

WINE TOURISM AS A CENTRIPETAL FORCE IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF RURAL TOURISM

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Abstract

Purpose – The paper aims to explore the significance of wine tourism for the rural tourism development in the Republic of Croatia and its intensity as the centripetal force of this development. In their efforts to advance rural tourism, wine-growing regions vastly rely on wine tourism.

Methodology – Based on the applied comparison, induction and deduction methods, the paper proposes measures which are expected to facilitate the wine tourism development and thus increase wine sales, and even more importantly, increase the demand for rural tourism products.

Findings – Wine tourism should gain special significance as an increasingly interesting component of the rural tourism product within the Croatian tourism, especially in terms of creating experiences and atmosphere for tourists during their stay in a certain rural tourism destination. Wine tourism is positioned as an attractiveness factor for rural destinations as well as a powerful centripetal force through well-designed marketing efforts. This way significant synergistic effects can be achieved in the combined rural and wine tourism development. In the strategic sense, this also means combining complementary tourist attractions in a way that coordination, cooperation and partnership between different tourism entities bring about maximum effects in rural tourism operations.

Contribution – The paper's originality is based on the claim that wine tourism should not be based solely on wine tasting and selling; rather, it should be linked in with gastronomic, natural, historical, entertainment and all other attractions in a particular rural destination. It is exactly this element that Croatian wine tourism is seriously lacking, mostly due to the fact that there are no destination management agents therein.

Keywords Croatian tourism, development strategy, marketing, rural tourism, wine routes, wine tourism

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