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**ВИНЕНИЯТ ТУР – БЕЗСПОРЕН МОДЕЛ ЗА ИНОВАЦИЯ В РАЗВИТИЕТО НА  
ТУРИСТИЧЕСКАТА ДЕСТИНАЦИЯ**

**THE WINE TOUR – AN INDISPUTABLE MODEL FOR THE INNOVATION IN THE  
DEVELOPMENT OF THE TOURIST DESTINATION**

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**Abstract:** Wine tours are inevitably related to the local rites and traditions, a part of the cultural heritage of the region. This new tourist genre appears as a result of a bright idea of producers from Australia and California in the beginning of the 90's of the last century (1990's). The wine tour or itinerary, successfully planned, worked out and developed is an undisputable innovation both as a conception and practical expression of the territory in the regional and the national supply. The wine tour model must contain the respective "wine elements", serving the wine tourism, thus helping for developing the wine destination.

**Key words:** vine area, wine, winery, wine road, wine tour

The global tendencies in tourism have imposed the searching of new forms of supply, including new packets and programmes, different from the ones of the competitors. The globalization in tourism was provoked by the boom in the development of the transport, technologies and the telecommunications, the buyers' demands, the national politics, the building up infrastructure and superstructure. The level of development and difference in the particular countries lead to competitive advantages. The potential of the globalization is namely in introducing new technics and technologies to reduce the expenses. The reducing of the expenses support the investments in and science activities and such of development, whose main aim is searching vanguard and technological decision and their implementation in practice.<sup>1</sup> Such a decision is exactly the wine tourism and its possibilities for development of the tourist destination.

Wine tourism is a niche market for individuals seeking and showing a special interest to wine products ( Hall M., 2001).

In an international aspect the wine tourism has been developed since the early 90's of the last century mainly in Australia, California and The USA, followed by the SAR, Argentina, Chilly, Canada. In Europe, as a result of saturating with traditional forms of tourism – the sea and the mountain, the interest to the wine and other alternative forms has also grown. Wine producers, hotel and restaurant owners, transport firms and tourist agencies have united their powers. The initiative is supported by governments and local communities interested in the development of the wine tourism. A lot of means were invested in building up an infrastructure and superstructure with one aim only – to attract tourists. Thus was reached the way to create a new product "the wine road"<sup>2</sup>

Wine tours are inevitably related to the local rites and traditions, a part of the cultural heritage of the region. The aim of working out a wine tour is to show the real merits of the wine region by combination of visiting natural beauty spots, tasting the typical kitchen and diving into the local culture.

The wine tour is a modern tourist product combining the pleasure of the good wine with other rising interests such as culture, history, beautiful nature and kitchen. Their harmonic interlacing is what provokes an experience of full value during a trip. This new tourist genre appears as a result of a bright idea of producers from Australia and California in the beginning of the 90's of the last century (1990's). They soon realized that having been disabed to rely on the large trade chains and had to find an own way for selling their products. Organizing tours around famous and not so known regions and showing their spots, they added walks around vine areas and tasting the local wine. This resulted in enlarging the direct sells of bottles and made their wines distinguished. Today, for example, the Australian wineries sell more than 30% from their wines that way.

The success turned out to be infectious and at the end of the 90's almost all significant wine powers in the world have orientated to develop this new kind of tourism – the wine tourism. In Europe the wine roads start developing in the 60's in Bordeaux, France – a unique town with impressive gothic architecture.

In Bulgaria the first steps in that sphere were made also at the end of the 90's, when the country was separated into 9 vine areas. More and more wineries started rely on wine tours to popularize and sell their wines. The industrial design that was traditional for the socialist Vinproms – a pattern of a winery in the past changed its aspect and gradually gave up its place durably in front of the new wine powers able to keep the old wine traditions creating new and friendly atmosphere in attractive aesthetic midst – a certain indication for the searched symbiose between the wine and tourism.

Five years ago eight wine roads appeared to follow visiting cultural objects spreaded out all over Bulgaria and become a part of tours including The Rila monastery, The Pleven panorama, The old Plovdiv, The ancient Perpericon,

ethnographic centers as Arbanassi, the old capitals of the country, the roman therms in Varna and a lot of natural phenomena, meeting at the same time the typical Bulgarian kitchen.

The destinations defined as wine roads in France, Spain and Italy annually attract millions of tourists. The project “development of Southern Central region through tourism development copies the European system for luxury tourism. The word “wine” is united in it, and the “Antique road of wine”, “The Dionysius` road” and “The Orpheus` road” are identified and have become unique. Wordly said, the wine is a cart which may cover up everything up to the limits of the human imagination. Owing to its` help by turning into a tourist product a new economic biography of the communities around the mentioned roads can be written. The whole historical richness of our country and the varieties of sorts of grape hide an enormous potential when visiting them during a trip for one or more days, that can be called “wine tour”.<sup>3</sup>

The wine tour or itinerary, successfully planned, worked out and developed is an undisputable innovation both as a conception and practical expression of the territory in the regional and the national supply.

The wine tour model must contain the respective “ wine elements”, serving the wine tourism, thus helping for developing the wine destination. For fulfilling this model a working team of professional cadres must be formed – winers, wine producers, wine specialists, oenologists, sommeliers, economists, geographers, historians, architects, archeologists and tour operators. Once formed the team and giving out the respective responsibilities then come the stages of the circle of the wine tour:

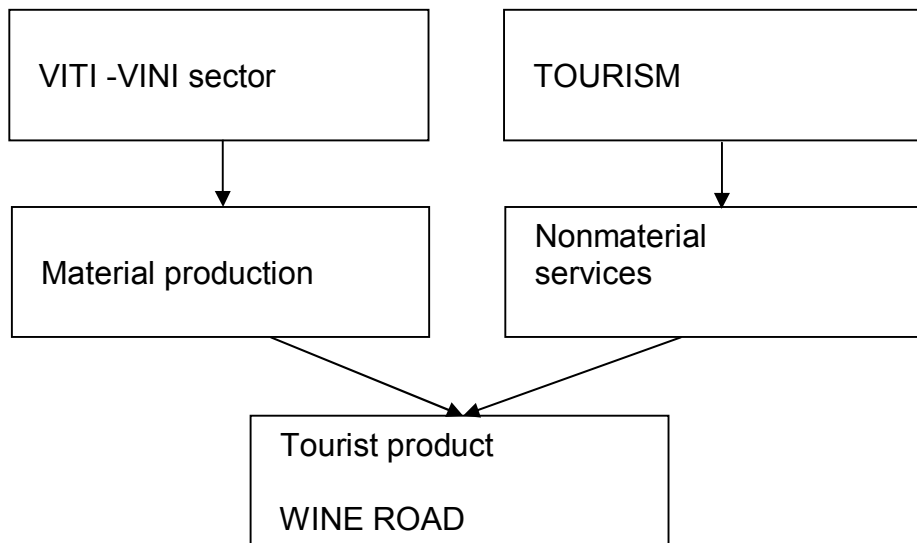
- to have a general idea about the region
- to explore and build up a realistic picture for the recreational potential of the region
- to define and promote visits in the most proper vine massifs and wineries,

working for the necessities of the wine tourism

- to discover and represent the territorial combinations of the attractive natural, cultural and historical objects with visiting vine areas and wine cellars.
- to define the finance parameters for working out a wine tour and forming budgets.

The wine region to be represented as a wine one needs to combine successfully itineraries to the vine areas, the natural and historical spots with the wine products in all their forms in a way to satisfy the clients

best. The wine products must be comfortable to the specifics of the consumers` requires and preferences. The wine tour must contain fascinating talks, lectured by enologues or professional guides. To be the experience more complete and satisfying the lecturs would be told among grape areas, in front of casks or near wine – cellars and end with prolonged degustations. A new tendence during the wine vacation recently appeared in Europe using the wine products in the form of cosmetic means in some Spa centers.



**Fig.1 Tourist product WINE ROAD**

Figure 1 represents the combination of the viti-vini production and tourism, united in a whole tourist product – wine road. The viti-vini sector represents material production – grapes, wine and high alcoholic drinks. This sector has at a disposition rich material – technical base (machines and suppliers, wine cellars for grapes and wine processing, premises for maturing th of the final production, etc.)

Tourism, on its side, offers non material services – information, accommodation, food establishments excursions, animation, etc.

According to the dates of the TA, the places that offered wine tourism in the period between 2000-2002 were in proportion foreign – home torism 3:1. While in the recent five years the statistics shows a growth of the home tourists and the proportion now is already 1:1.

Visiting Bulgaria one can see numerous archeological objects, museums, natural phenomena and enjoy and taste the traditional Bulgarian food with one aim only to feel up the typical old atmosphere in the old Bulgarian settlements. The wine tours can be successfully combined with a

visitation of cultural monuments, such as churches and monasteries, renaissance towns and ethnographic settlements, as well as natural reserves and even including a wine therapy in some balneo - and Spa – centers.

Although more and more wine-cellars have been opened in public, yet it is still early our country to pretend that wine tourism has reached the level which must be promoted and developed outside the national tourist market. The product of wine tourism at this stage can be described as a primary form, satisfying to some extent the

necessities of the home tourists. Our wine regions have more to add and develop to their image of wine destinations. The lack of good infrastructure, adequate marketing and proper advertisement appear to be main barriers for the accessibility of the regions to become preferable in an international scale.

Another advisable recommendation is improving the coordination and the interactivity among the different subjects and more concrete between the wine region and the tourist business.

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