Ithaca 2018 Abstract Submission

Title
Wine Cycling Tourism - Who does that, and why?

I want to submit an abstract for:
Conference Presentation

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Keywords
Wine tourism, cycling, tourism, survey, Germany

Research Question
Wine cycling tourism can be another way to increase direct sales. But the knowledge about these potential customers is rare. Therefore, this study wants to shed light on this group.

Methods
In order to analyze the behavior, the attitudes and the differences of wine cycling tourists and cycling tourists, we conducted an online survey.

Results
The preliminary results show that there is a difference between cycling tourists and wine cycling tourists. The data states that many cycling tourists would like to try wine cycling tours.

Abstract
Objective
Just like the bicycle undergoes a revival as a means of transportation, cycling experiences a clear trend in tourism. Cycling tourism begins to establish as a healthy and sustainable way of tourism. In consequence and as a result of the increasing demand for adventure and events, new forms of cycling can be observed in practice. A rather new way of cycling tourism represents wine cycling tourism. Regional tourism associations establish cycling tours in combination with wine tastings. The combination of indulgence, active recreation and nature seems to attract people of all ages. Wine tourism serves as a vehicle to promote not only vineyards but also culinary highlights as well as hospitality management of a region. Expected effects are supposed to be manifold, thus leading to more investments in this new development. In addition, many small and medium sized vineyards need to find ways to attract customers and lure them on the premises. Direct sales decline in Germany and wine tourism can be one way to encounter this problem. However, it is not trivial what effects result from integrating wine and cycling tourism. Assuming positive direct and cross-selling effects, the question is by what factors they are influenced.
Furthermore, the objective of this study is to identify differences in the attitudes and the behavior of wine cycling tourists in comparison to ‘regular’ cycling tourists.

Literature review
Due to the relevance of tourism for many vineyards and wine regions, wine tourism is popular among academics as well. According to Dreyer (2012), wine tourism is tourism with wine as the main purpose. However, wine tourism in the broader sense also includes activities with wine as a secondary purpose. So far, wine tourism research is predominantly done in the US and Canada, Australia and New Zealand (Lockshin and Corsi, 2012). However, the infrastructure and the size of vineyards vary significantly among different regions and countries. Especially in Germany, vineyards tend to be smaller than e.g. in Australia, hence the requirements and actions for these smaller vineyards are different. Therefore, it is necessary to gain more insights in the specification of wine tourism and the importance in Germany. The recent study by Scherhag & Binninger (2017) shows how a destination card can foster tourism activities in wine regions. The authors state that expanding cooperation to other partners within the destination can enhance the attractiveness of a touristic region. With this in mind, the study at hand combines the two kinds of tourism to explore synergies and success factors. The second kind of tourism interesting for this study is bicycle tourism. Similarly to wine tourism, bicycle tourism is a subgroup of general tourism. Bicycle tourism is defined as day trips or longer journeys with riding a bike as the main purpose (Dreyer et al., 2012). However, journeys with riding a bike as secondary purpose are also defined as bicycle tourism in the broader sense (Dreyer et al., 2012). Bicycling is the Germans’ most favorite leisure activity (Dreyer et al., 2012) and bicycle tourism has been growing over the last years to 5.2 million trips of three or more nights and 150 million day trips (Bangel, 2017). Furthermore, since electric bikes become more popular, bicycle tourism is accessible for less trained or elderly people. Currently, around 13 % of bicycle tourists use electric bikes (Bangel, 2017).

The latest analysis of bicycle tourism in Germany published by the ADFC shows that bicycle tourists predominantly opt for bike trips for several days with changing accommodations (74 %) (Bangel, 2017). Furthermore, 49 % of the bicycle tourists want to combine bicycle tours with culinary experiences (Bangel, 2017). In terms of location and scenery, the report states that bike trails along rivers are highly appreciated by tourists. According to the ADFC, the lack of public transport to and from bike trails and the catering industries’ inability to meet the bike tourists’ needs are the main weaknesses of German bike trails (Bangel, 2017). Especially the inability to meet the bike tourists’ gastronomic needs is a weakness that needs further analysis. In part, this study wants to answer to this issue with respect to the wine industry.

Method
In order to analyze the behavior, the attitudes and the differences of wine cycling tourists and cycling tourists, we conducted an online survey. The initial survey was rolled out in August 2017 in German language. In November 2017, an English version of the survey was sent out as well. The participants were incentivized by wine and bicycle related gifts using a lottery. The interim results presented in this abstract reflect the first German survey. The sample consists of 282 participants. The data analysis was carried out with IBM SPSS 24. The online survey was distributed via several wine and bicycle related newsletters and social media groups. Therefore, the sample is not representative and is supposed to give some insights in the behavior of wine cycling tourists. The questionnaire consists of four sections. The first section covers the general aspects of cycling such as the kind of bike, the frequency of cycling, and the occasion. The second part is dedicated to the wine consumption and some specifics such as frequency and purchase locations. The next section covers cycling tourism and wine cycling tourism depending on the participants’ answers. Last, the participants had to answer the typical socio-demographic questions such as age, gender, and income.

Preliminary Results and Implications
The participants are categorized by their cycling behavior. Ten participants state that they do not ride a bike at all; these participants are neglected in the further analyses. 140 participants state that they ride a bike but do not travel with their bikes; these are called cyclists. Then, there are cycling tourists and wine cycling tourists. The 95 cycling tourists travelled with their bikes with at least one overnight stay. The 37 wine cycling tourists visited a vineyard during their cycling tour with at least one overnight stay.

The average age of the participants is 40 years, the average income lies between 3’000 and 4’000 Euro, and 49.1 % of the sample are female. Analyzing the sample according to their cycling behavior shows differences in the three groups. Cyclists, cycling tourists and wine cycling tourists have an average age of 36 years, 42 years, and 50
years respectively. Looking at the average income of the groups, the wine cycling tourists’ and the cyclists’ average income is around 3’000 to 3’500 Euro, and for the cycling tourists the value is around 3’500 to 4’000 Euro. The proportion of female participants within the cyclists, cycling tourists, and wine cycling tourists is 64.2 %, 40 %, and 30 % respectively. There is an overlap between wine cycling tourists and cycling tourists; many wine cycling tourists also

The questionnaire also contains questions about the preferred month for travelling by bike, about the duration of a tour (time and distance), destinations and general important factors for tours. Cycling tourists look for destinations with rivers, travel preferably in June, enjoy nice weather, undertake longer tours (7-8 days, 500-550 km), and spend around 40 % of their daily budget on food. Wine cycling tourists travel to destinations with vineyards, travel in September, look specifically for restaurants, go on shorter trips (5 days, 350 km), and spend around 65 % of their daily budget on food.

These preliminary results show that there is a difference between cycling tourists and wine cycling tourists. Furthermore, many cycling tourists would like to try wine cycling tours. Therefore, the cycling tourists could be an interesting target group for wine cycling tours. In addition, the wine cycling tourists state that they mostly visit vineyards spontaneously. Hence, the vineyards should be visible along cycling trails and should create awareness for their offers and products.

Limitations and further plans
The main limitation of this study is the relatively small sample size and the sampling method. Due to the convenience sampling for this survey, the survey mostly attracts people who are prone to cycling tours. Therefore, this study does not claim to be representative. However, the insights gained with this study can be used to improve the direct sales for vineyards when they open up to cycling tourists. To enlarge the sample, the questionnaire will be in further national newsletters in Germany.

Literature


