## Padua 2017 Abstract Submission

**I want to submit an abstract for:**
Conference Poster Session

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**Keywords**
Wine Tourism, Price Policy, Wine Tasting, Cellar Door Sales

**Research Question**
Do wine-growing regions differ with regard to their tasting offers and what common tasting situations emerge when visitors of the winery (tourists) walk in spontaneously and want to taste wine.

**Methods**
In this study, a mix of methods is applied. Frist, a secondary analysis of consumer behavior at wineries and the design of tasting situations in the context of cellar door.

**Results**
At the time of the writing of this abstract, the work is still in progress. As a result of the analysis of different characteristic, tasting situation will be presented.

**Abstract**
Direct sales (cellar door sales) play an important economic role for vintners/vintners’ cooperatives (Getz, 2000; Winkelmann, 2013). The appearance of the sales and tasting rooms is highly different (Kolesch, 2015). Tasting room sales are typically priced at retail levels resulting in a higher profit margin. Sales at supermarkets, restaurants, and wine shops, while crucial for brand building, go through distributors, who retain much of the overall profit (Marlowe et al., 2016).

Wineries design their tasting offers very differently according to marketing aspects. This applies especially to the price policy. For example, German and Italian vintners rarely charge a fee for tastings; however, they are rather the rule in the US. Cellar doors in New Zealand and Australia behave very differently as do Canadian tasting rooms in respect to policy surrounding tasting fees at their wineries. In the case of New Zealand tastings often are indeed free, but there is an unspoken agreement to buy at least one symbolic wine bottle as a customer. Furthermore, the appearance of the sales and tasting rooms are extremely different around the world (Kolesch, 2015; Thornley, 2016). It is possible that some differences are traceable to historically evolved, cultural differences.

Taking account of insights from consumer behavior as a theoretical framework this article explores the differences of the wine tasting offer in several countries from the new and respectively old world of wine. The center of attention are forms of wine tasting offers at cellar door sales in selected wine-growing areas of similar structure in
Germany, Italy, New Zealand, Australia, Canada and the US. Kolyesnikova & Dodd (2009) suggested that, at least to some extent, consumers purchase goods and services in response to sampling due to a perceived need to reciprocate for trying the products/services.

In this study, a mix of methods is applied. At first, a secondary analysis of consumer behavior at wineries and the design of tasting situations in the context of cellar door sales took place. The body of literature is relatively small. The majority of studies deal with professional tastings or the general willingness to pay (Ramirez, 2010; Almenberg & Dreber, 2011; Lewis & Zalan, 2014). Kolyesnikova & Dodd (2009) study suggested that, at least to some extent, consumers purchase goods and services in response to sampling due to a perceived need to reciprocate for trying the products/services. But this does not refer to common tasting situations that emerge when visitors of the winery (often tourists) walk in spontaneously and want to taste some wines.

The focus of this study is a web-based offer analysis of the respective homepages of the vintners/vintners’ cooperatives in the study area. Using keywords for wine tasting appropriate to the mother language of each vintner/vintners’ on Google, a content analysis of the Google rankings appropriate for content analysis will commence.

Following a standardized procedure (list of criteria) each website is analyzed regarding the offer of wine tastings, how these offers are arranged, if respectively which prices are charged and how strong the touristic orientation of the wineries is (amount of touristic offers).

The focus is on different offers for tastings in combination with the prizes for these offers. The investigations are undertaken for all wineries in selected international wine-growing regions. Regions that are analyzed: Franconia (Germany), South Tirol (Italy), Marlborough (New Zealand), Margaret River (Australia), Okanagan (Canada), and Columbia Valley (USA).

The next step (approximately spring 2017) is a qualitative observational study in the form of mystery shopping in wineries in order to analyze the tasting situations (Dreyer, Ratz & Schirrmieister, 2016). Not just the tasting itself but the entire service quality in the context of the tasting and sale situation is to be assessed (van Hyfte, 2016; Ratz & Dreyer, 2014). Based on this observational study selected findings that illustrate the quantitative offer analysis will be presented.

The aim is to analyze the study areas with regard to their offers for tastings and the prizes charged for them. Important research questions are:

- Do the wine-growing regions differ with regard to their tasting offers?
- Are there different price policies in the individual countries?
- Where are free tastings offered?
- Are charges for tastings more common in certain regions?
- Who charges the highest prizes?
- What are the differences between individual tastings and booked tastings for groups?
- And: How is the environment for the tastings designed? (PoT – Point of Tasting/ Dreyer 2016)

At the time of the writing of this abstract, the work is still in progress. As a result of the analysis different characteristic, tasting situation will be presented. It will be distinguished between individual tastings and booked groups. The focus is on the price policy, especially at the individual tastings of the walk in’s. We will work out different kinds of offer categories:

- Tastings with a fixed number of wines for a fixed price
- Tastings with a price per wine tasting where the amount is offset against the purchased wine
- Tastings without fees for the customer in the hope that it will immediately or later result in the purchase of wine

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Wine tastings in the context of cellar door sales – Characteristic tasting offers and price policy as compared to international standard

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