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### **EXTENDED ABSTRACT**

**Title:** The economic impact of wine tourism in Spain: An analysis of the Wine Routes of Spain.

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**Abstract:**

Currently, tourism activity is showing clear signs of evolution towards shorter and more frequent trips, which means that travelers, apart from demanding the classic sun and beach destinations, are opting to discover and enjoy new experiences (Lai, 2019). As a result of these changes in tourist consumption patterns, the tourism offer, promoted by public and private agents, is adapting to the new demands of travelers through the creation of thematic tourism products, including those related to the recovery of the cultural, social, and gastronomic heritage of geographical areas (Sánchez-Cañizares & López-Guzmán, 2012). In particular, tourists are very interested in the gastronomic offer of the places they visit and, within this, in everything related to the world of wine.

Wine and tourism, therefore, represent a perfect symbiosis, offering a different experience to tourists, as well as promoting the economic, social, and environmental development of

wine-growing regions (López-Guzmán et al., 2011). On the one hand, wine tourism offers a complete sensory experience to the tourist, since the visitor can experience and taste wine through sight, smell, touch, taste, and sound. Any tourist, regardless of their knowledge of oenology, can appreciate the smell and taste of the different wines, get to know the winery facilities or the sound of opening a bottle of wine and toasting with the right glasses. As a result, wine has often become the main reason for visiting a particular geographical area rather than a complementary activity to travel (Stewart et al., 2008). On the other hand, wine tourism allows the economic development of rural and urban areas to be boosted under the premises of sustainable development. This type of tourism is part of the social, cultural, environmental, and economic history of the municipalities and their inhabitants and has even been defined as the “wine landscape” (Brunori & Rossi, 2001).

The first research in the field of wine tourism dates back to the nineties of the last century, focusing on the influence of wine tourism activity on rural areas and on the behavior of wine tourists (Hall, 1996). Thus, among the pioneering works on wine tourism, the books *Wine Tourism Around the World* (Hall et al., 2000) and *Explore Wine Tourism* (Getz, 2000) stand out for their relevance and disruptive character in the field, as well as the research carried out by Charters & Ali-Knigh (2002), Carlsen (2004), Getz & Brown (2006) and Mitchell & Hall (2006).

The definition of the term wine tourism is not homogeneous, as it has been analyzed from different perspectives. Thus, Hall et al. (2000) consider wine tourism as the experience associated with visiting vineyards, wineries and wine demonstrations in which wine tasting is the main element. Getz & Brown (2006), on the other hand, conceive wine tourism as a strategy to develop a certain geographical area and an opportunity for wineries to promote and sell their products directly to consumers. Therefore, wine tourism is not simply wine tasting, but a set of socio-cultural and environmental factors that make it possible to respond to the tourist's search for a differentiating experience. Given the proliferation of definitions, Clemente-Ricolfe et al. (2012) conducted an extensive literature review on the different definitions and conceptualizations of the term.

As far as wine tourists are concerned, academic literature has traditionally employed two procedures to analyze and segment this type of tourists: (a) the classification of the customer considering demographic factors (origin, age, education and family background); and (b) the establishment of a profile detailing their psychographic background (values, attitudes and lifestyles). In this sense, different publications consider both demographic and psychographic variables when identifying and analyzing wine tourists, being widely considered as a typology of tourists who are between 30 and 50 years old, are in the moderate and high income bracket, come from the wine region or live close to it, are regular wine consumers, have an intermediate or advanced knowledge of wine and have diverse external and internal motivations for visiting a winery (Mitchell et al., 2000; Mitchell & Hall, 2006; Nella & Christou, 2014). For the purposes of this research, we have considered as wine tourists all those visitors to the wineries and wine museums belonging to the Wine Routes of Spain.

In recent decades, wine tourism has emerged as a complementary way of generating employment and wealth in the economy. As a consequence, its study has acquired a high level of development and maturity in the academic literature, with research in several countries such as: Australia (Sigala, 2019), Canada (Hashimoto & Telfer, 2003; Getz & Brown, 2006), Chile (Torres et al., 2021), Hungary (Medina, 2015), Italy (Colombini, 2015), New Zealand (Baird et al., 2018), Portugal (Lavandoski et al., 2018), South Africa

(Ferreira & Hunter, 2017) and Spain (Gómez et al., 2015). In the case of Spain, the first research was carried out by foreign researchers, focusing on La Rioja (Gilbert, 1992) and Marco de Jerez (Hall & Mitchell, 2000). However, these early studies were later complemented by Spanish researchers. Among the pioneering research carried out by Spanish researchers on the subject are the studies by Armesto-López & Gómez-Martín (2004), Medina & Tresserras (2008) and Alonso & O'Neill (2009) on the Catalan wine routes, the research by Pastor (2006), Gómez & Molina (2011) and Gómez-Rico (2011) in the context of La Rioja, the studies by Millán-Vázquez et al. (2008), Millán-Vázquez & Melián-Navarro (2008) and López-Guzmán et al. (2009) on the Montilla-Moriles wine route, as well as the research by Alvear-González et al. (2007), Matellanes-Lazo (2009), Miranda-Escolar & Fernández Morueco (2011) and Gómez-Rico (2011) on wine tourism in Ribera del Duero.

Wine tourism is an increasingly important activity in Spain, with a great tradition in the so-called New World countries, such as the United States, Australia, Chile, and South Africa. The agents involved in wine tourism activities are structured as a cluster structured through wine routes in which cooperation and relations between the different companies are encouraged. Therefore, the generation of wine routes represents a key element for the correct functioning of wine tourism activities. In fact, in the case of Spain, several researchers have studied the role of wine routes in boosting the competitiveness of a territory, increasing wine production, improving the quality of life of citizens, and respecting the environment (Jiménez & Sevilla, 2008; Guerrero & Albert, 2012; Romero, 2017; Portela & Domínguez, 2020). However, to our knowledge, the economic impact generated by these routes in the Iberian country has not been addressed in the academic literature. To overcome this research gap, this paper aims to analyze the supply and demand of tourism activities by analyzing the evolution of the institutions involved in the Spanish wine routes, on the one hand, and the economic impact of these routes, on the other. The research also seeks to analyze the company effect on this economic impact, as well as the relationship between the Spanish industry's quality labels, namely the Denomination of Origin (DO) and Protected Geographical Indications (PGI), and the creation of the Spanish wine routes. Therefore, the study aims to answer the following four research questions: How has the number of institutions adhered to the Spanish wine routes evolved? What is the economic impact of each of these routes? Do the wine routes that generate the greatest economic impact have the largest winemaking groups? Do the existing wine routes come from protected areas under DO or PGI?

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