



# WINE TOURISM SUPPLY: THE CASE OF WINERY “CHATEAU KAMNIK”, MACEDONIA

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## **Abstract**

*This paper indicates the importance of development of wine tourism in Macedonia in achieving positive socioeconomic effects, deeper acquaintance and discovering the destination and its culture by the tourists, thereby leading to an increase in the length of stay and expanding the seasonality of the tourism supply. In Macedonia, as in the world, the wine production has a long history and tradition. Over time, with the development of tourism and the discovery of new alternatives in terms of a supply, an interesting mix of tourism and wine industry has been developed, which created a new type of tourism that has recently gained momentum in tourism - wine tourism. It is a kind of tourism that includes visiting wine regions, wine cellars, vineyards, various wine events, as well as wine tasting and wine buying directly from the wine producer. All this with one point - meeting the basic tourist needs of recreation and culture. Due to the fact that Macedonia is increasingly involved in the wine and tourism industry, this type of tourism becomes popular. So, the wineries are working intensively on expanding and improving the supply in terms of tourism. This paper elaborates the case of a winery that participates in the wine tourism with its own supply - the winery “Chateau Kamnik” from the Skopje wine region.*

## **Key words:**

*Tourism, wine industry, wine tours, promotion, Skopje wine district, benefits.*

## **INTRODUCTION**

Tourism is one of the fastest growing industries, which has its place, significance and role in the world and national economy. It is considered as an economic and social phenomenon of conscientious living. Over the years, it has experienced continued growth and deep diversification that has allowed it to become one of the fastest growing economic sectors in the world (UNWTO, 2018). Revenues derived from tourism are a factor for economic development of many countries. Today, many types of tourism have been developed, the tourist needs of the people are variable, constantly demanding something new, undiscovered or interesting.

Macedonia is a tourist destination that still is considered "undiscovered" and possesses natural and anthropogenic values for tourism development from which the whole country will benefit from many aspects. Yet, it is necessary to create an



appropriate tourism development plan that will contribute to enriching tourist supply and to promote it and develop it accordingly. One of tourism types that has high development trends in the world, and Macedonia can offer it, is the wine tourism. Wine culture took important role in Macedonia since the Roman times, when the emperors favored its grapes. Thanks to the geographical position, soil and climate conditions and over 280 sunny days, in Macedonia grows perfect wine grapes.

### **WINE TOURISM: Part of rural tourism**

Wine tourism is considered as part of rural tourism. Starting from what characterizes rural tourism - tourist activities that are performed outside the city environments where tourists can find different types of attractions (natural and/or anthropogenic), one may consider the wine tourism as part of the rural environment (Marinoski, 2008). Rural tourism is associated with the terms "green" and "eco" tourism, whereas:

- Green tourism: although in some countries it is increasingly related to rural areas (away from big cities), "green tourism" is a type of tourism friendly in relation to nature, quite opposite to mass tourism.
- Ecotourism: as an ecological form of tourism, which includes the only natural values as well as the active promotion of nature protection, which is a source of income for the local community.

This alternative type of tourism is primarily caused by:

- Satisfaction from a tourist supply with standard traditional tourist products (sea, lake, mountain, city visit) that do not bring diversity into the holiday of the tourist;
- Ecological and moral destruction of tourism resources; and
- Excessive use of the computers in the city environment.

Rural tourism takes place in an environment that is relatively unpolluted, calm and inhabited by traditional communities, satisfying more needs (Metodijeski, 2012):

- The need to "escape" in order to reduce the tense situation, accompanied by active or passive participation in various tourist activities;
- Need for maintenance and restoration of health;
- Need for belonging and love;
- Need for knowledge, learning and education;
- Need for something nice and new, etc.

### *Features and development*

From tourism perspective, with the very development of the wine industry on one hand, and the discovery of new alternatives and opportunities for expanding tourism supply on the other hand - an interesting combination of tourism and wine industry has leaked out. A new type of tourism is developed - wine tourism whose beginnings connect for different periods in different regions. But, in general, today's form of wine tourism is relatively new and develops throughout the 21st century. It is slow tourism (away from the city jam), in touch with nature, in touch with the authenticity and tradition of a region, state and people. And, together with the food, it is already a different gastronomic experience.

By increasing the competition between tourist destinations, local culture is becoming an increasingly important source of new products, services and activities for attracting and entertaining tourists. Gastronomy plays a particularly important role in this process, not only because food is at the center of the tourist experience, but also because gastronomy is an integral part of the identity in the postmodern society (Hjalager & Richards, 2002). A significant trend is one that connects local products with their place of origin - the idea that certain food or wine can be fully enjoyed and "understood" only if they are prepared where they originate from the locals and local ingredients.

Wine tourism is a type of tourism aimed at visiting wine regions and wineries, vineyards, various wine events as festivals, fairs, etc. (Johanson, 1997), as well as wine tasting and wine buying directly to the wine producer - all of this in order to satisfy recreational and cultural needs as basic touristic needs. It is an important component for both the wine industry and tourism. For the tourism industry, wine is a tourist product, which is the most frequent and main reason for visiting the wine region, while for the wine industry, tourism is one of the ways to establish a connection and bring the wine supply closer to the potential consumers and increase sales. However, for the smaller wineries it provides cash flow and assists them in achieving a better sales mix, while for the bigger wineries the wine tourism is a part of the public relations commitment (Hall et al., 2002).

Wine roads are also important. These are vineyards that attract tourists because of not only wine, but also food and sights (Sidali et al., 2011). Wine tours usually involve enjoying the natural surroundings of wineries, tasting foods that are well suited to wine, recreation, complementary knowledge of wine production, and other activities. In the process of creating a wine tourism supply, it must be noted that tourists who are involved in this type of tourism are not only aiming to visit the wineries to consume and buy wine, but they also want to experience something new, gain a new knowledge, get to know the region, but also relax away from the urban environment (Pivac, 2012). Beside of the wine terroir, an important role play the food, architecture, the surrounding, environment, employees etc. (Sigala & Robinson, 2018).



Apart from the classic wine tours it is very important to pay attention to the additional activities that can be offered, as well as accommodation, restaurants, authenticity of the supply, additional tourist information, etc. The general classification of tourists who are involved in the wine tourism is: professional wine connoisseurs, wine enthusiasts, curious tourists, visitors, etc. What motivates tourists to get involved in this type of tourism is having a new experience, wine tasting from a particular wine region, getting acquainted with wine production or enjoying the natural environment.

### ***Benefits***

With the general development of the wine tourism, also develops a certain destination, the range of tourist supply widens, the number of tourists increases and a certain image of that destination is created. The development of wine tourism certainly depends on the tourism policy, country's strategies and development programs, destination marketing, tourism organizations and the private sector. Benefits of this type of tourism are from several aspects (Michev & Metodijeski, 2018): the number of tourists (domestic and foreign) increases, also the days of stay, the consumption, the tourist supply is expanded and improved, wine sales are increased, revenues are realized and new business cooperation, employing the local population, improving infrastructure, etc. In addition, for one destination where thematic and cultural festivals are organized - it is a way to make it more dynamic, to generate economic and social outcomes to the population etc. (Peris-Ortiz et al., 2015).

## **WINE TOURISM IN MACEDONIA**

In Macedonia, wine, along with the sun, food and endless natural beauty, is one of the symbols for recognizing the country. The story of the Macedonian wine is a story with countless characters, tastes and secrets of recipes that traditionally and centuries are transmitted from generation to generation. The wine in Macedonia has a long tradition and history. Based on the fact that it possesses ideal climatic and soil conditions, vineyards in excellent condition that produce high quality grape varieties and at the same time have investments and private initiative, it is firmly believed that Macedonian wine certainly steps on the way to become recognizable and demanded among wine consumers around the world. Red wine dominates in the wine production with around 80%. The tradition of wine production in Macedonia is centuries old, that even the ancient kings Philip II and his son Alexander the Macedonian were enjoying in the wine as one of their favorite drinks. Some of the Macedonian wineries work intensively in the direction of developing and expanding tourism supply, and at the same time through various wine and food fairs promote Macedonian wine tourism around the world. In this case we make a brief overview on the wine tourism supply in one of the best and most visited wineries in the country - "Chateau Kamnik".

## **WINERY "CHATEAU KAMNIK" – SKOPJE WINE DISTRICT**

Skopje wine district belongs to the continental-sub-Mediterranean climate zone. It is a typical zone where the influences of the sub-Mediterranean and eastern continental climate combine. Unlike the other vineyards in other districts, Veles and Tikveš, where the distance from the Aegean Sea and the vicinity to the higher mountains is more expressed, Skopje vineyards are more influenced by the continental climate.

### *Overview*

The winery is a small boutique winery located in the eastern part of the city of Skopje, 6 km from the city center and about 300 meters above the sea level on the eponymous site - Kamnik. It was founded in 2004, when the first 4 hectares of vineyards were planted in the property where the winery itself is located. Today, there are 16.5 hectares of vineyards from which about 150,000 liters of wine are obtained (Figure 1). Unlike most wineries in the country, this winery is created as a result of love and passion for wine and wine production and for this reason, a lot of effort, knowledge and attention is paid to produce exclusively high-quality wine.



FIGURE 1. VINEYARDS

Source: <https://www.chateaukamnik.com/gallery.php>

### *Wine tours*

One of the main activities in the wine tourism is participating in the wine tours where guests visit the wineries and can feel an authentic experience while tasting the wines. The winery "Chateau Kamnik" also offers guided wine-tasting tours, in which the guests at first are introduced with the history of the winery, the story and passion behind the foundation, they get information about the geographical micro-location, etc. Visitors also can learn about the grape varieties that grow on these vineyards, where their location is and why the white varieties are placed toward east, and reds towards south. The tours continues in the production area that is located in the building where the the process of production is explained– from the harvest to the bottling. Guests can also enjoy in the cellar (Figure 2) where the wine is aged in

barrique barrels and learn about the magic of aging. At the very end, they can relax in the tasting-room (Figure 3).



FIGURE 2. BARRIQUE CELLAR

Source: <http://www.vino.rs/aktuelno/reportaze/item/2277-chateau-kamnik-zlatna-vina-makedonije.html>



FIGURE 3. TASTING ROOM

Source: <https://www.chateaukamnik.com/gallery.php>

### *Accommodation and restaurant*

Those who participate in the wine tourism, as a part of their holiday experience, would always like to experience something more, something specific for the place, something new. For example: visiting restaurants to try food and wine, meet and interact with other people, experience some activities etc.

In the same complex with the “Chateau Kamnik” winery is the Hotel & Restaurant “Hunter’s Lodge Kamnik” (Figure 4), offering 21 rooms for accommodation.



FIGURE 4. HOTEL "HUNTER'S LODGE KAMNIK" OUTSIDE

Source: [https://www.tripadvisor.com/Hotel\\_Review-g295110-d581266-Reviews-Hotel\\_Hunter\\_s\\_Lodge\\_Kamnik-Skopje\\_Skopje\\_Region.html](https://www.tripadvisor.com/Hotel_Review-g295110-d581266-Reviews-Hotel_Hunter_s_Lodge_Kamnik-Skopje_Skopje_Region.html)

On the first level there is a restaurant which has been ranked among the best game restaurants in the region where guests can enjoy in tasty dishes and try/buy over 150 local and international wines. They can also take some of the "tasting menus" usually with 4 or 5 courses perfectly combined with the appropriate wine (Figure 5). Additionally, the guests can experience an unusual activity – shooting. At the basement there is an indoor shooting range with 5 stand positions and automatic targets as well as laser simulation shooting range for practicing with laser guns.



FIGURE 5. THE RESTAURANT "HUNTER'S LODGE KAMNIK"

Source: <http://www.kamnik.com.mk/Restaurant.htm>

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Due to all changes that have taken place in tourism during its long-standing development, today almost one-third of the world's tourist journeys take place outside



the framework of classically understood trips. New tourism products, destinations, alternative forms of tourism, etc. - are the real shape of tourist demand today. Macedonia, as a new country on the tourism market that is still looking for its perfect place to “deliver” to the potential tourists, has very good opportunities to use its present position because it can learn from the experiences of others and create and sell products in accordance with its possibilities at the same time keeping pace with the latest trends. This means that the country must raise the competitiveness and attractiveness of those tourism products that can increase the benefits, and this is definitely the development of wine tourism.

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