

The impact of tourism on the willingness to pay for a bottle of standard quality champagne

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Abstract

Wine tourism is currently a key issue for the European wine industry. As wine production around the world continues to exceed consumption, techniques which develop brand loyalty and stimulate sales need to be developed. Whilst substantial research has been carried out into wine tourism in the new world much less has been done in Europe. Currently, there is a growing interest in wine tourism in Europe and notably in France. It is a part of current debates about the future of wine businesses and is often considered a good way to attract new buyers. However, this new interest in wine tourism is less marked in the most reputable vineyards like champagne. On the one hand, some think that tourism cannot enhance the high image these wines have. On the other hand, the providers of champagne think of wine tourism only as a means of increasing sales and consider it irrelevant for them, due to their great success since 2001. But these positions ignore the potential wine tourism offers to increase image of wine quality, a potential which was demonstrated in the new world several years ago. This paper focuses on the potential impact of tourism on the value of champagne. We assume that tourism-related activities can increase consumers' quality perceptions and offer a possible increase of price for a bottle of standard quality. From a linear model with OLS indicators, we seek to explain the estimated price of a bottle of "standard quality" champagne from these variables completed by socio-economic indicators. We use an explanatory quantitative study with a sample of 143 buyers of champagne in direct sales. Our results prevent to maintain the initial model but allow us to highlight the use of wine tourism to enhance the value of standard champagne rather than merely the quantity of sales.

JEL classification: C12, M31, Q11.

Keywords: Wine tourism, willingness to pay, value of champagne.

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