefits represent a fundamental motive for their involvement in wine and wine tourism. Furthermore, and as noticed by Fraser and Duarte Alonso (2006), investments are required to provide the infrastructure to host visitors and exploit potential opportunities, with no guarantee that these will be recouped. Inevitably, this may discourage some entrepreneurs from involvement in wine tourism. For those who take the step towards wine tourism involvement, EA is also applicable, namely, through more consciousness towards the need to develop this activity sustainably. For instance, winery entrepreneurs need to be aware and act upon increased traffic at wine tourism destinations (Getz & Brown, 2006; Jones, Singh, & Hsiung 2015, 2003), with implications for local residents and for travellers.

Kuratko, Ireland, and Hornsby (2001) suggest that through EA firms can maximise opportunities that others have not detected or assertively pursued. In referring to the work of Smith and Di Gregorio (2002), Kuratko et al. (2001) posit that EA is also reflected in novelty, particularly in new resources, markets, or customers. Similarly, EA has been associated with making creative, innovative, or adventurous exchanges; these exchanges take place between an entrepreneurial actor, the enterprise, and other parties that the enterprise trades with



(Watson, 2013). In some situations, exchanges occur through business deals that have an innovative or novel dimension to them. In the context of wine tourism, Duarte Alonso and Northcote (2008) emphasised the nature of exchange relationships between visitors and wineries, with winery entrepreneurs not only positioning the visit as an educational or product-service provision and experience, but also as a business transaction. Arguably, to make successful transactions and provide memorable experiences, wineries need to consider and execute innovative and creative strategies.

Passion is yet another significant aspect of EAT that is related to the present study. A study undertaken among entrepreneurs (Mathias, Williams, & Smith, 2015) found that when participants made a decision to pursue an opportunity, their passion was conveyed to their new business, contributing to their full involvement, including in decision-making and in being strongly vested in the business's success. This success was found to be as much about extrinsic as intrinsic rewards, including developing services or products participants felt proud of (Mathias et al., 2015). Similarly, research conducted among winery entrepreneurs (Baragwanath & Lewis, 2014; Fraser & Duarte Alonso, 2006) revealed the importance of passion for making wines, with important implications for SWT, for instance, in driving socioeconomic or environmentally conscious philosophies.

#### *The dynamic capabilities approach (DCA)*

The characteristics of the present study, which fundamentally examines the perceived benefits and the sustainable development of wine tourism, also support the adoption of the dynamic capabilities approach. Teece (2014) explains that dynamic capabilities allow enterprises to develop assumptions about business problems or consumer preferences. This first notion aligns with the present research, in that winery operators are considering wine

tourism as an alternative revenue stream to cater for increasing demand for this special interest tourism activity.

Dynamic capabilities are engrained in the resource-based view of the firm (Helfat & Peteraf, 2009, p. 93). This theory rests upon various key criteria, namely, valuable, rare, imperfectly imitable, and non-substitutable resources, also called VRIN attributes (Wilson & Daniel, 2007). These attributes represent factors that contribute to firms' competitive and sustainably competitive advantage (Barney, 1991; Teece, 2018). Dynamic capabilities help fine-tune and validate these attributes, as well as act upon them through the realignment of activities and assets that enable continuous changes and innovations (Teece, 2014). This second notion applies in the context of SWT. Indeed, realigning activities and assets can lead to more memorable wine tourism experiences, which in turn contribute to a winery's enhanced appeal, and to its image and that of the wine region, with direct implications for their overall long-term sustainability.

Dynamic capabilities also emphasise two important aspects (Teece et al., 1997). The first is represented by the changing nature of the business environment, particularly in market forces and technology. The second aspect is manifested through the fundamental role of strategic management, in integrating, re-configuring and adapting resources, functional competences, and organisational skills to address the changing environment (Teece et al., 1997).

Moreover, Eisenhardt and Martin (2000) define dynamic capabilities as an identifiable and specific set of processes that include building alliances, strategic decision making and product development. Thus, dynamic capabilities typically implicate "long-term commitments to specialized resources" (Winter, 2003, p. 993). In the case of the wine industry, the global market has become extremely competitive (Gil, Garcia-Alcaraz, & Mataveli, 2015), and new forms of diversification have gained in momentum. Wine tourism

is an illustration of such diversification efforts, namely, in helping to develop alternative commercial opportunities (Scherrer, Duarte Alonso, & Sheridan 2009).

The more recent dynamic capabilities literature provides additional valuable insights. For example, Teece (2007) introduces the microfoundations of dynamic capabilities, which are conceptualised as distinct disciplines, decision rules, procedures, processes, skills and organisational structures that can support long-term firm performance. Furthermore, dynamic capabilities encompass three key adjustments, clusters of activities, or orchestration processes (Teece, 2007, 2012, 2014):

*Sensing*, which entails the assessment, development, co-development, and the overall identification of opportunities or threats (Birkinshaw, Zimmermann, & Raisch, 2016).

Sensing enables firms to cater for customer needs, both domestically and internationally (Teece, 2012, 2014). In this process, firms undertake external environmental scanning, for instance, bringing “unstructured data from the external environment” (Teece, 2018, p. 364) into their organisational system to make informed decisions that include identifying opportunities or prioritising problems. In reference to sensing in the wine industry and wine tourism, and in line with EAT’s notion of uncertainty, motivation and action (McMullen & Shepherd, 2006), it could be suggested that winery owners embarking in wine tourism identify potential opportunities and threats prior to making final investment decisions. Moreover, they may observe, read, or hear from others about the potential of wine tourism.

*Seizing* essentially entails the mobilisation of resources to cater for market/consumer needs and therefore address opportunities or capture value (Teece 2014; Teece, Peteraf, & Leih, 2016). Seizing determines how rapidly the firm’s system can respond to the opportunities and threats that were identified and deemed significant (Teece, 2018). Again, aligned with the

opportunity evaluation stage (Mitchell & Shepherd, 2010), and in the domain of wine tourism, seizing can be perceived as the operationalisation stage to maximise opportunities. To this end, wineries' mobilisation of resources (Teece, 2014) is conceptualised as further knowledge-gathering. Other activities include the construction of a cellar door, or other facilities to host visitors, as well as incorporating innovative practices (e.g., more informational visits, bilingual staff).

*Transforming/Reconfiguring* capabilities emphasise a firm's continued renewal (Teece, 2012, 2014), and help keep alignment between the elements of its organisational system and strategy (Teece, 2018). This alignment can be critical in light of significant changes in the firm's design, for instance, in the development of a new business model. However, reconfiguring is also appropriate in the case of minor transformations that need to be undertaken to keep alignment with the firm's business environment (Teece, 2018).

Transforming also has strong links with the wine tourism activity. First, winery operators must make continuous efforts to keep abreast of consumers' needs and wants, for instance, product preferences, the increasing significance of social media (Thach, Lease, & Barton, 2016) or environmental consciousness (Barber, Taylor, & Strick, 2009). Second, consistency in the form of maintaining high product or service standards, as well as avoiding the over-commercialisation of wine tourism, or positively influencing visitors' perceived authenticity of the winery experience (Kim & Bonn, 2016) could have important implications for the long-term sustainability of wine tourism, and that of wineries.

Together, EAT and the DCA provide a strong foundation to guide and inform the present research, which is concerned with various aspects associated with SWT, including its perceived benefits, and the ways in which it could grow and develop sustainably. The study addresses the following research questions (RQs):

- RQ 1: To what extent can the studied region benefit from wine tourism?
- RQ2: How could wine tourism be developed in a sustainable way?

The theories presented above will be adopted to understand SWT based on the findings, and a resulting framework will be proposed (Figure 3). Fundamentally, the potential operationalisation of this framework is reflected in the following question:

- RQ3: To what extent do EAT and the DCA contribute to a more in-depth understanding of SWT?

## **Methodology**

This study has various objectives that at the same time represent contributions to the SWT academic literature. First, the study's unit of analysis entails the examination of the perceived benefits from wine tourism development (RQ1), and second, how this activity could be sustainable (RQ2) based on data gathered in four different countries. Third, the study examines the value of EAT and the DCA in the context of SWT (RQ3), and proposes a theoretical framework that illustrates the associations between these theories and the findings. Consequently, the study addresses various knowledge gaps, which include the scant research conducted on sustainability aspects of wine tourism (Gázquez-Abad et al., 2015), the absence of SWT studies focusing on multiple regions or countries, and the development of theoretical frameworks drawing from existing theories to investigate and understand SWT.

A case study methodology was employed in this research. Cases studies are the favoured methodology when investigators have limited control over events, when the research focuses on contemporary phenomena within real-life contexts, and when 'how' or 'why' questions

are asked (Yin, 2003). The case study strategy is tightly associated with data, emphasises the understanding of dynamics that exist within single settings, and can result in developing empirically valid, testable, and novel theory (Eisenhardt, 1989). Theory can develop through the recognition of “patterns of relationships among constructs within and across cases and their underlying logical arguments” (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007, p. 25). Gathering the experiences and views of winery owners and managers, or the study’s single setting (Eisenhardt, 1989) concerning contemporary phenomena (Yin, 2003), such as the perceived benefits from wine tourism and SWT, is consistent with the case study methodology.

More specifically, and aligned with Baxter and Jack (2008), and Yin (2003), the present investigation, which focuses on single cases of four different wine regions, exhibits characteristics of a multicase study. This type of case study “enables the researcher to explore differences within and between cases. The goal is to replicate findings across cases” (Baxter & Jack, 2008, p. 548), which was undertaken in the present research (Figures 1, 2, 3, and 4).

In addition, learning about these phenomena from the supply side of wine tourism was perceived to add significant insights and value to the research. Consequently, and associated with wine tourism research (Duarte Alonso & Liu, 2012; Gázquez-Abad et al., 2015; Getz & Brown, 2006), this group of participants was chosen. Also, in agreement with recent investigations undertaken in the field of tourism (e.g., Guachalla, 2016; Hunter, 2016; Nichols, Ralston, & Holmes, 2017; Wells et al., 2016), the study adopts a constructivist and an inductive approach.

Constructivists or interpretivists consider that interpreting the world of meaning is vital in order to understand it (Schwandt, 1994). A distinguishing feature of constructivism relates to the importance of interactions between the object of the study and the investigator; this interaction allows deeper meanings to be uncovered (Ponterotto, 2005). Together, the

participant and the researcher can co-construct or create findings based on their interactive interpretation or dialogue (Ponterotto, 2005).

Inductive analysis is conceptualised as approaches that mainly utilise comprehensive readings of raw data and help derive themes, concepts, or models that emerge through interpretations generated by researchers (Thomas, 2006). Moreover, inductive theory is the end result of the inductive stance, and can be achieved by “drawing generalizable inferences out of observations” (Bryman, 2016, p. 22). Thus, at the core of inductive reasoning is the undertaking of specific observations and deriving general conclusions from these (Walliman, 2016).

Several key reasons support the decision to gather data among winery representatives operating in four different wine regions. Essentially, studying contemporary phenomena (Yin, 2003) from the perspective of winery owners/managers operating in wine regions located in both Northern and Southern Hemisphere (Old versus New World) would allow the identification of potential of wine tourism alongside issues around its sustainability drawn from a stakeholder group who is a key contributor on the supply side. Similarly, given that wine tourism in the chosen regions has yet to reach full potential, such investigation would help identify insightful practical and theoretical dimensions. Nevertheless, while focusing only on the supply side can offer useful insights about SWT development, it is acknowledged that the study would have also benefitted from eliciting information from the invaluable perspective of other relevant groups and stakeholders (e.g., other businesses in the regions/municipalities, government agencies/public organisations, consumers and consumer groups).

Numerous regions were appropriate for addressing the objectives of this research. First, a decision was made to select Peruvian and Northern Argentinian wineries due to their geographic proximity, which provided a more convenient logistical organisation of the data

collection. In addition, there is very limited academic knowledge of Peru's wine and wine tourism, which is currently developing. Furthermore, examining the study's key themes from the perspective of wineries operating in two emerging economies, as is the case of Argentina and Peru, would contribute to valuable insights, which might align or differ from existing wine tourism research. In addition, the two wine regions from these nations were close to larger cities, with Ica being at nearly 190 miles from Peru's capital Lima, and Cafayate close to 120 miles from Salta city.

Second, choosing Italian and Spanish wineries was believed to strengthen the research, as these two countries are not only leading wine producers, but their economies are more developed and arguably, their wine tourism offerings and strategies might differ from wineries operating in emerging economies. In fact, Duarte Alonso's (2017) research highlights the increasing growth of wine tourism in the Cava enclave of Sant Sadurn d'Anoia, Spain. In the case of the Conegliano-Valdobbiadene wine region, Boatto et al.'s (2013) research underlines the 'take-off' stage of wine tourism, "with as yet unrealized development potential" (p. 93). Finally, the chosen European wine regions were at close geographic proximity of main cities, with Valdobbiadene being close to 50 miles from Venice, and Sant Sadurn d'Anoia around 32 miles from Barcelona, thus, also facilitating the data collection processes.

A search on websites from various wine associations helped collate a total of 122 electronic emails from the different wine regions (Table 1). A message was sent to these wineries, explaining the objectives of the research and requesting an opportunity to undertake an interview with a member of the ownership or management. The knowledge and expertise of these individuals was considered paramount for the research, and aligns with a purposive sampling, which entails the strategic selection and investigation of information-rich cases (Patton, 2015). The wineries that were included displayed considerable levels of experience



and knowledge, were established for at least 20 years and were in an informed position to discuss issues around wine tourism. Similarly, the selected wineries provided avenues to elicit information from respondents, who through long-term firm survival would have extensive knowledge of various dimensions, including being resilient. Moreover, they would be best placed to discuss issues concerning their business strategy, longevity, and experience of succession across multiple generations.

As many as 54 wineries accepted to partake in the research, an overall 44% response rate, and a total of 56 winery representatives were interviewed (Table 1), with two winery managers being interviewed at one Italian and one Spanish winery, respectively. At the end of 2016 and beginning of 2017, one member of the research team, who is fluent in Spanish and Italian languages, travelled to Argentina and Peru and at the end of June and beginning of July of 2017 to Italy and Spain to conduct the interviews. On average, the interviews lasted 70 minutes and were recorded with participants' permission. Simple rapport building questions around demographics and the respondent's level of experience were asked in the beginning. To ensure consistency, this interview protocol was adhered to for all interviews (Bryman & Bell, 2015). Subsequently, the following overarching questions, designed based on a review of the contemporary literature on wine tourism and SWT, were asked:

- Question 1: To what extent can this region benefit from wine tourism development?
- Question 2: How could a SWT product be achieved in the case of this region?

The selected studies predominantly focused on the perceptions of winery owners and managers (e.g., Duarte Alonso & Liu, 2012; Duarte Alonso et al., 2015; Gázquez-Abad et al., 2015; Villanueva & Moscovici, 2016). Regarding the second question, participants were presented the following broad definition of SWT proposed in the literature (Hall, 2000;

Mitchell, Charters, & Albrecht, 2012; Montella, 2017; Poitras & Getz, 2006; UNEP & WTO, 2005):

In this study, SWT is defined as tourism that takes accountability for social, economic or environmental impacts, both currently and in the future, and emphasises the needs of local cultures, communities, places, industries, as well as visitors.

Yin (2009) posits that one key approach in case study research is to employ various sources of evidence, including interviews, documents and observations, allowing for data triangulation (Baxter & Jack, 2008), in essence, looking at the same research question or phenomena from various sources of data (Decrop, 1999). Moreover, information originating from various angles can be employed to elaborate, illuminate, or corroborate the research problem (Decrop, 1999). In line with the triangulation approach, the opportunity to travel to wineries to conduct the interviews also enabled on-site observations, and the gathering of printed material.

Guidelines for reaching a consensus regarding data saturation, the point where no new themes or new information are detected in the data (Guest, Bunce, & Johnson, 2006) are inconclusive, and lack consensus. Indeed, Fusch and Ness (2015) explain that a one-size-fits-all assumption does not apply with regard to data saturation. Guest et al. (2006), for instance, identified data saturation within the initial twelve interviews, “although basic elements for metathemes were present as early as six interviews” (p. 59). This study follows the suggestion of O’Reilly and Parker (2012), who posit that the appropriateness of the data, as opposed to the number of participants, should be the fundamental marker for sampling adequacy. In two cases (Argentina, Peru), data saturation was noticed by the tenth interview, while in the other two (Italy, Spain), this point was reached on the 17<sup>th</sup> winery interview (18 participants in each case).

The data were transcribed by members of the research team, which allowed for cross-checking and consistency. Utilising a conventional content analysis approach (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005), emergent issues as identified by respondents were coded. Content analysis was undertaken through the use of the data management software NVivo, version 11, a computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software (CAQDAS) (Woods, Macklin, & Lewis, 2016). NVivo allows the coding of issues in the form of nodes or idea clusters, where the prevalent themes can be identified and analysed. To ensure robustness and validity, only triangulated nodes (issues indicated by more than 3 regions) were utilised in the final analysis.

#### *Demographic characteristics: participants and wineries*

As many as 50 wineries (92.6%) were open to the public at the time of the study, and 32 out of 56 participants (57.1%) were owners or co-owners of the winery, while 22 (39.3%) were managers/export managers (Table 2). On average, participants had worked for nearly 16 years at the winery, and almost fifty percent of the wineries employed at least 10 staff.

Table 2 Here

#### *Background of the selected wine regions*

Based upon comments from participants, and material gathered during the interviews, the following section provides a brief background of the selected wine regions. Ica, Peru, boasts the majority of Peru's wineries, some of which are more than a century old. The majority of the wineries also produce Pisco, a popular alcoholic beverage, which, as is the case of the local still wines, is derived from the fermentation of grapes that is then distilled. For the last 22 years, wine and tourism have been linked through a route of traditional winepresses (Ruta de Lagares), with a similar harvest festival (Festival de la Vendimia) that has been in

existence for over five decades. The combination of still wines and Pisco, together with the historic and recreational elements of the above events, provide alternatives for different consumer tastes and interests. As the interviews have suggested, Cafayate, in Argentina, presents similarities with Ica concerning the establishment of the wine industry several centuries ago. Here Torrontés is the grape variety of the region's signature wine. In contrast, there is no organised wine route within Cafayate, even though efforts have been made in recent years to establish one. To date, however, Cafayate is part of Salta's wine route, a much larger circuit, which also includes wineries located at distant locations within the province, and within hours from each other.

One key difference between the municipality of Sant Sadurn d'Anoia and Ica and Cafayate is the existence of over 40 predominantly micro and small wineries, easily accessible within walking distance from one another. In addition, there is a Cava Interpretation Centre in the heart of town, which provides historic information on the local wine industry, as well as an opportunity for visitors to learn about sensory aspects of their products. Finally, and to some extent similar to Sant Sadurn d'Anoia, the region/municipality of Valdobbadiene also boasts dozens of micro, small and medium wineries, many of which are also within walking distance from one another. One key distinctive feature between these municipalities and Ica and Cafayate is that the local wine industry has existed for numerous centuries. In addition, wineries predominantly belong to families, whose members have been involved in the family business for generations.

## **Results and Discussion**

### *How the studied regions can benefit from wine tourism (RQ1)*

The interviews first revealed various benefits from wine tourism, both at an individual level, and across regions. The upper portion of Figure 1, for instance, highlights general agreement

concerning five fundamental benefits. Four of these included a) financial benefits, b) brand exposure and brand image recognition, c) the usefulness of wine tourism in helping grow other diversification streams, including on-site sales, and d) the potential for the local gastronomy to combine with play a part in wine tourism development. The following selected comments further demonstrate and support these perceptions:

*A1: ...tourism has increased exponentially... on average, we are making sales in 80% or more of the cases [visits to the winery]...*

*P5: This small community of wineries here is composed of relatives.... tourism keeps us alive.*

*I1: [Wine tourism] is an excellent way to make direct sales, with secure payment, and margins are higher.*

*SP14: We are opening for visits the entire week, and for us... it is a stronger promotional activity than investing in advertising.*

Some of these comments are in agreement with earlier research. For instance, Dodd (1995) isolated six instrumental ways in which winery owners/managers considering wine tourism as an add-on diversification strategy could benefit: Opportunities for visitors to try new wine products, increased margins, creating an additional sales outlet, building brand loyalty, educational opportunities and learning about consumers (marketing intelligence) (Dodd, 1995). The financial benefit through increased on-site sales was also revealed in more recent research (Duarte Alonso & Liu, 2012), as well as while visiting the wineries during this study. In discussing the impacts of a wine route, Brunori and Rossi (2000) explain two fundamental effects, one being the revenues gained through existing activities, and the second, the spillover effects by opening up opportunities.

The fifth common benefit relates to the socioeconomic benefits that wine tourism provides to the surrounding community. These benefits were perceived to reach the wider population, for example, through the employment of residents, as well as in the form of spillovers to other businesses, such as transportation and hospitality firms that work alongside wineries. These perceptions are in accord with O'Neill and Charters (2000), who posited that wine tourism can have positive effects on the entire wine region, and with Skinner (2000), who found the benefit of employment and educational opportunities ensuing from wine tourism. The following selected comments further emphasise these socioeconomic impacts:

*A2: In the last 10-12 years, there has been tremendous growth... A wine route was developed, new restaurants opened, there are new wineries, hotels...*

*P10: There is clearly a business around tourists: restaurants, hotels, taxis, merchandise, word-of-mouth promotion... when you look at the numbers you understand actual impacts...*

*I10: Tourism has increased benefits for us all: our winery, tourist agencies, all activities that are in this region, comprising restaurateurs, and it benefits the territory because it encourages everyone to preserve and/or enhance it...*

*SP7: I see ourselves employing more people. For example, someone who can organise events, tastings, food and Cava pairings.*

Figure 1 Here

Figure 1 also highlights insightful linkages and associations between strongly triangulated issues. The results indicate the need to grow and its relationship with the value placed upon gastronomy and wine and vice-versa. These elements are also inter-related to exposure and

brand recognition, and underline that, for wine tourism to grow, there needs to be collected emphasis on gastronomy, brand exposure, and even wine exports. These elements are also equally valuable when considered against financial and socioeconomic gains, suggesting that such approaches would also benefit wineries as well as the local community. These notions are prominent and highlighted as vital by all four wine producing regions.

The nodes identified here provide useful signposting as well as valuable focal points, suggesting that growth in wine tourism should not be undertaken as a single stream but rather requires multiple focuses to ensure success. Similarly, the value gained should not be underestimated as purely financial, where avenues to improve the community can also be gained to the benefit of the local population.

#### *How SWT could be developed (RQ2)*

When participants were asked how SWT could be achieved, both strategies and concerns emerged from their extended comments. Furthermore, while predominantly social and economic sustainability instruments were mentioned, environmental sustainability was also revealed. Figure 2 illustrates that, while some issues were raised at a region level, there was mostly agreement between two or more regions. For instance, three-region associations were revealed through five themes, including the following two, which underlined the need to:

- Become more entrepreneurial, with an emphasis on the behaviours of winery operators, where more focus and dedication were required; as A8 underlined: *“You have to be passionate; it is a very competitive industry. You have to take risks. The results are only seen long-term...”* This comment concerning passion resonates with empirical research adopting EAT (Mathias et al., 2015), and wine tourism research (Baragwanath & Lewis, 2014; Fraser & Duarte Alonso, 2006). The comment also

underlines the aspect of risk-taking, one of the key characteristics of an entrepreneur (Hébert & Link 1989), and importantly, it links to sustainability.

- Improve services, which, apart from telecommunications (internet), illustrated a lack of knowledgeable and bilingual staff. However, as Vandegrift (2008) found, bilingual skills are a determinant for members of the local population to access jobs and suggests that it is fundamental in order to cater for international visitors, contribute to the firm's competitiveness, and therefore to socioeconomic sustainable practices. For instance, being a local resident with few prospects to attend language or hospitality courses and the long distance to the city of Salta (nearly 4 hours away), the case of A3 is illustrative of the involvement and support afforded by the wineries: *"I did not study tourism; I learned everything here. The owners do not have any issues with sharing their knowledge. I did not know any foreign languages and they provided a private teacher for me to learn."*

Figure 2 Here

More importantly, the four regions were inter-linked by five themes (Figure 2), with the first highlighting the value of 'selling' the local cuisine as a key complement of the wine tourism experience. This inclusion was not only in the form of food-wine pairings, but also as each element acting as an instrument to discover and position the other. As the following comments underline:

*A9: Gastronomy could play an important role in increasing the repertoire of activities for visitors.*



*P9: Talking about Peru nowadays is talking about gastronomy... we have an opportunity to provide the right environment and product to build upon this phenomenon.*

*SP13: We need to make a much stronger connection between the local gastronomy and wine.*

Associated with the above comments, in discussing the linkages between food and wine experiences, Hall (2003) acknowledges the role of food and local cuisine as a key part of tourism, including through marketing strategies. Food is also an instrumental part of local culture, identity, consumption and production (Hall, 2003); therefore, it can contribute to the wine tourism experience, and to sustainability, particularly as a drawing card, complementing or enhancing a region's appeal. Moreover, creating interest in local products can stimulate awareness, assist in diversification efforts, maintain animal and plant varieties, reinforce local culture and identity, and encourage community pride (Hall, 2003), with clear implications for socioeconomic sustainability.

Other key elements that could prove vital for SWT development included increasing and strengthening existing infrastructure, more collaboration among wineries, more support from the public sector (e.g., town hall, regional government agencies), and paying attention to environmental and carrying capacity issues. Despite existing literature highlighting the need for infrastructure, collaboration, training, or impacts on the environment occurring in wine regions (e.g., Barber, Taylor, & Deale, 2010; Getz, 1998, 2000; Getz & Brown, 2006), these issues continue to affect wine tourism development or are perceived as fundamental to achieve SWT. Moreover, concerning collaboration, Eisenhardt and Martin (2000) emphasised the significance of alliancing as intrinsically related to dynamic capabilities, and therefore as a source of competitive advantage.

With regard to environmental sustainability and carrying capacity, different aspects were raised by participants from the four regions. The following verbatim comments support previous research, for instance, in that SWT is contingent upon identifying and managing issues that are associated with such key resources as water, land, or infrastructure (Getz & Brown, 2006).

First, Argentine wineries (e.g., A5) raised concerns over the natural resources that might become under pressure if the wine industry, and therefore wine tourism, were to grow:

*“Water supply is becoming an issue. You have large wineries using water from rivers. However, river water is not sufficient to plant many more vineyards.”* In this context, Poitras and Getz (2006) note the balance that must be struck between bottom-line objectives of the wine and tourism sectors, including their long-term economic sustainability, and those of local residents, notably, the protection of their lifestyles and the natural environment.

Second, from a Peruvian respondent’s perspective (P6), rapid urbanisation in the city of Ica and its surroundings was threatening the wine as well as other rural sectors: *“The current development of the region is out of control. The city is encroaching and devouring the rural areas, and it is threatening the future of the agricultural land...”* The phenomenon of formal and informal development that can affect wine routes that are in close proximity of metropolitan areas, and therefore the sustainability of both wine tourism and local population, has been acknowledged in more recent wine tourism research (Ferreira & Hunter, 2017).

Third, the need to address carrying capacity in the case of growth of wine tourism, was identified by several Italian participants, including I15: *“This region is very fragile, very delicate. We do not have large roads, no parking spaces... If we had 100 cars and 4 buses driving on these tiny roads on a Sunday, the traffic will come to a standstill and no one would move anymore.”*

Finally, and in contrast to previous concerns, some Spanish respondents perceived the potential for wine tourism in Sant Sadurní d'Anoia to become a vehicle for environmental sustainability, namely, addressing issues of carrying capacity in the near-by city of Barcelona. Indeed, the value of diversifying the extremely high concentration of city tourism was suggested (SP5): “*We have numerous tourists in Barcelona, way too many for the city...*” Thus, drawing wine tourists to their region would achieve two goals: increase patronage, and alleviate city crowdedness (SP12): “*We are very near Barcelona, and people look for experiences...*”

The triangulated nodes further indicate the importance that selling gastronomy has with the development of wine tourism; however, without more public sector support and collaboration among wineries, this can be a difficult task. In essence, while there is value in developing these measures to grow wine tourism, development must be undertaken through synergies between local government, wineries and organisations dealing in hospitality such as hotels and restaurants.

These synergies, some of which are emphasised in earlier tourism research (Moscardo, 2008) are also reflected in the results with a need to focus on infrastructure development in capacity building. Thus, for wine tourism to be developed and sustained in the future there needs to be careful investment and resourcing. Nonetheless, it is vital to note that all four wine regions placed strong value on protecting the environment and in considering the negatives that can emerge with excessive growth in tourism. As such, while there are clear avenues to develop wine tourism, such development must be undertaken with due care and consideration of the locality, and that the origins that drive its attractiveness as a tourist destination are protected.

*The applicability of the proposed framework (RQ3)*

In line with one of the foundations of inductive analysis, suggesting the significance of approaches based on raw data that help derive models (Thomas, 2006), and based on the research findings, this study proposes a theoretical framework (Figure 3), which illuminates the understanding of the dimensions under investigation. Question 1 is associated with both EA and DCA in various forms.

First, the perceived benefits of wine tourism adhere with the notions of EA concerning judgemental decisions made under uncertain conditions concerning opportunities for profit (McMullen & Shepherd, 2006). The aspect of uncertainty, which in the context of investments to develop wine tourism and returns could create hesitance or discourage winery entrepreneurs, was not strongly reflected in the findings. Instead, the fact that most wineries were open to the public and that all participants perceived wine tourism development positively, including those whose wineries had not become involved in this activity, illustrates favourable perceived benefits from wine tourism. However, there were comments, for instance, indicating the unpredictable nature of the country's economy (Argentina) or the impacts of heavy bureaucratic burdens (Italy, Spain), which could lead to uncertainty, affecting wineries, and therefore wine tourism.

Based on the framework (Figure 3), EAT, which refers to opportunities that are identified and acted upon in broad terms, is similarly reflected in the opportunity attention stage, or exploiting opportunities for profit by specific individuals (Mitchell & Shepherd, 2010), which in this study is exhibited by the winery operators. In addition, Alvarez's (2005) point concerning entrepreneurial alertness that is grounded on the notion that market imperfections- and therefore opportunities for profit (McMullen & Shepherd, 2006) can result from continuous scanning of the environment, is also applicable. Indeed, in many instances, participants sensed commercial potential that, for instance, led them to exploit niche markets. These unique opportunities presented themselves through participants' actions, or through

more serendipitous ways, for instance, by being close to a particularly locality. As in the case of SP5, who attributed part of her firm's success in wine tourism to the fact that "*other wineries do not open on weekends*", a simple and uniquely sensed opportunity was materialised.

Second, as previously indicated, the findings also have various associations with the DCA. The sensing orchestration process was revealed through winery participants' views regarding the benefits of wine tourism, and in some cases through (e.g., SP7) their desire to undertake investments to provide more offerings to visitors and at the same time create employment.

Figure 3 Here

Consequently, seizing was manifested in the various benefits that were identified, including sales, brand image, and the positioning of the region as a niche in wine production. The orchestration process of reconfiguring was again illustrated by most participants' concerns of what needs to be done in order to boost SWT, as well as by their apparent commitment and willingness to growth wine tourism in the region. An argument is also made that reconfiguring is a necessity for EA after a decision is made to capture an opportunity for profit (Figure 3). Moreover, given the nature of exchanges between the enterprise and other actors, a further linkage is identified. This linkage suggests that action is followed by maintaining and improving the consistency of product and service delivery, and by the overall concern of developing SWT.

While reconfiguring suggests the importance of addressing radical new opportunities (Teece, 2014) it also encourages reflection, in this case, considering potential threats to SWT, including a lack of infrastructure, support from local government agencies, or even environmental concerns. These concerns include not jeopardising natural resources

(Argentina), the vital step of working alongside local authorities in order to curb expansion and potential threat to vineyards (Peru), to avoid losing control of visitor traffic (Italy), and in proposing alternative forms of alleviating congestion of city tourism (Spain). These findings reflect deeper linkages to the notion of reconfiguring, where participants change and transform to enhance opportunities, and these are actively undertaken with consideration of an appropriate balance.

Overall, reconfiguring highlights the need for continuous improvement, learning, and innovation, which can have a direct and positive effect on SWT, the local community, and the region's long-term competitive advantage as a wine tourism destination. At the same time, and aligned with Mathias et al.'s (2015) findings, in that, in following their passion, some entrepreneurs' main emphasis is to develop a product with commercialisation potential rather than creating a business that provides products. Thus, focusing on a SWT product adopting EAT principles, such as looking for market imperfections (Alvarez, 2005), or novelty (Smith and Di Gregorio, 2002), the region can at the same time provide a variety of products for commercialisation, including wine, food, services, and the destination itself.

Both theories are not only appropriately reflected by the results of the study, and in the prevalent approaches undertaken by the four wine regions, but also provide strong signposting into vital considerations in the development of wine tourism. From a theoretical perspective, the framework provides a useful toolkit where activities for growth, as well as informed approaches to target setting, could be developed for other wine producing regions. The framework posits the importance of innovation and learning as part of a sustainable approach, while still retaining the values of entrepreneurship such as opportunity sensing, and with it, action.

SP8's reflection epitomises a broader view of what constitutes sustainability at an individual, winery entrepreneur level: *"I always wanted this business to be sustainable, in*

*the sense that the business is like a table with many 'legs'; it is important to find a balance, and the legs must be even, so that the table is not wobbly. One of the legs is represented by the vineyards, another is wine tourism, another is that we produce foods, and another is my house, where I also have rooms to host friends, including international friends."*

## **Conclusion**

This study contributed to the wine tourism and international wine business literature in various ways. Essentially, the study examined the perceived benefits of wine tourism and how it could be sustainable, gathering the views of winery operators across four different wine regions. Furthermore, the study proposed a theoretical framework based on the EA and the DCA to aid in the understanding of the key dimensions under investigation. These contributions help narrow several knowledge gaps, for instance, regarding the limited attention that sustainability aspects have been given in this area (Gázquez-Abad et al., 2015), the inadequate research focusing on SWT from a multi-country perspective, and the lack of theoretical frameworks emerging from wine tourism research.

The findings underlined the many perceived benefits that wineries and their surrounding communities could gain from wine tourism development. While these benefits included financial gains through sales, they also identified intrinsic aspects, such as the potential for continuous growth, which was associated with future exports, return visits, and subsequent sales, or the perceived enhancing of the brand image, through more recognition, and overall exposure to consumers. At the same time, the need for more infrastructure to continue the development of wine tourism, more collaboration among wineries, and maximising the potential of the local gastronomy paired with wine were the most perceived ways to work towards SWT development.

### *Implications*

The emerging themes that were identified from the two overarching questions, and illustrated in Figure 4, provide a strategic toolkit with direct practical and theoretical implications. Most notably, through participants' responses to Question 1, and as discussed earlier, five common themes were revealed (Figure 1). These themes included financial benefits, the potential to grow, exposure/brand recognition, the potential for blending gastronomy and wine, and socioeconomic gains. All these themes exhibit strong relationships with the socioeconomic development of a wine region and underscore the first key proposition, and at the same time a practical implication: *If winery operators perceive and attain these benefits, a vital first step will be made towards SWT in a wine region.* Similarly, the other five common key themes among the four regions (Figure 2) highlight a second proposition with direct relationships to SWT:

*To continue transforming and to move towards SWT, wine regions must:*

- *Address such carrying capacity concerns as limited infrastructure to host large numbers of visitors,*
- *Develop ways to complement local food and wine,*
- *Establish stronger collaborative ties,*
- *Limit environmental concerns such as excessive water issues,*
- *Invest more in infrastructure, and*
- *Receive more public-sector support.*

Arguably, some of these common themes stemmed from participants' responses to Question 2, including the ability to address environmental and carrying capacity concerns, the



marketing of gastronomy with wine tourism, or extending collaboration among wineries, are linked to the VRIN attributes (Wilson & Daniel, 2007), and therefore represent sources of competitive/sustained advantage (Barney 1991). Therefore, a final and fundamental practical implication is that the combination of perceived benefits and the addressing of key gaps, which conform to the strategic toolkit, can strengthen wine tourism destinations and help it achieve sustained competitive advantage.

The strategic toolkit also has various theoretical implications. One fundamental theoretical implication is that the path preceding wine tourism development, and leading to SWT (Figure 3) can be understood through entrepreneurial action and sensing, seizing and transforming, as well as through opportunity evaluation (EAT). Indeed, the common threads that became apparent among all four wine regions concerning the perceived potential of wine tourism (Figure 1), and ways in which such potential could be harnessed (Figure 2), were related to sensing and seizing.

Sensing was evident through the five common perceived benefits from wine tourism, while seizing was revealed through winery operators' need to mobilise resources to tap into these identified opportunities and benefits. These resources, which include more professionalism, developing activities, more collaboration and the importance of 'selling' the local gastronomy, all provide a strong foundation for winery entrepreneurs to maximise opportunities from wine tourism. As illustrated in Figure 3, equally important is the fact that these resources, alongside with the imperative need to anticipate and address carrying capacity or environmental issues (Figure 2), highlight essential elements in the pursuit of SWT.

The DCA, which emphasises the significance of recognising and acting upon opportunities (Mitchell & Shepherd, 2010), notably, through opportunity evaluation, is put forward as having links with the process of reconfiguration. This process stresses the firm's

preparedness in renewing and reorganising in the face of change, as well as in maintaining alignment with its organisational system and strategy (Teece, 2018). Given that opportunity evaluation stems from the motivation to act upon opportunities, an argument is made that, once action is consummated, winery operators' motivation to maximise new opportunities must be further enhanced. For example, in light of increasing choices of wine tourism destinations (Brown & Getz, 2005), with resulting competition for visitors' patronage and purchases, repeat visits, word-of-mouth advertising, and overall, loyalty, there is a need to be uniquely as well as clearly positioned in their visitors' minds (Williams, 2001).

Therefore, the practical implications highlighted in the proposed theoretical framework (Figure 3) illustrate both its theoretical value, as well as facilitate the understanding in the development of SWT through the two theoretical foundations. Moreover, given its theoretical contribution in the present research, the EAT and the DCA could potentially be considered to further examine SWT development in other regions, or sustainable tourism development in other sectors, including craft brewing or culinary tourism.

### *Limitations and Future Research*

As Ioannidis (2007) explains, unavoidably, all research, including important study breakthroughs, has limitations. The present research is no exception to Ioannidis's (2007) suggestion. For example, while the findings provided valuable insights and helped develop a theoretical framework, and while data saturation was achieved in all four regions, arguably, the number of participants is still limited. In addition, the study was only conducted once, with no data available to compare the before or after, or the aftermath of sensing, seizing and transforming. Another limitation is that, in the context of studying SWT, the study only presents the side of a key player from the production side of wine tourism, thus, not incorporating other potentially useful perspectives. These limitations present future research

opportunities. For instance, future studies could include other wine regions among the dozens of countries that produce wine and offer wine routes, which could further knowledge of wine tourism and SWT development in other parts of the world. Exploring other wine regions could also allow for the gathering of more data, which could contribute to supporting or adding to the knowledge gathered in the present research. Similarly, approaching other stakeholders that support or complement wine tourism offerings and SWT development, such as local restaurants, hotels, transport providers, or government agencies and chambers of commerce, as well as those drawn from the demand side of wine tourism, particularly travellers, could be significantly beneficial. Their points of views could help generate ideas that would contribute to the further development of SWT products and services.

Future research could also consider a longitudinal approach, which could not only track the developments in the efforts and strategies of wineries, but also, and more importantly, allow examination of the EAT and DCA as useful theoretical instruments to understand SWT development.

This study has brought to the fore four regions, two in emerging and two in established economies, both steadily seeking to position themselves as wine tourism destinations. These cases illustrate the growing competition of wine regions to draw visitors and commercialise their wine tourism experiences. Future research could contribute in this aspect, identifying issues and ways to remedy them for the benefit of winery operators and visitors. In addition, there are overarching impacts of wine tourism development for communities and visitors, positively, through socioeconomic wealth, and negatively, as changes to the local culture and traditions resulting from a substantial increase in visitors. Keeping abreast of changes, both from a practical and theoretical perspective, could illuminate, support, and ultimately, inform the multiple stakeholders, including visitors, winery entrepreneurs, government entities, and the researcher community of developing and maintaining a SWT product.

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