



Increase Wine Tourism in Spain from Chinese Tourists

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Abstract

In recent years and especially after the world pandemic COVID-19, the tourism sector is undergoing great changes as a result of travelers looking for unique and outdoor products to enjoy different experiences, involving new trends in tourism, especially in non-traditional destinations, and changing the needs and attitudes of tourists. In this sense, the tourist is currently more and more motivated by sensations in the search for new experiences. In this context, in which the experience is a fundamental objective, some tourist modalities such as wine tourism, already emerge as practices aimed at satisfying the new demand after the 1990s world widely. Nevertheless, this paper is present the current Chinese tourist flows after the pandemic and their relevant motivations in the growing demand for slow tourism, breaking the traditional stereotype of what we think are their demands, and presenting the possibility of wine tourism in small and middle-scale places like Priorat of Catalunya and Ribeira Sacra of Galicia, both situated in Spain. The main objective of this study is to research the development of a friendly campestre and natural wine and food local supplies, their interesting up-downs historic paths, their impressive "heroic" geographic sceneries such as the big contrast of mountains against rivers in these two still developing their international names wine regions of Spain: Priorat and Ribeira Sacra, also analyzing the high acquisitive power and potential demands of wine tourism for Chinese outbound tourists for this two regions, to identify the adjustments that must be made in the plannings and applications in these two specific wine regions, and serving as examples for others still not well known international wine regions to be developed for Chinese tourists or even Asian tourists for Europe and the rest of the world.

Keywords— Asia, Chinese tourists, COVID-19, wine tourism, Spain.

I. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Resume

In the wake of the world pandemic COVID-19, the travel industry has experienced tremendous setbacks and changes, and post-epidemic travelers are looking for unique outdoor experiences to enjoy the post-nirvana tourism industry, and new trends in tourism have manifested themselves in exploring non-traditional destinations with outdoor activities experiences (Chen, G., Huang, S., 2020) In this context, experiencing some new In this context, experiencing new modes of tourism, such as rural tourism or wine tourism under its umbrella, is starting to rise significantly as a new way of travel and habits (Ren, Sánchez, 2022). This reality is also applicable to the current Chinese tourist population, although there is not much scholarly research and data on the experiences and habits of Chinese tourists in Spain, although it is true that there are

various communications that have been done in various fields in both countries. Two medium-sized Spanish regions, located in the mountains near the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans, are selected for this study, Priorat and Ribeira Sacra, two of Spain's rare "heroic regions" that have not been "polluted" by tourists. The study of the wine situation in Spain and the new needs of Chinese tourists sent out a survey on the "wine tourism experience", answered by three hundred people, to find out if Chinese tourists are interested in wine tourism, and from the results of the survey so far they are. This paper hopes that it will be possible to expand such small and medium-sized quality regions that attract and also respond to the needs of Chinese "second or X visits" European tourists, but also can be a strong driver for the growth of wine tourism and tourism in Spain and even in Europe.

Therefore, this study proposes to analyze wine tourism as well as medium-sized cultural tourism in Spain in order to understand its potential attractiveness for Chinese outbound tourists. On the other hand, the latest developments in the reopening of borders for Chinese outbound tourists this year, with US\$ 270 billion in spending in 2020 and 2021 alone, have been described by the UNWTO as "the moment the world has been waiting for" (UNWTO, 2023), China is the sixth largest wine consumer in the world in 2020, and Spain is its fifth largest wine exporter (ICEX, 2021), in addition to new Chinese tourist flows that show today's trend towards independent and experiential tourism (McKinsey, 2020).

The development of wine tourism in the world, the analysis of two research cases in Spain, the demand of Chinese outbound tourists to break old stereotypes, the actual wine market in China will be analyzed in the ongoing study, as well as the author's final survey on online wine tourism experiences, which also has many concrete takeaways.

1.2. Objectives

The main objective of this study is to research the history and actual tourism situation of the wine regions: Priorat and Ribeira Sacra of Spain and the demand for "slow wine tourism" from Chinese tourists there, to identify the adjustments that could be made for the development of the middle scale wine tourism destinations in Spain, serving as examples for other places like those for the rest of the world.

The specific objectives of this research are:

- a. To study the background of wine tourism in the world and Spain;
- b. To analyze the profile, the experiences, and the behavior of the Chinese outbound tourists by bibliographical review and the application of semi-structured interviews;
- c. To propose the strategy of optimization of the management of the two cases of study based on the obtained results.

1.3 Contribution of the paper

Therefore, this study aims to show the potential of wine tourism in Spain and the emerging demand for its wine tourism from actual Chinese outbound tourists. Currently, due to the end of the COVID-19 pandemic, a new century of tourism has begun and those outdoor destinations that are not yet saturated are starting to become new points of demand for tourists.

The two cases selected for this paper have had very small numbers of Chinese tourists visiting or showing interest, but are gaining an international reputation for their culture, history, and unique geographic features.

In addition, this paper will contribute to the understanding of the uniqueness of wine and tourism in Spain, with relevant data and explanations to illustrate the new needs of Chinese outbound tourists and to increase the wine and cultural exchange between China and Spain, and even the world.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Definitions of important items related to the research

2.1.1. Wine tourism

Culture, first named after the Roman philosopher Marcus Tullius Cicero, its name for the first time according to the Roman philosopher Marcus Tullius Cicero, defined as "cultura animi" in the Latin language, meaning "the cultivation of the soul", covers the knowledge and experiences related to the self over time (Williams, 1983). If tourism is a twentieth-century phenomenon, culture is consubstantial to man. The term culture has been the subject of debate since ancient times, as mentioned, the term culture is evolving from the meaning of "cultivation of the earth" to "the cultivation of man". Since the eighteenth century, the term has been the result of reflection among the great theoreticians and has become one of the concepts that arouse more interest and concern among social science studies. Tourism refers to the activities of sightseeing, in general, it refers to the industry that provides leisure infrastructure and services. It is a complex phenomenon of society, covering the areas of politics, economics, culture, history, geography, and justice, among others (Jayapalan, 2001).

2.1.2. Wine tourism in Spain

The abundance of native wine varieties in the Iberian Peninsula made possible the early beginning of viticulture. Some archaeologists believe that these grapes were first cultivated between 4000 and 3000 BC, long before the Phoenicians founded the city of Cadiz around 1100 BC (J. Robinson (ed), 2006). After the Phoenicians, the Greeks and Carthaginians introduced new advances in vine cultivation, including the teachings of the winegrower Magus (H. Johnson Vintage, 1989). The oldest winery in the West remains on a hill in Cadiz, given three centuries before the birth of Christ.

Spain is a paradise for wine lovers. From the north to the south there are several wine routes that present the country's history, national character and cultural diversity and great integration. At the same time, wine tourism is a unique experience that intertwines taste, smell and senses.

Visiting Spanish wineries and discovering the secrets of their winemaking can be a stay in their vineyards or a wine tasting class. On hundreds of wine tasting routes and hotels

throughout Spain, visitors from all over the world can taste wines of the highest quality from all regions.

Enjoy a wide range of red, rosé, white or sparkling wines. Spain's diverse climate offers a wide selection of wines that can satisfy every taste and every moment of the day. From the freshness of the Galician white wines of Albariño to the unique character of Rioja wines, to the highly complementary wines of the Douro or the jewel of Andalusian wines, Jerez. Spain's wines are distinguished not only by their diversity, but also by their quality. Many winemakers are recognized and appreciated by the world's wine experts for their creative work (<https://www.spain.info/export/sites/segtur/.content/Folletos/folletos/rutas-vino-ZH.pdf>).

The wine tour will also take you to explore all the sights of Spain. From the villages depicted in La Mancha's Don Quixote to the mosques of Cordoba, through Las Médulas in El Bierzo, or the Guara Mountains and Gorges Natural Park, there is an endless cultural and natural heritage. It is no wonder that the capital of the World Tourism Organization is located in Madrid, Spain.

In Spain, the traditions and customs of the city are preserved through popular celebrations such as the Great Wine War in Rioja Haro, or the grape harvest festivals in Jerez in Cadiz and Logroño in Rioja. Spanish wine is also synonymous with innovation and avant-garde. In recent years, the industry has been undergoing a real revolution in the application of the latest technologies to the cultivation of grapes.

2.2. Cases of study:

a. Priorat

Priorat is a Denominación de Origen Calificada (DOQ) for Catalan wines produced in the Priorat region, in the province of Tarragona, in southwestern Catalonia. The DOQ covers 11 municipalities. It produces mainly powerful red wines, which attracted international attention in the 1990s. The area is characterized by its unique terroir of black slate and quartz soil known as llicorella (Jancis Robinson, ed., 2006). It is one of only two wine regions in Spain with DOCa, the highest level of qualification for a wine region under Spanish wine regulations, along with DOCa Rioja.

The first evidence of vine cultivation and wine production dates back to the 12th century, when the monks of the Carthusian monastery of Scala Dei, founded in 1194, introduced the art of viticulture in the area. The prior of Scala Dei ruled as a feudal lord over seven villages in the area, which gave rise to the name Priorat.

The monks tended the vineyards for centuries until in 1835 they were expropriated by the State and distributed among

the small landowners. At the end of the 19th century, phylloxera devastated the vineyards, causing economic ruin and massive emigration of the population. Before phylloxera, Priorat had an estimated 5,000 hectares of vineyards (Johnson, Hugh; Jancis Robinson (2001). *World Atlas of Wine* (5th ed.). London: Mitchell Beazley. p. 198. ISBN 1-84000-332-4.), but it was not replanted until the 1950s. The DO Priorat was formally created in 1954. Initially, the headquarters of the DO's regulatory body was located in Reus, about 30 km east of the wine region, rather than in the Priorat itself. In the 1985s, bulk wine production was phased out and quality wine began to be bottled. In the beginning, wine cooperatives predominated. Carles Pastrana, René Barbier, and Álvaro Palacios are the architects of Priorat wines reaching the highest category (<http://www.latimes.com/features/la-fo-priorat15aug15,1,4770355.story>). In the period from 2000 to 2009, when it was approved as DOQ but not yet DOCa, even though these appellations were the same in Catalan and Spanish, respectively, the situation was somewhat confusing. In 2006, the Catalan government approved new DOQ regulations. The regulatory council moved from Reus to Torroja del Priorat in 1999. The Priorat vineyard area has not stopped growing since the quality revolution driven by Clos in the 1990s. At the turn of the millennium, there were 1,000 hectares (2,500 acres) of vineyards, with an equal amount of planting rights secured (Johnson, Hugh; Jancis Robinson (2001). *World Atlas of Wine* (5th ed.). London: Mitchell Beazley. p. 198. ISBN 1-84000-332-4.) In 2018, Priorat had 2,010 hectares (5,000 acres) of vineyards (Consell Regulador de la DOQ Priorat". www.doqpriorat.org. Retrieved 8 January 2020.).

According to the Priorat Tourism office of Catalonia, they have sent me the following data of Chinese visitors up to 2020, they are still updated no doubt, but there is already a demonstration of the interest of Chinese tourists towards this specific land, so in a way we can already support our hypothesis of the possible accessibility to Priorat from Chinese tourists, from now to the future. Below are the precise statistics of tourists from mainland China and Taiwan from 2016 to 2020 (www.turismepriorat.org).

b. Ribeira Sacra:

The Ribeira Sacra is an area comprising the banks of the rivers Cabe, Sil, and Miño, in the southern part of the province of Lugo and the north of the province of Orense, in Galicia, Spain. The capital of the area was agreed to be the city of Monforte de Lemos (Lugo), which is also the most populated locality. On April 5, 2019, its candidacy for the Unesco World Heritage List was approved by the Historical Heritage Council of the Ministry of Culture. The decision will be made at the 45th World Heritage Committee in 2021 (La Voz de Galicia, 2019). Wine is the

hallmark of Ribeira Sacra. The production of this drink, as well as the cultivation of the vine, was introduced by the Roman settlers in these lands more than two thousand years ago. Later it was the Christian monks who took over this activity and today its production continues to be the economic engine of the region.

The Ribeira Sacra Designation of Origin was created in 1997 and has an area of more than 1,500 hectares dedicated to vineyards, which represents more than 5% of the total Galician land used for wine production. Ribeira Sacra is divided into five cultivation sub-zones: Chantada, Ribeira do Miño, Amandi, Ribeira do Sil, and Quiroga Bibei. The main grape varieties used in winemaking are godello, albariño and treixadura for white wines and mencia, brecellao and merenzao for reds. These are mainly young wines, although crianza reds are also produced. Ribeira Sacra is a paradise for wine lovers, as they can take guided tours of the Adegas Terrae wine group, do wine tastings, and learn about winemaking production. However, there are also places like the Wine Museum of Monforte or the Vinobus, which offer other ways of presenting the culture of the vine.

According to my contact with the Xunta de Galicia, the data of Tourists from China, from 2020 to so far in 2023, who have shown interest in Galicia are, divided by city and users distinctly (<https://aei.turismo.gal>). In the totality there are 6129 respondents of this questionnaire to the interest on Galicia, and other almost 20 destinations with a smaller number of interested tourists, which saves the pages around here, and we compare them with the numbers of Taiwan as well, as the first case study. I cite it for the place and the number distinctly the same.

2.3. Chinese outbound tourists

China is the world's largest "outbound tourism market when measured by trips and expeditions, Chinese tourists made 4 billion domestic tourism trips and 117 million overseas trips; overseas trips are expected to reach 160 million in 2020. More than 70 percent of Chinese tourists travel with family and friends and exhibit as the highest-spending traveler profile for their international trips. In addition, the growth of overseas tourist spending by Chinese tourists is estimated at an annual rate of 5.4 percent, reaching more than \$315 billion a year by 2020. Currently, due to the economic development of China, the Chinese population is beginning to enjoy more and more economic resources to travel abroad to relax and see the world, in my opinion, knowing their tourist behaviors is a fundamental step to understanding them. However, the stereotype of Chinese tourists who behave by shopping, not daring to try the local food, or only traveling in large groups (Grand Tours) with

traditional agencies has left a deep imprint in the minds of foreigners.

In terms of the researcher's field, back in 2014 Lojo and Cànoves (2014, <https://www.raco.cat/index.php/DocumentsAnalisi/article/view/298602>), confirm that Chinese tourists had "travel to Europe" determined by "citizens with citizens of large cities with medium or high economic capacity" on the grounds of "social mobility", "paid vacations" and "motivation to save".

At the same time, after my research and understanding, I can guide young post-00s, post-90s, and post-80s Chinese travelers to start "looking for new ways to travel, not wanting organized groups or tour company packages" and destinations with "cultural attractions that get rid of simple clichés". In short, this youth tourism trend is emerging and developing very quickly, then we are perfectly positioned to take advantage of Spain's rich wine resources and optimize its offer to show these Chinese tourists a rich tourism product with a unique travel experience. In the post-epidemic era, Chinese tourists, especially the post-00s, are beginning to show a new demand for outdoor tourism, while the average group traveler is gradually pursuing "semi-open" tourism, with a particular emphasis on the "cultural" and "historical" aspects of destination selection by Chinese tourists. In particular, it is worth emphasizing the importance that Chinese tourists attach to the "cultural" and "historical" aspects of destination selection (Wei, Alsina, 2019), while in the post-epidemic era, they are quickly catching up with outdoor trips that have become popular in Spain, for example. All of the above suggests that Chinese tourists are likely to have a strong interest in Spanish wine tourism, which combines outdoor tourism with historical and cultural features.

In summary, according to my understanding, it is possible to properly adjust the current Spanish tourism for Chinese tourists' new introduction methods. Tour packages customized by tour operators and allowing flexible experiences are highly sought after by the market. Chinese tourists are willing and encouraged to expand their palate and taste the local cuisine. Digital channels, such as mobile apps, online forums, and websites, among others, are key for Chinese tourists to get information and book accommodations and activities. Several of the above suggestions apply to two or even more of the cases we presented, and their official websites are not even in English, let alone Chinese.

2.4. Chinese wine market

China was the world's sixth-largest wine consumer in 2020. However, despite having a large market size, per capita consumption is very low. Of the total wine consumed, 73%

was red wine, followed by 23% white wine, 0.8% sparkling wine, and 2.6% rosé. Sixty-seven percent of the wine consumed in China comes from imported wine. The top countries from which wine was imported into China in 2020, ranked by value, were the following: Australia, France, Chile, Italy, and, in fifth place, Spain. Due to China's imposition of anti-dumping tariffs on Australian wine in November 2020, wine imports from this country have been reduced by 95% at the beginning of 2021 (ICEX, 2021). From the above information, we clearly understand that Chinese people have reached a more mature stage of wine consumption and familiarity and that Spain is the fifth largest wine exporter of China, which has a crucial role and significance for our research. I believe that these data show that Chinese people already have a certain knowledge of Spanish wine, which indirectly proves the feasibility and possibility of their wanting to participate in wine tourism in Spain.

III. FIGURES AND TABLES

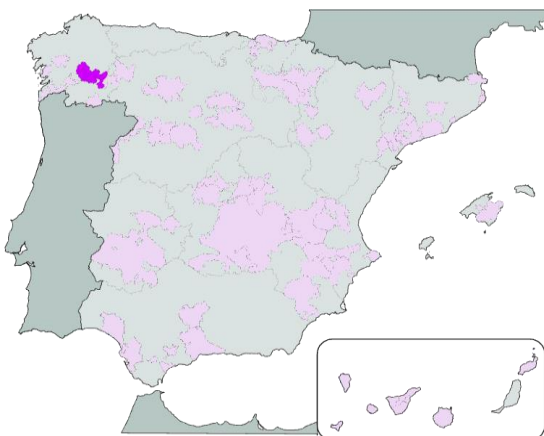


Fig. 1: Priorat in Spain.

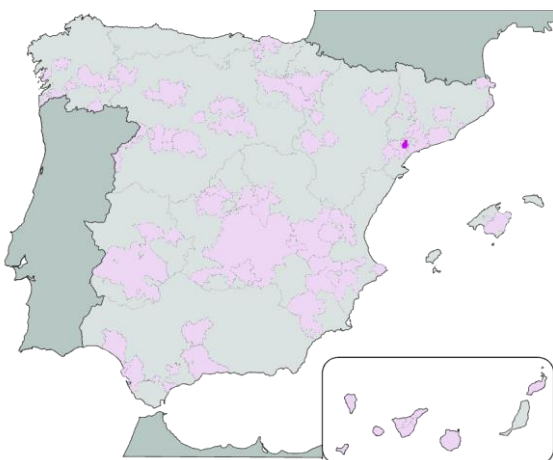


Fig. 2: Siurana river in Priorat, Tarragona.



Fig. 3: Location of the DO Ribeira Sacra.



Fig. 4: Ribeira Sacra, Rodicio.

Tab. 1. Chinese tourists in Priorat from 2016 till 2020

	China	Hong Kong	Taiwan	Persons in total
2020	6	0	5	11
2019	21	5	10	36
2018	6	5	6	17
2017	14	6	6	26
2016	16	6	22	44

Tab. 2. Chinese mainland tourists who showed interests in visiting Galicia in 2023

City	Users	City	Users	City	Users
(not set)	3656	Weihai	12	Chuzhou	4
Shanghai	958	Haikou	11	Zhangzhou	4
Beijing	531	Chongqing	11	Foshan	4
Hangzhou	163	Zhuhai	10	Taiyuan	3

Xi'An	160	Xiamen	8	Changchun	3
Shenzhen	105	Dalian	7	Longyan	3
Guangzhou	53	Zhengzhou	7	Qingdao	3
Suzhou	49	Shijiazhuang	6	Langfang	2
Chengdu	44	Shenyang	6	Jinzhou	2
Wuhan	35	Nantong	6	Lianyungang	2
Nanjing	31	Guiyang	6	Ningde	2
Tianjin	27	Harbin	5	Putian	2
Zhongshan	24	Jiaxing	5	Ganzhou	2
Hefei	23	Ningbo	5		6129
Changsha	19	Taizhou	5		
Wuxi	15	Quanzhou	5		
Dongguan	15	Jinan	5		
Fuzhou	14	Taizhou	5		
Nanchang	12	Jinhua	4		

Tab. 3. Taiwan tourists interested in visiting Galicia in 2023

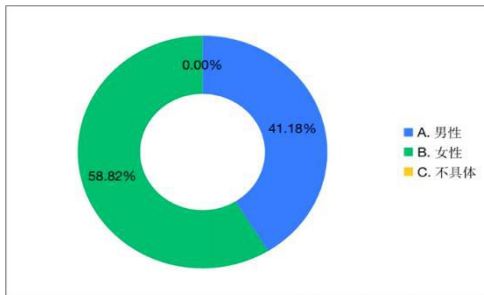
City	Users
(not set)	811
Zhongli District	34
Taoyuan District	25
Pingtung City	10
Tamsui District	7
Taitung City	5
Douliu City	5
Yilan City	4
Zhubei City	3
Nantou City	3
	936

Tab. 4. Chinese Tourists: Dispelling the myths

What do Chinese tourists like to do?	STEREOTYPE	REALITY
	Shopping	1) Experiences are more valued; 2) Needs of diverse trips.
How do you accommodate Chinese tourists?		
	Exclusively visit to iconic places	Preferred trend of long term stay
	As tourists achieve experiences, then decline in tour packages International tour packages are emerging (tour and semi-tour)	As tourists achieve experiences, then decline in tour packages International tour packages are emerging (tour and semi-tour)
	Only tasting Chinese cuisine Fine food is highly valued	Fine food is highly valued
	Only paying in cash	Chinese payment methods are "must" (Alipay, Wechat)
How do you attract them?		
	Depends on traditional travel agencies	Friends and families play a major role
	Travel Apps are more important than websites	Tourism apps are not used as extensively

Below are the five questions and results of my online survey of 300 Chinese people: "About the wine tourism experience", I have selected 5 representative questions and answers.

Q1: Sex of surveyors:



Tab. 5: Sex of the surveyors of online questionnaire "About the wine tourism experience".

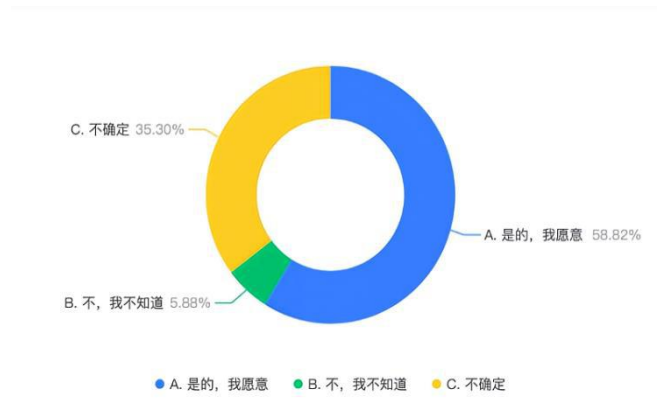
Option	Answer
A. Men	41,18%
B. Women	58,82%
Questioned person number	300

Option	Answer
A. A winery that feels friendly	11.76%
A good guide who can explain the winery well.	5.88%
C. Wine festivals and related exhibitions.	5,88%
D. The reputation of the winegrower	0,00%
E. Reputation of the wine region	0,00%
F. Various activities for the wine experience	47,06%
G. A good wine tourism route	29,41%
H. A winery with good food or a very good restaurant	0.00%

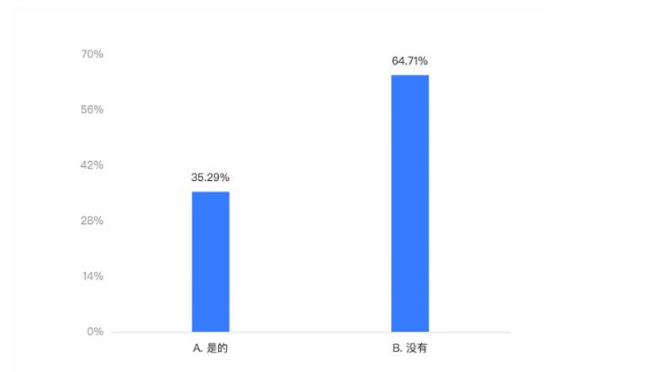
Q10: Would you like to participate in a wine tour (multiple choice)?

Tab. 6: Would you like to join a wine tourism experience?

Option	Answer
A. Yes, I will do it.	58,82%
B. No, I don't know.	5,88%
C. I am not sure.	35,29%



Q11: Have you ever taken a wine tourism trip (multiple choice)?

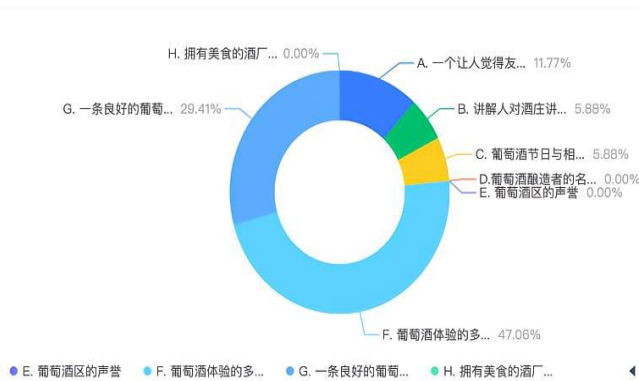


Tab. 7: Have you ever taken a wine tourism trip?

Option	Answer
A. Yes	35,29%
B. No	64,71%

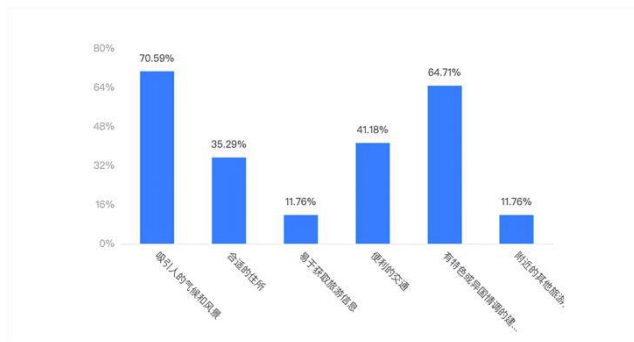
Q12: If you have participated in a wine tour, how would you rate the following (multiple choice)?

Tab. 8: What's the most important attraction for you in a wine tourism trip?



Q13: Principles of destination selection: (scroll down for multiple choice questions):

Tab. 9: Principles of destination selection



Option	Answer
Attractive climate and landscape	70,59%
Suitable accommodation	35,29%
Easy access to tourist information	11,76%
Easy access to transportation	41,18%
Architecture with exotic character	64,71%
Other nearby tourist attractions	11,76%

IV. CONCLUSION

This article examines and explores many important indicators and definitions of cultural tourism, especially wine tourism, including definitions, a brief overview of the world's wine regions, the wine-producing regions, and the history of Spain. Most importantly, the article focuses on the "strong" or even "vindictive" desire of Chinese tourists

outside of China to travel out of the country after the epidemic, the optimistic judgments and expectations of the UNWTO regarding Chinese outbound tourism, the Chinese wine market, and most importantly The two cases we studied were presented: the northeast and northwest corners of Spain, in Priorat and Ribeira Sacra, respectively, with a thousand-year history of wine growing, unique "heroic" landscapes and high-quality wines, in addition to being close to the international tourist metropolises of Barcelona and Santiago, as well as France and Portugal. and France and Portugal. Therefore, studying the case of these two lesser-known Chinese wine destinations can help increase employment, enhance tourism development and improvement, integrate international diversity, promote the acceptance of small and medium-sized wineries that have not yet received full international recognition, and gain recognition and concrete arrival among tourists from outside China. The author advocates the use of data-based strategies that are currently popular in China, such as the use of KOLs, Key Opinion Leaders, and "e-market strategies" to promote the two cases we have chosen online, as well as to strengthen their web translations and local presentations. We also used the Korean experience of filming a famous TV series in the region to promote the local development of the two case studies, and to promote wine tourism to the two case studies by Chinese tourists from abroad.

More than 58% of the respondents are female, between 26-35 years old (47.06%), they have master's degree (47.4%), the respondents come from all regions of China, but those from the east coast occupy the majority (58.84%), they are employees of state-owned entity (29.41%) or foreign or private companies (23.53%), almost 30% of the respondents travel more than 2 times a year, the income was worth from zero as a student to almost 100,000 RMB (13930 euros per month), the frequency of drinking wine is every week, every month and all year round (29.41% in all three options), more than 58% respondents answer that they do want a trip to the vineyard, while almost 35% said no, almost 65% of people have not participated a trip to the winery to date, an experience with multiple activities (47.06%) along with a good wine tourism route(29.41%) are the primary factors for one to participate, an attractive landscape(70.59%), an exotic style of architecture (64.71%) and convenient transportation(42%) are the most influential factors in terms of destination selection, having an enogastronomic experience (88%) and learning about wine (71%) are the main objectives for a trip to the vineyard. The only downside is that I did not mention in the questionnaire whether Chinese tourists are interested in visiting our selected wine case areas. This is something that can be investigated in depth in future studies as a next step to expand and deepen the research.

I also have specific data from the Catalan tourist offices in Priorat (almost 150 people have visited) and Galicia (more than 6 thousand people) on the number of Chinese and Taiwanese tourists who visit and intend to visit the region, which shows that there is a large potential group of tourists in China and even in Taiwan who want to visit the region.

In conclusion, this article is still undergoing deeper knowledge, exploring two wine regions that are currently little covered by academia, two areas of Spain that have great potential for market development and produce high-quality wine tourism. As well as analyzing the identity of Chinese tourists traveling abroad and the new state of consumption, which are relatively scarce in academia at the moment.

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