Wine Tourism in Romania
Case Study: Dealu Mare Vineyard

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper is to analyze the Romanian wine growing heritage, with an impressive historical past and the rich cultural heritage and traditions related to wine, to highlight the considerable potential in terms of development of wine tourism in Romania, factors that attract and motivate this new form of tourism, respectively planning a network of traditional themed routes in the region of Dealu Mare, emphasizing the significant parameters needed for a successful organization of this network. The analysis of the wine tourism situation in Romania and identification of factors with important role in attracting and motivating the wine tourists represents an important step in the field of wine research, through knowledge of the economic efficiency of production in wine-growing farms, finding the possibility to increase the effectiveness of investment in this area, which will allow everyone to realize the possible recommendations for the future.

Keywords: Dealu Mare Vineyard, Sustainable Development, Wine, Wine Cellar, Wine Tourism

INTRODUCTION

In Romania, theoretical and practical approaches connected to wine tourism are very few compared to other European countries or in the New World (Australia, New Zealand or the United States of America), where the first comparative studies in this field appear in the ’90, especially after the first conference dedicated to this type of tourism, held from 3 to 5 May 1998 at Leeuwin Estate, Margaret River wine growing region (Western Australia). The wine tourism and its intimate ties with rural tourism, agro tourism, cultural tourism or gastronomic tourism have set in the attention of many researchers, such as: Hall (1996), Mitchell and Hall (2003) in New Zealand; Gilbert (1992), Medina and Tresserras (2008) in Spain; Pavan (1994), Cinelli (2004) in Italy; Dodd (1995), Skinner (2000) in U.S.A.; Getz and Brown (2006) in Canada; Thevenin (1996), Frochot (2000) in France; Macionis (1999), Carlsen and Dowling (2001), Bruwer (2003), Pratt (2011) in Australia; Preston-Whyte (2000) in South Africa. In Romania, the roots of wine tourism are very deep, but about its development we can barely speak in the late ‘90s, when the Halewood International Ltd group (the largest independent house producer of wines and alcoholic drinks from United Kingdom) established Halewood Romania with three main areas of activity- viticulture, wine making and marketing of Romanian wines, with the desire ... to be there where people spend their holidays

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or where they relax and they can do it in the company of a true wine and quality”.

Generally regarded as a traditional form of tourism, at the same time dynamic and alternative, wine tourism can bring a major contribution to the regional and local development. This is why rural environment is considered, rightly, as the depository of the resources for a new beginning of a new economic thinking. In this way, the wine sector represents an area of national importance, a priority in the strategy of sustainable development of the Romanian agriculture, sector which may contribute to the rediscovery of Romania as a possible tourist destination, as well as the multiplication of the interest for the Carpathian-Danubian-Pontic area (Soare et al., 2010). The same wine sector also offers a wide range of experiences through cultural tourism, rural, wine, active holidays and even business opportunities.

Positioning of wine tourism as one of the forms of tourism with broad perspectives of development in the region of Dealu Mare is thoroughly supported by the presence of a picturesque landscape, with a wide variety of cultural and historical values, popular art, ethnography, folklore, traditions and archaeological remains.

**METHODS AND DATES**

This study begins with a review of the references related to theoretical aspects regarding wine tourism, followed by a general overview of the wine heritage, the achievements of local communities in this area in a representative region for the actual Romania wine tourism, such as Dealu Mare vineyard and to the extent to which these developments correlate with actual possibilities for development. At the same time, the study seeks to highlight the role of wine tourism in the sustainable development of hilly space, where wine culture and wine production have become traditional activities, but who can afford a better balancing of economic development, social, cultural, through spatial diffusion of growth impulses generated by the wine-growing centers in the region.

The study is the result of the analysis of various bibliographic sources. Qualitative methods were used, case study, observation method, method of exploratory research, analysis of documents, consultation of bibliographic sources, of the legislation in this field. In order to obtain some data related to the wine heritage of Romania or regarding the concept of wine tourism the exploratory method was used. in this respect were analyzed the main statistical documents provided by the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD), the Association of Producers and Exporters of Wines from Romania (APEW), National Wine Interprofessional Organization (NWIO), National Office of vine and wine products (NOVWP), publications which had as their reference object wine tourism, planning and development of a network of wine routes.

**WINE TOURISM**

Journeys in the wine-growing regions with vineyards, wine cellars and wineries don’t only confine in their visiting and wine tasting. These movements are performed also for visiting some sites of great natural landscape values, contact with harvesters and their traditions in winery, testing local products, contact with local gastronomy or traditions of the areas visited. The movement toward a wine region is ultimately a mix between nature and flavour and wine tourism is more associated with the movement in a wine-growing area (to explore, to discover, to learn new things) than with wine products. Some studies indicate that the wine, this drink considered divine, is associated with relaxation, socialization, and hospitality (Dodd, 1995).

Wine tourism in not a new phenomenon. It made its debut in the modern tourism period in the early 19th century, when the diversification of routes and means of transport but also the demographic burst in urban centers have led to an increase in the number of organized trips to new places of attraction. Visiting vineyards and wine-growing villages become the favourite tourist activities for the story landscapes and
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