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MASTER THESIS

**CREATING PRACTICAL GUIDELINES FOR BASIC WINE TOURISM
PRINCIPLES**

ETER GORGILADZE

Internship developed at Balzac Communications

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Abstract

Today, no one doubts the significance of wine tourism. In recent years, the growing importance of wine tourism has been obvious, both directly for wineries as well as for regional development and even the progression of worldwide tourism.

The growth of wine tourism is currently claimed to be accelerating, resulting in gaps between academic and practical knowledge—usually seen as normal during this advancement phase. During such a period, academic and practical knowledge must combine to generate new sector standards. The paper presented is based on a synthesis of scholarly insight and business sector expertise, along with important factors in wine tourism, which have been identified and transformed into a wine tourism guideline.

This guideline will help wineries to develop wine tourism. This is a program minimum any winery involved in tourism, regardless of its size or profile, should consider. In addition, this guideline can be used in wine tourism consulting services, as well as in various training programs.

Key Words: Wine tourism guideline, Wine tourism manual, Important factors of wine tourism, Wine tourism service standards, Cellar door experience

Abbreviations

UNWTO: United Nations World Tourism Organization

HORECA: Hotel/Restaurant/Café

1. Internship Overview

Balzac Communications is a consulting company focused on the wine sector. The company has three offices in the United States; Napa Valley, New York, and Columbus. Balzac provides consulting services to various wine companies, wine associations, or other business establishments in the wine sector worldwide. The company has developed a culture of online work, allowing employees living in different parts of the world to be effectively involved in various projects.

Balzac is a modern company and well-suited to the demands of today's market. The open-minded and creative team is a key factor in their success. Furthermore, innovation is at the core of the business, this can easily be seen from their view: "Creativity to make things fly". Although the company is small, it still plays an important role in the wine sector. The upper management are renowned professionals in the sector and the highly qualified staff, knowledgeable in the wine sector, contribute to the success of the company.

Balzac offers the following services: public relations, event management, business strategy, digital marketing, creative design, and online learning.

During the internship, different tasks and projects were implemented. It is important to highlight the event management projects of the Bordeaux Grand Cru Tasting Tour in the US. Several desk research projects were conducted to collect necessary information, PR and Marketing plans were designed and implemented, social media content was created, and a business proposal was created. It also should be mentioned that the first draft of the presented guideline was used during the internship to evaluate the direction of wine tourism within the winery to formulate a development plan.

2. Introduction

2.1 Wine Tourism and its Development

Many different definitions of wine tourism exist but one of the most widely accepted comes from Hall et al. and dates back to the year 2000.

“Visitation to vineyards, wineries, wine festivals and wine shows for which grape wine tasting and/or experiencing the attributes of a grape wine region are the prime motivating factors for visitors” (Hall et al., 2000).

If we look at the development of wine tourism in a historical context, we will see that interest in the academic field of this issue begins in the 1990s (Terziyska, I., 2018). Hall and Getz are significant figures in terms of the academic development of wine tourism. Their works from the early 21st Century were impactful contributions to the sector (Charters, S., Carlsen, J., 2006). It is also prudent to point out that the first Wine Tourism Conference was held in Australia in 1998 (Morris, R., & King, C., 1998). The production of academic works on the issue can be recognized as an indirect metric for the development process of the sector and its increasing importance.

Since the beginning of this century, many wineries, and even policymakers, have analyzed that wine tourism can be far more encompassing than selling wine at the cellar door. From this angle, wine tourism can be viewed as a lifestyle package that includes various elements related to many different economic activities. Consequently, wine tourism has gradually become an important contributor to regional development (Charters, S., Carlsen, J., 2006).

Of the significant academic works in wine tourism, that of René Baretje-Keller is of particular note; he analyzed 282 references, the most considerable tourism literature from all over the world. In his scholarly overview of the literature, 1300 themes in wine tourism academic studies can be identified. Using this body of research, he created 5 thematic groups: culture and heritage; business; marketing; wine tourists themselves; and wine tourism systems (Charters, S., Carlsen, J., 2006).

Baretje-Keller's work indicates how important wine tourism has become. Today, no one doubts its value. Yet there remains a gap in the academic and even practical knowledge and expertise needed for implementation. This paper serves to partially fill the aforementioned gaps. Before the problem is introduced, it will be useful to take another look at the importance of wine tourism today.

2.2 Importance of Wine Tourism

When talking about the benefits of wine tourism, it is important to distinguish between three levels: the global economy, the national/regional economy, and the wine businesses themselves.

The wine tourism sector was projected to be valued at around 8.7 billion US dollars in 2020, a year when the whole global tourist industry was seriously impacted by the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. According to projections, the value of the wine tourism business will increase to roughly 29.6 billion euros in 2030 (30.8bn USD) (Statista.com, 2022 report).

For national/regional development, wine tourism has an important impact on economies through economic growth, capital investment, and regional/rural development opportunities. Economic growth from wine tourism can be connected to increased revenue, foreign exchange, higher demand for local production, and job creation. Capital investment is mainly considered to attract investors for HORECA businesses. The impact of wine tourism on regional development can be highlighted as a process of socio-cultural-economic improvement. Wine tourism is most commonly connected to rural tourism, which is why it promotes the diffusion of economic benefits, knowledge, and cultural activities from the center to the periphery of the country (Khan, A., Bibi, S., Lorenzo, A., Lyu, J., & Babar, Z. U..2020).

For the wineries themselves, the development of wine tourism can have many other benefits besides income. Wine tourism promotes brand awareness and customer loyalty, which in turn reduces intermediary and marketing costs involved in the sales process. All this is related to cash flow and profit margin. Therefore, the benefits are more extensive than the simple income earned from a tourist visit (Carlsen, J., 2004).

2.3 Introducing the Problem

For the development of wine tourism, an active academic engagement is crucial. As previously stated, the number of academic papers and research related to the subject indirectly indicates the level of development of the field. This number is growing significantly every year. Although at this stage, there are no guidelines, manuals, or even a complete list of evaluation criteria, which can be leveraged by professionals involved in wine tourism management. The existence of practical guidelines for wineries engaged in wine tourism is critical on a local and even global level of wine tourism development.

It should also be noted that various studies have explored different dimensions of wine tourism and shown ways to develop them. Unfortunately, this information is fragmentary, does not describe the whole process of wine tourism, and is also quite scattered, which hinders access and actual practical implementation.

For reference, several works that can be considered close to the presented study should be highlighted. In 2016, At the UNWTO Global Conference on Wine Tourism, UNWTO presented the “Prototype on Wine Tourism: Joyful Journey” pilot project results, with recommendations for wineries that wish to develop wine tourism (3rd UNWTO Global Conference on Wine Tourism, Moldova, 2018). Another UNWTO document – “Guidelines for the Development of Gastronomy Tourism” deals with different aspects of wine tourism but focuses on regional development projects suited to policymakers rather than dealing with the needs of wineries. (UNWTO, 2019). In previous years, a document created by the Winemaker’s Federation of Australia was available with detailed checklists for wineries engaged in wine tourism, but this is no longer available (Woldarsky, V., 2018).

Also noteworthy are two previous WINTOUR Master’s theses: “Design and implementation of the multi-criteria evaluation scheme for the wine tourism experience” by Olga Karakich and “Wine tourism project: Creation of best practice manual” by Vinka Woldarsky (Karakich, O., 2018 & Woldarsky, V., 2018). Those works focused on the evaluation criteria and best practices of wine tourism. This thesis can be considered a development of Karavich and Woldarsky's work, which is good practice for the master's program itself. In a similar vein, the Master’s thesis defended by Ekaterina Iakimova under the same master's program is useful. She worked on service design topics and clarified touch points in the consumer journey¹ of a winery visit. These touch points were used to collect different factors/criteria related to winery visits (Iakimova, E., 2019).

2.4 The Study Focus

Wine tourism has many forms; winery and vineyard visits; wine festivals and events; participation in wine tastings, etc. The increasing interest in wine tourism has given rise to many innovative activities that may not yet have been mentioned in the academic literature. To summarize, any touristic activity

¹ *The customer journey is understood as the practice that a customer goes through with a company across all steps and touchpoints that comprise the customer experience (Lemon, K. N., Verhoef, P. C., 2016).*

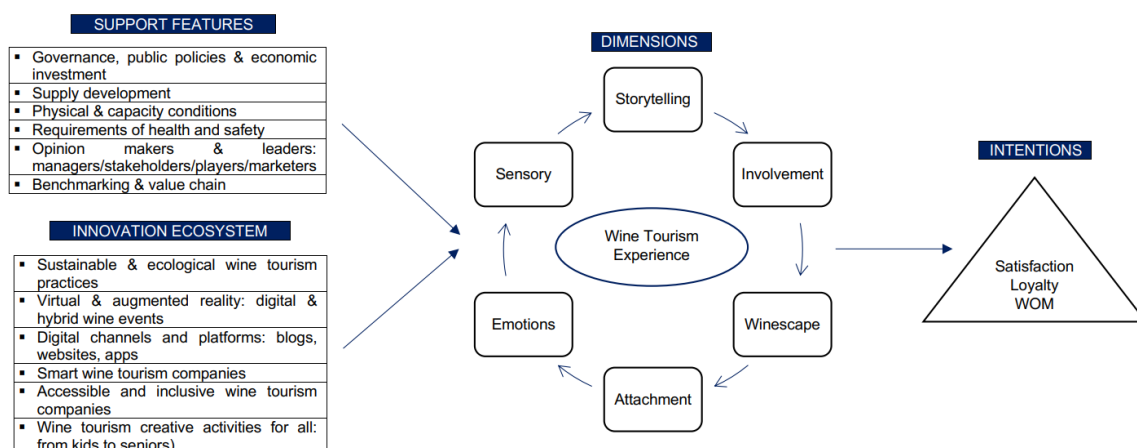
whose primary motivation is related to wine can be considered a form of wine tourism, which leaves a wide range of activities.

This research focuses on the "traditional" perception of wine tourism, i.e., the process of a tourist visiting a winery, which includes a visit to a vineyard, the industrial apparatus, winery, and wine tasting. The focus of the presented research is not on the different types of activities that wineries can carry out. Therefore, this research addresses the most basic form of wine tourism and the various factors associated with it.

In addition to the variety of forms of wine tourism, it should be noted that wine tourism cuts across multiple facets of the wine industry and has many layers that can influence tourist behavior (Woldarsky, V., 2018). Considering the characteristics of wine production, tourism in general, and gastronomic or agro-tourism in particular, are essential to understand when talking about successful wine tourism.

In addition to the many facts that have already been discussed, many other aspects are likely to influence the development of wine tourism. These factors can be grouped into 4 categories: support features, innovation ecosystem, dimensions, and intentions. Those categories with their factors are given in the following chart (Santos V., Ramos p., Sousa B., Valeri M., 2021);

Figure 1. Towards a Framework of the Global Wine Tourism System (Source: Santos V., Ramos p., Sousa B., Valeri M., 2021)



From this chart, the many layers of wine tourism are visible, but this study focused primarily on the “Dimensions” category with a secondary investigation of some elements of the “Intentions” category. The factors related to those groups were studied through the cellar door visit prism. This study, therefore, is an attempt to describe the one particular basic activity we most often encounter in wine tourism – a visit to the winery, with the elements and processes consumers go through.

The study subjects were divided into three categories to optimize the uncovering and analysis of the factors/criteria that refer to each “Touch Point.” These appear between visitors and the winery during the whole “Customer Journey”. The three categories are: factors prior to the visit (1); factors presented during the visit (2); and post-visit factors (3).

To have a clearer idea of what factors/criteria exist in each category, one needs to highlight the customer journey map for winery visits created by Ekaterine Iakimova. The listed touchpoints in the customer journey were used to identify important criteria/factors of winery visits for this study (Iakimova, E., 2019).

Figure 2. Touch Points and Customer Journey Map (Source: Iakimova, E. 2019).



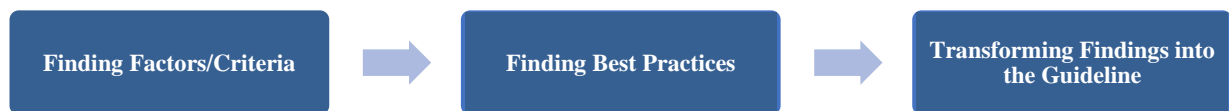
3. Research Goal and Objectives

The present study aims to create a guideline for basic wine tourism principles. The guideline will integrate those important factors/criteria that need to be considered at different stages of wine tourism planning and development for any winery, regardless of its size or profile. This guideline is suitable for both wineries and wine tourism consultancies.

Objectives

- To collect the important factors/criteria in wine tourism (cellar door visits) based on academic papers, customer reviews, and the practices of sector experts.
- To collect information about wine tourism best practices from sector experts.
- To integrate the study results and insights into a guideline for basic wine tourism.

Figure 3. Study objectives



4. Methodology

A holistic approach to creating basic guidelines for wine tourism development is necessary. It should be based on both scientific papers and the practical knowledge and experience of sector experts, as well as consumer experience. In this process, desk research techniques were utilized, as well as some other qualitative and quantitative research methods. The stage and chronology of the research phases are given in the following table.

Table 1. Research phases

Phases	Desk Research	Qualitative Research	Quantitative Research	Creating Guideline
1 st Phase	Literature Review			
2 nd Phase		Netnography Study		
3 rd Phase		In-depth Interview		
4 th Phase		Focus Group Discussion		
5 th Phase			Self-administrated online Survey	
6 th Phase				Integration Study Insights and Transforming into the Guideline
7 th Phase				Review of Guidelines by the Wine Tourism Experts

4.1 Desk Research

As part of the desk research, the existing literature on wine tourism was studied. Emphasis has been placed on the latest papers, as wine tourism is still in its infancy. The corresponding information and standards are quite variable.

Based on the literature analysis, wine tourism is divided into three stages, and for each stage, the significant factors contained in the academic papers were collected. Those stages and factors are given in the following table.

Table 2. Important criteria / factors of wine tourism in academic papers

Stages	Criteria's/Factors	Statement
Stage 1. Factors prior to the visit	The winery location	Being on a wine route is important in terms of dealing with location conditions (Barber, N. A., Donovan, J. R., & Dodd, T. H., 2008). Creating activity packages for social/ritual gatherings (weddings, birthdays...) (Getz, 2000) Using landscape advantages for escapes or adventure tourism (Hall, Cambourne, Macionis, Johnson, 1997)
	The collaboration between wineries and other stakeholders	Collaboration between wineries and other stakeholders, like hotels and different touristic attractions, as well as magazines and any other impactful stakeholder, can have an effect on tourists' decisions (Visser, E. J., De Langen, P., 2006)
	The visiting hours	Long visiting hours are essential for tourists in the decision-making process (Marzo-Navarro, M., Pedraja-Iglesias, M. 2012)
	Working during weekends	Weekend visiting hours are essential for tourists in the decision-making process (Dawson, D., Fountain, J., & Cohen, D. A., 2011)
	Website	(1)Visual design, (2)Content, structure, and navigation, (3)Technology, (4)Ordering and payment, and (5) Contact information are important criteria to be considered (Stanujkic, D., Karabasevic, D., Popovic, G., & Sava, C., 2021). Winery websites can be used for promotion, commercial, and educational purposes (Duarte A., Bressan, A., O'Shea, M., & Krajsic, V. 2013)
	Digital presence and advertisement	High ranking in Google search is crucial nowadays (Mitrović, S., Šimunić, M., 2019) Well-optimized sites receive more traffic and therefore sales (Mitrović, S., Šimunić, M., 2019)
	Social media platforms	The main reasons for using social media platforms are communication and contact, customer engagement, marketing and promotion, and exploring information (Duarte A., Bressan, A., O'Shea, M., & Krajsic, V. 2013)
	Evaluation/Review platforms	Reviews can be crucial for the customers' decision-making process. Managing visitor reviews is a part of customer relationship management, which is important for business success (Assimakopoulos, C., Papaioannou, E., Sarmaniotis, C., & Georgiadis, C. K., 2015)
	Media coverage	Coverage occupies an important role in wine tourism (Brown, G., & Getz, D., 2005)
	Communication with a winery representative	Interpersonal communication, even online, has an important influence on people/potential customer (Karakich, O., 2018) Communication is one of the key factors in wine tourism assessment (Woldarsky, V., & Geny-Denis, L., 2019)
	Booking	Direct reservations such as via website booking, reservation platform booking, or booking by phone are popular practices among tourists (Liu, Y., 2012) The booking process is one of the key factors in wine tourism assessment (Woldarsky, V., & Geny-Denis, L., 2019)
Stage 2. Factors present during the visit	Infrastructure	Winery parking is important for everyday tourists as well as large-capacity buses. (Kaddi, A. K., Suklabaidya, P., 2014). Road signs, emergency exit signs, WIFI, amenities equipment, cleanliness and safety are important elements of winery infrastructure (Karakich, O., 2018) Child entertainment elements are important touch points for visitors (Iakimova, E., 2019)
	Visitor center	The visitor center can be used as a channel for consumers to improve brand awareness and loyalty (Dodd, T., Bigotte, V., 1997).

Stages	Criteria's/Factors	Statement
	Wine shop	Selling local products and even souvenirs is an important factor for wine tourism income and for meeting tourists' needs (Morris & King, 1998) Human and service elements are important and have even more impact on customers than interior design and décor (Charters and O'Neill, 2001)
	Personnel	Interaction with personnel is a significant factor in customer satisfaction (Duarte A., 2005) Winery staff should be well prepared and trained in service as they also have a strong influence on consumers satisfaction (Carlsen, J., 2011)
	Wine guide	Presentation skills, good appearance, confident voice, and body language, knowledgeable with language, sales and promotion skills are all important factors for a wine tour guide (Karakich, O., 2018)
	Wine tour	A wine tour needs to include the '4E' elements (education, (a)esthetic, entertainment, escapism), (Quadri-Felitti D., Fiore A., 2013)
	Wine tasting	The tasting room and process can influence customer purchasing (Shapiro, M. & Gomez, M., 2014) Tasting room aesthetics can influence consumer satisfaction and behavior (Fountain, J., Fish, N., Charters, S. 2008). Wine tasting attribution is an important touch point to the visitor (Iakimova, E., 2019)
	Value for Money	Value for money significantly affects the consumer satisfaction level. Perception of value includes price and service quality elements. (Westbrook, R.A., Oliver, R.L., 1991).
	Cleanliness of the winery	Cleanliness is a very important factor, and it should be considered for all customer-facing aspects of the winery (Byrd E., Canziani B., Hsieh Y., Debbage K., Sonmez S., 2016)
	Gathering information about visitors	Gathering information from the visitors is an important tool, which can be used for the improvement of practices (Chu, 2002; Roszkowski, 2003) The communication process during tasting also can be used as an information-gathering opportunity (Root, 1996; Penn, 2003)
	Storytelling	Stories get attention easily and they can make an impact on consumers (Moscardo, G., 2010) Storytelling elements can transfer brand stories directly to the visitors (O'Neill, M., & Charters, S., 2000)
Stage 3. Post-visit factors	Maintain communication	One of the ways to maintain communication with visitors is through a wine club (Murphy, J., 2007) Social media platforms are an important way to keep in touch with visitors (Dolan, R., Conduit, J., & Fahy, J., 2015) Review options and replying to them are important touch points for visitors (Iakimova, E., 2019)

4.2 Qualitative Research

Netnography Technique

Netnography is a qualitative research technique developed in recent decades that focuses on the study of community in the online space (Kozinets, R. V., 2015). It is often mentioned as a virtual ethnography, indicated by the name of the method itself, and the techniques are common with ethnography (Wiles, R., Bengry-Howell, A., Crow, G., & Nind, M., 2013).

To determine and collect important factors for consumers, 10 wineries' profiles from TripAdvisor² were studied. Those wineries were chosen based on the Best Wine Capital Awards. All wineries are winners in the Wine Tourism Service Category on the global or regional levels (Best Wine Capital Awards, 2022). It should be mentioned that 6 among them were from Old-World countries and 4 from the New World. In total 200 reviews were analyzed, and for each winery, 20 reviews covering all score categories were studied. From those reviews, 622 factors were mentioned in total. These were grouped into 63 categories. The result of this study is given in the following table:

Table 3. Important factors / criteria of wine tourism in netnography results

	Factors/Criteria	622	100%
1	Wine taste/quality	79	12.70%
2	Friendly staff/unfriendly	56	9.00%
3	Landscape/view	42	6.80%
4	Getting knowledge or information/not getting	40	6.40%
5	Beautiful cellar door /architecture/historical building	39	6.30%
6	Knowledgeable/informative guide/not knowledgeable/confident/not confident	30	4.80%
7	Money value	26	4.20%
8	Number of tasting wines	26	4.20%
9	Good/bad/interesting/not interesting tour	19	3.10%
10	Service good/bad	16	2.60%
11	Good/bad guide	15	2.40%
12	Attitude good/bad	14	2.30%
13	Professional/unprofessional staff	14	2.30%
14	Price/affordable/not affordable	13	2.10%
15	Paired products with wine	12	1.90%
16	Felt welcome/not welcome/hospitality	11	1.80%
17	Good/bad tasting	11	1.80%
18	Beautiful setting	9	1.40%
19	Tasting room interior/atmosphere	9	1.40%
20	Having good time/good atmosphere/good vibes /pleasant/bad atmosphere/vibes/time	9	1.40%
21	Relaxation time/free time/walking	8	1.30%
22	Beautiful interior	7	1.10%
23	Tasting duration	7	1.10%
24	Time rushing/not rushing	6	1.00%
25	Not giving enough attention/giving enough attention	6	1.00%
26	Passion for wine/work in stuff	6	1.00%
27	Waiting time/delay/bad timing	6	1.00%
28	Wine selection for tasting	6	1.00%
29	Crowded	5	0.80%
30	Different from other wineries/not different	5	0.80%
31	Storytelling	4	0.60%
32	Location	4	0.60%

² One winery did not have a TripAdvisor profile, thus Google Reviews were analyzed with the same instructions

	Factors/Criteria	622	100%
33	Authenticity/mass tourism/commercial	4	0.60%
34	Make feel special/personalized	4	0.60%
35	Selective service/"not everyone is welcome"	4	0.60%
36	Welcoming process/reception	4	0.60%
37	Wine shop interior/atmosphere/merchandise	4	0.60%
38	Good places for pictures/giving time for it	4	0.60%
39	Language skills	4	0.60%
40	Vineyard	3	0.50%
41	Working hours	3	0.50%
42	Amount/pour of tasted wine	3	0.50%
43	Funny guide/good humor	2	0.30%
44	Children disturbing other customers	2	0.30%
45	Winery road sign	2	0.30%
46	Flexibility on timing/not flexible	2	0.30%
47	Local products	1	0.20%
48	Cleanliness	1	0.20%
49	Smiling/not smiling	1	0.20%
50	Shortage in staff	1	0.20%
51	Easy/not easy parking	1	0.20%
52	Asking feedback	1	0.20%
53	Receiving an apology for something/not receiving	1	0.20%
54	Nonsense rules	1	0.20%
55	Last minute cancelation	1	0.20%
56	Shipping option /shipping problem	1	0.20%
57	Tasting conditions (temperature, water...)	1	0.20%
58	Working noise during a visit	1	0.20%
59	Kid's tasting packages	1	0.20%
60	Paying in advance	1	0.20%
61	Child friendly visit	1	0.20%
62	Gift	1	0.20%
63	Guide's flexibility/adaptability to the audience	1	0.20%

In-depth Interview Technique

An in-depth interview is one of the first stages of research. The aim of which is to uncover all the necessary information about a topic from people who have experience with the study subject (Boyce, C., & Neale, P., 2006).

It should be mentioned, that the in-depth interview framework was conducted based on the netnography and desk research study results.

For this study, two wine tourism stakeholders were interviewed. Respondents were selected to cover different aspects and topics of the wine tourism industry. They were experienced in the following:

Table 4. In-dept interview respondents

Respondents' Profile	Screening Criteria and Purpose
Wine Tourism Manager / Wine Tour Guide	Experts in planning, managing, implementing, and evaluating wine tourism products
Representative of Wine Tourism Award	To represent professional approaches and bests practices in wine tourism

Focus Group Technique

The focus group guidelines were based on desk research, netnography, and In-depth interview study results. The focus group technique is a qualitative research methodology to investigate people's opinions, knowledge, attitudes, and experience about a certain topic (Glitz, B., 1997).

Two focus group discussions were performed to collect the expert knowledge of wine tourism professionals, and their in-depth insights. Four to five respondents participated in each group. During the discussion, respondents highlighted the most important aspects of wine tourism for them, and they pictured the best practices regarding each topic.

4.3 Quantitative Research

Based on the previous phases a quantitative research instrument was created. The desk and qualitative research results were analyzed, and provisions were created to be evaluated by wine tourism professionals from all over the world. 90 respondents with planning, managing, and implementing wine tourism products were interviewed with a self-administrative online questionnaire. The survey instrument included different criteria, highlighted by the wine tourism industry professionals during the in-depth interview and focus group discussion. Survey respondents were asked to evaluate each criterion/statement on a Likert³ scale to show how important given criteria are for them.

Table 5. Survey structure

1 score	2 score	3 score	4 score	5 score
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

The use of this technique was for ranking the importance of the topics identified in the qualitative research to various professionals.

³ A type of psychometric response scale in which respondents indicate their level of agreement with a statement using a five-point scale (Likert, R., 1932)

4.4 Creating The Guideline

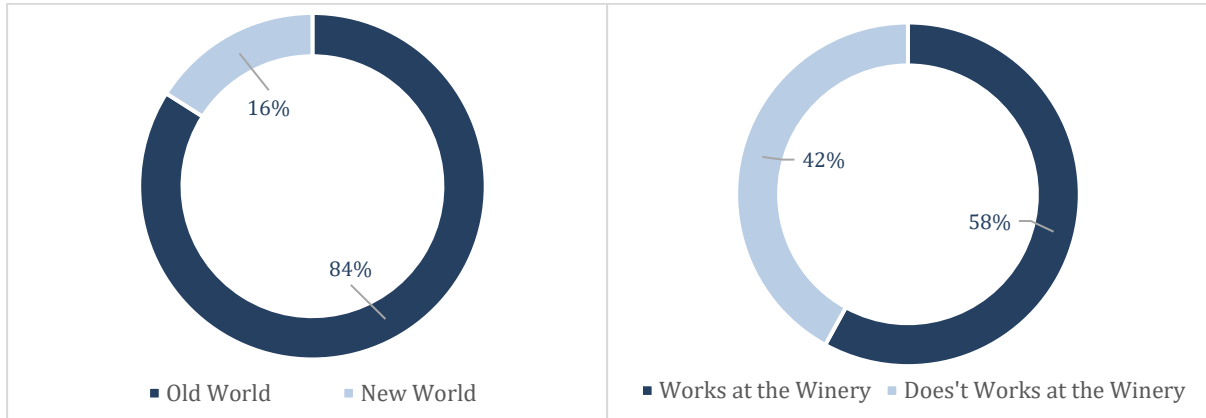
The quantitative research has revealed the criteria that wine tourism experts consider most important. From the quantitative survey results, only those whose statistical score/arithmetical mean was greater or equal to three were selected. These criteria were moved to the guideline. A description of the best practices was created, based on the expert knowledge identified in the qualitative component of this research.

Following the previous research stages, the results were analyzed, integrated, and transformed into a wine tourism basics guideline. The draft guideline was reviewed by the wine tourism experts and updated based on their comments.

5. Study Results

The quantitative study involved 90 wine tourism professionals from around the globe, from 6 continents. It is important that data was collected from both New and Old-World wine countries. Participants were working in wineries as well as various fields of wine tourism, which clarifies a more multifaceted picture.

Figure 4. Respondents profile



The results obtained in the quantitative study are presented in the following tables, showing the arithmetic mean score on a 5-point Likert scale based on an assessment of the significance of each statement.

The results of quantitative, qualitative, and desk research were analyzed, and based on the synthesis of all of this data a wine tourism guideline outlining basic principles emerged.

Some Factors Prior to Visit

Table 6. Some factors prior to visit

Some Factors Prior to Visit	Importance on 5 score scale				
	Old World	New World	Works at the Winery	Doesn't Works at the Winery	Total
The winery location is important in the wine tourist's decision-making process	4.4	4.4	4.5	4.2	4.4
The winery guide how to get to the winery is important for tourists	4.3	3.8	4.3	4.1	4.2
The winery shuttle service from the major city or town of the region is important for tourists	3.7	3.8	3.5	4.1	3.7
Collaboration between the wineries is important	4.3	4.5	4.2	4.4	4.3
Collaboration between the wineries, hotels, and other types of tourist attractions is important wineries' tourism	4.7	4.6	4.7	4.6	4.7
Printed advertising materials on different touristic places are important for the winery tourism	3.7	3.6	3.8	3.6	3.7
Articles about wineries in printed magazines are important for the wineries' tourism	3.7	4.3	3.8	3.9	3.8
Visiting options during the weekends are important for the wineries' tourism	4.4	4.7	4.3	4.7	4.5

Location: The location of the cellar often plays a crucial role in the decision-making process for the visitor. This is often a problematic issue while wineries are usually in rural areas where transportation is not very developed. Location is a static circumstance but still, a winery can carry out certain activities to deal with this issue.

The winery website must contain detailed information about the location, as well as instructions on how to get to this location and the transportation options the visitor can use.

A shuttle service can be considered as an additional service. It also can be organized by collaborating with various wineries located in the same region.

Cooperation with hotels/hostels/guest houses/restaurants and other tourist agents or events: It is important to note that wine tourism visits are mainly related to other activities from the same region. So winery should have accurate information about all the tourism agents/events in the region. This is largely due to the tendency of tourists to ask the local representative for their opinion and advice on visiting different wineries. Consequently, partnerships with various tourism agents are an effective way to attract tourists already in the region. The most actively used technique for conducting such a partnership is to invite various strategically important employees from other companies that has direct contact with the tourists and conduct an info tour for them.

Collaboration with other wineries: Collaborating with competitors is a lucrative move in wine tourism. A large number of these tourists also visit other wineries in the same region after their first visit. Also, they are wondering which winery the host would recommend for the next visit. This behavioral tendency can be used in favor of the winery. Based on cooperation with different wineries, it is possible to organize a system to send tourists to each other.

Printed Advertisement: Tourists who have already arrived in the region, are one of the most important targets for wineries. Therefore, the winery should try to be noticeable to potential visitors using a variety of techniques. Information leaflets, or magazines, often placed in tourist offices and hotels are an important opportunity to promote the winery.

Working hours: Extended working hours are important during the active tourist season. It is also desirable that the cellar can receive visitors on official holidays because some visitors can only travel during this period.

Website

Table 7. Winery website

Winery Website	Importance on 5 score scale				Total
	Old World	New World	Works at the Winery	Doesn't Works at the Winery	
The winery website is important to tourists in the decision-making process	4.6	4.6	4.7	4.6	4.6
Content quality on the winery website is important for the wineries' tourism	4.4	4.6	4.4	4.5	4.4
The navigation process on the winery website is important for the wineries' tourism	4.3	4.4	4.4	4.3	4.3
The winery website speed is important for the wineries' tourism	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.1
The winery website's compatibility with different devices like phones or computers is important for the wineries' tourism	4.4	4.6	4.4	4.5	4.4
Showing wine tourism packages with all the necessary information on the website is important for the wineries' tourism	4.3	4.2	4.2	4.3	4.3
The complete contact information given on the website is important for the wineries' tourism	4.6	4.4	4.6	4.4	4.5
The website connectivity with social networks like Facebook and Instagram is important for the wineries' tourism	4.3	4.2	4.4	4.2	4.3
The website language options are important for the wineries' tourism	4.4	4.1	4.4	4.3	4.3

Content: The visual and textual content posted on the website should be of high quality and should match the communication style of the company. It is also important for the content to be authentic and give clear visitor expectations.

Straightforward website: The website should be simple and not overloaded with sections or content. Only essential information should be listed on the website. Website navigation should be intuitive.

Website speed and device compliance: Website loading speed should be satisfactory (less than 3 seconds). Usually, potential customers leave a website if it is too slow to load. The website should be device responsive.

Wine tourism packages: The wine tour offers should be presented in a conspicuous place and easily found while navigating the site. It is desirable to offer different packages to give customers a choice. A minimum of two packages should be offered with 3-4 being optimal. A brief and simple description of

each package should be given. The price, along with all the other relevant tour-related conditions, should be displayed. The price of the tour should be competitive compared to other local wineries. The procedure for how a visitor can receive an existing service should be easily described. It is desirable to have appropriate visual material for the tour (at least pictures). The wine tour should not require a minimum number of visitors.

Company contact info: The contact information section should be complete. It should include at least the following information: full address (including postal code), telephone number, and email address. There should be a map with directions (i.e. a Google maps embed)

Website language: Additional languages can be added based on the core visitor segment of the winery but, in most cases, English is essential for wine tourism operations.

Website connectivity with social networks: The website should list the social network links on which the company is represented (e.g., Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, etc.) The possibility to easily check the social media pages of wineries can help potential visitors in the decision-making process.

Social media pages

Table 8. Social media pages

Social Media Pages	Importance on 5 score scale				
	Old World	New World	Works at the Winery	Doesn't Works at the Winery	Total
Having a Facebook page is important for the wineries' tourism	3.6	4.3	3.9	3.4	3.7
Having an Instagram page is important for the wineries' tourism	4.4	4.5	4.6	4.3	4.5
Having a LinkedIn page is important for the wineries' tourism	3.3	3.2	3.3	3.3	3.3
Content quality on winery social media pages is important for the wineries' tourism	4.5	4.4	4.6	4.4	4.5
The complete contact information given on winery social media pages is important for the wineries' tourism	4.4	4.4	4.6	4.2	4.4
The frequency of activities on winery social media pages is important for the wineries' tourism	4.2	4.1	4.3	4.1	4.2
People's engagement level on winery social media pages is important for the wineries' tourism	4.2	4.1	4.2	4.1	4.2

Presenting the company on social media: The company should have, at minimum, Facebook and Instagram pages. Social media pages are an easy and fast way to communicate with customers. Also, potential visitors check the winery's social media pages to get a feel for the winery's 'vibe,' helping them with the decision-making process. Visitors should be encouraged to engage with the winery's social media, e.g. sharing their experiences, which can be seen as free publicity.

Content: The visual and textual content posted on the social page should be of high quality and should match the communication style of the company. The content needs to be authentic, giving visitors the

correct expectations. It is desirable to show the activity and visitor engagement. The personal factor is also important in wine tourism, therefore content should include people—both workers and visitors. This content should still highlight the landscape and architectural aspects. For production aspects of the business, the cellar and aging processes are the most desirable in social media content.

Activity: The company needs to be active on the social networks on which it is represented. The latest post should not be posted more than a week ago (in countries that are more active on social media this time will be less). The level of customer engagement (likes/followers/shares/comments) is also important and should be adequate for the size of the company and country.

Facebook: The Facebook page should contain information about the business ("about" field). A brief and easy-to-read description of the company should be given. It must contain information about the company website, phone number, and address (connected to Google Maps).

Instagram: Filling in the information related to the business description is important. It is necessary to have a website link. It is desirable to have a direct link for visitor bookings. It is important to have video content. It is desirable to have a "highlights" section. The page should look professional and should rely on the company's communication style.

Evaluation Platforms

Table 9. Evaluation platforms

Evaluation Platforms	Importance on 5 score scale				
	Old World	New World	Works at the Winery	Doesn't Works at the Winery	Total
Reviews on TripAdvisor profile is important for the wineries' tourism	4.4	4.0	4.4	4.3	4.4
Reviews on the Google Business page are important for the wineries' tourism	4.3	4.0	4.3	4.1	4.2
Facebook Reviews are important for the wineries' tourism	3.7	3.8	3.9	3.6	3.7

TripAdvisor Review: The company’s profile information should be provided and it is necessary to post contact information. It is also desirable to post basic information about travel packages. It is optimal for visitors to have a booking option on TripAdvisor.

Google Review: The company must have an address registered on Google Maps for the possibility of getting reviews from customers. After visiting the location, the Google Review platform automatically asks customers whether they enjoyed the experience and also asks to share some visual content. For visitors, it's easier to evaluate on Google than on any other platform, that’s why every winery should give enough attention to this profile.

Facebook Review. It is important that visitors can read and write reviews. customers could have different favorite platforms to use, so each platform must offer the maximum number of features to the visitors.

Score and Managing Comments: (applying to all the reviewing platforms). The total evaluation score is important, as are comments and correctly managing the reply process (especially for negative comments). Nowadays, a score lower than 4 stars can be considered a disadvantage in the decision-making process of potential visitors. Usually, customers pay more attention to wineries with a score of 4.5 or above. The winery should protect its position when dealing with negative comments but always appear grateful for visitors who took the time to write feedback. Often in response to negative comments, a winery may appear arrogant or in a position of denial, which is irritating for the author of the comment, as well as for potential tourists, who often check negative comments first.

Internet Presence

Table 10. Presence in internet

Presence in Internet	Importance on 5 score scale				
	Old World	New World	Works at the Winery	Doesn't Works at the Winery	Total
Website Search Engine Optimization (SEO) is important for the wineries' tourism	4.2	4.0	4.0	4.5	4.2
Google Ads is important for the wineries' tourism	3.5	3.4	3.4	3.6	3.5
Digital advertising on social media pages is important for the wineries' tourism	3.9	3.6	3.8	3.9	3.8
Being in different articles, guides, magazines, and similar internet content is important for the wineries' tourism	4.5	4.6	4.5	4.5	4.5

Google My Business: The field related to the business must be filled out. Detailed contact information is required, including an address, phone number, email, and website. It is important to post information about working hours. High-quality visual content is also well received. Links to social media pages are desirable. Links from different booking platforms are also useful.

Positioning of the Company in Google Search: The winery website should have good SEO to appear at the top of search. Usually, potential customers don't go farther than the first 3-4 results. Google ads can be used to promote wineries in top positions.

Digital advertising: Digital advertising can be a powerful tool to capture potential customers' attention. Targeted Facebook and Instagram ads can reach specific people who are in the process of selecting a winery and such advertising can play a crucial role in the decision-making process.

Presence on different internet resources: Featuring on various internet resources increases the chances of a potential visitor noticing a winery. However, in addition to this, it can be used for various other aspects of digital marketing too.

Communication with Winery Representatives

Table 11. Communication with winery representative

Communication with Winery Representative	Importance on 5 score scale				
	Old World	New World	Works at the Winery	Doesn't Works at the Winery	Total
The communication style of the winery representative is important during communication with potential visitors	4.6	4.4	4.6	4.5	4.6
Response time is important during communication with potential visitors	4.6	4.5	4.5	4.6	4.6
Providing correct information is important during communication with potential visitors	4.8	4.7	4.8	4.7	4.7
Providing comprehensive/all necessary information is important during communication with potential visitors	4.5	4.6	4.7	4.3	4.5
Providing coherent information when communicating with different representatives of the winery is important for potential visitors	4.5	4.5	4.6	4.4	4.5

Sometimes, a wine tourist, after selecting a few preferred wineries in the region, contacts a company representative directly to find out any detailed information and to book a visit. At this point, the company has entered the main competition stage and has been selected from a list of other wineries, hence it may only have to compete with a few other companies selected by the tourist. Therefore, it can be said that communication with a representative of a wine company may be a crucial factor. A company representative should be able to get a potential visitor to agree to the visit.

Response time: Response time should ideally not exceed 1 hour during business hours, and responses to messages sent during non-business hours should be received within the first hour of the new working day. Expectations regarding response time are slightly different for different platforms. For example, replying to emails may take more time than on Facebook, WhatsApp, and Viber. However, when it comes to booking issues, it is important to respond as quickly as possible to a potential visitor. A significant fraction of modern consumers operate on the principle of "here and now" and the company's communication channels must be able to adapt to this.

Communication style: The communication style should largely replicate the general communication style of the company, which is found on the various communication channels. The communication style should be coherent with the philosophy. For example, while a family winery can have a familiar tone, well-known old chateaux from Bordeaux may have a comparatively formal tone. Communication must be authentic to the company. The speaking/writing skills of company representatives are important. They are required to provide correct, comprehensive, and any necessary information.

Booking Process

Table 12. Booking process

Booking Process	Importance on 5 score scale				
	Old World	New World	Works at the Winery	Doesn't Works at the Winery	Total
The possibility to book visits in different ways is important for the wineries' tourism	4.3	4.3	4.3	4.3	4.3
Having a reservation system for visitors on the website is important for the wineries' tourism	4.2	4.2	4.1	4.2	4.2
Having paying option on the website during reservation is important	4.1	4.1	4.0	4.2	4.1
Paying in advance for a winery visit is important for wineries' tourism	3.5	3.2	3.5	3.5	3.5
Visit' reservation option with email communication is important for tourists	4.2	3.8	4.2	4.0	4.1
Visit' reservation option with Facebook communication is important for tourists	3.0	3.1	3.1	2.9	3.0
Visit' reservation option with Instagram communication is important for tourists	3.1	3.1	3.2	3.0	3.1
Visit' reservation option by phone is important for tourists	4.2	4.3	4.4	3.9	4.2
Visit' reservation option with TripAdvisor is important for tourists	3.3	3.1	3.1	3.5	3.2
Visit' reservation option with different wine tourism reservation platforms is important for tourists	3.9	3.6	3.8	3.9	3.9
Accepting visitors without reservation (cellar door) is important for wineries' tourism	4.1	4.2	4.1	4.1	4.1
The easy booking process of visit is important for wineries' tourism	4.6	4.4	4.5	4.7	4.6
The confirmation email of booked visit is important	4.7	4.4	4.6	4.7	4.6
The modification possibility of booked visit is important	4.1	4.0	4.0	4.3	4.1
The cancelation policy of booked visit is important	4.3	3.8	4.2	4.2	4.2
The discount system for different visitor categories is important (for example, students, wine professionals, big groups, and so on)	4.0	3.9	3.9	4.1	4.0

Booking options: Customers should have the opportunity to book visits through various channels. A website booking system is necessary. If a visitor requests a booking through various social platforms, or even via email, the winery should preferably send a booking link that will get the user into the site booking system. This way booking will be systematized, and at the same time, the site's ranking increases due to the users engaging with the site, which is important for being in the first position on Google Search. It should also be noted that in addition to link sharing, it is important to provide the customer with all the required information during the communication process.

In the booking system of the winery site, it is desirable to have the possibility of payment, although this should be optional and not mandatory. Some visitors prefer to pay in advance. This way they do not have to focus on financial issues during the tour and focus as much as possible on relaxation. It should also be noted that some packages that require the supply of products in advance (for example food and wine pairing) may only be on a prepaid basis so that the company will not be harmed by cancellation.

Reservation modification, cancellation policy, and money refund procedure are important. All this should be tailored to the interests of the customer as much as possible so as not to harm the decision-making process.

Also, it is desirable to activate the booking button on the winery’s Facebook page, which will be linked to the booking system of the site.

Booking Platforms: In addition, it is important to have booking options via various booking platforms, such as TripAdvisor or other companies that sell wine tours. Some customers often prefer such platforms, because the payment and cancellation policy is more reliable for them.

The option to make reservations by phone is important for some visitors. It is prudent to note that phone calls are often problematic for foreign visitors, so it is necessary to make this process easier by using WhatsApp and Viber.

Some other Aspect of Booking: For any form of reservation, the booking procedure should be simple. Confirmation emails (or a message in the case of phone booking) are important for visitors. Any winery, regardless of its size and resources, can have a booking tracking system/form to ensure that everything is properly planned and implemented.

It is important for any winery involved in wine tourism to be able to receive guests without booking. Some visitors, when they see the winery from the road, make the spontaneous decision to visit, and such tourists must not be refused.

It is desirable to have concession pricing for different categories of tourists, for example, students, elderly people, wine professionals, or large groups.

Infrastructure

Table 13. Infrastructure

Infrastructure	Importance on 5 score scale				
	Old World	New World	Works at the Winery	Doesn't Works at the Winery	Total
Having the road sign of the winery is important	4.6	4.7	4.7	4.4	4.6
Having signs of different infrastructure at the winery is important (like signs of parking, welcome center, bathrooms...)	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.4	4.5
Having a parking space is important	4.5	4.8	4.6	4.6	4.6
Having a kids-friendly winery is important	3.5	3.4	3.4	3.6	3.5
Having adapted winery for people with special needs is important	4.4	4.1	4.2	4.4	4.3
Having the visitor/welcome center is important	3.9	3.8	3.9	3.9	3.9
Having WIFI is important	4.2	4.6	4.3	4.2	4.3
The cleanliness of any space in a winery is important	4.7	5.0	4.8	4.7	4.7
Safety of any space in the winery is important	4.7	4.8	4.8	4.6	4.7

Road Signs: The winery should have noticeable signage for visitors. This allows easy access via road and also serves as advertising for spontaneous visitors.

Signage: Signs help visitors to understand the space, therefore the winery needs to have signs. At minimum for parking, the visitor center, toilets, emergency exits, and the shop should be displayed. In large wineries, all additional spaces should have signs.

Parking: Appropriate space should be allocated for parking. There should be signs showing where visitors may access parking facilities. The parking capacity should be appropriate for tourist buses if the winery targets large groups too.

Visitor Center: The visitor center helps guests to easily explore from their arrival at the winery. Also, it serves as a waiting space for visitors if needed. The visitor center must have a toilet so that tourists have access to it before the visit starts.

Amenities: Toilets should be adapted for people with special needs, the elderly, and children. Infant changing stations are desirable.

Safety: Since the wine tour mainly includes a visit to the technical part of the winery, the guide must take special care of visitor safety. They should warn guests in advance to beware of hazards (e.g. staircases that visitors may not notice without guidance.)

Cleanliness: The cleanliness of the cellar and the tasting environment, as well as the tasting utensils, are essential elements in assessing wine tourism. It is important to pay attention to the yard and the surrounding area of the cellar as well.

Wi-Fi: Wi-Fi can be especially important for foreign tourists who may not have internet access on the premises. Guests should not encounter an obstacle to sharing winery content on social media. Wi-Fi must be freely accessible without a password.

Child-friendly Space: A winery should take children into account in the space planning process. It is also important for children to have an age-appropriate tasting package or an entertainment station/accessories during the tasting.

Personnel

Table 14. Personnel

Personnel	Importance on 5 score scale				
	Old World	New World	Works at the Winery	Doesn't Works at the Winery	Total
An Attitude of staff who can be seen by visitors is important	4.8	4.9	4.8	4.8	4.8
The appearance/look/clothing of staff who can be seen by visitors is important	4.2	4.8	4.3	4.2	4.3

Attitude of Personnel: One of the most important aspects of wine tourism is personal relationships. Therefore, it is important that any staff, with whom the guest may come into contact during the visit, have a positive attitude. To feel welcome is an essential criterion for customers.

Appearance: Often the staff are in the process of working, during which it is natural to not have immaculate clothing, but this must not be too noticeable to the visitor.

Wine Tour Guide

Table 15. Wine tour guide

Wine Tour Guide	Importance on 5 score scale				
	Old World	New World	Works at the Winery	Doesn't Works at the Winery	Total
Wine tour guide communication style is important	4.6	4.8	4.6	4.6	4.6
Wine tour guide language skills are important	4.6	4.3	4.5	4.6	4.6
Wine tour guide knowledge is important	4.7	4.8	4.8	4.6	4.7
Wine tour guide storytelling skills are important	4.7	4.6	4.7	4.6	4.7
Wine tour guide time management skills are important	4.4	4.2	4.5	4.2	4.4
Wine tour guide people management skills are important	4.5	4.4	4.5	4.4	4.4
Wine tour guide adaptability skills to different type of group are important	4.7	4.7	4.6	4.8	4.7
Wine tour guide selling skills are important	4.2	4.5	4.3	4.1	4.2

Introduction: At the beginning of the tour, the guide should introduce himself/herself to the guests, and it is important to clearly explain what their duty in the winery is. The guide must get to know the group and understand their interests regarding the tour. Based on this information, the guide should modify the tour content and highlight aspects that visitors may be more interested in it. In the introductory part of the tour, a brief description of the tour and safety measures are useful for visitors.

Communication: The tour guide should be a polite and welcoming person with passion of wine. They should have good communication skills. They should have a good language level and be confident. Communication style will depend on the profile and philosophy of the winery, but too much familiarity or formality is never a good idea. For that reason, guides should not cross the line with familiarity and nor should they come across as arrogant by being overly formal. Distance during the tour (between the guide and visitors) is important too. Distance standards are highly cultural aspects, of which a guide should be aware. The tone of the guide's communication is also important, it should not be didactic, it is preferable to take the form of information sharing where both sides of the communication are equal.

Knowledge: Knowledge is essential for a wine tour guide. The guide should be well-acquainted with the history of the winery, as well as wine production, general wine history, and cultural aspects of the region and country. Guides should be aware also of touristic monuments, activities, and other places which could be of interest to the visitor.

Storytelling Skills: Nowadays stories sell everything. That's why this skill is important for a guide to gain and maintain visitor attention. Storytelling elements can be applied to every part of the tour content.

Time and Person Management: One of the important challenges of a guide is the management of time and the individuals in the group. It is important that the tour is completed on time and that none of the members of the group feel neglected.

Sales and Promotional Skills: Toward the end, an essential aspect of wine tourism is the promotion and sale of winery products. Therefore these skills are almost mandatory for guides. Techniques used by the guide should be soft and not obvious to visitors. The guest should not feel obligated to buy anything.

Wine Tour

Table 16. Wine tour

Wine Tour	Importance on 5 score scale				
	Old World	New World	Works at the Winery	Doesn't Works at the Winery	Total
The wine tour length is important	4.2	4.5	4.2	4.4	4.3
The sequence of activities when planning a wine tour is important	4.4	4.2	4.2	4.4	4.3
The wine tour content is important	4.6	4.4	4.5	4.6	4.5
Highlighting winery sustainability practices is important	4.2	4.1	4.2	4.1	4.2
Highlighting a scenic view from the winery is important	4.2	4.6	4.2	4.4	4.3
Taking pictures are important for visitors	4.4	4.7	4.5	4.5	4.5
The money value of a wine tour is important	4.4	4.3	4.4	4.3	4.4

Tour Length: The average duration of a basic tour is often one hour. Tour duration of fewer than 40 minutes can be negatively perceived by the user. Yet a tour duration of more than 1.5 hours can be tiring for guests.

Tour planning: A wine tour usually includes various elements; a visit to the vineyard; the industrial areas; a tasting room or similar. It is therefore important that each stage is properly assembled and planned at the appropriate time, and that the experience is consistent. Usually, the tour starts with a visit to the vineyard, followed by a visit to the factory, then a visit to the cellar, finishing with a visit to a tasting area and shop. Usually, it follows the winemaking stages but in some cases, this may differ based on spatial planning or layout. For sales, the wine shop needs to be the last point of the tour.

Tour Activities: The active involvement of visitors in the tour is important, they should not be placed in the position of passive listeners. To do this, it is possible to focus on different aspects. At best, the basic tour should have educational, entertainment, aesthetic, and escapist aspects. Question-and-answer opportunities, quizzes, or simple games may be helpful in this process.

Highlighting a scenic view from the winery during a tour is important. It should also be considered that taking pictures is important for visitors, hence the time required for it should be taken into account when planning the tour. Also, taking pictures should be encouraged, avoiding discomfort for tourists.

A wine tour is quite an active travel package loaded with information and several activities, it should not be forgotten that for a majority of wine tourists the primary motivation is relaxation. To this end, visitors may be given free time after the tour so that they can spend time independently in the winery. It is possible to have a bar-type space in the building or a yard that is equipped with the necessary infrastructure.

Tour Content: It is important to adapt the content of the program to the group. During the tour, the guide needs to determine what type of information is most suitable for the group and adapt accordingly. Moreover, if the guide sees that some type of information/activity is not interesting for the customers, they may make shorter or even skip this part. The tour guide needs a high level of emotional intelligence to understand the visitor’s needs and provide suitable adjustments.

Today, sustainability is an important aspect for modern tourists. Therefore, best practice dictates that wineries highlight sustainable practices involved in the production process.

Many wineries appear similar for guests. It is vital to create a unique tour program and also to emphasize the differences that a particular winery has in comparison to others.

Wine Tasting

Table 17. Wine tasting

Wine Tasting	Importance on 5 score scale				
	Old World	New World	Works at the Winery	Doesn't Works at the Winery	Total
The tasting room design is important	4.3	4.5	4.4	4.3	4.4
Tasting room lighting is important	4.3	4.3	4.3	4.3	4.3
The number of tasted wines is important	4.1	4.1	4.0	4.1	4.1
The wine glasses are important	4.4	4.5	4.5	4.3	4.4
Printed / digital materials for tasting notes are important	3.4	3.5	3.3	3.4	3.4
Having water during the tasting is important	4.4	4.2	4.4	4.3	4.3
Having napkins during the tasting is important	4.1	4.0	4.0	4.1	4.1
Having spittoon during the tasting is important	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.1

Tasting Room: The design of the tasting room has an impact on visitor satisfaction. Aesthetic aspects are important in this case. Also, if possible, the tasting room will have a beautiful view of the landscape. Good lighting and light colors are desirable in a tasting room. The room should be free of intense aromas. Tasting attribution is a key factor in appreciation, wine glasses especially can affect visitors' perceptions. High-quality wine glasses can increase the positive attitudes of tourists. Having water, napkins, and a spittoon during the tasting is important. Printed/digital materials for keeping tasting notes can be helpful for visitors.

Number of Wines: The number of wines can be crucial for visitors. The optimal number of wines on offer is 3, while an essential aspect of wine tourism is tasting the different wines in terms of grape

variety, vintage, or technology. This allows visitors to find some differences. Less than 3 wines can be considered by the visitors as “not generous” but more than 4 wines can be difficult for a tasting (except tasting for wine professionals).

Content: The involvement of guests during wine tasting should be encouraged. Sometimes they want to share some stories, also wine tourists tend to showcase the knowledge they have about wine and they should be allowed to do so. Preferably in the form of dialogue and not in a didactic form.

According to modern principles, a guide listing wine aromas can be an inconvenience for visitors as they may not have the same palate or experience with those products.

Wine Shop

Table 18. Wine shop

Wine Shop	Importance on 5 score scale				
	Old World	New World	Works at the Winery	Doesn't Works at the Winery	Total
Product diversity in a wine shop is important	4.2	3.7	4.3	3.9	4.1
Having local products in a wine shop is important	4.1	3.8	4.0	4.2	4.1
Having souvenirs in a wine shop is important	3.6	3.3	3.7	3.4	3.6
Having gift packages in a wine shop is important	4.0	3.5	4.0	3.8	3.9
Money value is important for a wine shop	4.2	3.6	4.2	4.0	4.1
Payment option with both cash and card is important	4.7	4.6	4.7	4.7	4.7
Easy payment procedure is important in wine shop	4.7	4.8	4.7	4.7	4.7
Having a wine shipping option is important	4.2	4.2	4.3	4.2	4.2

Key features of the wine shop: The location of the wine shop and the merchandising of the products often play a crucial role in the process of visitor product purchase. As already mentioned, it is advisable to set aside time for the wine shop at the end of the tour, after the tasting. When evaluating a wine shop, attention should be paid to the products presented and their price categories. The shop should be assessed in how simple, easy to understand, and intuitive the process of moving around the space is. A wide variety of products and offers will also be appreciated. Attention should be paid to whether the winery cooperates with other local producers and whether it has placed their products. However, the products in the store must be noticeably aligned with other products or the company philosophy.

Payment in the store must be possible both in cash and by debit card. Issues related to the packaging of purchased products are important to the customer. It is also advisable to place a winery flyer/brochure in the purchase and at the same time an additional gift/souvenir if possible. The simplicity and duration of the payment procedure is important. It is advisable that the payment procedure is not carried out by a guide and other persons are assigned to do so to avoid the visitor feeling uncomfortable.

Value for money of tour and wine products: It is important to evaluate how suitable the tour package price is. Furthermore, there is an importance placed upon how the wines are presented and tasted. This variable can be measured in relation to the quality of the product/tour package and its price.

Possibility to send/ship the wine: Often a large proportion of tourists, especially international tourists, can purchase only a limited number of wines due to air regulations. Therefore, it is important to assess whether the wine company can ship wine to different countries, or other regions of the same country. Sending wine does not only mean selling a few extra bottles, it should also be used as a means of maintaining further communication with the visitor.

Other Factors

Table 19. Some other factors

Some other Factors	Importance on 5 score scale				
	Old World	New World	Works at the Winery	Doesn't Works at the Winery	Total
Gathering information about visitors is important	4.3	4.2	4.4	4.1	4.3
Encourage visitors to follow on social media pages of the winery is important	4.3	3.9	4.4	4.0	4.2
Encourage visitors to write reviews on different platforms is important	4.2	3.8	4.2	4.1	4.2

Gather information about visitors: Receiving visitors to a winery produces many benefits. Among them, the ability to gather information is key. Information gathering can take place in different stages of a wine tour. During the booking process, it is important to collect some information about visitors in advance.

The guide should write a general description of the group after the visit in a common document that will be completed after each group visit. Also, the guide should ask at the beginning of the tour if visitors are visiting other wineries in the same region and specifically whom they are visiting. It is important to ask visitors after the end of the tour if they are going to visit another winery and which one. This information should also be included in the document mentioned above and then analyzed.

In addition, besides using this technique, one may also use small satisfaction questionnaires/surveys to obtain information about visitors and feedback on their satisfaction. This way, a winery can also collect email information and obtain more information about winery visitors. Another technique to do this can be using photos taken during visits and asking for email addresses to share them later. Those pictures can be used for social media but it is important to have permission to share these images of visitors in advance.

In addition to these techniques, it is possible to prepare entertaining online quizzes, based on enjoyment and useful in the collection process for emails.

A good, natural atmosphere for gathering information about visitors happens during the tasting. Usually visitors like sharing information and stories during tasting talks. Gathering this information about

visitors is a key strategy for maintaining future communication, which has several benefits for the company. It is crucial to remember when obtaining email, advance consent is needed to continue future communication. Various incentives and benefits may be used to increase visitor interest in these communications. It is important that the collection of information is both optional and low-friction, avoiding discomfort for the visitors.

Encourage visitors to connect with the company on social media and write reviews: During the final stage of the tour, the guide should encourage visitors to like the company's social pages and also tag the winery when sharing any story/post on social networks. To simplify this process, a ready-made document that easily places the visitor on the company's social pages can be provided. The wine tour should be able to make a brand ambassador out of each visitor.

Post-visit Factors

Table 20. Post-visit factors

Post-visit Factors	Importance on 5 score scale				
	Old World	New World	Works at the Winery	Doesn't Works at the Winery	Total
Maintaining communication via e-mail with visitors is important	4.0	4.1	4.1	3.9	4.0
Stay in touch with winery visitors via social media platforms is important	4.1	4.1	4.2	4.0	4.1

Maintain communication via Social Media: Today's reality makes it easier to stay in touch with visitors. For this end, social media pages can be used. It's important to encourage tagging the winery in any visitor-generated content, reflecting time spent at the location. Responding to those posts is also important. The winery can collect visitor profiles to maintain communication with them.

Maintain communication via Email: The database of collected emails should be used carefully. It is advisable to contact the visitor only in cases when this communication will have some benefit for them. This could be a birthday greeting and a discount offer or informing about any activity that will provide some value for them.

6. Discussion

6.1 Application

it is useful to highlight that all the criteria/factors were based on the literature review and recognized as important from the study results. Identifying important wine tourism criteria/factors and determining best practices based on them can be considered the foundation of a wine tourism guideline, or manual. Although wine tourism is becoming an active research topic in academia, it is still difficult to find a similar guideline to help wineries at different stages of wine tourism planning and implementation. Also,

for many wineries, it is difficult to access international practices and knowledge. A document that combines the worldwide successful practices in the wine tourism industry can become a working tool for many companies.

In addition to the visible needs of the wineries, the creation of a similar guideline was first and foremost implemented for Wine and Wine Tourism Marketing Consulting Companies, like Balzac Communications, which was a direct supervisor of this study. One of the services of similar companies involves consulting for wine tourism product development. Thus, for them, the existence of a wine tourism guideline, providing essential evaluation criteria, as well as any collected information on the topic of worldwide best practices, is very important. With the help of such a document, it is possible to improve the service directly, as well as significantly speed up the whole procedure. The presented guideline is a framework for assessing the direction of the company's wine tourism services and making relevant recommendations.

It should also be noted that in cooperation with Balzac Communications, a test application of the existing wine tourism guideline was performed. Based on this manual, the tourism direction of one of the largest Georgian wineries was evaluated, and accordingly, the best practices that the winery can implement were identified.

To summarize, the use of this tool has greatly simplified the procedures of wine tourism consulting, as well as reduced the working time and, consequently, the necessary financial resources.

6.2 Limitations

The presented guideline includes mainly the basic criteria that the winery should do as a program minimum for wine tourism. It is a primary manual, and not a document that covers all aspects of wine tourism development. Wine tourism is an industry that has emerged at the intersection of tourism and winemaking, and it combines even more factors than just tourism or wine production separately. For companies to succeed in wine tourism, it is certainly important to consider the factors, criteria, and best practices given in this study essential for the tourist visit process, however besides this many other layers can affect the company's activities in this wine tourism sector.

The presented research certainly could not cover all the existing and important circumstances, so the focus was on the process of direct interaction, i.e. tourist visits to the winery and the associated “customer journey”.

An important limitation of this study is the lack of a quantitative consumer study component. Customers’ experiences and attribution toward wine tourism criteria and best practices were studied only under the qualitative component of this research. Analyzing the quantitative data of customers are important but is essentially large-scale, which could not be done due to the scarcity of resources under the study conditions.

6.3 Future Development

The first phase of future development in this research may be the addition of a quantitative component for collecting customer data. Combining the expert study with customer components will make it possible to see an even bigger picture. Such an update will make it possible to perceive and analyze all the necessary criteria and best practices comprehensively, making this instrument more realistic and practical in daily use.

When talking about the future development of the research, it is also necessary to mention the possibility of using this guideline to develop a training program for industry workers. Since for Balzac Communications the educational direction is important, a similar training or workshop program could be considered within the same company. This can be used as a service as well as a PR activity to spread company awareness.

7. Conclusion

To conclude, this paper has attempted to collect and integrate academic knowledge, expertise, and practical experience, as well as consumer evaluations and attitudes toward important criteria of wine tourism and its best practices. Collecting and integrating scattered and often fragmented information was a challenging objective of the research, but it has been achieved and successfully transformed into a practical guideline for wine tourism basics.

It can be argued that the focus of this paper is on practical uses, although the intensification of academic discussion, and the demonstration the wine tourism industry lacks and needs similar types of guidelines and manuals, may encourage further academic research.

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