

Padua 2017 Abstract Submission

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Keywords

Wine tourism, Critical Success Factors, Travel agencies, Turkey

Research Question

What are the Critical Success Factors for the development of wine tourism in Turkey?

Methods

An open-ended survey instrument for qualitative interviews is used. In-depth semistructured interviews with travel agents are conducted on the phone. Data is being analyzed with the use of content analysis.

Results

It is suggested that marketing wine tourism, laws and regulations, the appeal of the winery and wine tourism destination, and the quality of wine be taken into consideration.

Abstract

Turkey is a country with an old wine-producing tradition and with a huge tourism industry although it has not made the importance of wine tourism profitable up to now. Wine tourism in Turkey has full of development potential. The history of wine in Turkey (Anatolia) dates back to the Neolithic period. According to archaeobotanists, the grape was first discovered in the region of Eastern Anatolia, Georgia, and Armenia trio (1).

Turkey is among the world leaders in grape production. Turkey has the fifth largest grape-growing area at 500.000 ha after Spain, France, Italy, and China (2). Turkey ranks sixth in the world for grape production with annual four million tons of grape production (3). Unfortunately, only 11 percent of this huge output is used for wine making (4). Turkey's wine production is around 60,7 mio liters per year and it accounts for only two percent of global wine production (5). There are 166 wine producers licensed by Tobacco and Alcohol Market Regulatory Agency (TAPDK) (6) of Turkey, but it is a very small number when compared to other wine-making countries. The Turkish wine market is largely dominated by Doluca, Kavaklıdere, and Mey, each with an annual production capacity of more than 10 million liters (7). Boutique wineries began to be seen since the early 2000s.

Turkey's most developed and productive wine regions are the Thrace (Marmara) and Aegean regions as well as Central and Southeastern Anatolia. Some prominent wine tourism destinations in Turkey are Şirince, Avsa Island, Bozca Island, and Cappadocia where visitors can experience the quality wines of boutique wineries. To illustrate, in Cappadocia, there are daily tours combined with the precious attractions of the region. The Turasan and Kocabağ wineries are the prominent names in the region which are visited by thousands of tourists for wine tasting every year.

In order to promote wine regions, there have been some efforts to establish wine routes. To illustrate, twelve boutique wine producers from Tekirdağ, Şarköy, Kırklareli, and Gelibolu have gathered together to promote the Thrace Vineyard Route (8). Two separate routes were developed by the Wines of Turkey Platform consisting of seven wine producers of Turkey (9). Türker, developed three different routes (Thrace, Aegean, Central Anatolia

routes) consisting of quality wine makers (10).

According to Getz et al., (11) there are many factors that will influence the success of wineries and wine tourism destinations. He identified four categories that were critical to the success of wine tourism from the point of view of suppliers. These are quality; wine country appeal; winery appeal; and developing and marketing wine tourism. In another research, from the demand (tourists) side, Getz and Brown (12) identified CSFs including core wine product (visitor friendly wineries, knowledgeable winery staff, wine festivals, familiar wineries), core destination appeal (attractive scenery, pleasant climate, moderately priced accommodations), and cultural product (unique accommodations with regional character, fine dining, gourmet restaurants, and traditional wine villages). Baker and Cameron (13) states that strategic orientation, destination identity and image, stakeholder involvement, and implementation, monitoring and review are important success factors of a wine destination from the supply side. For the development of Turkish wine tourism, there is a need to identify the critical success factors (CSF) from various perspectives. Identifying the CSFs and implementing strategies for the success of the wine destinations will provide the growth and rise of wine tourism industry and competitiveness in international tourism market. Therefore, the purpose of the study is to identify the key factors which will contribute to the development of the wine tourism industry in Turkey.

An sample of 15 travel agents who organize wine tours is selected to determine the CSFs for the development of Turkish wine tourism industry. An open-ended survey instrument for qualitative interviews is used. In-depth semistructured interviews with travel agents are conducted on the phone. The interviews are being recorded which are subsequently transcribed. Data is being analyzed with the use of content analysis.

From the perspective of CSFs, it is suggested that marketing wine tourism, laws and regulations, the appeal of the winery and wine tourism destination, and the quality of wine be taken into consideration.

Travel agents believe that the most important CSF is the marketing. According to the travel agents wineries should conduct joint marketing efforts to develop wine tourism and to strengthen the image of Turkish wine. It is aimed at developing collaborations among wineries and improving wine tourism through the Thrace Vineyard Route prepared by the Thrace Tourism Operators Association with the participation of 12 boutique wine producers operating in different regions of the Thrace extending from Kırklareli to Çanakkale with 12 vineyards in total: Vino Dessera, Arcadia, İrem Çamlıca, Barel, Chateau Nuzun, Umurbey, Barbare, Melen, Chateau Kalpak, Gülor, Gali and Suvla. Also the Wines of Turkey Platform constitutes a strategic partnership among Turkey's leading wineries in order to develop the wine market and wine culture of Turkey. However, support of the Turkish government is essential for the marketing of wine destinations. In Turkey, governmental agencies have an immense impact for the development of tourism industry. Travel agents addressed the organization of international festivals and events which involve food and wine as the most influential ways of marketing as the law and regulations permit the organization of events to promote wine industry at international level.

There are legal constraints on alcoholic beverage production in Turkey. Advertisements, campaigns, promotions, and events which promote the alcoholic beverages among the consumers are prohibited in accordance with the constant executive orders. Therefore, wineries are banned to support any events and sponsor these activities using their brands, marks or logos. Unfortunately high tax policies of the Turkish government naffect the development of wine industry. The situation of wine producers and the future of wine tourism seems difficult because of the ban on harvesting and wine tasting activities. In other wine tourism countries, for example in Australia, the government supports the wine tourism and is widely involved in the development of wine tourism. In order to avoid the negative consequences of these prohibitions, to ensure the sustainability of the wineries and to increase the income from the wine tourism, the wine producers are turning their vineyard houses into boutique hotels and gourmet restaurants. As a result, it is essential that the Turkish regulations be amended in favor of the successful improvement of wine industry.

According to travel agents, increasing the appeal of the wineries and wine tourism destinations is a CSF for wine tourism industry. With the collaborative effort of all stakeholders (including wineries, governmental agencies, tourism and wine associations, etc.) the appeal of destinations should be increased by enriching the image of the destination using the long history of viticulture in Anatolia, adding gastronomic values of Turkish cuisine and combining natural environment, cultural attractions, and heritage with wine tourism and tourist facilities (hotels, restaurants, etc.). Travel agents hold that the current existence of high quality accommodation facilities is a chance for Turkey to develop the appeal of wine tourism destinations. The appeal of wineries, wine tasting, hotels in or in the neighborhood of the vineyard, restaurants serving simple carbohydrate meals, critical mass of at least four or five wineries in adjacent areas, and the signage could be counted among the key factors along with the genuine experience of wineries including the important elements of qualified service as well as knowledgeable and cordial staff. Consequently, given the routine, yet qualified wine production in Turkey, it is noteworthy mentioning

that new wine products should be explored and invested for a diverse and better national wine industry.

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Identifying Critical Success Factors in Turkish Wine Tourism from the Perspectives of Travel Agencies

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