

Culinary Wine Tourism: Exploring the Theory of Experiential Consumption

Guenter Schamel

Free University of Bozen-Bolzano, Italy

guenter.schamel@unibz.it

Abstract

Purpose

We explore key elements of consumer demand for the development of a successful wine and culinary tourism segment. In particular, we explore the demand preferences that are important for consumers in identifying a suitable wine and culinary related hotel offer in South Tyrol. In addition, we study the key elements of current supply and their pricing. Conceptually, we utilize the theory experiential consumption (4E-Model) of Pine & Gilmore (1998): entertaining, educating, escaping, and aesthetic.

Methodology

We surveyed potential tourists in a wine region to gain a better understanding of demand features of wine and culinary related hotel offers using an exploratory factor analysis.

Findings

The most preferred demand feature defining a culinary wine experience relates to informative entertainment. The second feature relates to socio-cultural activities that educate. The third are wine and food-specific activities to escape from normal routines. A fourth feature relates to the aesthetics of style and culinary wine traits offered within the package. We also relate our results to current supply conditions for wine and culinary related hotel offers in South Tyrol to see if the tourism sector is developing supply conditions that reflect consumer preferences

Practical implications

Matching demand preferences and supply conditions is crucial in developing a successful wine and culinary related tourism segment.

Key words: Culinary wine tourism; demand preferences; experience consumption