

Functional characterization of wine tourism in the New World of Wine: Comparative study between Mexico and Brazil

Caracterización funcional del enoturismo en el Nuevo Mundo del Vino: Estudio comparativo entre México y Brasil

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Abstract

This paper aims to characterize wine tourism in two regions of the New World of Wine, one in southern Brazil and the other in central Mexico. This research intends to understand better the functional characteristics of wine tourism in the Latin American context and has a perspective based on rural sociology and tourism studies. A multiple case study was carried out, from which a comparative analysis was developed to identify the structures and functional characteristics of wine tourism in two wine regions of Mexico and Brazil. Based on the data analyzed, it is possible to carry out a functional characterization of the wine tourism offered in the study areas, highlighting that in both contexts of the new world of wine, wine tourism services are directly related to the production of wine, too from recreational interpretation processes of the productive value chain that ends with the tasting and direct sale of the wine. The study focus on 12



observation units in two wine regions in Brazil and Mexico. The main conclusions are that wine tourism differences and similarities of the regions demonstrate two differentiated wine tourism models with territorial articulations characterized in terms of culture, tradition, and food and wine experiences.

Key Words: Wine production; Wine consumption; Structure of wine industry; Brazil; Mexico.

Resumen

Este trabajo tiene como objetivo caracterizar al enoturismo en dos regiones del Nuevo Mundo del Vino, una en el sur de Brasil y la otra, en el centro de México. Esta investigación pretende comprender mejor las características funcionales del enoturismo en el contexto latinoamericano y tiene una perspectiva basada en la sociología rural y en los estudios de turismo. Se realizó un estudio de caso múltiple, a partir del cual se desarrolló un análisis comparativo para identificar las estructuras y características funcionales del enoturismo en dos regiones vitivinícolas de México y Brasil. A partir de los datos analizados, es posible realizar una caracterización funcional de la oferta enoturística en las áreas de estudio, destacando que, en ambos contextos del Nuevo Mundo del Vino, los servicios enoturísticos están directamente relacionados con la producción de vino, también a partir de procesos de interpretación recreativa de la cadena de valor productiva que culmina con la degustación y venta directa del vino. El estudio se centra en 12 unidades de observación en dos regiones vitivinícolas de Brasil y México. Las principales conclusiones son, que las diferencias y similitudes enoturísticas de las regiones, demuestran dos modelos enoturísticos diferenciados con articulaciones territoriales caracterizadas en términos de cultura, tradición y experiencias enogastronómicas.

Palabras clave: Producción de vino; Consumo de vino; Estructura de la Industria del vino; Brasil; México.

1 Introduction

Worldwide, wine tourism has experienced sustained growth over the last 50 years (Durán and Álvarez, 2017), establishing itself as an alternative to conventional tourism with substantial economic implications. This aspect has generated a critical economic revitalization of rural areas where grapevines and wine are produced based on endogenous resources. This is in addition to the other crops typically found in a Mediterranean climate, such as olive groves. Here, olive oil and wine are seen as important elements of heritage and culture (Murgado et al., 2025; Salvado & Monteiro, 2024).

One of the objectives of the socioeconomic transformation of rural space is the generation of complementary income for rural actors, who previously depended exclusively on primary activities. The multi-functionality of the territory translates into a crucial strategy for the productive restructuring of the rural space (Segrelles and Vázquez, 2012; Niño et al., 2015). Along the same lines, contemporary rural societies operate under multiactivity schemes, in which people carry out a more significant number of tasks than those they traditionally carried out (Schneider, 2009). Therefore, rural tourism is inserted into the guidelines of the global world under political and economic schemes. These principles are based on the redesign of the rural world and on models of productive diversification of the territory, which include a vital cultural component (Aguilar et al., 2002).

In recent years, wine tourism has become highly relevant worldwide, a development component for different wine production areas. According to Getz and Brown (2006:79), wine tourism can be understood as: "the development and marketing of wineries as places to visit, and of destinations based on the attractiveness of wine." Additionally, the complementary definition of Getz et al. (1999) is taken up:

"Wine tourism is a form of consumer behavior based on the attractiveness of wine and wine regions, and a development and marketing strategy for the wine industry and destinations in which wineries and wine-related experiences are the dominant attractions."

Meraz and Maldonado (2016) consider wine tourism essential in disseminating wine culture and wine-growing activity in rural areas. The territory is considered as a whole, where culture, landscape, and services are combined. Molina et al. (2015) consider that rural tourism has undergone significant changes because tourist experiences are built based on territorial synergies rather than isolated elements. In the case of wine tourism, the articulations between the different territorial resources are essential because they serve as a vehicle for wine experiences.

For example, wine is experienced in the context of gastronomy and, therefore, of local agri-food systems, as with olive groves used for olive oil production, olive oil tourism represents a socio-economic opportunity that can be examined not only within the European context, but also in other geographical areas. In this sense, olive oil tourism is linked to agricultural activities and, implicitly, to the local area. It currently offers high potential for rural area development through tourism, although it remains seasonal compared to other forms of tourism (Vena-Oya & Parrilla-González, 2024).

Furthermore, according to Parrilla-González et al. (2024), culinary tourism can play a significant role in revitalising rural areas and ensuring appropriate population growth. As such, the tourism offering has adapted to cater to the demands of different tourist segments.

The European continent that makes up the Old World of Wine has a long tradition of winemaking (Molina et al., 2015). This region has been a pioneer in the development of wine tourism. On the other hand, in the New World of Wine, particularly in North America, wine tourism became popular starting in the 1990s with the establishment of just over a thousand boutique wineries. From a global perspective, the Old World of Wine refers to countries with a long-standing tradition of winemaking and a deep-rooted expertise in this field. In contrast, the New World of Wine emerged from the 16th century onwards through processes of conquest and territorial migration. In both cases, the terroir is closely connected to the production method (Terblanche et al., 2021).

Worldwide, there is an increase in the commercialization of wine (as a product and tourist attraction), integrating an offer to promote wineries. In the academic field, it has contributed to the generation of studies with a direct impact on social, economic, and environmental aspects.

Some studies on wine tourism (Fraser and Alonso, 2006; López et al., 2013; Novo et al., 2019) agree that the diversification of products in this type of tourism can directly influence in the motivations of tourists to make their trips. Therefore, it is necessary to have a better theoretical conceptualization of this tourist phenomenon.

Similarly, there is research (Briedenhann and Wickens, 2004; Bruwer and Alant, 2009; Thome-Ortiz, 2017; De Jesús-Contreras and Thomé-Ortiz, 2018) that conceptualize wine tourism as a process of tourist appropriation of territories. These approaches consider socioeconomic dynamics in which negative impacts can arise in wine regions and a questionable effect on rural development. It is pertinent to question who are the main beneficiaries of wine tourism.

Talking about wine tourism implies a close relationship between wine production and food cultures (Sparks and Malady, 2006; Thomé-Ortiz, 2017; De Jesús-Contreras and Thomé-Ortiz, 2018). In such a way, the wine-food binomial can be studied from the complex relationship between agri-food products and terroir. In this sense, the perception of the urban consumer is strongly influenced by the territorial identity of the food, the local know-how, the reputation of the products, and their historical depth (Espeitx, 1996; Lavandoski et al., 2012).

The articulation between food and tourism is generated through territorial synergies that allow economic diversification and the development of small businesses. According to Sparks and Malady (2006), in many regions where an attempt has been made to develop a tourism product

around food and wine, what is sought is to address the need to strengthen wine production and strengthen the productive fabric.

Therefore, a historical-cultural perspective of the territory suggests that wine tourism can be divided between the "old world of wine" and the "new world of wine" (Ye et al., 2017). According to Wen et al. (2010), the first refers to the European wine production areas, which have a deep history in wine production. While the second refers to production areas outside European regions, such as America, Australia, South Africa, and New Zealand.

From the construction of commercial relations and the growing commercialization of wines from the New World, numerous wine tourism routes emerged in Australia, Africa, and America (Lavandoski et al., 2012).

Based on this, the leading wine regions have designed various wine tourism products, depending on their territory's characteristics and the specific needs of wine tourists. In most of these cases, wine tourism is considered a hedonic activity with a high cultural content (Bruwer and Alant, 2009)

Wine tourism can represent a development engine for inland tourist destinations (López et al., 2013); that promotes collective action between producers and providers of tourism services (Thomé-Ortiz, 2017). It also encourages the consumption and knowledge of wine through festivals, visits to wine regions, or guided tours (Meraz and Maldonado, 2016). The New World of Wine regions has been characterized based on case studies, which shows that wine tourism activity has substantially increased (Getz and Brown, 2006). In a global context, some wine-producing regions are experiencing a significant boom in wine tourism, providing a clearer picture of global trends in the New World of Wine. This is evident in Chile, where traditional viticulture and the production of natural wines are increasing, and the tourism and gastronomy sectors are thriving (Cortés et al., 2024).

In the case of China, wine tourism has adopted a tourist-focused approach, prioritising panoramic views of the landscape, wine tastings, and information about the wine itself (Chenguang et al., 2024). By contrast, in the US, most studies focus on marketing aspects, such as the image of wine destinations and the added value of the product. Meanwhile, countries such as Argentina and Chile focus more on sustainability, culture and heritage (García-Rodea et al., 2022). Against this backdrop, where there are similarities in terms of the market, heritage, quality and marketing aspects, the various wine-producing regions of the Americas face the challenge of improving their understanding of wine tourism and adopting mechanisms to develop, promote and regulate it.

It is identified that wine tourism in the New World of wine presents various research opportunities in terms of the socioeconomic and political structures in which it develops. According to Thorpe

(2009), all these phenomena occur within the framework of globalization, where the wine industry is being restructured and rationalized, opening the way to multiple research lines.

The International Organization of Wines (2018) mentions that Brazil is one of the countries with the most extensive wine production worldwide, with an area of 86 thousand hectares of production. In addition to this, around 1.7 million tons of grapes are produced. On the other hand, wine consumption in Brazil represents approximately 330 million liters per year, which is why wine tourism can be understood as a consequence of the growth of the wine industry (Lavandoski et al., 2012).

Wine tourism in Brazil is an activity with great potential due to the differences in climate and soil in its wine regions, as well as the cultural influences resulting from immigration, mainly Italian. Characteristics of territory gave way to establishing wine tourism routes and associations of wine producers. However, the studies on the subject are still incipient (Fávero and Rotta, 2007). The region called Grape and Wine is located in the northeastern part of the State of Rio Grande do Sul.

On the other hand, in the Mexican case, for many years, Mexico was a country characterized by the arrival of tourists who engaged in mass tourism, although, over time, trends have emerged in the market that have diversified tourist activities. Wine tourism stands out among them due to its tremendous economic benefit. According to Novo et al. (2019), wine tourism in Mexico began between the 1980s and 1990s from three types of wine producers: i) traditional producers; ii) developing producers; iii) emerging producers.

Vitis vinifera production in Mexico was diversified according to the characteristics of the grape, form of production, and marketing. Based on the classification of Novo et. al. (2019), the states with traditional production are Coahuila and Baja California, with a large quantity and quality of production. The producing states in development are: Aguascalientes, Chihuahua, Querétaro, San Luis Potosí and Zacatecas, which have grapes for wine and brandy. Finally, the emerging producer states are not considered producers but have recently started, such as Nuevo León, Hidalgo, and Puebla.

In Mexico, two central wine regions with a consolidated wine tourism offer: i) Ruta del Vino in Baja California and; ii) Art, Cheese and Wine Route in Querétaro (Arévalo, 2018). Both are raised as development projects strongly impacting the territory's economic activation.

This paper aims to characterize the context of wine tourism in two wine regions of the New World of Wine. This research intends to understand better the functional characteristics of wine tourism in the Latin American context. This aspect is a fundamental task because, according to Campbell

and Guibert (2006), the New World of Wine producers are competing strongly with the Old World of Wine markets.

2 Material and methods

This research is developed under the disciplines of rural sociology and tourism studies. A multiple case study was carried out (Stake, 2000), from which a comparative analysis was developed to identify the structures and functional characteristics of wine tourism in two wine regions of Mexico and Brazil.

According to Martínez-Carazo (2006), case study is a methodological strategy of scientific research, helpful in generating results focused on the strengthening, growth, and development of existing theories or the emergence of new scientific paradigms. On the other hand, Corrêia and Passos (2006) indicate that case studies involve examination processes of events within a real-life context, which guide the establishment of adequate research processes in an important way for the collection of helpful data.

Several studies show a comparison between some regions of the New World of Wine and another of the Old World of Wine, or simply between producing regions. Such is the case of Mitchell et al. (2012), who compare the regions of Champagne, France, and Margaret River, Australia; Thorpe (2009), Ye et al. (2017) examine wine tourism in China. Correia and Passos (2006) focus on analyzing various wineries that make up a wine route in Portugal; In turn, Getz and Brown (2006) identify wineries in Canada. Arévalo (2018) presents a comparative analysis in Mexico between the wine regions of Querétaro and Baja California. For his part, Molina et al. (2015) develops an analysis of five wine regions with Denomination of Origin.

Chetty (1996) indicates that it is possible to have better use of the information from the paradoxes generated in a study of multiple cases, where characteristics and research hypotheses are included, and it intends to compare the experiences between each case. In addition, Eisenhardt (1991) points out that, based on multiple case studies, a comparative analysis can be generated where the information is a generating element of knowledge.

Twelve wine companies that offer activities linked to wine tourism were considered to study. This way, small, medium, and large companies were chosen based on their competitiveness and productivity (Table 1). These companies are scattered in two territories characterized by the production of wine at a national and international level.

Table 1: Study units analyzed

Number	Name	Size	Wine Region
1	Casa Valduga	Large	Vale dos Vinhedos, RS, Brazil
2	Miolo	Large	Vale dos Vinhedos, RS, Brazil
3	Larentis	Medium	Vale dos Vinhedos, RS, Brazil
4	Pizzato	Medium	Vale dos Vinhedos, RS, Brazil
5	Videiras Carraro	Small	Vale dos Vinhedos, RS, Brazil
6	Lidio Carraro	Small	Vale dos Vinhedos, RS, Brazil
7	Freixenet	Large	Queretaro, Mexico
8	Viñedos La Redonda	Large	Queretaro, Mexico
9	Viñedos Azteca	Medium	Queretaro, Mexico
10	De Cote	Medium	Queretaro, Mexico
11	Cava 57	Small	Queretaro, Mexico
12	San Patricio	Small	Queretaro, Mexico

Source: Own elaboration.

Study units were determined from a convenience random sampling (Otzen and Manterola, 2017), establishing a description of the phenomenon and identifying the differences and similarities between the two geographical areas to show if there is a correlation between some of the factors to be evaluated. This sampling technique was chosen because the research characteristics have specific purposes that evaluate different dimensions, based on an observation guide and a semi-structured interview of each study unit, resulting in a total of 12. It was considered that the observation guide strengthens the identification of non-verbal, attitudinal, and contextual aspects that are not included in the interviewee's speech; therefore, it has a complementary character.

The topics addressed in the script of the semi-structured interview revolve around general services, perception, and criteria of quality, tourist services, training in wine tourism, security measures, and wine tourism marketing. General company data was also integrated. On the other hand, the observation guide focused on tourist attractions, forms of marketing, certifications, quality indicators, service team, and traditional elements of culture. On this basis, the data was collated using country-specific indicators relating to quality, regulatory frameworks and the provision of tourism services, with the aim of identifying emerging categories within the tourism sector, including spatial organisation and cultural linkages, which form the basis of the comparative analysis presented in the results.

The study units were selected based on the following considerations: i) companies of different sizes: small, medium, and large, according to criteria regarding their production volumes and visitor capacity; ii) offer tourist services related to wine production; iii) be located within a wine-producing region; iv) availability of representatives of wineries to participate in the study.

2.1 Study Zone

a) Queretaro, Mexico.

The state of Querétaro is the largest producer of cheese and wine in the central region of Mexico, whose production system is linked to the agri-food legacy of Spanish colonization and is located an hour and a half from Mexico City in an area made up of an agro-industrial complex (Thomé-Ortiz, 2017).

The Queretaro wine belt is located in central Mexico and is made up of the municipalities of San Juan del Río, Pedro Escobedo, Tequisquiapan, Colón and Ezequiel Montes. Initially (1970-1980), the region focused on producing brandies, spirits, and grape distillates. Wine production was scarce because they did not enjoy high prestige. In this sense, it is from the 1980s that foreign capital was injected with a new facet in winemaking (De Jesús-Contreras and Thomé-Ortiz, 2019; García-Rodea et al., 2024).

With the neoliberal policy established by the Mexican government in the mid-1980s, a commercial opening was generated that forced producers to make improvements in their production processes, higher quality inputs, training for personnel in charge of grape production and wine, as well as marketing (Novo et al., 2019).

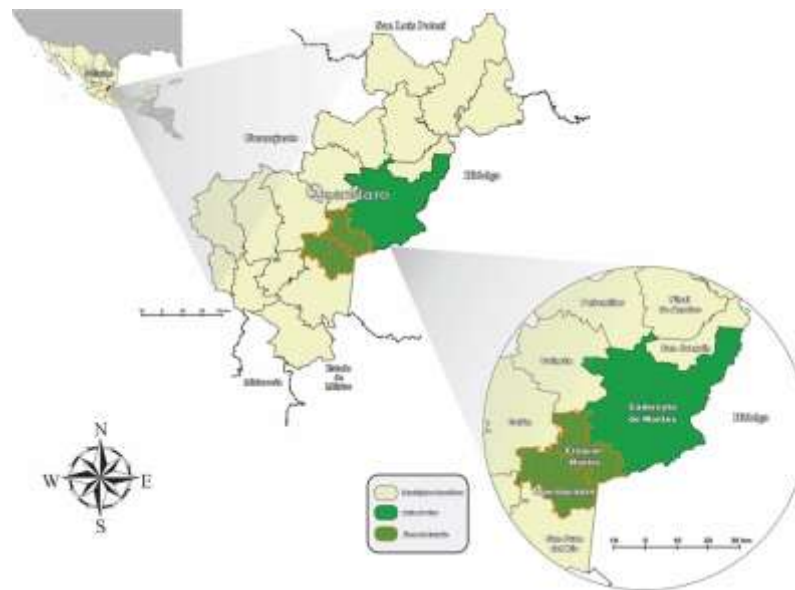
Due to the geographical location of Queretaro, its humidity characteristics, soil types, temperature, and altitude, there are favorable conditions for wine production. According to de Jesús-Contreras and Thomé-Ortiz (2018), even though this wine-growing region is outside the world wine production range, vine varieties such as Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon, Pinot Noir, Tempranillo, Malbec and Chardonnay, from which white, rosé, red and sparkling wines are obtained.

The study area was limited solely to the "Art, Cheese and Wine Route." This route began in the middle of 2007 with the collaboration of some wineries in the area, tour operators, and later integration of local cheese factories. The territory formed a cluster that is increasingly strengthened in the specialization of the actors involved in knowledge and innovation (Arévalo, 2018). This initiative is associated with private capital, although local governments have also invested in public resources for its promotion and infrastructure development (De Jesús-Contreras and Thomé-Ortiz, 2019).

This route comprises heterogeneous wineries ranging from family businesses to transnational companies (Thomé-Ortiz, 2017). It is estimated that it is visited by 600,000 tourists annually, which represents an approximate economic benefit of 24 million euros (De Jesús-Contreras and Thomé-Ortiz, 2018).

The Route of Art, Cheese and Wine is located in the municipalities of Tequisquiapan, Ezequiel Montes, and Cadereyta (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Location of the Route of Art, Cheese and Wine, Querétaro, Mexico



Source: Own file.

Based on the increase in wine production and the creation of new wineries, the Tourism Bureau of Querétaro (SECTUR, 2018) indicates that, to date, 19 wineries are registered within the route.

According to Arévalo (2018), in the Mexico, the plantation of vineyards covers around 70 thousand hectares, of which most of the varieties are white and red grapes.

b) Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil

According to the International Wine Organization (2018), Brazil has 86 thousand hectares of grape production, producing a total of 1.7 million grape tons and 330 million wine liters per year.

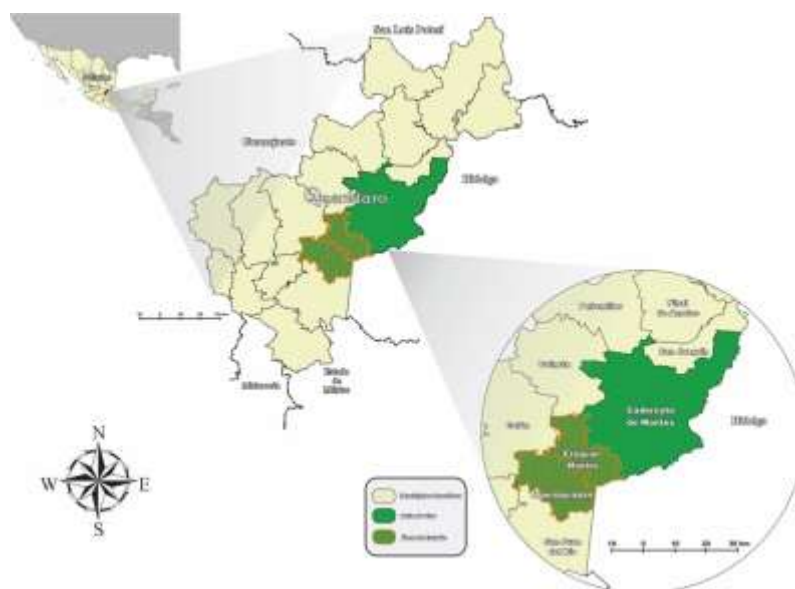
Fávero and Rotta (2007) indicate that the wine regions of Brazil are concentrated in the Serra Gaucha, specifically in the Grape and Wine Region. They also mention that other hubs are emerging in the region of the Sierra do Sudeste and in the State of Rio Grande do Sul.

Viticulture in the Serra Gaucha was an essential livelihood for Italian immigrant families due to the significant influence of cultural aspects and collective memory, which allowed the development and economic growth of the region, creating an identity associated with production and wine marketing. Recently, this local activity has been appropriated by tourism, which uses culture as a form of attraction (Lavandoski et al., 2012).

Wine tourism in Brazil arises due to an isolated action by some Serra Gaúcha wineries, as well as the promotion of wine festivals, whose objective was to expand and spread the consumption of the drink. The first signs of wine tourism were in a region recognized nationally and internationally as Vale dos Vinhedos, which date back to the 1970s with some family businesses that produced typical wines (Fávero and Rotta, 2007).

Vale dos Vinhedos region, according to César (2019), is determined as a territorial portion of 81.23 km² belonging to the gaúcho municipalities of Garibaldi, Bento Gonçalves, and Monte Belo do Sul (Figure 2), having a great activity related to wine. According to Valduga and Vieira (2014), it must be placed in the historical and geographical context of Italian colonization in the so-called Italian colonial region.

Figure 2. Location of the Wine Route, Vale dos Vinhedos, Brazil.



Source: Own file.

Vale dos Vinhedos region is characterized by tourism sustained through peculiarities of the geographical and cultural landscape where three essential elements stand out: society, the environment, and the economy. These elements are framed in contexts of social and cultural diversity that are directly reflected in the production that has promoted transformations, economic growth, and local development (César, 2019).

This region constitutes the first Denomination of Origin (DO) of Brazilian wines, granted certification in 2012 after receiving the title of geographical indication in 2002 (Gabardo and Valduga, 2019). These aspects represent a strengthening of the tourism industry, in which, according to César (2019), many of the wineries remain open to tourism.

3 Results and discussion

The origin of wine production in the south of Brazil is related to the processes of European migration during the 19th century, particularly the Italian migration from which the territory's oenological culture derives. Wine production responded to a cultural process of rooting in the new territory that would welcome them by reproducing some production systems typical of Europe that now had to adapt. However, since its inception, this new wine industry used the representation and exhibition of its production processes, from the land to the glass, as an intuitive mechanism for marketing and disseminating wine culture in the New World of Wine. The winegrower's house was an open space for learning about wine culture, where social relationships were built between producers and consumers, reflecting tourist immersion simultaneously with wine production.

In central Mexico, the wine origin arose a century later and derived from the existence of appropriate edaphoclimatic conditions to produce wine, conditions that both nationals and foreigners took advantage. While the adoption of tourism compared to European and South American countries is recent, it was developed following the patterns of Old World of Wine tourism destinations. However, its recent development is a significant activity that offers an alternative for the marketing, positioning, and sale of wines, especially for the small wineries that have opened their doors to visitors.

In both cases, the offer of wine tourism services is related to the production of the wine, based on recreational interpretation processes of the productive value chain that end with the tasting, to move on to the last link, which lies in the direct sale of the wine.

It is possible to observe that, for the most part, the wineries studied have developed a generic wine tourism offer similar to that offered in the wine tourism destinations of the Old World of Wine. The star products are the tour of the vineyards, tastings, pairings, and social or thematic events, of which there is a greater variety in Querétaro (see table 2). In both destinations, the tourist route modality has been selected, an aspect that denotes social organization and collective action as a strategy for tourist valorization of local resources. Wine tourism in the New World of Wine responds more to a process of collective territorialization than to individualistic action focused on the particular prestige of each winery, a common aspect in European wine tourism.

Table 2: Wine tourism offer in the regions of Brazil and Mexico

Winery	Activities that make up the tourist offer						
	Vineyard tours	Guided tours	Tasting of local products	Cultural events	Wine recreational activities	Sale of products	Wine tourism route

1	Casa Valduga (BR)	X	-	-	X	X	X	X
2	Miolo (BR)	-	X	X	X	-	X	X
3	Larentis (BR)	X		X	X	X	X	X
4	Pizzato (BR)	-	X	X	-	-	X	X
5	Videiras Carraro (BR)	X	-	X	-	X	X	X
6	Lidio Carraro (BR)	-	X	-	-	-	X	X
7	Freixenet México (MX)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
8	Viñedos La Redonda (MX)	X	X	-	X	X	X	X
9	Viñedos Azteca (MX)	X	X	X	-	X	X	X
10	De Cote (MX)	X	-	X	-	X	X	X
11	Cava 57 (MX)	X	-	X	-	X	X	X
12	San Patricio (MX)	X	-	-	-	X	X	X

Source: Own elaboration.

Table 2 allows a comprehensive conception of the similarities between the wineries' competitiveness in both regions, which are concentrated in medium and large companies. These companies have more significant technological, productive, and financial resources, so they have better conditions to enter the tourism market. It is possible to affirm that wine tourism in both regions lacks an equitable distribution of benefits that favors local development. The case studies indicate that the greatest tourist attraction and added value is the wine tourism route. In Vale dos Vinhedos, it is called: the Grape and Wine Route; and in Querétaro, Route of Art, Cheese and Wine. It can be seen that they are two routes with similar objectives, whose beginnings were similar (OIV, 2018; De Jesús-Contreras and Thomé-Ortiz, 2019), focused on promoting the wine culture in synergy with the local gastronomic offer, incorporating cultural events, as well as complementary attractions.

The Grape and Wine Route was founded in 1995 and is dedicated to promoting wine tourism and sustainable development in the region, supporting marketing, positioning, tourism management, and protection of products with Geographical Indication (GI) and Designation of Origin (DO). In

addition, it promotes scientific research to achieve productive and wine tourism excellence. In both cases, the wine tourism routes are supported by internal organizations: in Brazil by the Association of Producers of Fine Wines of Vale dos Vinhedos (APROVALE) and in Mexico by the Association of Wine Growers of Querétaro (AVQ).

AVQ was founded in 2010, aiming to promote wines from the region. The organization's primary functions are the management and search for financing, providing technical assistance, marketing, and promoting research to benefit quality production. In 2013, derived from the management of the AVQ, the concept of "extreme viticulture" was created, granted to the region due to the extreme conditions they have to cultivate the vine, such as height (1950 meters above sea level), microclimates, rains during maturation and hail hazard.

Both associations were born at the initiative of wine producers, APROVALE, with the primary objective of obtaining quality certifications (IG and DO) and supporting them to reach more demanding markets under the support and tourist positioning of the region. The AVQ with the primary objective of promoting and encouraging the consumption of wine and strengthening the industry at a national level, taking up wine tourism as a central strategy.

Regarding demand, Vale dos Vinhedos is oriented towards exclusivity and sophistication, opting for a market niche based on specialization and made up of tourists who are knowledgeable about wine or have previous experience. Territorial quality is related to the possession of a DO in the region. In Mexico, the demand is characterized by tourists who seek to experience and venture into the culture of wine, an aspect related to lower penetration of wine culture in regional gastronomic expressions, with a predominance of taste for distillates such as mezcal and tequila.

The differences allow us to observe that having a DO provides reputation, security, and support for the product, qualities that differentiate it from other generic products. These characteristics are transmitted directly to wine tourism services in the Brazilian case.

In this sense, there are indications that the DO represents an essential element in conferring quality to the product and the wine tourism destination. An aspect that translates into the consolidation of tourist markets for mature wine consumers, who usually operate through a logic of differentiated niches, prioritizing quality over quantity. On the other hand, the geographical location of the destinations plays a significant role in their consolidation of the tourist market. Many Art, Cheese and Wine Route visitors came from Mexico City, considered the fourth largest metropolis in the world (Thomé-Ortiz, 2017).

This analysis indicates that service is a precedent when discussing tourist activity since it determines customer satisfaction, which is an essential element for both case studies. On this

subject, it was detected that in Vale dos Vinhedos region, the service is warm, local, and specialized, breaking the tourist-business relationship barrier. In Mexico, it is defined by the tourist generality of attention-courtesy as an implicit element, but, on the other hand, it shows a tendency towards massifying the offer, especially in large-scale wineries. In addition, there are more festivals, concerts and social events than in Brazil. This suggests that there is a greater influx of tourists seeking leisure activities. Another aspect to highlight is that in Brazil, the guides have a specialty directly related to wine production; all those involved in the service are winemakers, sommeliers, or business people. In Mexico, despite the lesser extent of specialists in the same fields, the authenticity of the wine tourism experience is limited to small wineries where it is possible to find more personalized attention.

The formation of a new trade in the shadow of wine production, which is that of the wine tourism professional, is interesting, considering that the two regions lack tourism specialists. Skills have been developed through practice. Recently, in the Mexican case, the artisanal wine school has been opened and developed by a winery, in which courses and workshops are offered to train professionals.

Querétaro wineries are oriented towards a mass wine tourism model, which directly impacts the increase in demand. At Vale dos Vinhedos, efforts are focused on the quality of the product to captivate its visitors and thus achieve more significant benefits without overcrowding the destination.

There are similarities in the gastronomic offer, highlighting in Vale dos Vinhedos the synergy between wine and gaucho and Italian gastronomic specialties, reflected in the restaurants located in the region, outside the wineries. In Querétaro, the wineries with the most significant capacity have their restaurant infrastructure, offering international cuisine and some typical Mexican dishes to accompany the wine.

From the point of view of wine production, Brazilian wineries use high technology to produce wines without altering their traditional essence (García-Rodea et al., 2022). In the Mexican case, the technological incorporation is not foreign; however, it tends more toward a traditional. Although the differences mark production parameters, the wineries adhere to making efforts to produce quality wines. Promoting with it the conservation of traditional or artisanal methods, implementing technology, promoting the specialization of all its collaborators, and even applying quality standards, emphasizing that, in general, quality aspects have had greater resonance in the wineries of Vale dos Vinhedos.

Regarding wine tourism quality, the quality labels of the wineries were analyzed (Table 3), as well as the services requested by visitors, taking into account the assumption of the rurality-wine tourism relationship. In this sense, the essential services (drinking water, electricity, drainage, WiFi, telephone signal) were identified; access (roads, signage, location); physical security, and integrity measures for visitors (signage, fire extinguishers, contingency care, area, and establishment security); tourism (information modules, image, and areas of the winery, types of tours); image; cleaning; hygiene; aggressive impact mitigation measures and quality features requested by visitors.

Table 3: Distinctive quality in wineries

Winery			Quality badges		
			Tourism distinction in a digital community (Trip Advisor Certificate of Excellence)	Wines with DO	Wines with international awards
Brazil	1	Casa Valduga	X	X	-
	2	Miolo	X	-	-
	3	Larentis	X	X	-
	4	Pizzato	X	X	-
	5	Videiras Carraro	-	-	-
	6	Lidio Carraro	X	X	-
Mexico	7	Freixenet Mexico	X	-	X
	8	Viñedos La Redonda	X	-	-
	9	Viñedos Azteca	X	-	X
	10	De Cote	-	-	-
	11	Cava 57	-	-	-
	12	San Patricio	-	-	-

Source: Own elaboration.

Regarding tourist services, each winery's efforts to show the visitor its history and production stand out. On the essential services of access, security, and integrity, both cases include them as a measure of satisfaction towards tourists and are reflected in the very essence of production. The division of productive spaces from tourist spaces is evident since each winery designates access areas for visitors. These areas generally have the least risk or are designated solely for tourist purposes. These areas show processes of representation and performance in small spaces (Thomé-Ortiz et al., 2015).

Image, cleanliness, and hygiene are also present in wine tourism destinations and define the quality of the final product. The image reflects the impression that the visitor acquires of the

destination and allows to define synergies with the environment, a characteristic most appreciated in the Brazilian region. Cleanliness and hygiene are fundamental elements for production, a criterion fulfilled in the two case studies. Regarding impact mitigation measures, the effort is incipient because, in both study regions, the wineries lack sustainability initiatives.

Quality characteristics requested by visitors, recognized by service providers in the Brazilian wine region, existing characteristics that differentiate them from their similar ones, expressing that the main attributes are the offer of personalized attention. In some wineries, it was mentioned that the service is professional by oenologists or by an experienced member of the founding family, and others assured that they offer attention in a family environment. In Mexico it is observed that attention in a small winery is personalized, while in larger ones, it increases in the specialization.

Furthermore, a Geographical Indication (GI) was recently granted in 2025 for wines produced in the Mexican state of Querétaro. This suggests that the wine production sector in this country is becoming more professionalised with regard to aspects that may directly impact quality and the development of wine tourism. By contrast, Designations of Origin have been in place at most Brazilian wine estates for decades, setting a standard that Mexico still has significant room to improve upon.

In terms of professionalisation, there are different perspectives in both contexts. In the wine sector, for example, Brazil is leading the way with a constant stream of training for oenologists and sommeliers at national and international levels. In contrast, these activities are still in their infancy in Mexico, although they are constantly evolving. However, when it comes to wine tourism, Mexico is setting an example for many other countries thanks to the large number of tourists visiting the country. Consequently, there is a growing trend towards professionalisation among wine tourism service providers, including customer service staff, tour operators and sommeliers specialising in creating food and wine experiences.

As previously mentioned, these characteristics enable the identification of two distinct wine tourism models in the countries studied. In these models, the region serves multiple purposes by presenting wine not as an isolated product, but as an integral part of the geographical landscape. This involves incorporating other local products into the value chain. This has led to an increase in the development of wine tourism routes featuring specific attractions and agri-food products.

Clearly, wine tourism in both regions has led to wine being granted cultural heritage status. However, in the Mexican context, wine has not yet become firmly established in consumer markets, despite evidence of growing tourist interest in these regions. Mexico is seen as a tourism sector in constant growth, particularly in the wine-producing regions of the central part of the

country. Over time, the range of wineries has expanded, and wine tourism has spread to other states. By contrast, Brazil's wine regions have a long history and deep cultural roots, meaning that the wine industry often carries more weight than tourism itself.

4 Conclusions

Wine tourism differences and similarities of the regions show two differentiated wine tourism models: i) the Mexican mass model and; ii) the Brazilian model of proximity focused on territorial quality. In Brazil it is appreciated that the culture of wine expresses a form of cultural resistance where the origin is exalted and protected. This situation is visualized in Mexico, although a logic more directed towards an aspirational model of cosmopolitanism and supremacy of the European lifestyle as a benchmark of good living persist. The hypothesis of the two models implies that wine tourism shows inertia towards the overcrowding of destinations, linked to the geographical proximity to large urban centers and the new cultural meaning of wine consumption.

Concerning the territorial articulations in Brazil, the landscape and cultural characteristics that derive from its history, longing, and territorial roots prevail. While in Mexico, gastronomic and ethnic articulations are identified that have gained greater strength, also due to the cultural aspect of the country and the efforts made to offer food and wine experiences.

Articulations between wine, gastronomy and the configuration of the territory have led to a tourism product that meets the needs of different market segments, strengthening wine production. Similarly, the productive fabric of both wine regions has been strengthened by considering the synergies of economic diversification and the development of new business proposals.

It is identified that the professionalization and expansion of wine tourism in both productive regions has resulted in the design of unique wine tourism products. These innovative tourism products include similar or different activities depending on the offer of wine and gastronomy, which is supported by various resources to convert traditional consumption into an experience with high cultural content.

This study suggests that destination managers in places such as Querétaro need to balance rapid growth with quality-focused strategies in order to prevent overcrowding. Meanwhile, the challenge for Vale dos Vinhedos is to maintain authenticity and specialisation in the face of potential tourist growth. Thus, this comparative analysis provides a basis for a future research line: whether this type of analysis, examining the appropriation of productive territories by tourism, can be replicated in other Latin American contexts, in order to contextualise the differences between proximity and mass models, and distinguish cultural aspects from links with new urban markets.

In light of this, the following questions are important to ask: How does the urban background of visitors influence their perception of the authenticity of these models? Which governance strategies are most effective at distributing the benefits of wine tourism between family-run wineries and large companies?

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