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in the era of Global Pandemic

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## The Economic Impact of Torre De Moncorvo's Wine and Taste Festival

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### Abstract

An event can exist at a particular time and place, specifically prepared and developed with a certain purpose and for a target audience. According to the purpose and other factors, one can categorize events in a multitude of classifications. In this sense, this paper will focus on food and wine touristic events.

A touristic event has the potentiality to attract new people to a region and, as such, attract new money, enhancing not only the economic activity of the region, but also its visibility, its image, and the diffusion of local culture.

An event moves people, creating jobs and increasing the revenues for a country or a region, and can also develop the destinies' notoriety and increase the demand in low seasons.

This potential economic enhancement and cultural visibility is increasingly appealing for local and regional public and private entities as part of the economic and promotional development strategy of the region. As such, it is relevant to understand the annual Vinho & Sabor Douro, a wine and taste festival, that happens in Torre de Moncorvo, regarding its economic impact and how it promotes local culture and products.

A survey was conducted in order to estimate the behaviour of exhibitors and visitors of the event. With the data collected it was possible to understand the importance of this event regarding exhibitors' revenues, visitors' preferred products, and how much the visitors spent, which allowed to estimate the economic impact of the event for the region.

**Keywords:** Wine and Food Festival, Cultural Tourism, Economic Impact, Torre de Moncorvo.

### Introduction

For a long time now it is accepted that tourism is a tool for regional development (Moscardo, 2007). Among different types of tourism, event tourism has gained a considerable importance. An event can exist at a particular time and place, prepared and developed specifically with a certain purpose and for a target audience (Getz, 2009).

When a touristic event occurs there is the potentiality to attract new people to a region and, as such, attract new money, enhancing not only the economic activity of the region, but also its visibility, its image, and the diffusion of local culture (Almeida & Araújo, 2017). An event moves people, creating jobs and increasing the revenues for a country or a region, and can also develop the destinies' notoriety and increase the demand in low seasons (Getz & Page, 2016).

This potential economic enhancement and cultural visibility is increasingly appealing for local and regional public and private entities as part of the economic and promotional development strategy of the region (Allen, O'Toole, Harris, & McDonnell, 2010).

Although, literature presents some studies regarding economic impact analysis that certain events have in regions, it still lacks examples of deprived and isolated regions, that struggled harder to attract visitor, such is the case of Torre de Moncorvo. In this sense, this work intends to present the case of the wine and food festival to shed more light on the subject.

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## Literature Review

In the broader area of tourism one can find different types of tourism among which there is event tourism. This type of tourism regards the movement of people with a particular interest in participating in events. Events have been, for a long time, part of local, regional and national strategies regarding destination's development, since they are important promoters of tourism (Getz & Page, 2016).

Food tourism can be define, in the words of Hall and Mitchell (2001, p.308) as "as visitation to primary and secondary food producers, food festivals, restaurants and specific locations for which food tasting and/or experiencing the attributes of specialist food production regions are the primary motivating factors for travel". Food tourism can be define in a simpler way as the search for an unique experience regarding eating and drinking. According to World Food Travel Association, "is the act of traveling for a taste of place in order to get a sense of place". Usually, this search for food experiences is related with an interest about the origin of the products, the authenticity of the food, the culture and traditions of the places (Cunha, Barroco, & Antunes, 2019; Hall & Sharples, 2008).

In literature, tourism has infinite references and only a small part refers to food and wine events. However, the focus in this niche is increasingly growing, not only for the economic interest of the producers but also because they have the potential to attract visitors to the regions and lead them to contact to local producers that wouldn't happen otherwise (Montella, 2017).

Currently, food is seen as a key element to increase the value of a destination and to attract loyal tourists. This connection is stronger when food is related with wine, since both elements can add value to the destination and enable the differentiation and promotion of the regions (Marques, Lopes, & Varela, 2020). Wine events are considered a subcategory of food events. In reality, food and wine events are so attractive due to the gathering of two general interests: people like to eat and to drink. Getz (2019) enhances that the consumption is probably the "core experience", and the visitors that attend the event are focusing on tasting and buying.

Food and wine tourism is when a tourist visits a region with the main purpose of experimenting a specific type of food or wine (Hall & Gössling, 2016). Food and wine tourism complement each other and are also regarded as promoters of local tradition, authenticity and local identity and also contributing to preserve cultural and historical heritage (Getz, 2019).

However, it is necessary to refer that sometimes regions decide do avoid this path and don't promote these events, since the events must be close connected with local development strategies. It can be determined that such an event would do more harm than good to local residents and cultural authenticity (Getz, 2019).

Local economic development strategies that intend to enhance food and wine tourism tend to concentrate in using local suppliers and so reduce the economic leak to outside the region; enhance the product image; enhance branding and marketing strategies and promote local identity; among others (Hall & Gössling, 2016). One way to do so, and a current trend, is the organization of events related to food and wine, specifically, festivals (Van Niekerk, 2017). In recent years, events and festivals have been extensively promoted as a form of tourism particularly useful for regional development since they attract visitors and their spending to the local economy (Star, Rolfe & Brown, 2020). However, this trend also brought to light that some destination had these events merely to respond to the fact that other destinations were following this path and not because they considered it a strategic action for the region. As such, many events were one time only. When there is a planned and strategic approach to festivals, with a correct adjustment to local infrastructures, manufacturers and products, the region can select the event that best responds to the objectives and can truly differentiate from other regions (Van Niekerk, 2017).

The pursuit of the regions to develop food and wine festivals is easily understood since they are crucial to the promotion and dissemination of local products. Alongside, they can also communicate local cultural heritage and enhance local identity. However, the final pursued result, is always to boost local economy (Dixit, 2019).

There is a perspective extensively studied that emphasize economic benefits, although currently there are some different approaches that consider the possible existence of other benefits not economically related. However, even with this recognition of a different range of benefits that arise from festivals for the hosting regions, one can see in literature that studies focus mainly on four benefits: economic impact of the festival; marketing and service quality related to visitors profile; marketing and service quality related with the festival management; and positive and negative impacts of the festivals in local residents (Getz, 2019; Moscardo, 2007).

This type of events are important cultural and touristic attractions at national, regional and local level. Portugal is one of the best food and wine destinations in Europe and the Touristic Strategy 2027 (TE 2027) aims to place Portugal as one of the most competitive, innovator, and sustainable destinations in the world. The TE2027 identifies the wine and food product as an strategic asset for the qualification of the destination, since it enhances the touristic experience and adds value to the touristic offer of the regions (Turismo de Portugal, 2017).

According to Getz (2019), destinations have to determine what benefits they expect from events and how can the results be measured. Even the “perceived impacts, whether they are believed to be good or bad, and from whose perspective, is a necessary complement to market research” (Getz, 2019, p.152). Therefore, it is necessary to understand what benefits and to what range the hosting regions have accomplished them. The economic perspective is always one of the chosen perspectives and when the expectations are not met, usually the events tend to end (Getz & Page, 2016).

Even recognizing the existence of other benefits, due to time and resources constrains, the economic perspective is the focus of this paper. The particular case in study, Vinho & Sabor Douro, is a festival that belongs to the thematic events of food and wine. In the following sections the methodology and results obtained are described.

## **Methodology**

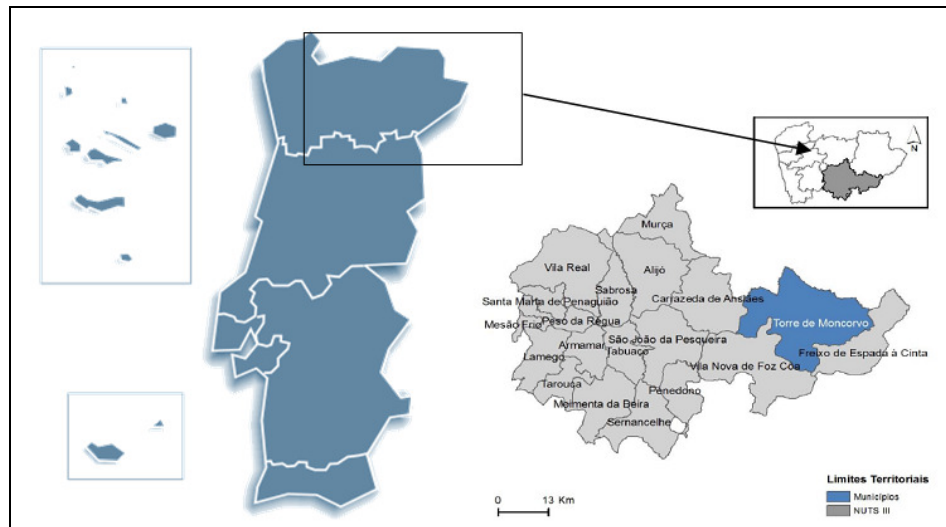
This work was developed based on a literature review regarding specific information about touristic events and the economic impact they can bring to a region. Afterwards, a survey was conducted to understand the behaviour of exhibitors and visitors do a specific wine and food event, the Vinho & Sabor Douro (Wine & Taste Douro). The survey was supported in two structured questionnaires, one directed to the exhibitors of the festival and one directed to the visitors. A pre-test was conducted to 10 individuals. The questionnaires were applied during the event (September 7-8, 2019).

The exhibitors' questionnaire had two sections, the first directed to characterize the exhibitors in terms of professional profile and the second regarded the result of their activity in the festival (sales, revenues, complains, and so on). The visitors' questionnaire had three sections, the first intended to describe their socio-economic characteristics, the second intended to understand their behaviour regarding habits of visiting other events, and on the third section it was intended to understand their behaviour as consumer of the goods and activities available in the festival.

With the collected data it was possible to characterize the exhibitors and their economic results and also the visitors regarding who they are, what they bought and how much they spent.

## **Results**

The municipality of Torre de Moncorvo is located on the south of the Bragança district, integrated in NUT III-Douro. This region is located in the northeast of Portugal and is characterized to be a deprived and isolated region (Figure 1).



**Figure1: Location of Torre de Moncorvo**

Source: Statistics Portugal (2020; 2018).

Torre de Moncorvo has 532 km<sup>2</sup> and spreads over a geographical area of 532 km<sup>2</sup>, has a population density of 16.1 per km<sup>2</sup> (Portuguese mainland is 112.8 per km<sup>2</sup>) and an aging index, that is the ratio between individuals with 65 or more years and individuals with 15 or less years) of 394.8 (for Portuguese mainland is 130.6) (Portugal Statistics, 2020). The municipality is divided in 13 parishes and is decreasing the number of inhabitants, easily perceived in the population density, due to different aspects namely decreasing of the birth rate, migration of the young ones either to go to study in other regions or to look for a job.

Although it is a region with severe restriction in terms of population and development indexes it includes the region “Douro Vinhateiro” that is a world heritage protected region by the UNESCO since 2001 and is one of the main touristic attractions to the region. Alongside, the municipality has invested in attracting tourist to the city, not only to appreciate the historic buildings but also to enjoy the cultural agenda, very rich in cultural events, were the Medieval Fair and the Vinho & Sabor Douro are examples.

### ***Torre de Moncorvo’s Vinho & Sabor Douro***

Due to its location, in the Douro Superior, Torre de Moncorvo is a distinguished wine region with 1,530 acres of vineyard, representing 16% of the Douro Superior and 3.5% of the Douro region. In this context, during September and October, when the harvest occurs, it was developed a wine and food event in order to potentiate tourism and attract those specific tourists that want to taste wine and experiment the surrounding activities concerning its harvest. This event started in 2014 with the designation Sabor Douro Wine Summer Fest and since 2019 is designated Vinho & Sabor Douro (VSD) and it happens every year in a fluvial beach of the Sabor river.

The festival is restricted to wine producers from Torre de Moncorvo, since one of the objectives of the festival is to show and promote local wines. This festival can be a front row for excellent local wines, and at the same time can enhance local economy, since all the products presented and sold in the festival are from local manufacturers.

In 2019 there were 12 exhibitors in the festival, nine wine manufacturers and three enterprises of the food area. The municipality estimates 6,000 visitors to the festival during the two days. These were the individuals that were considered to answer the questionnaire. On the exhibitors side, the entire population answer the questionnaire, and on the visitors side 193 answers were gathered through a convenience sampling. The following sections present the results from the collected data.

### ***Exhibitors results***

In this section the results from the exhibitors’ questionnaire are presented. A total of 12 exhibitors were questioned.

### ***Exhibitors Sample Profile***

Since the festival is restricted to wine producers of Torre the Moncorvo, it was understandable that the exhibitors' place of origin was 50% from the village of Torre the Moncorvo and 50% was from the county. Regarding their economic and legal activity, the main one is "Agriculture, livestock production, hunting, forestry and fishing" and for the remaining three was "restoration".

### ***Participation in this and others Medieval Fair´s***

Table 1 shows the participation in this and other similar events. One can see that the majority (58.3%) has participated in previous editions of the festival, however also the majority usually does not participate in this type of events.

**Table 1: Participation in this and other events**

Variables	Frequency	Valid %
<b>Previous participation in VSD</b>		
Yes	7	58.3
No	5	41.7
<b>Usual participation in other similar events</b>		
Yes	5	41.7
No	7	58.3

Source: Own elaboration.

### ***Exhibitors' Revenues***

Another aspect was regarding the total revenues of the exhibitors, to understand if the event did perform according to the objectives of promoting local wine and draining stocks. Table 2 describes the amounts the exhibitors stated for the two days festival. According to them, almost all (91.7%) estimated revenues under 2499 euros, in average the estimated revenue per exhibitor reached 1,458 euros.

**Table 2: Exhibitors' revenues**

Variables	Frequency	Valid %
<b>Sales amount (euros)</b>		
Up to 2499	11	91.7
Between 2500 and 4999	1	8.3
Between 5000 and 7499	0	0.0
Between 7500 and 9999	0	0.0
<b>Mean Sales amount (euros)</b>	1458.3	

Source: Own elaboration.

### ***National and foreign visitors' spending***

It was possible to distinguish national and international visitors and their spending. Table 3 presents the amount spent by Portuguese visitors and by foreign visitor.

From Table 3 it is possible to see that foreign visitors spend more, in average 47.2 euros, than national visitor that reach in average 38.6 euros.

**Table 3: National and foreign visitors' spending**

Variables	Frequency	Valid %
<b>Amount spent by national visitors (euros)</b>		
Up to 49	9	81.8
Between 50 and 99	1	9.1
Between 100 and 149	1	9.1
Between 150 and 199	0	0.0
Between 200 and 249	0	0.0
<b>Average spending</b>	<b>38.6</b>	
<b>Amount spent by foreign visitors (euros)</b>		
Up to 49	6	66,7
Between 50 and 99	2	22,2
Between 100 and 149	1	11,1
Between 150 and 199	0	0,0
Between 200 and 249	0	0,0
<b>Average spending</b>	<b>47.2</b>	

Source: Own elaboration.

### ***Need for Extra Workforce***

It was also relevant to find out if the exhibitors required extra labour force to participate in the event. A vast majority (75%) stated that they needed to employ more collaborators. According to Table 4 it is visible that they employed individuals from the region and for the two days vent 13 people were recruited.

**Table 4: Extra workforce**

Variables	Frequency	Valid %
<b>Need to recruit more employers</b>		
Yes, in the village	6	50.0
Yes, from other places	3	25.0
No	3	25.0
<b>Number employees recruited: 13</b>		

Source: Own elaboration.

### ***Future participation in this event***

Lastly, one important indicator that the event had successfully achieve the exhibitors objectives was about the intention to participate in future events. In this question it was a consensual answer with 100% stating that they will participate in future editions of the festival.

### ***Visitors Results***

In this section, the results obtained from the gathered data are presented. The estimated number of visitors to the festival reached 6,000 individuals and the total sample registered 193 answers.

### ***Visitors Description***

The data collected referred to the main demographic characteristics of the visitors. The majority of the visitors (88.6%) were Portuguese and of the foreign visitors 59.1% were from Spain and 27.3% were from France. This was already expected since the majority of the visitors tend to be Portuguese and the foreign are typically from Spain due to the proximity and from France due to the migrant tradition.

The educational level was mostly with secondary education, having 11.9% only basic educational level and 43.5% a higher education level. Regarding their professional activity the majority is employed (58.3%), self-employed (17.5%), 8.4% are unemployed, 7.6% are students and 7.4% are retired. Their monthly incomes are distributed



along different intervals registering the class “up to 635 euros” 14.7%; “from 636 to 1135 euros” 27.2%; “from 1136 to 1635” 22.1%; “from 1636 to 2135” 18.9%; and “over 2135 euros” 17.1%.

It was also studied with whom did the visitors attend the event as is resumed in Table 5.

**Table 5: National and foreign visitors’ spending**

Variables	Frequency	Valid %
<b>Visits alone or accompanied?</b>		
Alone	51	26.4
With company	142	73.6
<b>With Whom?</b>		
Life Partner	73	--
Descendants	26	--
Other family members	27	--
Friends	56	--
Other person	1	--
<b>Number of companions</b>		
1 Person	30	25,4
2 Persons	25	21,2
3 Persons	41	34,7
4-5 Persons	15	12,7
6 or more persons	7	5,9

Source: Own elaboration.

The majority of the visitors (73.6%) attended the festival with company and only 26.4% attended alone. From the company identified it was possible to determine that the majority visited the event with their life partner and the second most referred company was with friends. It is visible that , this event attracts small groups with one, two or three people reaching 81.3%.

### ***Length of stay and accommodation***

It is relevant to understand if the visitor remain in the region for only one day, for the duration of the festival or if they stay for longer periods. Table 6 presents the length of stay of the visitor not only in the event but also in the region.

**Table 6: Visitors’ length of stay**

Variables	Frequency	Valid %
<b>Length of stay exceeding one day</b>		
Yes	116	60.1
No	77	39.9
<b>Length of stay in the event</b>		
½ day	85	44.0
1 day	39	20.2
2 days	69	35.8
Average	1.1 days	
<b>Length of stay in the region</b>		
1 day	94	48.7
2 days	49	25.4
3 days	27	14.0
4 or more days	23	11.9
Average	2.1 days	

Source: Own elaboration.

It is noticeable that visitor mostly come one day to the event, reaching 64.2% the visitors that stay half a day or a hole day. However it is also possible to see that although the majority remains one day to visit the festival they remain for longer in the region (51.3% stay for more than one day) and in average they stay for 2 days. As such, it was interesting to see where the visitors stay for the night. Table 7 resumes the different accommodation options.

As can be seen in Table 7 the majority opts for lower price range accommodations, with “camping”, “family and friends”, “own accommodation” being the three top choices (with 66.1%).

**Table 7: Visitors' accommodation typology**

Accommodation typology	Frequency	Valid%
Local accommodation	21	18.1
Hotel	0	0.0
Rural Tourism	10	8.6
Camping	26	22.4
Family & Friends	26	22.4
Own Accommodation	25	21.6
Other	8	6.9

Source: Own elaboration.

### ***Usual visitor to this type of event***

The visitors were also questioned if they usually attend this type of events, since food and wine events tend to have a more hedonistic visitor with more specific characteristics. 58% of the visitors referred that they came to the festival specifically for the thematic involved.

They also described the number of times they attended these events, as is seen in Table 8. The majority of the 81 individuals that visited the VSD more than once, was repeating the visit between two and three times (69.1%) and 30.9% was visiting for the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> time.

**Table 8: Visitors' accommodation typology**

Variables	Frequency	Valid%
<b>Visits to the VSD</b>		
1 <sup>st</sup> time?	112	58.0
More than once	81	42.0
<b>Number of visits (for repeated visitors)</b>		
2 - 3 editions	56	69.1
4 - 5 editions	25	30.9
6 - 8 editions	0	0.0

Source: Own elaboration.

### ***Visitors' Spending***

The last part of the questionnaire to the visitors regarded their spending. What did they buy and how much did they spent. The majority of the visitors bought food in the festival (64.8%). On average the visitors had one meals in the event and spent an average amount of 14.1 euros on food. Overall, the visitors, during their length of stay had 2.3 meals locally (inside and outside the event) and spent an average amount of 34 euros in food.

During their visit 52.1% also bought souvenirs in the festival from local craftsman; 47.6% bought covered almond or almond related products; 19.7% bought wine; 18.7% bought olive oil; 15.5% bought cheese; and with lower percentages there can be identified honey, smoked sausages, and others.

Table 9 resumes the products bought and the amounts spent. It is noteworthy that only the souvenirs were bought in the festival precinct all the other products were bought locally outside of the event.

**Table 9: Visitors' spending, per type of product and per value**

Products acquired	Valid %	Average amount (euros)
Souvenirs	52.1	15.6
Almond	47.6	4.0
Wine	19.7	2.0
Olive Oil	18.7	4.5
Cheese	15.5	2.2
Honey	9.3	0.8
Smoked Sausages	7.8	1.0

Source: Own elaboration.

### ***Estimated economic impact of the visitors***

With the amounts determined for the visitors' spending it was possible to create a new variable that aggregates the different variables related to spending. As such, an average amount of 64 euros per visitor. Since all the products and food were bought locally or in the county, it is possible to assume that all the spending will remain in the region. For a simple purpose of magnitude determination one can estimate that the 6.000 visitors spent in the region almost 400,000 euros. This is clearly underestimated since it was not possible to determine how much the visitors spent for accommodation.

### **Conclusions**

The development and hosting of an event, and as in this case a specific and thematic event, is intended to attract people to the region where it happens boosting the economy and enhancing the image of the region and of its cultural aspects.

With this paper it was intended to describe the wine and food festival that occurs in Torre de Moncorvo every year since 2014. From the results it is possible to see that there are 6,000 visitors in two days in the village and that they spend around 400,000 euros.

With this event, not only there is a boost in the economy, with a great protection of local manufacturers, granting that the money will remain in the region, but also it is an opportunity to promote local wine and other products, such as covered almond that is a premium product and exclusive of the region.

Although there should be other factors considered, in order to more accurately estimate the impact, the intention was to have a magnitude of the impact and to understand in what amplitude can an event stimulate an isolated rural region.

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