

SHIFTING THE FOCUS FROM MERE WINE (AND) TOURISM TO THE WINE DESTINATION AND WINESCAPE CONCEPT

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Abstract

The aim of the article is to define the concept of winescape, in cooperation with wine tourism and wine destinations to take further steps towards the possible development of this concept. The article discusses the first mention of the term winescape, its later development, as well as the current theoretical background and possible further variations in the understanding of this concept. Secondary sources form the basis for the fulfillment of the objective using the synthetic method and previous research. In addition to the development of wine tourism, the wine industry and viti/viniculture, the concept of winescape is also considered from different angles, particularly in relation to the aspects that characterize wine tourism of a particular wine destination. However, this field of interest lacks a conceptual anchoring and a definition of terms for later use, not only in the academic world. Thus, empirical studies and the definition of the concept of winescape and its anchoring in the different wine-producing countries have not yet been completed, and the uniform understanding and use of the terms wine destination and winescape remain limited.

Keywords: Winescape, Attributes of Wine Destination, Wine Tourism, Wine Regions

INTRODUCTION

Viticulture and wine production lead to remarkable changes in the local and regional configuration of rural landscapes (Valduga & Minasi, 2022). When we think of a particular wine region, we often think of a landscape with its culture and tradition, a place of relaxation, a place associated with grapes and wine. Wine and wine landscapes are unique products of contemporary culture that demand local experiences, discovery and consumption of cultural products, and lifestyle associated with them. Peters (1997) insinuates that viticulture, when is successful, transforms the local landscape into a combination of agriculture, industry, and tourism. The synthesis of wine and tourism demand has driven the expansion of these sectors outside their traditional European homelands (Senese, Wilson & Momer, 2012). The appeal of terroir, regional destination branding (Hall, Sharples, Cambourne & Macionis, 2000b) and (tourist) signage has led to a surge in attention to wineries in many wine regions beyond the

Old World of wine (Senese et al., 2012), along with complementary attractions (Byrd, Canziani, Hsieh, Debbage & Sonmez, 2016), culinary schools, and overnight stays at wineries (Bruwer & Alant, 2009). Understanding of the wine tourism industry continues to evolve globally, with different perspectives on its benefits (Byrd et al., 2016; Dixit, 2022). As a result, new approaches and concepts are naturally emerging, one of which is the winescape concept (Williams, 2021). This concept, which can be understood as the image of a destination, has evolved over time (Byrd et al., 2016) and is becoming increasingly important in the wine tourism industry. Thus, considering different approaches, the combination of wine production and wine economy in an area that also offers cultural and historical attractions as well as tourist events amidst the landscape could play a role in defining a wine destination. Therefore, this article introduces the concept of winescape that has evolved to date and explains its further conceptual understanding. A wine destination is also explained from the perspective of the tourism sector, which has evolved with the wine sector into the concept of winescape.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Wine production and the wine industry have many positive effects on other (not only) economic sectors (Wine Fund, 2023). Both have rapidly gained popularity and developed, especially in areas outside the traditional wine regions of the Old World (Carmichael & Senese, 2012). More recently, viticulture has been linked to the tourism industry in many regions. These sectors are rapidly evolving to form a combined sector, such as wine tourism (Dodd, 1995; Getz, 2000; Kubát & Kerma, 2022; Mitchell & Hall, 2004).

Wine tourism is a form of rural tourism (Mitchell & Hall, 2004) as well as special interest tourism (Scherhag, 2016) and a sub-form of gastronomy tourism (World Tourism Organization, 2019). It includes all tourism activities related to wine (Scherhag, 2016). There are several definitions of wine tourism. One of the definitions comes from Dowling (1998) and goes back to the first wine tourism conference in Australia in the Margaret River wine region. He defines wine tourism as experiential tourism in wine regions that provides an exceptional experience encompassing wine, gastronomy, hospitality, culture, art, education, and travel. Further definitions are added by Hall and Macionis (1998) and Hall et al. (2000b) based on research in the New World of wine. An initial wine tourism definition, which is probably still the most widely accepted, was introduced by Hall (1996) as *"visitation to vineyards, wineries, wine festivals, and wine shows for which grape wine tasting and/or*

experiencing the attributes of a wine region are the primary motivating factors for visitors." Kerma (2018) builds on the first definition and currently adds wine culture to the definition by further explaining wine tourism as (local) food culture, regional food, and culinary arts. Bruwer and Alant (2009) specify that *"wine tourism is also related to wine as a product and to the place where the wine is produced, and also creates a strong link between this type of tourism and lifestyle."*

The concept of wine tourism, or enotourism, has ancient roots, but its modern incarnation as a structured industry began in the 19th and 20th centuries. Although it is difficult to pinpoint a single location as the definitive birthplace of wine tourism (Hall et al., 2000b). Hall, Johnson and Mitchell (2000) emphasize that wine tourism began primarily in the wine regions of the New World. Hall and Macionis (1998) and Hall et al. (2000b) point out that visiting vineyards has been part of organized travel since at least the Grand Tour, and that educational wine trails have been part of the German tourism industry since the 1920s, with the first educational wine trail *Weinlehrpfad* being established in Schweigen.

Several regions played an important role in its early development (Hall et al., 2000b). One such region is the Rheingau in Germany. According to some sources, the town of Johannisberg in the Rheingau can be considered one of the earliest examples of organized wine tourism. In the early 18th century, the prince bishop of Fulda established a guest house at Schloss Johannisberg, a famous winery in the region. This guest house welcomed travelers interested in wine, providing them with accommodation and the opportunity to taste and buy wines from the estate. This early example of hospitality and wine-oriented tourism laid the groundwork for the development of wine tourism in other regions. According to some sources, the origins of wine tourism go back even further in time, to a type of wine tavern called *Straußwirtschaften*, which are a centuries-old tradition and can be found throughout the wine regions. In these original seasonal wine bars, winegrowers were granted the right (still valid today) to sell their wines and food on the premises and to indicate this seasonal offer by hanging a wreath of flowers on the gate. They are an indispensable part of German wine culture (German Wine USA, 2021; Schloss Johannisberg, n.d.; Wines of Germany, n.d.).

Overall, wine tourism has probably developed independently over time in different wine-producing regions, driven by factors such as cultural heritage, economic incentives, and the desire to showcase local wines and hospitality to visitors (Hall & Macionis, 1998). As part of the diversification and development of rural areas in the wine and tourism sector, it is becoming increasingly important and has the potential to generate revenue at both regional and individual levels (Hall et al., 2000a).

Understanding Wine Tourism for the Emergence of a Wine Destination

As described above, wine tourism (mostly) takes place in an area where the wine production and vineyards are located so that visitors can easily get a glimpse of the production area and observe the vines and grapes from germination to the bottle of wine and a first sip directly at the place of their creation. According to Scherhag (2016), these are activities whose purpose is or includes the tasting and consumption of wine at or near the source (its origin). As pointed out by Sottini, Barbierato, Bernetti, Capecchi, Fabbriizzi and Menghini (2019), such a place can be considered a destination of final interest, in the context of tourism as tourism destination. The World Tourism Organization (2019) defines a tourism destination as:

"...a physical space, with or without administrative and/or analytical boundaries, in which a visitor can spend an overnight. It is the cluster (co-location) of products and services, and of activities and experiences along the tourism value chain and a basic unit of analysis of tourism. A destination incorporates various stakeholders and can network to form larger destinations. It is also intangible with its image and identity which may influence its market competitiveness."

Saraniemi and Kylänen (2011) further complement and expand a further delineation of tourism destinations and approaches in their paper. The link between wine tourism and tourism destination leads to a wine tourism destination, which, as Sottini et al. (2019) also emphasize, could be a wine-producing area in which wine tourism activities also take place. A wine-producing region can be understood as an area where wine is produced and has its origin. That is, the place where the vines are grown, and the grapes are processed into the final product, the wine.

From a traveler's perspective, the terms wine region and wine tourism destination can be used interchangeably. Hall et al. (2000a) point out in more detail the link between the destination and the wine region. In a typical wine destination, the wine tourist usually finds a rural environment that is conducive to grape growing and related aspects such as wine production, wine landscapes, and tasting rooms where visitors can sample wine.

In the Czech Republic, for example, wine tourism is linked to the area where the grapes are grown – as, of course, in almost all wine regions of the world. Such a region, which also offers other grape or wine products and related services, could be called a wine tourism region. To emphasize the tourism focus of such a region, the term can also be used as a wine destination – a wine region combined with a tourism destination (Kubát & Kerma, 2022). The

growing interest in wine tourism has resulted in the emergence of such wine destinations, from the well-known Old World wine regions in Europe, which include Champagne in France and Mosel in Germany, to the New World wine regions in Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Chile, the United States, etc. (Thompson & Prideaux, 2022). The concept of a wine destination will probably continue to be treated mainly in the context of a defined area that offers tourist services and attractions and where vines and wine production are also present (Kubát & Kerma, 2022).

In a study by Faulkner, Oppermann and Fredline (1999), the destination of South Australia was analyzed comparing its main attractions and tourist offerings to other destinations in the country. This destination could offer well-known wine valleys such as Barossa Valley or Hunter Valley in its portfolio. Therefore, the respondents mentioned these wine regions as one of the main attractions of South Australia as a destination. Based on this, we can conclude that these wine regions have a distinct image as they are considered the main attraction for potential visitors. The Barossa Valley has been called the 'cradle of the Australian wine industry' (Ibid.). Thus, one way to think of a wine destination as such is a destination that includes many attractive places to consume, one of which is the main wine region in the eyes of visitors, which can lead to the entire destination taking on the image of a wine tourism destination.

Another way of understanding a wine destination is offered by Telfer (2001) using the example of the Niagara region, which became one of the most important wine tourism destinations in Canada through the establishment of the Wine Route. Telfer divides this wine route into three stages according to the competitive advantages of the embedded clusters. Thus, he examines the transition of the Niagara Wine Route from a wine tourism village to a wine tourism town and finally to a wine tourism region. Strengthening the vertical and horizontal linkages within the wine destination can be developed at each of these levels. Another level at which the characteristics of the wine destination can be considered is the fact that the wineries themselves have become an important destination within the final level, the region. The wineries both collaborate and compete in the development and promotion of Niagara as a wine destination. The situation in each of the three study areas is evolving towards highly interconnected networks. Tourism is inherently connected to the nature of place, and so is a wine region. The Niagara region has the advantage of not only being a major international tourism destination but also recently becoming home to a wine route. The synergies between wineries and tourism continue to grow as wineries themselves have become a major force in the tourism industry (Ibid.). As Scherhag (2016) notes, tourism and

wine businesses are working together to create all wine-related events for both tourists and the destinations themselves. The expansion of wine destinations, based primarily on the development of wine trails, is a relatively typical example for all wine-producing places around the world.

From Wine Destination Toward a Winescape

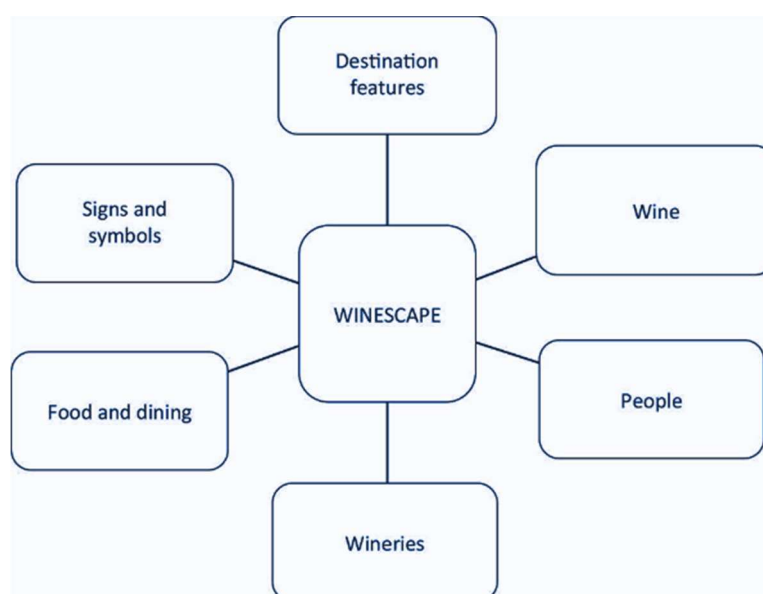
The regional wine environment is an important factor in the consumption of wine tourism products (Famularo, Bruwer & Li, 2010). This includes, in the case of rural landscapes where agriculture is commonly practiced, vineyards, landscape character, tasting rooms, tourist facilities, etc. According to some authors (Bruwer & Alant, 2009; Bruwer, Gross & Lee, 2016; Johnson & Bruwer, 2007; Thomas, Quintal & Phau, 2010, 2016), the preceding phrase can be captured by the term winescape concept. Although the concept itself is not new to the literature. It appeared as early as 1997 in a book by geographer Gary Peters. Peters expands the idea of wine regions in the Americas and develops the concept introduced by Stanislawski (1970) in his book on Portugal. However, another author, Myerscough-Walker (1968), mentions the concept of winescape even earlier than the previous authors. Myerscough-Walker explained this concept in the context of visitors' interaction with inns, hotels, restaurants, and clubs. Winescape emerged from the concepts of landscape and servicescape. Despite its origins in the cultural landscape discussion that has pervaded knowledge production since the early 20th century, literature on winescape did not appear more widely until the early 2010s (Valduga, Minasi, & Lohmann, 2022). This concept is currently being increasingly researched (Dixit, 2022; Kubát, Králiková & Ryglová, 2024; Terziyska, 2022; Valduga & Minasi, 2022) and is topical in wine tourism research (or well on the way to becoming one).

Winescape describes both the environment and the social interactions through which the wine tourism experience is co-created. Much of the winescape research is concerned with establishing a conceptual framework and identifying the individual attributes that make it up. The similarities in the various winescape models suggest a generic framework (Terziyska, 2022), as shown in Fig. 1.

According to Peters (1997), winescape refers to the attributes of the grape-growing area. Johnson and Bruwer (2007) define the winescape as the interaction of vineyards, wineries and other physical structures, wine, natural landscapes and environments, people, cultural heritage, cities and buildings and their architecture, and other human products. The processes

of vinification, production and sale of wine lead to the concept of winescape, which is part of the physical and cultural environment (Winkler & Nicholas, 2016). Here, the natural, cultural, and historical potential of rural areas is also highlighted, along with the associated tourism activities, in this case related to wine and its production (Kunc, Petr, Šauer, Tonev & Vystoupil, 2013). The winescape can be considered as another concept from this area of interest, similar to the concepts (in relation to wine, confirming its quality) of *terroir* or Wines of Original Certification (WOC), which can contribute to the selection and decision-making process for visiting a particular wine region or winery itself.

Figure 1 A generic framework of winescape concept in graphical representation



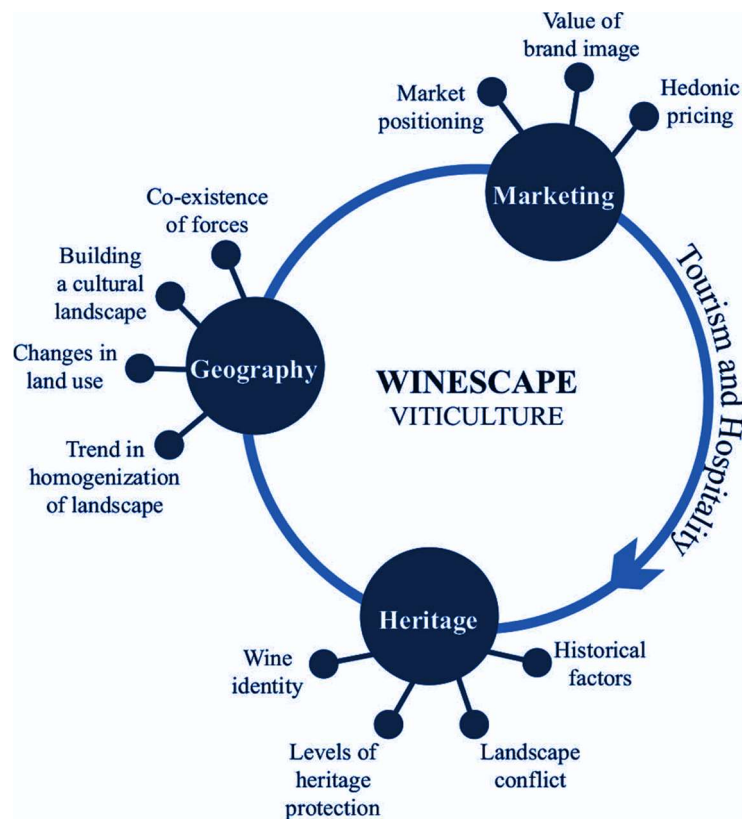
Source: adapted from Terziyska, 2022

Vineyards and wine landscapes are increasingly perceived by the territory as a more complex resource, composed of tangible and intangible assets, capable of providing certain goods and local services to residents and visitors (Sidali, Kastenholz, & Bianchi, 2015; Sottini et al., 2019). It is evident that the physical environment influences the vineyard and has an indelible impact on the resulting wine (Senese et al., 2012).

The relationship between the image of a destination in terms of gastronomy and the activities carried out in the destination is complex. Indeed, it is important to recognize that while gastronomy and wine are strong unifying themes for a tourism product and therefore can play an important role in promoting a destination, they are often not the main activities and attractions that tourists undertake when visiting a region (Frochot, 2003). Visitors may admire the complexity of a region for its enduring attributes, particularly nature (landscape)

and culture (heritage, customs), but also for additional features such as wine products, events, experiences, and sightseeing within the region (Bruwer et al., 2016). According to Valduga and Minasi (2022), the winescape can be considered a key element for tourism and hospitality. Considering the impact of land use, spatial planning, rural transformation, urbanization, implications, and consumption on a wine tourism destination means thinking about geographic, heritage and marketing approaches as the main components of the winescape, as shown in Fig. 2.

Figure 2 Main components of winescape concept



Source: adapted from Valduga & Minasi, 2022

DATA AND METHODS

The article discusses the first mention of the term winescape, its later development, as well as the current theoretical background and possible further variations in the understanding of this concept. Secondary sources form the basis for the fulfillment of the objective using the synthetic method. In addition to the development of wine tourism, the wine industry and viti/viniculture, the winescape concept is also considered from different angles, especially in relation to the wine tourism activities of a particular wine region and destination. The article

is likely to constitute a critical review as it attempts to provide a reflective account of research conducted in a specific area of interest (Paré & Kitsiou, 2017).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In general, winescape can be a designation for a landscape or an area where wine is grown. For example, it can be a description of the vineyards and surrounding countryside that is typical of the area where the wine is produced. Sometimes it is also used for paintings, photographs or other works of art depicting the landscape and surroundings of a wine region. This can range from an area of a few square kilometers to entire regions or even countries such as France, Italy or Spain that are known for their wine-producing regions.

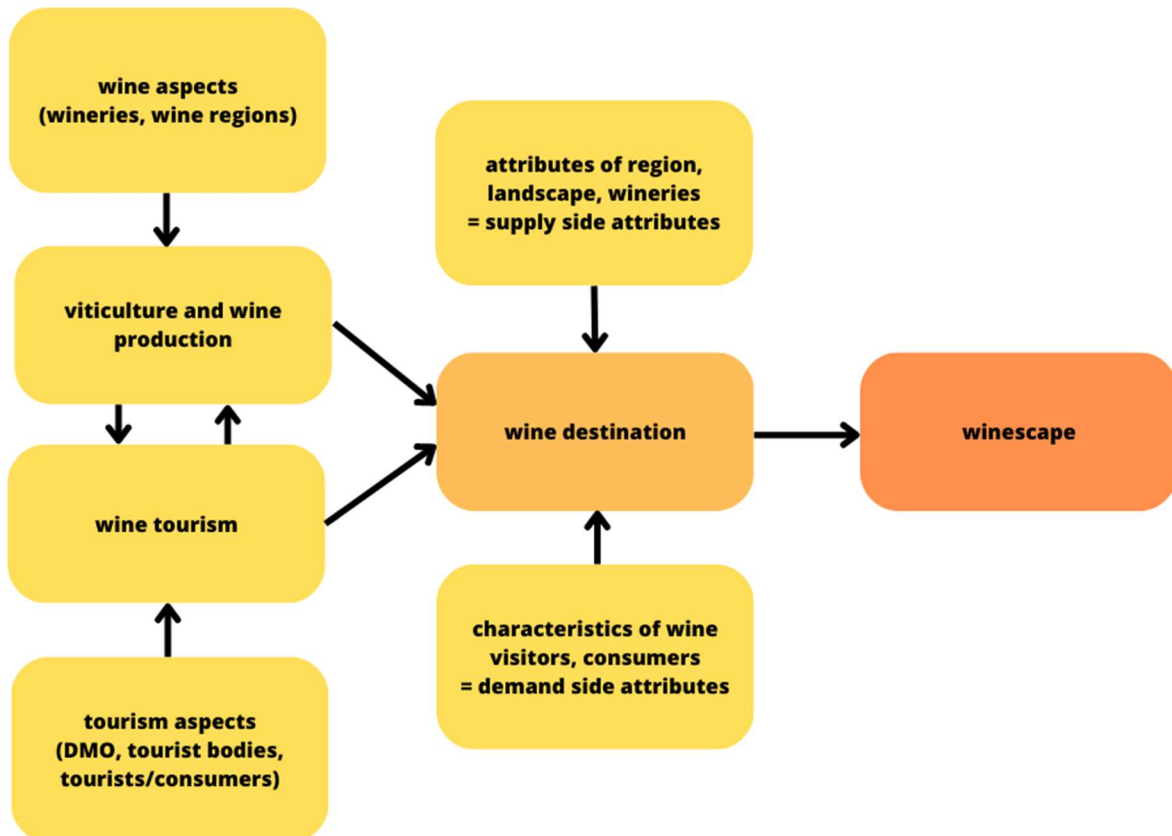
The potential of wine tourism destinations to package exceptional wine tourism experiences (Ali-Knight & Carlsen, 2003) is yet to be fully explored and developed. It could provide a comparative advantage to those wine regions that recognize and embrace the transition from a service economy to an experience economy (Pine & Gilmore, 1999). Terziyska (2020) presents several approaches and the selection of winescape attributes that are not strict and can be selected depending on the chosen approach, research method or specific cultural or environmental attributes of the destination.

It is important to note that winescape is not limited to the external aspects of vineyards, wineries, or landscapes. The interior of the wine buildings, the underground cellars, the maturing cellars and the wooden barrels in which the wines mature are also part of the landscape. When interpreting the winescape, other non-material elements, such as scent, taste, sound, appearance, etc., are also taken into account (Valduga, Minasi, & Lohmann, 2022).

According to Bruwer and Alant (2009), it is the concept of the winescape that primarily motivates and drives the behavior and decision-making of wine tourists. This interpretation suggests that it would be quite appropriate to consider the dimension of the consumer himself and his experiences, emotions, behaviors, and habits in relation to the winescape. Previous research in the field of winescape has focused on the attributes of the region or wine destination (Bruwer et al., 2016) or the attributes of the wineries (Byrd et al., 2016). The focus is therefore on the supply side of the concept, on attributes that are inherently given to the region or on attributes that have been developed in the region. Researching the winescape from the consumer's perspective would, therefore, combine other fields of study such as consumer behavior, human geography and psychology. Based on the authors' previous work, the proposed composition of the winescape framework is presented in Fig. 3. It illustrates the aspects of two sectors and, in a further step, the attributes from the environment that affect

and are relevant to wine destination. It shows the connection of two sectors such as wine and tourism through their components, activities, and products to create a wine destination that utilizes aspects from a previous step while receiving other attributes from the region and consumers that appear towards a winescape concept.

Figure 3 A proposal for the composition of the winescape framework from its origin



Source: Authors

CONCLUSION

Winescape is a term that has recently emerged in the context of describing the wine experience and its origins. The term refers to the extensive cultural and natural environment that influences the characteristics of wine. The perception and development of the winescape concept is based on a broader view of wine as a product of landscape and culture, rather than simply a product of the vine. It describes the cultural, social, economic, and environmental landscape of wine production and consumption. It has evolved over time and is now widely used in wine tourism, marketing, and research. The development of this concept is closely linked to the globalization of the wine industry, which has led to an increased interest (especially) of visitors in the geographical and cultural origins of wine.

The winescape concept considers the various elements that make up the wine industry, including vineyards, wineries, wine regions and the people involved in wine production and consumption. It also encompasses the social and cultural practices surrounding wine, including wine rituals, wine and food pairing and wine tourism.

Developing the winescape concept is also linked to raising awareness of the conservation and sustainability of wine-producing landscapes. These efforts promote the use of traditional agricultural practices and sustainable farming to preserve the natural and cultural values of the landscape and produce quality wines.

The development of the winescape concept has been shaped by, as well it is the result of an interdisciplinary approach that integrates knowledge from the fields of enology, (cultural) geography, history, sociology, anthropology, economics, and marketing. This approach has helped to define the key components of the winescape (in this article) and to understand the ways in which it is shaped by local and global factors. Incorporating the winescape into wine sales also allows people to better understand and appreciate the regional differences and characteristics of different wines. The winescape influences not only the cultivation of grapes and the production of wine, but also the overall experience with and of wine.

The winescape concept began to gain traction in the wine industry as wine producers and marketers sought to differentiate their products and appeal to a growing global audience. As the concept of winescape continues to evolve, it offers valuable insights into the complex relationships between wine, culture, and place.

The conclusions from the studies suggest that the winescape primarily motivates and drives the behavior of wine tourists. The lack of a consensually accepted definition of wine tourism in the field of tourism and leisure research has led to ongoing disagreements over important issues and concepts. One of these is the conceptualization of the regional brand aspect or the concept of winescape in relation to tourism services. As the concept is still in its prime, the possible development of this concept in the manner described in this article, through the proposed composition of the winescape framework, could enrich and further explore and develop the concept to consolidate its bases.

The scaling of the winescape concept addresses the pressing need for empirical evidence that captures the attributes associated with winery supply. From a winery management perspective, it provides wineries with a diagnostic tool to evaluate their wine region and helps them guide their market positioning and service activities in the marketplace by listing and sorting the key attributes of the winery and destination. From a destination management perspective, the concept is useful to enumerate the key factors that can be the main motivation

for visitors to visit the selected destination and a specific place, and it also identifies the possibilities to improve the necessary destination factors, e.g. as part of the development of strategic plans for the destination.

Previous studies and their findings, many of which are mentioned in this article, provide insight into the winescape concept and its delineation and position in the background of wine tourism. This concept provides an empirical decision-making framework that is freely applicable and generalizable in the context of wine tourism and in any wine destination or winery. By arranging and implementing attributes already used in winescape research, it can be adapted to any wine destination and enriched with new attributes typical of the destination.

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