City, architecture and wine: Wine tourism in the contemporary society

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Abstract. In the last decades, the growth of activities related to wine tourism is a potent driver of transformations in territories and societies. Wine landscapes of ancestral regions such as La Rioja in Spain, Bordeaux in France or also in the so-called “New World”, such as the Napa Valley in the United States, Mendoza in Argentina and many others around the world, demonstrate a new age where the wine tourism is essential for affecting their economies and leaving a mark in the contemporary society, in which architecture plays a major role to achieve these goals. In Brazil, an emerging country in wine production, the Valley of the Vineyards is one of the most traditional areas of production and it has been through major changes over the past decades. The countless vineyards, wine cellars, tourist establishments and the growing urbanization are redefining the landscape of the region. Using bibliographic revision to explore different perspectives on the theme, this article aims at highlighting the social, cultural and technical implications related to this kind of tourism. Moreover, both positive and negative effects reflect the identity and the characteristics of each area, along with cultural and architectural elements that are disposed in each wine cellar, time and place.

1. Cities, architecture and tourism

Tourism is a phenomenon that has ancestral roots. It characterizes contemporary societies, mainly occidental and industrial ones. Over the last years, tourism has assumed different aspects because of contrasting realities around the world. The broad concept around tourist activities currently refers to the act of traveling, implying a displacement with the intention of returning to the place of origin and permanent housing [1].

The first tourism definitions started in 1910, with the Austrian economist Herman Von Schullard, who wrote about the influence and the changes that the concentration of tourists caused to the economy of a certain place or country [2]. In 1970, Boyer, a theorist in the field of sociology, defined tourism as an act of mobility with the intention of using leisure as a tool to reach the cultural needs of the industrial civilization, placing it in the sphere of economy, society, leisure and culture [3]. Over the years, several other authors pointed different definitions for tourism, due to numerous factors in contemporary society that can assume different forms and configurations according to the context.

Despite its previous association with the elite, tourism nowadays is a common and essential activity in many societies. Such accessibility is due to social, cultural and economic aspects. According to Mayo [4], Rojek and Urry [5], the tourist destination and its image the main factors that influence tourists in their choice, which relates directly to the information that they have about the place, usually presented by the media or their own researches. These images consist of not only landscapes, but also architecture and cities that, according to Vargas, [1] play an important role in the development of tourism.

Within this subject, the city, the architecture and the history, as well as the image made of all these associations, compose the base for the tourist potential of a certain place. Between different tourist possibilities, we can highlight rural tourism, which has gained great attention in recent years. It involves various aspects, with new values and new relations between man and rural areas. Some of these relations are directly involved in daily rural life, valuing and recognizing local culture, while others manifest themselves in the form of large hotel complexes with a variety of activities that may or may not relate to the environment.

According to Roque, activities related to visits and recreation in the rural environment [6] date back to ancient times, when emperors and warriors moved to the countryside fleeing the daily life of Rome. After, in the Middle Age, noblemen also moved to the countryside in search of leisure and rest. Throughout history, the industrial revolution provokes the migration in great scale from the countryside to the city. However, many people still returned with the objective of visiting family and leaving the urban centers [6].

Zimmermann [7] characterizes rural tourism as a product designed to meet a certain tourist clientele which is attracted by the rural environment. Such place can acquire different forms and types according to various rural activities.

Within the new concepts and modalities of tourism that the rural world offers, wine tourism has been growing and standing out in the last decades. It brings the possibility of exploring the world of the wine, deeply altering its
dynamics and its development in countries with a long history of production or countries from the “New World” where the production is more recent, just like Brazil.

2. Wine tourism
As a phenomenon that stands out in the contemporary civilization, wine tourism appears as the result of the development of wine production facilities and tourists themselves. The quest for knowledge about wine cultivation, production and tasting has fostered the growth of tourism in this sector, turning the activity into a source of knowledge and pleasure [8].

In spite of the great bond with the rural activities, wine tourism can also grow and take place in urban spaces. Both environments can complement and relate to each other. The “City of Wine Civilizations”, in Bordeaux, is a great example. Inaugurated in 2016, it is a museum completely dedicated to the history of wine in the civilizations, along with wine tasting. Despite its location in the urban space of Bordeaux, it is strongly connected to the traditional producing area around the city.

Wine tourism shows itself as an activity that includes several factors, which contributes to enrich every involved aspect. The capacity of associating several tourist modalities gives space for new possibilities of this activity. Despite its existence for many years, the definition of wine tourism started in the nineties, because of the studies with wine tourism's scenario as a work landscape, which for many authors, connects the tourist activity with the vineyards, wine cellars and festivities of wine constitute the main motivation for visitors” ([9], p. 3). The author’s point of view suggests the return to the nature as a search of serenity and peace that, usually, rural areas can offer.

Wine tourism is becoming more and more associated to marketing, which configures an important strategy for the development of the wine-producing industry. Even in countries with a tradition in wine production, wine tourism is a strategy to narrow the relationship with the consumer. It goes beyond tasting, as it involves creating positive bonds regarding information and sales of products.

3. Wine tourism in the world
Although its little tradition, the “New World” has also experienced changes and innovations in wine tourism. In fact, many producers have much of their income from tourist activities, which are an essential element for the maintenance of some productions. With this, the investment in technology and spaces for receiving visitors is even higher.

One of the great examples of the rapid development and growth of wine tourism industry in the world is Australia. Since 1998, the country has been developing a “National Strategy of Wine Tourism” in order to strengthen the sector in the country. At the same year, they hosted the first world congress of wine tourism.

The United States, as one of the largest producers of wine in America, has the highest number of visits related to wine tourism in the region. The Napa Valley, in San Francisco, California, is 58 kilometers long and covers countless vineyards with more than 500 wineries, which receive millions of tourists every year. These tourists spend large amounts of money that moves the economy of the region. According to Gregory, [16] the success of the Napa Valley in wine tourism is due to several factors, starting with the quality of the wine produced in there, the location close to San Francisco and the various cultural and social activities introduced in there.

In the other countries of the “New World” wine tourism also relates to the economic restructure of rural regions, associated with the growth of consumption and requirements of quality demanded by consumers. In South America, Chile and Argentina have prominent wine tourism destinations, offering experiences in large, luxurious and technological wineries.

Within a distance of 1100km of Buenos Aires, Mendoza stands out as the most important wine region in Argentina. The province produces around 70% of the country’s grapes, with over 140,000 hectares of vineyards, and it is home to more than 700 wineries. With its landscape dominated by the Andes, Mendoza...
receives millions of tourists every year, who are seeking to experience the highest vineyards in the world [17].

Wine tradition has always been a part of European culture, but wine tourism has not developed in the same way and speed as in the “New World”. According to Hall, [9] although the first wine routes emerged in Germany around 1920, the perception and recognition of wine tourism as a tool for brand development and activities did not occur quickly and immediately. It only took place at the end of the XX century. Currently, wine tourism is growing in the European wine routes.

Within this scenario, France, Spain, Italy and Portugal are the countries that stand out not only in their productions, but also in the incorporation of wine tourism. Wine tourism grows in each of these countries under different perspectives and influences, which in some cases gain strength with incentive programs and financing. Closely linked to the cultural heritage and history, these countries associate all these attractions with wine and gastronomy.

In France, wine tourism has been strongly related to features of tradition and prestige. The region of Bordeaux is an example of this reality in the country, receiving an average of 70,000 visitors a year in its chateaux, museums and structures connected to sector [18]. From the ancient chateaux architecture, wineries are part of the imaginary and the expectations of visitors who seek this region for tradition and quality.

In Spain, although there are similarities with France, the emphasis is on innovation. The various regions of the country, especially the Ribera Del Duero and Rioja, are strong examples of both tradition and innovation, which brings a cool and futuristic image to the industry. One of the most emblematic wineries is called Marqués de Riscal. Designed by the architect Frank O. Gehry, it has a contemporary design and combines gastronomy and hotel services.

Wine tourism in Spain is, nowadays, a clear profit strategy, which reinforces the potential for brands that aim at establishing emotional marketing strategies. In early 2016, the Wine Tech Forum, with the support of Microsoft, Tpisa and the Councils Regulators Wineries Conference, created a space for dialogue and learning the new capabilities that the digital transformation can offer to the wine industry. The use of communication technologies employs a new vision to wine tourism, addressing the young audience with an agile and direct language [19].

In Italy, wine tourism is growing since 1993, when the foundation “Wine Tourism Movement” motivated the opening to the public of about 100 wineries in Tuscany, through the dilemma “See what you drink,” converting production sites in museums [9]. Currently, scenarios of Italian wineries combine traditional and contemporary architecture to build large complexes that resemble the ideas developed in Spain.

In Portugal, wine tourism has its maximum expression in the Douro region, with activities that evoke the culture and tradition in spaces that modernize and adapt to current needs. With a landscape classified as world heritage by UNESCO and a production of wine with renowned quality, wine tourism in Portugal follows a full development path by linking the cultural and architectural heritage of farms and homesteads.

Currently, the Great Wine Capitals (GWC) are being structured. It is one of the most important associations of wine tourism and brings the main wine capitals in the world together: Adelaide (South Australia), Bordeaux (France), Florence (Italy), Bilbao (Rioja Spain), Porto (Portugal), Mainz (Rhine-Germany), San Francisco (Napa Valley-USA), Cape Town (South Africa), Mendoza (Argentina) and Valparaiso (Chile). Through surveys in the participating cities, the data published by the GWC [20] notes a boom in wine tourism in recent years, and shows that the percentage of the revenue from the wine tourism in the interviewed wineries has reached 19.45%. Beyond this percentage, there has been an increase in the number of young people in the sector between 2012 and 2015.

4. Wine tourism in Brazil

Viticulture marks its presence in Brazil only with the arrival of the Portuguese. The Vitis Vinifera was brought by Martin Afonso de Souza in 1532, during the colonial period, and it was introduced in the captaincy of São Vicente, which currently corresponds to the state of São Paulo [21]. The grapes were brought from both Portugal and Spain, and after its introduction in São Vicente, an expansion took them to other regions of the country.

According to Valduga [22], the introduction of vines in Rio Grande do Sul is still a controversial topic. During the colonial period (1500–1822), due to wine production initiatives in Brazil, Portugal prohibited the establishment of industries in the colonies, along with the cultivation of certain fruits in temperate regions, in order not to compete with the internal market. In 1789 D.Maria I launched a license, the “Regias Letters in January 1789”, prohibiting the cultivation of vines in Brazil and evoking the mercantilist character of colonization. Despite the ban, in Rio Grande do Sul, cultivation continued in the Jesuit Missions [22].

The prohibition of wine production in the country ended in 1808, with the arrival of the royal family in Brazil, bringing habits and cultures to introduce wine into daily life and religious festivities [23]. With the permission of Dom Pedro I, the Italian João Batista Orsi stayed in the Serra Gaúcha to grow European grapes, starting and fostering the development in this region, considering its geographical and climatic aspects, which happened to be the necessary conditions for production.

The large growth in the production of wine in the country happened with the arrival of European immigrants to the country, which brought traditions and production methods with them. According Valduga, [22] the migratory movements in Rio Grande do Sul tried to develop viticulture in the country. Just in the nineteenth century, more than a million immigrants came into the country, the majority of Italian descent, who occupied the region of the slope of plateau in Rio Grande do Sul, which soon was called the Italian colonial region. The wine in the region of Italian colonization became the main product from 1885, but logistical problems weakened its growth, which occurred only from 1910, when the railway linking the Italian colonial region with the capital of the state, Porto Alegre, was launched. Since then, the flow of production of wines and passenger becomes possible, which turns the region into an attractive tourist destination in the summer, due to its milder climate. In
1920, several hotels were built in the cities of Veranópolis, Bento Gonçalves and Caxias do Sul to receive tourists [22].

In 1899 the first State Agricultural exhibition took place, with wine producers from Pelotas. However, the first grape exhibition happened on February 26, 1913, with the presence of 133 grape exhibitors and 20 wine exhibitors. From that moment on, viticulture grew in the area, and soon the number of urban wine producers increased as they started to offer wines of better quality than the ones produced by the farmers in an artisanal way. As they found themselves being harmed, they began to use cooperatives to compete with the big urban producers, many of which remain until this day [22].

Until the 1960s, Brazilian viticulture was limited to the South and Southeast of the country, in the states of Rio Grande do Sul, Santa Catarina, São Paulo and Minas Gerais. However, in the recent decades, the breakdown of trade barriers made possible to expand wineries in the country. In addition, with the improvement of systems and production methods, planting also took place in the Northeast, in the Vale do Rio São Francisco, which covers part of the states of Bahia and Pernambuco [23].

The Serra Gaúcha is considered the main producing area of the country, and is divided among the areas of the Vale dos Vinhedos, Pinto Bandeira and Altos Montes, with favorable soil and climate. The Valley of the Vineyards is the first region to receive the designation of “Denominação de Origem”, that ensures the quality of wines from this region.

The São Francisco Valley is one of the regions that gained visibility in the recent years. Located in the semiarid region of the states of Bahia and Pernambuco, is mainly specialized in the production of grapes for fresh consumption. This region is increasingly investing in production, reaching exportation standards. Currently, Brazil is the fifth largest wine producer in the southern hemisphere, with more than 1,400 international medals, having its wine exported to over 34 countries. In addition, according to IBRAVIN – Brazilian Wine Institute, domestic consumption is rising 30% by the end of 2016 [24].

Given the major growth of viticulture in Brazil, with more than 80,000 hectares of vineyards of distinct varieties, wine tourism has been gaining ground in the country, providing tourists with wine experiences that integrate cultural heritage, nature and landscape. It makes each producing region unique.

According to Flores [25], until 2012 the regions of wine tourism interest in Brazil were present in eight states. In Rio Grande do Sul, (Serra Gaucha, Santa Maria, Serra do Sudeste and Ilha dos Marinheiros), Santa Catarina (Vale do Rio de Peixe, Serra Catarinense, Vale da uva Goethe and Nova Trento), Paraná (the north, Bituruna, Colombo, Região Metropolitana and Santa Felicidade), São Paulo (São Roque, Circuito das Frutas, São Carlos and Espírito Santo do Pinhal), Minas Gerais (Andradas), Espírito Santo (Pedra Azul and Santa Teresa) and finally Bahia and Pernambuco (Eixo de Petrolina).

4.1. Vale dos Vinhedos

Rio Grande do Sul is responsible for most of the Brazilian production derived from grape. Several municipalities are producers, but the region that stands out for the number of production and visitors in their wine tourism routes is the region of the Vale dos Vinhedos, consisted of the cities of Bento Gonçalves, which is the national capital of grape and wine, Monte Belo do Sul and Garibaldi.

The Valley of the Vineyards was named as a district after changes in the organization of the territory of Bento Gonçalves, in August 1990. The Valley of the Vineyards has its colonization dated from 1875, with the arrival of many Italian families who also settled in other parts of the country. Therefore, viticulture has gained strength and expression in the region, reaching its fullest development in the twentieth century, as it is considered a source of regional growth and the emergence of activities related to wine tourism [22].

During the twentieth century, small producers’ cooperatives were created in the Serra Gaúcha in order to improve the marketing of their products. However, since there was no great lucrative success with these cooperatives, in the mid-1970, producers made their own wines forming several small wineries. Through the association of six producers seeking better competitiveness in the market, in 1995 APROVALE was established, an institution that aims at acting in the socio-economic and tourist development of the region. This institution opens the door to obtaining the indication of “Procedência de Origem” that was conquered in 2002 [26].

The “Indicação de Procedência” do Vale dos Vinhedos (IPVV) guarantees quality, reputation, tradition or other characteristics that reassure the geographical origin of the wine. In this particular region, multiple criteria must be strictly followed by the wineries to use the “IPVV” in their wines [27].

According Valduga, [22] wine tourism roots in the Valley of the Vineyards had its origins with the family wineries of the current Casa Valduga and the extinct Winery Fontanive, which initiated the marketing and the production of fine wines directly at the headquarters of the wineries. It attracted consumers of several neighboring regions that also visited the Aurora winery in Bento Gonçalves. In addition to these activities, many other wine festivals and parties helped in the consolidation of wine tourism in the region, with particular attention to Fernachamp in Garibaldi, the Fernavinho in Bento...
According to Falcado, [28] wine tourism in the Serra Gaúcha and the region of the Vale dos Vinhedos happens in parallel with the development of vineyards in the region, which began more than 100 years ago. Improving the quality, diversification of the producer and the attractions of the region, contributed to the development of wine tourism, which happens in three phases. The first phase corresponds to the establishment of wine tourism, beginning with the arrival of Italian immigrants in 1875 and extending to the mid-1960s. It is characterized by visits to relatives living in the region as well as agro-industrial exhibitions and events related to grape production. The second phase, called by the author as the expansion of wine tourism, covers the period between the years 1970 and 1990. It is characterized not only by festivities and exhibitions, but also by the beginning of visits to wineries in the area. Finally the third phase, called consolidation, corresponds to the periods between 1990–2004. It is characterized by tourist routes comprising large complexes that offer a range of activities related to wine tourism, such as accommodation and food in rural areas.

According to APROVALE [29], until 1995, the year correspondent to the entity’s creation, only the founding wineries were associated and a little more than a dozen canteens in the Vale dos Vinhedos, which most did not have any structure to support the reception of tourists. In 2015, 26 wineries were associated with Aprovale. In addition to wine tasting, today the wine tourism’s route in the Vale dos Vinhedos includes hotels, hostels, restaurants, cafes, tour operators, as well as art studios, crafts, and antique stores.

In 2001, according to data collected by APROVALE [30], the Valley of the Vineyards received 12,600 visitors. With the conquest of “Denominação de Origem” this number reached 115,000 in 2006. Nine years later, in 2015, that number increased to 397,529 tourists visiting the Vale dos Vinhedos.

The current wine tourism route in the Vale dos Vinhedos, with its many wineries, offers tourists a guided visit inside the wineries, wine tastings and grape juice, in addition to visits to vineyards. These visits enable a close relationship with customers, considering that the architecture of the wineries and the surrounding landscape create a unique experience.

5. Wine and rural landscapes: Identity and culture at risk

According to Correa Resendaahl, [31] the landscape is composed of a set of forms created both by the nature and the action of man. Its historical dimension has meanings, values and beliefs that influence the perception by the subject.

By the multiple aspects involved in wine tourism, rural landscapes have great potential, as long as they are preserved. Moreover, the enhancement of natural and cultural features of the area, along with agents, can ensure the maintenance of wine production practices and the landscape quality.

Within these statements, rural landscapes in the Vale dos Vinhedos are inserted as a result of the human modification in the territory, as a legacy of the cultivation and production of grape implanted by the Italian immigrants. They arrived in 1875 and have been leaving their cultural identity and history over the years. In the recent dates, Viticulture in the Vale dos Vinhedos has built in technology for production qualification, such as driving in the form of open trellis or espalier, which has changed the landscape wine. Moreover, the changes in this wine landscape are also related with the opening of commercial enterprises along the routes, the emergence of new economic activities and the paving of the main roads, among others, which are directly linked to the development of wine tourism in the valley.

According to studies conducted by Lavandoski, [27] in the case of the Vale dos Vinhedos, the perception of the rural wine landscape by the visitor in the area studied provided mainly by the wine culture. Therefore, the visitor notices a typicality in this landscape through its elements, such as the vineyards, the wineries, the architecture of the old houses, the relief, and thus the community’s way of life. The studies of Lavandoski still show how the landscape involves an entire image that the tourist makes of a certain place. It indicates the need to show aspects that are valued by those visitors, such as the contact with nature and the rural area, cultural and traditional manifestations, religiosity, and all things and habits that are being forgotten by the new generations over time.

Lavandoski [27] also concluded in his studies that wine tourism has contributed to the development and preservation of the image and identity of the Vale dos Vinhedos, promoting the region as a whole, along with their historical and cultural aspects. However, it highlights the fact that the landscape should not be treated in isolation. On the contrary, it must be built and maintained in parallel with the development of wine tourism. It requires a joint action by government agencies, entrepreneurs and the local community in order to enable alternatives that contribute to the appreciation and preservation of this landscape.

Recent studies conducted by Giordani [32] point out the modifications of this historically productive landscape, currently being a certified wine territory where there is a gradual process of transformation. The study analyzes this process, showing how increasing urbanization, which was also determined by the value of the land, has led the Vineyards Valley to lose the cultural values of the territory. From the historical point of view, the author...
discusses all the process of transforming the landscape, which starts with the planting of the first vineyards and the arrival of Italian immigrants until the emergence of its first urban centers and the recent urbanization, which will add a new value to the territory. According to the author, these changes imply a risk to a legacy of years of history in the construction of this unique landscape.

Also according to Giordani, [32] the city’s master plan has a specific legislation covering the rural area of the Vale dos Vinhedos. However, it has not been able to stop the process of change and growth from both urban and industries. Therefore, the Vale dos Vinhedos is committed to different deviations in land use. The most serious are the industrial areas and residential condominium complexes. At the moment when landscape becomes a value-adding factor to the territory, the question is how urbanization and architecture can lead to an identity loss.

The author also raises the question about the concept of “Denominação de Origem” of the Vale dos Vinhedos. According to her, it does not apply to the protection of the know-how, inserted into a wine landscape built with local materials and cultural events through a tradition repeated for generations. On the contrary, the “Denominação de Origem” in the Vineyards Valley proposes a new planting system, other than the one practiced in the territory since the arrival of Italian immigrants in 1875, which allowed the destruction of a territory to give space for new determinations to produce wines with “Denominação de Origem”.

In the study, Giordani [32] considers that the certification of the Vale dos Vinhedos, to the geographical indication in 2002, was a positive factor. It provided an identity to the local wine production, but there were consequences in the territory. The valuation of the land reaches a level that leads to the urbanization’s rapid growth, in addition to the abandonment of small producers which starts with the planting of the first vineyards and the recent urbanization, which will add a new value to the territory. According to the author, these changes imply a risk to a legacy of years of history in the construction of this unique landscape.

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6. Final considerations

Through the analyzed sources, it is possible to observe wine tourism as an activity with multiple possibilities. It promotes, at the moment, different values and alternatives to the environment, as long as there is this possibility in there. Its powerful economic influence is also remarkable to create a strong image of a product and place. The new capitals of wine show the growth and the importance of this activity, in which communication and technology are essential vehicles for its dissemination and maintenance.

In Brazil, the recent tradition in wine production is growing fast in the last years, reaching new regions and states, and strengthening the production and consumption of wine in the country. The Serra Gaúcha, with all its wine tradition, houses the most consolidated wine tourism destination in Brazil, attracting thousands of tourists each year, who are looking for the diverse experiences that this type of tourism can offer.

The Valley of the Vineyards reflects the cultural heritage that was established there, with vines and the following arrival of Italian immigrants in this region, which adds value and identity to this wine landscape. However, the growth of wine tourism during the last years comes along with deep modifications that put the validity of this region’s cultural landscape at risk, by the level of commitment to preserve that identity. The rapid urban growth and the changes caused by the development of wine tourism need to be carefully dimensioned for the purpose of maintaining the best practices and also the landscape and culture of this place.

We verified that wine tourism achieves notoriety in various regions of the world, stimulating economic growth of private wine production, products and services associated with the whole production chain in which tourism plays a key role.

The great development that wine tourism has had in recent years requires a thorough attention and monitoring by the various agencies that govern this activity. That way, it is possible to avoid the most negative consequences and that will enhance and strengthen the identity and the culture of the Vale dos Vinhedos, which is expressed through the rural wine landscape, architecture, and cultural manifestations.

It is necessary and convenient to conduct a deeper study regarding the real implications of wine tourism in rural landscapes of regions such as the Vale dos Vinhedos. It is important to align the interests of different producers, consumers and general public, facing the risk of jeopardizing the region’s potential because of the waste of cultural and natural resources.

References


