Title
‘New world’ wine countries vs. ‘Old world’ wine countries: A comparative study of wine tourists

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Conference Presentation

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Keywords
Wine Tourism, Chinese Wine Tourists, Western Wine Tourists

Research Question
• Do Chinese wine tourists and wine tourists from Old World wine countries differ based on winery service quality dimensions?

Methods
The study survey was distributed to Chinese wine tourists and wine tourists visiting the wineries of Crete, Greece.

Results
We conjecture that Chinese wine tourists will have higher scores on all dimensions of service quality (physical quality, staff behavior and wine tasting).

Abstract
‘New world’ wine countries vs. ‘Old world’ wine countries: A comparative study of wine tourists

In recent years, wine tourism research has evolved by exploring a variety of aspects of wine tourism ranging from wine tourist behaviors to the impacts of wine tourism on winery’s direct consumer sales. Most studies on wine tourism research tend to focus on Western wine tourists visiting Western wineries even though wine tourists from developing Asian countries (e.g. China) continue to grow (Lee et al., 2016). Thus, an important question that is worth asking is whether wine tourists from emerging markets are similar to Western wine tourists based on how they evaluate service quality and satisfaction with wineries. In our case, we compare Chinese and Greek wine...
tourists in their respective domestic markets. Prior literature reveals that Asian wine consumers’ motivations to drink wine vastly differs from that of Western wine consumers (Camillo, 2012; Lee et al., 2016; Yu et al., 2009). Researchers postulate that wine has been embedded in the Western societies deeply, especially those Western European countries producing wine for a long time. Thus, wine has been viewed as a regular alcoholic beverage for everyday consumption just like beer in Germany. On the other hand, wine is perceived as a special alcoholic beverage among Asian consumers because middle class Asian consumers may not afford to drink wine due to lack of economic and social capital (Lee and Zhao, 2006).

Previous studies have investigated several factors of interest to wine tourism scholars. For instance, Quintal et al. (2015) suggest that not only the natural landscape of a winery, service quality but also complementary dimensions (e.g. shopping opportunities, lodging) positively affect a wine tourists’ attitude. Extant studies in marketing and consumer behavior suggest that a variety of cultural and socio-economic factors lead to significant differences between consumers in emerging markets and those in developed markets (e.g., Michaelidou et al., 2015). Such differences relate, among others, to values, attitudes and behaviors, but they have not been investigated specifically within the tourism literature framework. Marketing researchers and managers, however, seek to better understand the differences between the consumers in developed and emerging markets as well as the challenges and opportunities posed by these differences for both local and foreign marketers in emerging markets (Sharma 2011; Sheth 2011). Given the increasing number of Chinese wine tourists it is worthwhile to compare Chinese wine tourists with wine tourists from old wine countries from Europe on the factors that affect wine tourists’ satisfaction and loyalty during a winery visit.

The purpose of this exploratory study is to answer the following research questions.

- Do Chinese wine tourists and wine tourists from Old World wine countries differ based on winery service quality dimensions?
- Is there a difference in the level of satisfaction with wineries between New World and Old-World wine tourists?

Research Method
The study survey was developed based on previous studies related to wine tourism, and wine tourists behavior. The survey was written in English. Then, the study was translated into Chinese by a bilingual professor who is fluent both English and Chinese. The survey translated into Chinese was used for Chinese wine tourists visiting one of the oldest and biggest Chinese wineries, located in Yantai, China. The original survey written English was distributed to wineries visitors in the wineries of Crete, Greece. All wineries linked to the Wineries of Crete network were informed and had the opportunity to facilitate data collection. We used the original English version of the survey since most wine tourists in Crete, Greece come from old wine countries (e.g. Germany, France, the United Kingdom) and are proficient in English. In both cases, the survey questionnaire was distributed after the winery visitors completed their winery visit. In each case, a sample of 200 questionnaires was used in subsequent analysis in SPSS and Stata 15. Along with demographic variables, we investigated the relationship between service quality (represented by dimensions such as physical quality, staff behavior and wine tasting) as an antecedent of satisfaction with a winery.

Expected Results and Implications
We conjecture that Chinese wine tourists will have higher scores on all dimensions of service quality (physical quality, staff behavior and wine tasting). While we also expect that Chinese wine tourists will have a higher satisfaction with wineries they visit. Our results have important implications for wine marketers and winemakers, particularly in emerging markets. Our study aims to point out that culture plays an important role in how consumers evaluate service quality and how satisfied they feel with wineries they patronize. It is our hope that this study will spur the scholarly interest in this area of study that is critical for wine industry.

References

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