

# The Impact of Covid-19 Pandemic on Small Wineries in Cyprus and Reflections on Wine Tourism: Entrepreneurs' Perspectives

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**Abstract:** Tourism-dependent countries like Cyprus, have been seriously affected by the shockwave that COVID-19 pandemic has generated to their sociocultural/economic fabric. One of the industries of Cyprus impacted is the wine industry. Indeed, the consequences of the pandemic have been reflected on various angles of the island's wineries; from the day-to-day operations to their overall strategy. Moreover, they influenced their relationship to tourism and the provision of wine tourist experiences. This is even more apparent in the case of small wineries. In this respect, the paper examines how tourism related wine enterprises, and more specifically, small wineries in Cyprus, handled the crisis and its impacts, through the analysis of the wine entrepreneurs' views. This study explores the dimensions of the pandemic imprinted on wineries' business and highlights the pertinent measures taken to deal with them. Additionally, it illustrates how wine tourist activities have been affected, enhanced, and reformed for the smooth wine tourist experience to be provided. To do so, exploratory research was utilized to collect data through secondary sources and face-to-face in-depth interviews with winemakers/managers/owners of small wineries in Cyprus. Findings reveal that the greatest challenge that small wineries faced, was the high degree of uncertainty, as Hotels, Restaurants, and Catering companies (HO.RE.CA.) were temporarily closed and consequently, the wine consumption related to tourist flows was reduced. Small wineries took a series of measures to handle the crisis, such as emphasizing communications through online media, improving the provided -tourist-experience in the wineries, or enhancement of direct marketing and distribution strategies. The paper concludes with recommendations for small winemakers to deal with the shocks of crises and for their sustainable competitive advantage.

**Keywords:** Wine tourism, Cyprus, Wine marketing, Covid-19, Wine industry, Innovation

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## 1. Introduction

The pandemic of COVID-19 was among the most severe crises in the modern history that affected many sectors worldwide, including tourism and wine ones. Indeed, as Szolnoki et al. (2022) argue, the pandemic disrupted several dimensions of the wine-tourism industry including leisure, culinary, experiential, historical and cultural visits, making them rearranging their business model to adopt with the new circumstances, in order to, somehow, maintain their competitive position and remain viable. Considering that according to Gutiérrez-Escobar et al., (2021), wine is among the most widely consumed beverages worldwide, wine business has been severely impacted by COVID-19, with global revenues falling by more than 10% in 2020 (Lu, 2020). Many studies have been conducted in this area regarding the effects of COVID-19 on wine sales, consumption, and international commerce (Rebelo et al., 2021; Wittwer & Anderson, 2021). These studies highlight the challenging situation for the wine business and how it affected the wine market. Among the nations that the pandemic influenced their wine (tourism) industry was also Cyprus.

Tourism comprises one of the most important sectors of the economy for the island of Cyprus. Since its independence from the British Empire in 1960s, the government of Cyprus found on tourism the means for economic growth, sociopolitical stability and integrity, independence, and in expansion, improvement of the quality of life of the island's residents (Boukas, 2019). Indeed, Cyprus tourism has been steadily increasing, with minor fluctuations, in its recent history, while after 2010, tourist arrivals and revenues have been growing in a positive and steady pace (Boukas and Marneros, 2024); it is noteworthy that only in 2019 approximately four million international tourists visited the island generating €2.7 billion, (12.2% of nominal GDP) (Cyprus Statistical Service, 2022). The wine tourism industry of the island follows also the same course.

Despite its small size, the island of Cyprus indicates a prominent wine tourism activity. Currently, there are 80 wineries, many of them capitalizing on the significant tourism activity of the island and providing wine tourism experiences, such as visiting wineries, tasting and learning the local wine culture or projecting the wine character of Cyprus through a series of festivals (Liasidou, 2018). In this respect, the wine villages of Cyprus are significant

attractions for wine tourism visitors that want to experience the unique varieties of the island, such as the Commandaria (a unique local ancient variety of sweet wine).

Nonetheless, as in any other industry, the wine tourism industry has been particularly negatively affected by the pandemic's consequences. Cyprus wineries experienced an unprecedentedly volatile climate following the COVID-19 outbreak. Businesses in the industry were extremely uneasy when the government of Cyprus declared a state of emergency in 2020, as hospitality facilities had to close down. Travel between wine areas and foreign visitor arrivals in those regions were prohibited under the state of emergency, which had the effect of significantly lowering wine consumption associated with tourist flows (Boukas and Marneros, 2024). In this vague landscape, the Cypriot wine tourism industry faced a unique crisis and it was necessary to adopt to the new circumstances, emphasising innovative products/processes.

This study explores the impacts of the pandemic on wineries' business strategy and operations and underlines their actions for handling the crisis, focusing on innovation not only on the wine tourism product development but also on other business activities. As such, the study illustrates how wine tourist activities have been affected, enhanced, and reformed themselves for the smooth wine tourist experience to be provided during and in the post-COVID-19 era. The paper concludes with a series of strategies that stress innovation in the business environment, that post-COVID19 wine-tourism industries in destinations with similar characteristics to Cyprus, can utilise in order for the more effective tourist experience to be formed and delivered.

## **2. Literature Review**

### **2.1 Wine Tourism Industry Worldwide and Cyprus**

Wine tourism is much more than a "food and beverage excursion" as it is associated with specific leisure activities and use of the tourist facilities of a given region (Nemethy, Lagerqvist & Walas, 2017). According to Hall et al. (2020) and Hall and Macionis (1998), wine tourism is characterised as a form of special interest tourism that includes visits to vineyards, wineries, wine festivals, and wine shows in wine producing regions. Marzo-Navvaro and Pedraja-Iglesias (2010), add other aspects, such as visiting local attractions or experiencing the indigenous lifestyle, for example, staying overnight in the vineyards.

In terms of the role of wine tourism to the wine destination's enhancement undeniably, it can be considered as a growing activity that contributes to the economic development of wine-growing regions (Hojman & Hunter-Jones, 2012; Molina, Gomez, Gonzalez-Diaz, & Esteban, 2015); the dynamic development of wine tourism has a positive impact on the creation of a strong brand image for wine destinations (Orth et al., 2012). Destination managers promote satisfying experiences to create an one-of-a-kind connection between the customer and the place where the wineries are located, so that improve their attractiveness. In this respect, the island of Cyprus has recognised the contribution of wine to its overall appeal and diversification of its tourism product (Boukas, 2019).

The Cypriot wine industry has gone through an evolution stage during the last decades, as there is a technological/equipment upgrade of Cypriot wineries, mainly because of more educated winemakers, subsidies from EU and Cyprus government aiming to improve competitiveness (Feilden, 2023). In terms of varieties, the wineries produce primarily red and white wines, but also offer rose and Commandaria. In addition, the wineries produce varietal wines from indigenous varieties and blended wines from indigenous and international varieties. The wines are produced from three indigenous varieties and eight protected designation of origin varieties. Wine production reaches 9 million litres, exports 1.5 million litres, and wine consumption rises to 16 million litres (An Overview of Cyprus 2023). In addition, the promotion of Commandaria and Zivania spirit which are ancient Cypriot wine produces, are among the prime products in wine tourism activities and enhance the wine tourism dynamics of the island (Cy statistics 2024). Nevertheless, the pandemic crisis of COVID-19 affected the competitiveness of the wine tourism product of the island but, at the same time, signified new innovative way/s that the wine tourism product is produced, promoted and delivered to its markets.

### **2.2 COVID-19: Impacts on the Wineries**

The COVID-19 pandemic has largely changed wine tourism operations. Since the coronavirus emerged, the worldwide wine business has faced various challenges. For instance, Marco-Lajara et al. (2021), suggest that the Spanish wine sector has been hit, particularly on employment in wine-related economic activities, distribution routes, exports, and wine tourism. Similarly, Temperini et al. (2022) underlined the primary distribution channel management problems that small wineries faced, among them the lockdowns and the closure of the HO.RE.CA distribution channel, in order to comply with the policy regulations. As such, the pandemic actually created a

disruption in small wineries operations and brought to the surface challenges on various processes of wine (tourism) companies.

Indeed, the last years have brought a new reality for an industry that was traditionally based on promoting wine directly to the community and forging relationships with the end consumer and customer, mainly through the conventional way of selling. As Szolnoki et al. (2022) argue, COVID-19 significantly affected the financial condition of wineries, which they had to urgently find alternative ways of revenue generation for covering the overnight loss of many traditional sales channels such as cellar door, wine tourism events, culinary activities, travel retail, etc. The authors suggest that diversification of sales channels proved to be the foundation for resiliency. In this respect, today, businesses are almost forced to accept online platforms.

COVID-19 underlined the need for alternative and innovative ways and tools to perform traditional tasks and accelerated their implementation. For example, during the pandemic much more emphasis was placed upon technology. In fact, technology has changed the way consumers shop products, among them wine, much earlier from the crisis; with technology, wine buying became part of the online age (Halstead, 2013). Nonetheless, as Sigala (2023) argues, technologies and innovation were considered as necessity and have been instrumental for enabling the wine tourism industry to go through the crisis, re-start but also resetting its practices. This underlines why innovation may be among the few aspects that can improve a product's competitiveness.

### **2.3 The Role of Innovation for Wineries**

Undeniably, innovation is a concept well-studied in the tourism literature. For instance, innovation has an important part on the diversification of many products, among them tourism (Benur and Bramwell, 2015). Nonetheless, it can also have an impact not only on the development of new products but also on the creation of innovative processes in tourism, such as the use of new technologies in the tourism production process or the co-creation of experiences (Boukas, 2021; Boukas and Ioannou, 2020). As Boukas (2021) argues, both innovative products as well as innovative processes can help products to grow and be fertile, providing equally spread benefits to various destination's stakeholders.

Regarding wine tourism, innovation can be met on various aspects such as at the production level through the cultivation/production of organic wines (Jones & Grandjean, 2017). Today a significant portion of the agricultural sector deals with organic products (Goodman, 2004). Consumers intend to pay more money for organic products as they consider them healthier, tastier and of higher quality, although many still confuse the concepts of organic, biodynamic and sulphur-free wines (Amato et al., 2017). In the same lines, alcohol-free or low-alcohol wine products, seem to hold an increasingly share of the wine market. This is mainly attributed to the scientific research published on the effect of alcoholic beverages on human health. As such, innovation could be beneficial for the creation of non-alcoholic produces for wine tourists.

Additionally, innovation is also seen on the packaging material and label on the bottle which may consist a differential advantage of the wine for the tourist. The packaging material and the label play an important role in marketing and act as a means of impression. Packaging that is innovative and convenient to manage is being launched in the wine market (IPSOS, 2018). In this aspect technology can be really helpful as it helps producing more innovative environmentally friendly materials, convenient to use.

Moreover, the evolution of technology and digitalisation had also affected the wine tourism product. Tourism, and wine tourism in particular, rely heavily on technology. Technologies have long been used to support, enhance, and revolutionise wine experiences and offers, as well as the operations of wine tourism stakeholders and wine tourists themselves. Blockchain, smartphone applications, social media and internet advancements, crowdfunding, and virtual and augmented reality were all projected to revolutionise and innovate the wine tourism business (Sigala & Robinson, 2019a).

Indeed, the use of social media and digital marketing has proven to be a valuable tool for the wine industry to increase brand awareness, engage with customers and increase sales (Obermayer et al., 2022). Digital marketing strategies such as social media advertising, email marketing and influencer marketing have become an essential part of the wine industry's overall marketing plan (Costa et al., 2021; Jeyamani, 2020). Wine tourism combined with social media can become an important tool for wine tourists/wineries. They can share their own experiences on social media, encouraging others to visit paving the way for a direct brand-customer interaction. Wine tourists may benefit from interacting with wineries of interest, further enriching their related searches (Cristófol, et al., 2020).

Overall, it is argued that innovation as expressed in various areas of wine tourism companies can play significant role for the winery and the wine destination’s sustainable competitive advantage. This is even more evident in the case of crises, such as COVID-19 where many challenges and problems can arise into the surface. Therefore, there is a need to comprehend how wine tourism can be benefited from innovation during and post crisis for creating, improving or reorganising wine tourism practices.

### 3. Methodology

The paper is part of a preliminary study that aims to explore the role of Covid-19 on Cyprus wine tourism industry. In this regard, the study examines how Cyprus wine tourist companies have faced the impacts of COVID-19, focusing on their operations and strategy, and underlines pertinent actions for their recovery and post-crisis course, highlighting innovative practices. Finally, the paper suggests implications regarding management strategies that wine tourist companies could adopt, in order for them to gain and improve their competitiveness in a post-crisis environment.

In this respect, the key methodological approach utilised, was exploratory research through reviewing documentation about wine tourism in Cyprus, as well as face-to-face, in-depth interviews with seven managers/owners/representatives of Cypriot wineries from the areas of Paphos and Limassol, Southwest Cyprus (see Table 1).

**Table 1: Profile of Interviewees**

Respondent	Gender	Age	Area
1	Female	>40	Limassol
2	Female	> 40	Limassol
3	Male	> 35	Limassol
4	Male	> 40	Paphos
5	Male	> 55	Limassol
6	Male	> 55	Limassol
7	Male	> 55	Paphos

The interviews lasted on average between 1-1½ hours and were conducted in the premises of the interviewees. The wineries were selected based on an industry accessible list from the Ministry of Trade and Commerce and with the support of the Industry Group Oenognosia, Cyprus.

An interview guide was prepared for facilitating the process. The interviews were held in Greek language as all the respondents spoke Greek. All the interviews were recorded and transcribed verbatim in the Greek language. Afterwards, they were translated in English and analysed manually by each author independently. Data were analysed iteratively (Miles & Huberman, 1994) following a constant comparison method (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) for finding out emerging themes and distinguishing their relationships. Once theoretical saturation was reached, interpretations and coding themes by both authors were compared and a coding scheme that is suitable for the emerging data was prepared and followed.

### 4. Findings

#### 4.1 Impacts of COVID-19 Crisis on the Operation and Performance of Wine Tourism Companies

Correspondingly to what happened to the rest world (Guedes et al., 2023; Niklas et al., 2022a, 2023b), in the case of Cyprus the pandemic hit both sales and visitation of Cypriot wineries. Based on the findings, the crisis has severely affected wineries’ sales. As respondents indicate, the impact was noticed both on the visits as well as on the wine sales. Specifically, especially for smaller wineries that only provide wine to Hotel, Restaurant and Catering (HO.RE.CA.) establishments, the respondents underlined that since those companies had to remain out of operation because of the pandemic’s governmental measures, they had to halt also their sales to them. As Respondent 3 indicated, a wine producer, producing only Commandaria, the winery faced a sharp reduction on sales both in house and in the retail (since they were no visits). As complemented, the reason for this is because sweet wine (i.e., Commandaria) is a particular variety mostly asked by Russian<sup>1</sup> tourists who, as stated, indicate

<sup>1</sup> Russian tourists possessed the second largest market of tourists on the island during that time.

a great preference for it. Since with the lockdowns there was not international travel to Cyprus there was also a fall on the Commandaria's sales, respectively.

In these lines, the majority of wineries stated that they faced significant decline in the overall number of visitors to Cyprus' Wine Routes/wineries, and also decrease in the number of wine tourists. This decline had a direct reflection on wine sales at the winery as well as wine consumption establishments. As Respondent 7 claimed: 'We did remain open but we struggled a lot as much of our operations depends on wine visits ... the crisis was a serious test for our team's integrity and we were lucky that we remained strong'. Similarly, Respondent 6 argued that neither their company nor the government were prepared for the consequences of such a crisis on their operations. This comes in alignment with the literature; as Kastenholz et al. (2022) argue, wineries had little advice about what should they do or amend in their practices regarding their operations and they had often difficulties in developing new marketing policies that could aid to overcome the fears of tourists.

Nonetheless, for the case of Cyprus, apart from the sales and visitation, the crisis did not appear to affect the actual production of wine. The surveyed wineries indicated that wine production was not impacted since demand for wine was increased from retailers (e.g., supermarkets). In contrast, the wineries did continue the production of the wines. Respondents indicated that there was no need to proceed with 'green harvest', and few of the wineries proceeded with distillation of fermented liquids (wines) to produce a local distillate called 'Zivania'.

Generally, the pandemic's consequences on Cypriot wine tourist companies followed the pace of all worldwide wineries. As the rest tourist activities on the island, wine tourism ones were significantly reduced due to the quarantine measures. Moreover, the high dependence of wineries on the hospitality industry challenged even more this situation. In an effort to deal with this enormous crisis, wineries on the island followed a series of measures, many of them innovative for them, to respond effectively to its impacts.

#### **4.2 Responses to COVID-19: The Role of Innovation**

Among the direct responses of the wine tourism companies was to perform several of their operations in an online format, transforming traditional activities (e.g., wine tasting, presentations, etc.) onto an online format. Actually, the majority of wineries tried to promote online sales, enhance virtual wine tasting, even searching new markets especially retail shops, but with scepticism, as for many of them, these practices were completely new. For instance, Respondent 2 mentioned that the online activities, such as online tasting, were something new for their winery and they had to train their personnel in this innovative way of doing business. Indeed, online operations were among the first measures adopted during COVID-19 period and many of these activities still continue today as a common practice from wineries. As Szolnoki et al. (2022) argue, in COVID-19 period there was an increasing tendency to perform online tasting for mitigating the loss from the policy measures. The authors argue that this was positively reflected both to the wine tourist experience, but also to the revenues of wineries. The authors conclude that online tasting will remain as an option for many wineries in the long term. In this regard, the online environment has created new opportunities to the wine tourism, something noticed also by the interviews.

In terms of distribution, the market moved from HO.RE.CA. industry to supermarkets but with no success as. As stated by Respondent 4, the problem with supermarkets was the low profit margin and long periods of payment. The respondent claimed that the cooperation of the small wineries with big supermarkets was not sustainable and viable for them, and hence they found that online distribution could be more vital. Moreover, wineries with strong distribution systems, especially after the pandemic, arranged to satisfy all their customers (HO.RE.CA.) in shorter periods of time. Instead, small wineries struggled and do struggle to distribute their wines in a short period of time due to their low(er) supply. Therefore, the dependence of HO.RE.CA. companies to big brands of wines has been increased. This left to the small wineries to concentrate more on direct sales, enhancing their options for visitation to their premises, especially after the pandemic period. As Respondent 7 indicates: 'One of the lessons gained from COVID-19 is that we had to find ways to be more independent'. As such, the interviews noticed a continuous turn of the smaller wineries towards wine tourism, and in this regard, this new tendency places wine tourism among the top alternative tourist activities on the island, where prior crisis its role was supplementary to the main tourist product, mass tourism. Interviewees argue that the opportunities provided by online activities such as sales or marketing ones, created a new environment with improved conditions to sell and market their products on newer, non-traditional for the island's tourism, markets, such as Germans.

In this respect, among the online operations used during the pandemic and afterwards was the enhancement of the wineries' activities in online platforms in which their actions and products are promoted. Respondents also indicated the growing utilisation of social media such as X (Tweeter), Instagram and/or Facebook (in alignment to the literature). As Respondent 7 claims: 'We had to remain alive... we use a lot the social media... many people know us from there and they recommend us to others'. Similarly, Respondent 1 suggested that the social media provided a good space for them to communicate with various publics such as visitors, official or even other companies. Indeed, as argued by Yu, Wang and Hanes, (2022, p. 75): 'In the era of digital economy, digitalisation has given the wine culture industry new vitality against the backdrop of COVID-19'. The authors complement that COVID-19 provided the opportunity for many wine tourism companies to utilise digitalisation not only to promote their produce but also open the gates to many people to know more about the unique culture of the brand.

To this end, another finding that has to do with innovation was the diversification of the Cypriot wine tourist product to new or unexplored prior the crisis, markets. All respondents indicated that they paid attention on the cultivation and promotion of the Cypriot indigenous varieties; furthermore, many wineries proceeded with small vinifications of local varieties; this gave a competitive advantage as they penetrated more seriously to the local market. One of the wineries stated (Respondent 2) that the promotion of 'Comandaria' and 'Zivania' is the flagship of Cypriot wineries with great benefits to 'ecotourism'. The pandemic gave the opportunity to wineries to search for new ways to focus on the local market. For instance, as mentioned, the home consumption has been increased, and the wineries performed many home deliveries during COVID-19. Additionally, some respondents claimed that they frequently organise events of various types (e.g., business, social, etc.) on their premises not only to increase their revenues but also to project the local wine culture to more potential visitors.

Finally, some wineries (i.e., Respondent 2 and 6) argued that after the crisis they try to value and further understand visitors. As suggested, since visitors are valued for their future continuous visitation, wineries try to understand what they want from the wine consumption and offer them enriching factors for creating a more enhanced tourist experience. For instance, as demonstrated, they ask the visitors about their preferences in tastes, offer them wine in appropriate glasses, and/or accompany them with the suitable food to enrich the taste. As Respondent 6 indicated: 'We try to listen to the visitor and make the experience together with him'. As such, in their effort to improve and differentiate their tourist experience, there is a tendency towards provided a more holistic experience to the visitor investing in co-creation (Boukas and Ioannou, 2020).

Overall, the interviewees argued that the most significant lesson gained from the pandemic, was that they realised their weaknesses and addressed more effectively their strengths; the interests of the company and the employees were aligned, as a result of empowering the team. Respondent 5 stated that every crisis makes the weak enterprises weaker and the strong enterprises stronger. The respondent concluded that even if the pandemic created a huge disruption on the landscape of wine tourism, it also indicated great opportunities that had to be seized. Indeed, as Boukas and Ziakas (2014) argue, one of the lessons of large crises is the realisation that the system of the crisis is chaotic and among the few responses that tourist destinations can do is to act quickly and think innovatively.

## **5. Conclusion and Recommendations**

The study's findings are especially relevant to the Cyprus wine sector since they shed light on a volatile environment caused by the coronavirus pandemic. In reality, the study provides a significant contribution to the academic literature as it addresses the impact of the coronavirus on small island context and small wine enterprises, as well. From the survey it was found that the crisis highlighted the significance of the coherence among the employees of wine tourism enterprises, the importance to find out new ways to be independent such as more specific wine tourist products that emphasise locality to new markets (i.e., locals), and innovative elements that could be used for them to be more sustainably competitive, such as online practices in distribution and marketing and co-created wine tourist experiences. Finally, one of the major findings drawn from the research is a significant reorganisation of wine distribution channels, since domestic wine consumption and other channels expanded significantly.

To this end, the paper suggests that in order for smaller wineries to be more competitive in the long term, especially in traditional mass destinations, such as Cyprus, there is a need for them to concentrate on the destination's local identity, as a differential factor and/or expand in more alternative markets. Among the findings, it was found out that the majority of the small wineries invested in their local indigenous varieties, in order to be different in the global market, and this paid back; it is no surprise that the majority of sales regarding wine tourism come from 'Commandaria' or 'Zivania', that are both indigenous cultivations and varieties.

Towards this direction, the role of creative tourism is imperative not only to provide products (e.g., wine) and processes (e.g., specific production patterns) but also to provide complete experiences supported by co-created mutual involvement of the customer and supplier. Considering that wine making and consumption in Cyprus is part of its life and culture and has historic value, it can be concluded that the concept of creative tourism could be adopted in the production and delivery of the wine tourist experience. As Richards (2001) argues, creative tourism provides visitors the opportunity to develop their creative potential through active participation in learning experiences which are characteristic of the holiday destination where they are undertake (in this case wine tourist experiences). As such, the wine tourist experience in destinations similar to Cyprus, should incorporate all chronologic phases from the past, to the present and future of wine, should treat wine not only as a popular cultural product but a high cultural element with significant past and history (e.g., Commandaria), as well, and could emphasize the holistic experience through the incorporation of digitalization and virtual/online techniques, and the support of co-creation (Boukas and Ioannou, 2018, 2020). In this respect, the wine tourist experience can become richer and could help put wine tourism on the map of important activities in smaller destinations, among other traditional ones (e.g., 3Ss tourism).

Overall, this study concludes that small wineries and tourist companies in Cyprus proved to be quite strong during the crisis because of their direct response towards its consequences, as well as their investment in a large degree, on their strengths, capitalising opportunities provided to them such as new technologies, diversified distribution, and production orientations. The specific study is progressive and is based on a framework that incorporates various stakeholders such as entrepreneurs, policy makers, communities, etc. In this regard, a limitation of the study is that it focuses only on wine companies. Future research could shed light on the views of other stakeholders regarding their perceptions/reactions on the pandemic's impacts. Additionally, as this study is a preliminary examination, it concentrates only on the opinions of a small number of entrepreneurs. A greater sample size would provide a more representative image of the entrepreneurs' reflections. This is something that needs to be managed in future research. Finally, further research needs to analyse more the course of small wineries in small -island- destinations in the post-crisis era. In this respect, there is a need to expand on the examination of not only what the supply side (i.e., wineries and wine tourist companies) believes about the future of wine tourism, but also on the views of wine tourists themselves, in regards to how they perceive the 'newer' wine tourist experience, after the incorporation of innovative products, processes, and practices employed by wineries. This comparison, could allow identifying gaps for improvement of the future wine tourist experiences of smaller wineries in smaller destinations' context.

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