



MASTER THESIS

ANALYSIS OF THE TOURIST SERVICES COMPANY ENOAVENTURA AND PROPOSALS FOR ITS IMPROVEMENT

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**Internship developed at EnoAventura
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June 21, 2019

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ABSTRACT

In the last 10 years the wine tourism in Spain has been gaining popularity and has increase the number of visitors thanks to “Wine Routes of Spain” and it’s integrated product oriented to the cultural and rural tourism based on the activities related to wine, gastronomy and culture plus a wide accommodation offer and different complementary activities as sports, restaurants among others. In this context the tourist service company EnoAventura, located in the geographic area of The Basque Country and Alto Ebro, cradle of the wines of Rioja Alavesa (D.O.Ca Rioja) covers a large number of activities related to wine tourism, oleotourism and active tourism (always aligned with the objectives of the Strategic Plan of Basque Tourism and sustainability), putting value in the gastronomy, the culture, the landscape and the natural resources of the area, also adding to the offer a Rural House complex due the increasing interest on them as an accommodation solution. Through a bibliographic revision related to Rioja Alavesa and its attractiveness; the vision, global trends and sustainability of Basque Country tourism plan; the wine tourism in Spain and Rioja Alavesa; olive oil tourism and adventure and cycle tourism; in addition to a S.W.O.T. analysis of the company, the objectives of this study have been set in order to corroborate whether EnoAventura is going in the right direction and to improve the company's performance by giving proposals to enhance its efficiency and quality of its product, increase its online presence and attract a greater public of interest.

Keywords: Rioja Alavesa; D.O.Ca Rioja; winetourism; Wine Routes of Spain

List of abbreviations:

D.O.Ca. = Qualified Designation of Origin

G.D.P. = Gross Domestic Product

ACEVIN = Spanish Association of Wine Cities

U.S.P. = Unique Selling Proposition

S.E.O. = Search Engine Optimization

S.W.O.T.= Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats

1. INTRODUCTION

The following work, which is focused on the tourist services provider company EnoAventura (located in Rioja Alavesa), aims to improve the performance of it by strengthening the weak aspects and taking advantage of the positive ones. This document starts with information about the company and the work carried out during the period between February and June of 2019, during which a great part of the work done was to contact the different tourism agencies with which Enoaventura works (also with new ones) and from where it captures most of its clients (mostly foreign); going through the organization and coordination of the different activities and finishing with the execution of them.

To evaluate the company, an analysis of Rioja Alavesa region was carried out with information on the municipalities that make up its assets and attractions; plus, information about Basque tourism and new trends on which they base their strategy. Then, the wine tourism in Spain was contextualized with information on the number of tourists and their evolution in the last 10 years; the percentage of local versus foreign tourists on the most visited routes; the monthly distribution of visits; their motivations and age ranges. Also, as Enoaventura, within its offer it makes experiences where, culture, traditions, gastronomy and landscape are valued; doing activities related to wine and the vineyard, olive oil and sport (such as bicycle rides, mountain excursions, among others); information about oleotourism and active tourism has been analyzed, in order to see to what extent these activities are complementary to each other and as tourists resemble in their profile. The work continues with a S.W.O.T analysis of the company, which was created based on the information collected and the experience obtained during the different services. Finally, a proposal is delivered so that with its implementation and necessary dedication, several of the weak aspects of the company can be improved.

1.1 The company

Enoaventura is an incoming company provider of tourist services registered in the Wine Route of Rioja Alavesa and located in the geographic area of The Basque Country (also known as Euskadi) and Alto Ebro, Spain, cradle of the wines of Rioja Alavesa (D.O.Ca. Rioja). It started in the year 2010 (being one of the first tourist initiatives in the region), with the aim of putting value in the gastronomy, the culture, the landscape and the natural resources of the area. At the same time, Enoaventura has decided to boost the tourist offer of the area by covering a large number of activities adaptable to almost all types of tourists, including sports activities of different kinds, in places as the River Ebro, Sierra Toloño and others related to the natural heritage. Visits to traditional wineries, cellars with architectonical interest or cellars with award-winning wines and visits to the famous vineyards of Rioja Alavesa and its centenarian olive groves together with the cooperatives where they make the olive oil. The gastronomy is

also present in different activities where visitors are shown the typical preparations of the area paired with the local wines and olive oils.

Also, Enoaventura has diversified the offer with the cooperation of private (as the hotels Sercotel Villa de Laguardia, Eguren Ugarte and Viura, who provided their facilities for the installation of some bicycle stands) and public entities with the financial and logistic support of Basque Government, the Provincial Council of Alava, La Cuadrilla de Laguardia - Rioja Alavesa and the Rioja Alavesa Wine Route, offering a Bike Service called “Rioja Alavesa Bike” destined to improve the touristic services and the accessibility to all the municipalities and heritage of the region, through the implementation of bike stations located in Labastida, Elciego, Laguardia, Paganos, Villabuena, Samaniego, Lapuebla de Labarca, Lanciego and Moreda de Álava

To complement the offer Enoaventura also manages a rural house (with capacity for 20 guest, divided in 3 properties of different sizes and characteristics) in the town of Lapuebla de Labarca (D.O.Ca. Rioja), with 857 neighbors (INE, 2018) related directly or indirectly to the wine and with more than 30 registered cellars in the Registers of the Regulatory Board of the D.O.Ca. Rioja. Located on the banks of the Ebro River it has an strategic place for the enotourists due the proximity with others towns closely related to the wine and the gastronomy as Elciego (6 km); Laguardia (8 km); Haro (34 km) and Logroño (16 km), being this last one since the year 2007 part of the tourism product dynamization plan “Enoturismo en Logroño”, with the aim of turning the city of Logroño in the first urban destination of Spain for tourists interested in the wine culture, with a commitment to quality and the creation of experiences (RECEVIN, 2007)

Besides cities of tourist interest as Vitoria/Gasteiz (53 km); Pamplona (101 km); Bilbao (126 km) and Donostia/San Sebastián (160 km) are close enough both to visit or attract people, since a large part of the tourists who visit the Wine Routes of Spain are local and come mostly from nearby autonomous communities (Iliescu, 2016).

1.2 Duties and activities during the internship

In general terms the duties and activities carried out during the internship can be listed in the following way:

a) Implementation of the public-private initiative “Rioja Alavesa Bike”, for which bicycle stands were installed in the different towns of the region (Labastida, Elciego, Laguardia, Paganos, Villabuena, Samaniego, Lapuebla de Labarca, Lanciego and Moreda de Álava).

b) Cleaning, maintenance and preparation of the rural house “Ikustieder” for the reception of tourists.

- c) Implementation of the different experiences offered.
- d) Guide of the tours, both in English and Spanish.
- e) Business relationships with different national and international agencies.
- f) Research and contact with new agencies of interest.
- g) Quote and creation of new tourist experiences.
- h) Management of social networks as Facebook and Instagram.

2. TOURISM CONTEXT

2.1 The Region: Rioja Alavesa

Rioja Alavesa, with 316,3 km² and its 10.536 inhabitants (INE, 2018), is one of the seven regions that make up the province of Álava (sub-region of Basque Country). To the north it borders with Toloño mountain and to the south with the Ebro river and is composed by 15 municipalities (figure 1): Baños de Ebro (286); Elciego (1.025); Elvillar (348), Cripán (181); Labastida (1.445); Laguardia (1.505); Lanciego (667); Lapuebla de Labarca (857); Leza (196); Moreda de Álava (229); Navaridas (209); Oyón (3.368); Samaniego (319); Villabuena de Alava (299) and Yécora (269).



Figure 1. Rioja Alavesa and its municipalities

In addition to its natural attractiveness it is possible to find heritage of the megalithic culture (Doll of the Sorceress, in Elvillar, is the biggest, in better state of conservation and the most well-known); the Town of “La Hoya”, the most important site of the Bronze Age of the Basque Country; one of the most beautiful towns of Spain, Laguardia, famous for its walls, its underground caves and its churches; hotels and wineries of architectural importance as the Hotel of Marqués de Riscal in Elciego, designed by Frank Gehry and Ysios Winery in Laguardia, designed by Santiago Calatrava; among a large number of wineries recognized all over the world for the high quality of their wines. Also the small towns with their traditional wineries of harvesters as Villabuena de Alava and Lapuebla de Labarca and the centenaries

vineyards and olive tree fields, as the oil press (most of them in Moreda de Álava, Lanciego, Oyón) are part of the attractiveness and heritage of the region. Finally, the gastronomy is the perfect complement of this wine region, where it is possible to find traditional “pintxos” bars and restaurants, wine bars and Michelin star restaurants. Mostly all of them adhered to eno-gastronomic tourism club, which seeks to ensure and protect certain standard of quality.

In terms of wine production Rioja Alavesa belongs to the D.O.Ca Rioja, and with a surface of 12.079,6 hectares of red varieties and 899,3 hectares of white varieties (Consejo Regulador D.O.Ca Rioja, 2018) is the place where the most well know wine of the D.O.Ca are made.

2.2 New trends and sustainable tourism

In the last years the Basque Government has been investing in the promotion and in the sustainability of the general touristic activity of Euskadi (and Rioja Alavesa as a wine destination) with a vision of future, which can be describe, in general terms as (Gobierno Vasco, 2014):

- The touristic offer of Esukadi it is sustained on a way of life, a style and places and unrepeatable experiences in no other part of the world.
- Euskadi reflexes the singularity of its different territories and municipalities in a complementary way to its integrity as a country, configuring an articulated and intelligent destination.
- As an industry, the goal of the public and private actors, is to generate jobs, wealth and contribute to boost the economic activity from other sectors of Euskadi.

The Strategic Plan of Basque Tourism 2020 focuses on five actions to improve the competitively of Euskadi including Rioja Alavesa:

- 1) Support for tourism demand, with attention to the quality, improvement of the brand and facility to travel.
- 2) Promote innovation and the entrepreneurial spirit through collaboration with educational centers, access to information and availability of data, thus improving the image of the industry.
- 3) Combine the resources of the region in an efficient way, creating value chains, networks and accessibility.
- 4) Ensure a sustainable tourism development in terms of the social impact, the environment, the social dialogue and the transport. This, through the participation in the project “ERNEST” 2008-2012 (European Research Network in Sustainable Tourism), whose objective

was to develop and reinforce the coordination framework between regional research and innovation programs in sustainable tourism, emphasizing issues such as transport, energy, the environment, gastronomy and agriculture, socio-economic and human sciences, and health. In this way, in recent years, contact has been established with organizations such as the Sustainability Area of the State Secretariat, European sustainable tourism networks, the Basque Environment Department, the Responsible Tourism Institute (ITR) and the Biosphere seal.

5) Help the industry improving the financing and decreasing administrative bureaucracy.

To carry out a strategy efficiently it is necessary to take into account the global trends in tourism (analyzed by international organizations and studies or sector entities, added to the opinion of the experts), which are exposed in the Strategic Plan of Basque Tourism 2020.

➤ The World Tourism Organization foresees an annual average increase in the arrival of foreign tourists of 3,4% until reaching 1.400 million in 2020. In this scenario, Europe will remain as the main issuing region of foreign tourists. Also countries as Germany, Japan, U.S.A., China, U.K. and France will stand out as issuing countries.

➤ The income of the international tourism will continue to grow. The Chinese travelers have the fastest growing trend in spending, due the increase in wages and its openness to the world. Also Russia has shown remarkable increments. The spending of more traditional issuing countries as U.S.A., U.K. and Germany are still growing but in a more moderate way. Only France and Italy are one of the main markets that have shown a decreasing trend in the last period. In addition, it is expected that tourist spending from Asian countries will grow significantly until 2020 assuming 1/3 of the world total.

➤ The World Travel & Tourism Council, foresees that the principal key principal indicators (KPI) for tourism will continue growing in the next ten years. The contribution to the gross domestic product (GDP) will increase at a 4,4% annual rate. The creation of direct and indirect employment will continue with 2,0 and 2,4% annual rate, respectively. The investment is projected in a 5,3% annual rate and the spending generated by foreign tourists will grow in a 4,2% annual rate.

➤ The improvement in the transportation and general accessibility will reduce the transfer times, increasing the number of trips but with shorter stay.

➤ New types of clients with a wide range of demands. Independent travelers, tourists who demand custom and personalized treatment. A “multi-tourist” profile will emerge; which behavior is in constant change, even in the same tourist trip.

➤ More and more consumers will look for customized solutions according to their personality and specific market niche. It is expected that in 2020 the 20% of the European

population will be more than 65 years old and with considerable incomes and more free time to travel.

- It is expected that for 2020 80% of the European population will live in the cities. This will be a challenge for the managers of tourist destinations that must improve the management of transport infrastructure and communication.
- Changes in buying and consuming habits of the tourist will convert them in the main source of innovation.
- Growth in the competition with other lesser known destinations, especially Asian.
- The sustainable tourism, from an economic, social and environmental perspective, and the efficient use of the resources will become a key factor of competitiveness.
- Tourists will demand the use of new technologies that allow them to manage their trips and improve their access to the services. The use of social media has had an exponential increase as an information source and will continue growing. The use of mobile phones to manage the services will continue to gain importance and will allowed the users to integrate more of them.
- The technological development will mark the future of the touristic destinations, so the challenge will be to become a smart touristic destination with focus on the innovation the sustainability and the visitor.

Some studies (Bramwell, 1990; Jamieson, 1990; Brown & Leblanc, 1992; cited by Lane, 1994) have shown that tourism is an agent for rural economic regeneration and as a way of valorizing conservation; nevertheless, the rural environment is very fragile and very easy to changed and/or damage. The sustainable tourism aims to minimize environmental and cultural damage, optimizing the visitor satisfaction and maximizing long-term economic growth for the region, this supported by the following principles (Lane, 1994): a) Sustain the culture and character of host communities; b) sustain landscapes and habits; c) sustain the rural economy; d) sustain a tourism industry which will be viable in the long term and e) develop a balance and diverse rural economy, not relying only in tourism.

Since 2017 Euskadi, as a touristic destination, has the Biosphere Certification, becoming one of the most important regions in terms of touristic sustainability. Biosphere is a private, volunteer and independent certification system based on the principles of sustainability and continuous improvement. This certification given by the Institute of Responsible Tourism (ITR), created in 1995 with the support of the UNESCO, has as focus the integration of tourist companies with the destinations, the tourist and the touristic communication, creating sustainable touristic experiences and guaranteeing greater competitiveness through the

adoption of sustainable practices, increasing the efficiency, improving positioning, reducing the CO₂ footprint, saving water and energy costs and commercialization value.

2.3 Analysis of Wine tourism in Spain

Wine tourism is the journey that is developed with the purpose of having experiences with wineries and wine regions, as well as with their lifestyles (Western Australian Tourism Commission and Wine Industry Association of Western Australian, 2000). And it is composed by territory, wine culture and tourism, being territory and wine culture inseparable elements.

According to Bruwer, 2003, a tourist wine route is characterized by their natural, physics, cultural and social attractiveness, therefore is a mix of cultural, environmental and social aspects.

In the last 10 years the wine tourism in Spain has been gaining popularity and has shown an accumulated increase of 268% in the number of visitors. This as a consequence of the initiative of the General Secretariat of Tourism of the Government of Spain, where in the Integral Plan for Quality of Spanish Tourism 2000-2006 included, within the ten programs the plan, one called "Quality in Tourism Products", with the objective to work on the design and development of the offer of touristic products with the goal of diversified and combat the seasonality of tourism in Spain. This gave origin to the product "Wine Routes of Spain", defined in the year 2000 by the Secretary of State for Tourism, as "the integration under the same thematic concept of resources and tourist services of interest, existing and potential, of a wine-growing zone raised from the authenticity and the experiential vocation, in order to build a product from the identity of the destination, to facilitate the joint commercialization of the whole area and of guarantee the level of satisfaction of the demand, thus promoting economic-social development of it". This, in 2009, was complemented with the product "Saborear España" ("Taste Spain"), with the aim of enhance the gastronomic tourism in Spain (Rodríguez García, López-Guzmán, & Sánchez Cañizares, 2010).

The main idea of a route of wine is to create, in rural destinations, an integrated product oriented to the cultural and rural tourism based on the activities related to wine, gastronomy, culture plus a wide accommodation offer and different complementary activities as sports, restaurants, among others (MITYC, 2008).

Routes of Wine of Spain is an initiative composed by different routes in all the country with the aim of enhance the enotourist segment by the integration of the different resources and the cooperation between the public and private sector in order to create high quality products and destination identity, optimizing the cooperation, the satisfaction and development. In this way wine tourism helps to diversify the economy in depressed rural places, fixing their population and generating employment and wealth.

According to the Report of visitors to wineries and wine museums associated to the Wine Routes of Spain, 2017, written by Spanish Association of Wine Cities (ACEVIN) and “Wine Routes of Spain”, there are 25 wine routes with about 2.000 partners that make up the enotourist offer in Spain. Regarding the accommodation, the 4 star hotels are the most numerous with 51 partners and 4.049 available places. In the extra-hotel offer, the rural houses are the most numerous type of accommodation with close to 170 lodgings and more than 1.000 place, which amounts to 11.000 places in all kind of accommodation.

Since 2006 the Wine Route of Rioja Alavesa, with the support of the Alava and Basque institutions, has unify more than 140 establishments wineries, museums, accommodation, restaurants, wine shops and tourist companies with the aim of improve the experience of the visitor. Rioja Alavesa has become an enotourist destination known worldwide due the quality of its wines, the gastronomy and the characteristic landscape plus the medieval towns that make up the region, the culture and festivities and the diversity related to the tourist offer.

Figure 2 shows the sustained increase in the number of wine tourists since the year 2008 and the percentage of annual change. In 2017 the number of visitors to the cellars and wine museums (associated to the Wine Routes of Spain) increased to 3.213.267 what represents an increment of 18,4% compared to 2016. It is remarkable that from the year 2015 the annual growth has been around to 20%.

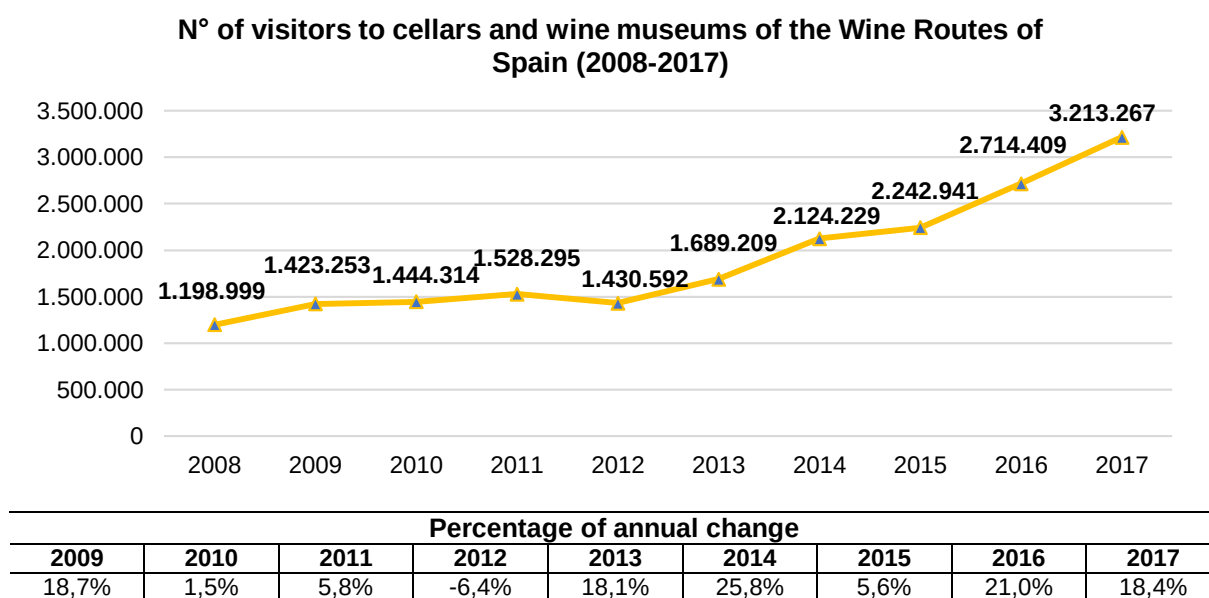


Figure 2. Number of visitors to cellars and wine museums of the Wine Routes of Spain from 2009 until 2017 and percentage of annual change.

Source: ACEVIN-Rutas del Vino de España, 2018a

Wine tourism continues to show a significant growth rate in accordance with the whole touristic activities in the country that in 2017 received almost 81,8 million foreign tourist (Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas, 2018)

In 2017, the most visited wine routes where: Brandy del Marco de Jerez (574.242); Enoturisme Penedès (438.112); Ribera del Duero (378.663); D.O. Empordà (373.206); Calatayud (296.597); Rioja Alta (256.303); Rioja Alavesa (169.888) and Rías Baixas (115.459). In the table 1 it is possible to see the number of visitors of the most visited wine routes during the years 2015, 2016, 2017 and the percentage of annual change.

Table 1. Number of tourist of the most visited wine routes during the years 2015, 2016, 2017 and the percentage of annual change.

Wine Routes	2015	2016	2017	%variation 2015-2016	%variation 2016-2017
Brandy del Marco de Jerez	449.326	501.783	574.242	11,7%	14,4%
Enoturisme Penedès	464.825	486.388	438.112	4,6%	-9,9%
Ribera del Duero	269.909	351.389	378.663	30,2%	7,8%
DO Empordà	92.092	110.573	373.206	20,1%	237,5%
Calatayud	0	251.395	296.297	-	18,0%
Rioja Alta	264.591	267.058	256.303	0,9%	-4,0%
Rioja Alavesa	150.992	158.234	169.888	4,8%	7,4%
Rías Baixas	88.679	101.907	115.459	14,9%	13,3%

Source: ACEVIN-Rutas del Vino de España, 2018a

Related to the origin of the visitors, in 2017 (ACEVIN-Rutas del Vino de España, 2018a), 73,8% were local (2.371.114) and mostly from nearby autonomous communities, being the Catalans the ones who practice wine tourism the most (Information retrieved from a survey made in 2008 by ACEVIN, extracted from Ilescu I.A., 2016). The 26,2% were foreigners (842.069), being the most numerous the German followed by British, Benelux (Belgian, Dutch and Luxembourg) and North Americans, who stand out for their high level of spending (Information taken from a survey made in 2008 by ACEVIN, extracted from Ilescu I.A., 2016). Foreign visitors increased 3,42% in comparison with 2016. The Wine Routes with the highest number of international tourists were Brandy Marco de Jerez (224.613), D.O. Empordà (181.726), Enoturisme Penedès (135.642), Rioja Alta (55.669) and Rioja Alavesa (51.915). The figure 3 shows the number of foreign and local tourist in the most visited wine regions in Spain by international tourist in 2017.

Since 2015 to 2017 Rioja Alavesa has represented, in average, the 5,9% of the wine tourist of the Routes of Wine, with an annual increment of 4,8% in the period 2015 – 2016 and 7,4% in the period 2016 – 2017. Of them (in 2017) the 30,6% were foreign and 69,4% Spanish.

Number of international and local tourists in the wine routes with the highest number of foreign visitors in Spain in 2017

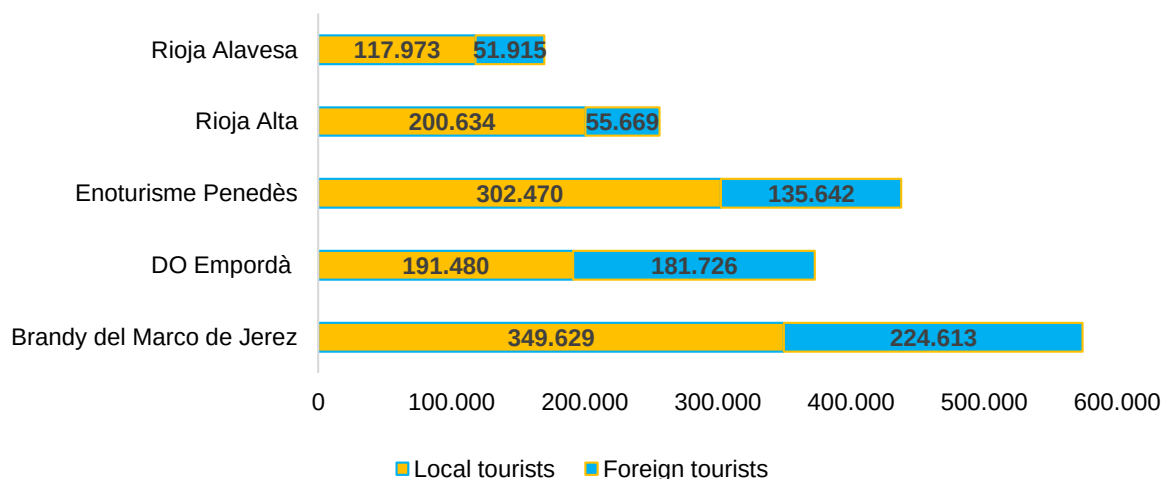


Figure 3. Number of international and local tourists in the wine routes with the highest number of foreign visitors in Spain in 2017.

Source: ACEVIN-Rutas del Vino de España, 2018a

Regarding the temporal distribution of visitors, autumn and spring are both the most active periods of the year, due the good weather and the attractiveness of the landscapes. Also during the months of August and September the numbers are very good due the increase of tourists that enjoy the wine tourism and see it as an alternative way for leisure during their holidays. The weakest months are January, February and December, because of the low temperatures. However, December has been improving as a consequence of the increase business events and meetings (figure 4).

Monthly distribution of the visitors to the Wine Routes of Spain in 2017

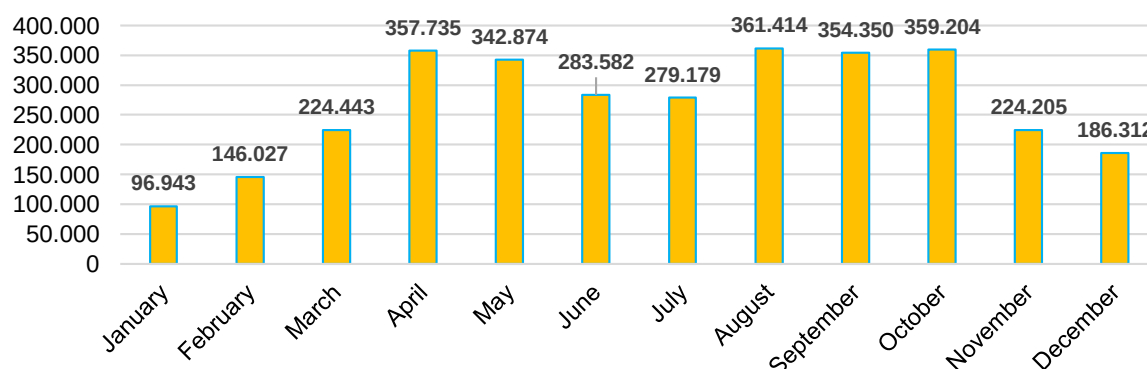


Figure 4. Monthly distribution of the visitors to the Wine Routes of Spain in 2017.

Source: ACEVIN-Rutas del Vino de España, 2018a

It should be noted that the months with highest and lower number of visitors vary in function of the Wine Route, due the geographical situation, climate conditions, the tourist activity itself and its offer. For Rioja and Rioja Alavesa the best month it is October and the worst January.

According to the Analysis of the tourist demand of Routes of Wine of Spain 2017-2018, the trips in couples represent the 42,9% and the organized groups 35,6%. The family trips, with children represent the 12,2% and without children 5,4%. The lonely travelers are still a small percentage but has grown 0,5% related to the last period. The figure 5 shows the evolution on the composition of the group of travelers between the year 2017 and 2018.

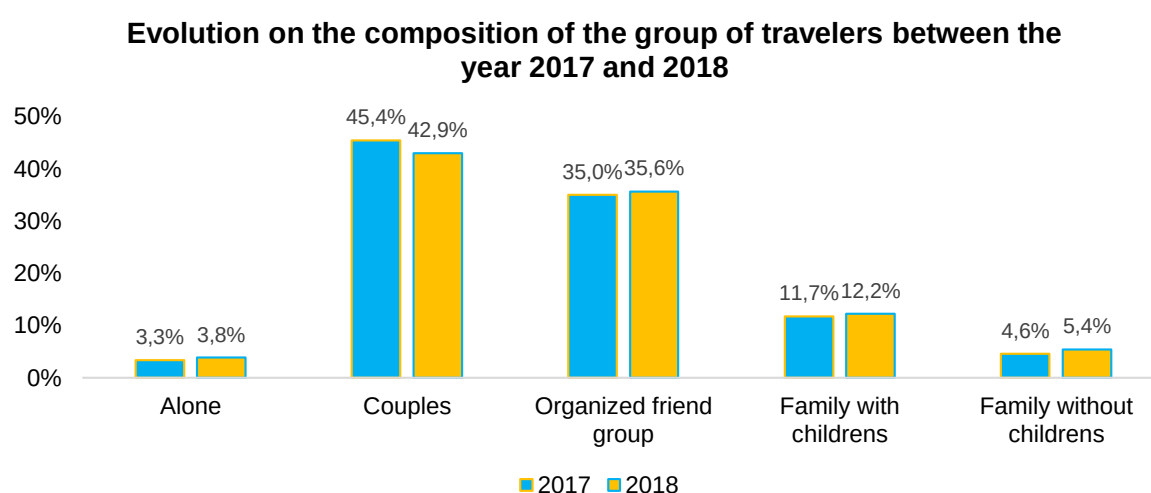


Figure 5. Evolution on the composition of the group of travelers between the year 2017-2018.

Source: ACEVIN-Rutas del Vino de España, 2018b

In terms of accommodation, the most used by the tourist who visit the Routes of Wine of Spain are 4 star hotels with a 25,1% of preference followed by rural houses (19,0%), 3 star hotels (17,1%), friend or family houses (15,6%), touristic apartments (7,1%), hostels (4,0%), 5 star hotels (3,7%) and 1 & 2 star hotels (3,4%).

According to the activities preferred by the wine tourists in Spain the visits to cellars take first position with an 86,8% of preferences. Enjoy the local gastronomy (56,8%) and wine tasting (54,4%) take second and thirds position respectively. The purchase of wines, both in specialized stores and in the cellar, has a 52,2% of preferences. The visits to wine municipalities has increased from 31,7% to 48,8% (comparing with the season 2017) showing the growing interest to discover the heritage and the historical footprint of the wine culture, as well as the traditions of the wine-growing towns and their people. Cultural activities (28,9%), visits to museum (28,7%) and the realization of outdoor activities (26,0%) also have shown an

increment comparing to 2017. In last position visits and activities in the vineyards had a 17,0% of preferences followed by the participation in wine events (10,7%) and tasting classes (8,0%).

According to the Analysis of Tourism Demand Wine Routes of Spain 2017-2018, delivered by ACEVIN-Wine of Routes of Spain, the average spending in the destinations of Routes of Wine was 161,9 euros per person/day, showing an increase of 5,3 euros comparing with the season 2017 and 17,5 euros comparing with 2016.

The average stays of the wine tourist in the Routes of Wine during 2018 was 2,43 days, showing a decrease of 8,3% in comparison with the last season. Despite that the average stay continues to be higher than the in 2015 and 2016.

The percentage of tourist who stay overnight (58,8%) and those who do not (41,2%) is still balanced, doing the excursionist a target to take into account and by the information extracted from ACEVIN-Rutas del Vino de España, 2018b we can see that there are differences in the composition of the travel group between excursionist and tourist (figure 6).

The sociodemographic profile of the wine tourist that visit the Routes of Wine of Spain (ACEVIN-Rutas del Vino de España, 2018b) is composed by 55,3% of women and 44,7% of men. The age ranges in the season 2018 was composed in its majority by visitors around 46 – 65 years (37,9%), followed by the groups between 36 – 45 years (28,8%); 26 – 35 years (21,8%) and 18 – 25 years (6,9%). In the figure 7 it is also possible to see the evolution since the last season where the group of 36 – 45 years and 18 – 25 years showed an increase of 1,6% and 2,1% respectively.

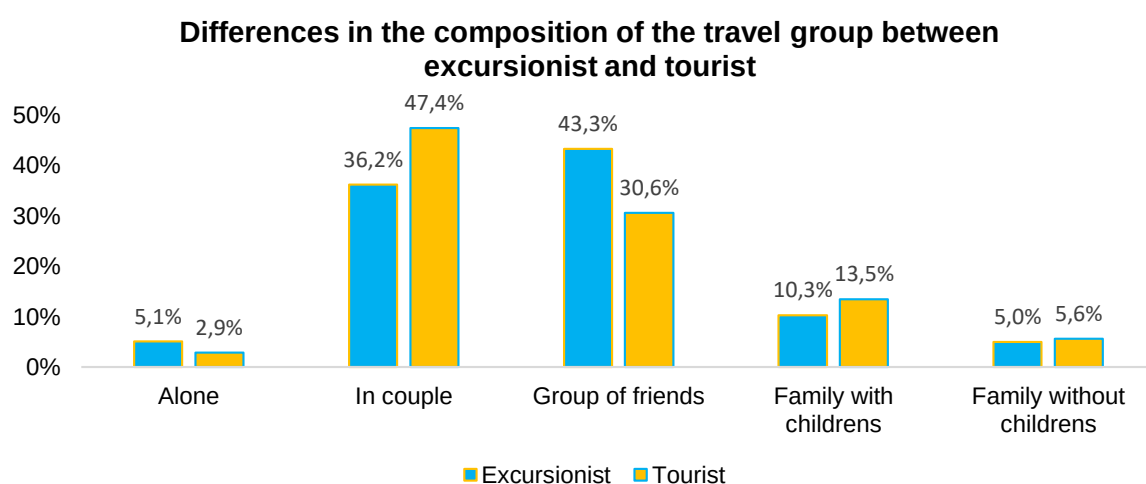


Figure 6. Differences in the composition of the travel group between excursionist and tourist.

Source: ACEVIN-Rutas del Vino de España, 2018b

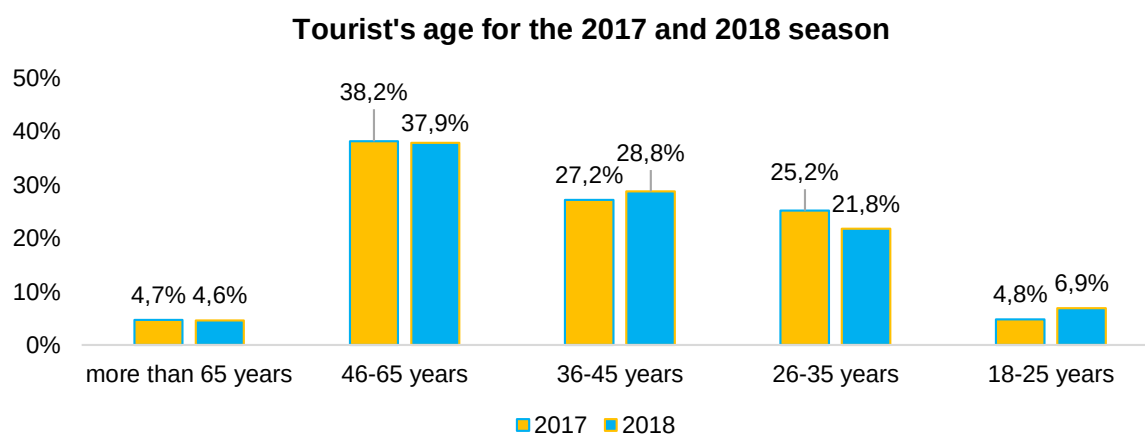


Figure 7. Tourist's age for the 2017 and 2018 season.

Source: ACEVIN-Rutas del Vino de España, 2018b

From the report of Analysis of the tourist demand of Routes of Wine of Spain 2017-2018, written by ACEVIN-Rutas del Vino de España, 2018b, we can extract that the 46,4% of the visitors declared them self as fans of the wine world, with some knowledge about wine and it's culture. They enjoy wine tasting and visiting cellars and vine landscapes. 21,7% are beginners and they try to approach in a playful way, being the wine tourism a way to introduction to the wine and it's culture. 19,3% consider themselves passionate and enthusiastic, with a better knowledge about wine. They are interested about the culture and to learn more about wine, the process, the varieties and terroirs. 5,8% are professional from the area and 6,7% do not have relation with the wine.

2.4 Olive tourism consumer profile in Spain

Olive oil is a food product that represents the culture and heritage of the areas where is produced as the Mediterranean Europe, the Middle East and North Africa, being a key element in the Mediterranean Diet, declared intangible Heritage of Humanity by UNESCO in 2010 (López-Guzmán, Cañero-Morales, Moral-Cuadra, & Orgaz-Agüera, 2016).

According the series of world statics on production, exports and consumption, updated by the International Oliva Council in 2018, Spain has been the first producer (1.260,1 thousand tons) and exporter (320 thousand tons) of olive for years and both with Italy the ones with higher consumption (525 and 500 thousand tons respectively).

As the popularity of gastronomic and wine tours has increase in the last years, as the academic research related to them; there is a potential commitment to the development of olive tourism and it is due the similarities between enogastronomic tourism and olive tourism that the strategies of territorial development and the planning of wine tourism can be useful to improve or implement olive tourism in rural areas (Duarte & Northcote, 2010).

An olive tourism destination requires a distinct and clearly identifiable culinary image and the development of olive tourism could strength that image through an increase of knowledge of the olive oil world and by direct sales of the products (Duarte & Northcote, 2010). Nevertheless, for the development of olive tourism, the location and proximity to other tourist routes is a key point and a competitive advantage (Northcote & Alonso, 2011).

According López-Guzmán et al. (2016) the profile of olive tourist has a higher percentage of women, mainly from Spain, France and the UK, mainly over 50 years old, with an average medium-high level of income, retired and with university education and with high satisfaction level.

The main motivations to visit olive areas are to know the geographical area and to learn about the olive oil world; also eating and drinking traditional products, entertainment and relaxation (Duarte & Northcote, 2010). As this type of tourism is closely related to rural tourism and also has a significant cultural component (Ruiz Guerra, 2010), the hospitality, environmental conservation, cultural activities and restaurants are aspects highly validated by the tourists.

In this context, Rioja Alavesa has an identifiable culinary image due their traditional food and local products as the wine and the olive oil, which shares the same landscape and local heritage as a similar tourist profile, which in general is interested in the traditional gastronomy, the cultural aspects and wants to relax and have fun.

In addition, Millán Vásquez de la Torre & Perez (2014), in his paper “Comparison of the Profile of Wine and Olive Tourist in Spain. A Case Study”, give us valuable information about the similitudes between this two type of tourist (table 2).

Table 2. Comparison between the profile of the wine tourist and the olive oil tourist.

		Enotourist (%)	Oleotourist (%)
Sex	Men	46,8	45,1
	Women	53,2	54,9
Age	18 – 29	19,2	15,6
	30 – 39	19,2	18,2
	40 – 49	15,2	24,1
	50 – 59	38,5	39,4
	≥60	7,7	2,7
Civil status	Single	24,9	35,3
	Married	55,1	50,5
	Other	20,0	14,3

With whom travel	Alone	8,0	5,4
	In couple	35,0	34,7
	With family	42,0	47,6
	With friends	15,0	12,3
Length of the trip	< 24 hours	50,4	62,8
	2 – 3 days	39,9	28,1
	> 3 days	9,7	9,1
Motivation	To visit the cellar	59,8	51,3
	To know the region	35,1	42,2
	Others	5,1	6,5
Election of the route	Recommendation from a friend	58,6	74,3
	Internet	23,1	15,6
	Travel agency	5,2	2,1
	Publicity	13,1	8,0
Satisfaction level	Satisfied	75,6	69,9
	Indifferent	18,9	23,1
	Unsatisfied	5,5	7,0

Source: Millán Vásquez de la Torre & Perez, 2014

The proportion of men and women is equilibrated and almost the same both in wine tourists as in olive oil tourists. The age range of the visitors has similar distribution in each segment and in the range between 40 -49 years the visitors start to be quite interested in olive oil experiences. The motivations, “to visit the cellar” and “to know the region” are the most important for the tourists. In case of the oleotourist, the length of the trip is less than 24 hours in almost the 63% of the cases analyzed (Millán Vásquez de la Torre & Perez, 2014). Also both kind of tourist show high satisfaction level. Finally, in terms of election of an olive oil route, the recommendation from a friend is a strong component.

So due the increasing popularity of gastronomic and wine tourism plus the attractiveness of Rioja Alavesa as a wine region and the similarities of the tourist profiles that it is possible to attract wine tourist to the oil press and to the olive groves. This product is well integrated with the others main attractions of the region (wine cellars, urban centers, high-end hotels and restaurants) and also is a complement to the wine tourism and the visitors in the region have shown interest about the olive oil tours and educative tastings.

2.5 Active sport tourism segmentation

Rioja Alavesa has the competitive advantage of having a great diversity of natural resources and sceneries suitable for adventure tourism, which works as a complement to wine tourism. In this context, the cycle tourism is an activity that fits well in the wine route, due the attractiveness of its landscapes, the cycle routes and paths, the gastronomy, the accommodation and other kind of services possible to find in it. Also both, the wine tourist as the cycle tourist shares a similar profile; they appreciate the landscape and are interested in culture, gastronomy and wine. They like to get close to rural areas and in general they spend long stance in the destinations and they like to complement with other activities.

According Gibson, Attle, & Yiannakis (1997) the popularity of active sport tourism has been growing in the last years. In 2012 the annual growth rate was of 21% and for 2017 it was noted a 142% increase in interest in bike tours (Pinterest, 2018), being this accessible type of physical activity one of the most popular types of adventure travel. (CBI Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2018).

The tourist in the early adulthood (17 - 39 years) represent the largest segment being the most active and the ones who more amount of money spend on their holidays. The segment in the middle adulthood (40 - 59 years) are similar to the youngest group; they are healthy and are motivated to spend their holidays in an active way but they are more reticent to the risk and some take sport oriented vacations with their families. In this way the family issue should assume a great importance by allowing the adults participate with and without children and/or creating activities and experiences focus on child and teenagers. The segment in the late adulthood (60 - 91 years) is the one with the faster growing rate. They are in good health, educated and often spend their holidays with friends and their adult children (Gibson, Attle, & Yiannakis, 1997).

Therefore, we can say that it is important for the tourism industry to meet the segments requirements and adapt the offer to the specific group of visitors.

The cycle tourism is environmentally, socially and economically sustainable way of tourism and also disperses visitors to areas that traditionally do not attract tourism and supports employment in local economies (Common Ground Trails for WestCycle, 2017).

The cycle tourists are highly valuable visitor market due to their propensity to stay longer, travel outside urban centers and spend an important amount of money (Faulks & Fluker, 2007). They have a high tendency to visit a destination more than once. Also they are more likely than a spectator or local cyclists to love fine wine and going to the best restaurants and love outdoor activities in natural environments

According to the report Western Australian Cycle Tourism Strategy (2017) the cycle tourist is categorized into seven different cycle types: 1) Road; 2) Track cycling; 3) BMX; 4) Touring (on-road or off-road); 5) Recreation and 6) Event participant.

Also these types can be subdivided under three different categories: 1) Leisure; 2) Enthusiast and 3) Sport.

Related to the market segments there are cycle tourists who travel to a destination to cycle and those who undertake incidental bike riding whilst on holiday.

In general, the cycle tourist is more sensitive to soft infrastructure (marketing, signage, quality tour/guiding and trail cleanliness) and is less sensitive to deficiencies in hard tourism infrastructure as roads, airports and accommodation.

From the report Cycling tourism from Europe written by the CBI Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2018), we can extract that the healthy and safety measures as safe equipment, safe cycling areas and routes are one of the most important requirements for the tourist. Good cycling infrastructure is also a key point and should include a variety of cycling routes and tracks, good road surfaces, clear and consistent route signage, route maps, information material regarding sightseeing and cycling maintenance. As the European cycling tourist has high quality standards they expect bicycles and related material of a good quality. They also prefer accommodation with cycling-friendly facilities as a secure bicycle storage and bicycle repair. They appreciate breakfast option that meets their dietary requirements related to a physical activity. In case the tourists stay in different locations they expect their luggage to be transported from accommodation to accommodation. Finally, they require their guides to be knowledgeable on topics such as first aid and bicycle repair. Also should be able to share information about the local nature and culture.

The traveler profile for the European cycling tourists is between 40 – 60 years old, slightly more often male, generally well-educated with higher incomes. Usually enjoy cycling as a form of sport or physical exercise. They like to be close to nature, often travel in couples or small groups and often arrange their travel and accommodation themselves (CBI Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2018).

As a high percentage of people (56-71%) in the Netherlands, Denmark and Finland cycle several times per week and due their cycling habits, make these countries an interesting source markets for occasional or frequent cyclists holidays. In countries as Hungary, Germany, Sweden and Poland cycling trips are popular with infrequent leisure cyclist as well (European Commission, Directorate-General for Mobility and Transport, 2013). Other large countries, like UK and France may also be interesting target markets and suitable for cycling tourism

packages aimed at infrequent leisure cyclists, as many travelers from these countries do not cycle often. (CBI Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2018).

Nowadays some trends as e-bikes, customized cycling itineraries, family and multi-generational trips, cycling experiences as an add-on to a round trip or city trip and the increasing use of online research, offer opportunities on the European market for cycling tourism (CBI Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2018).

Also, due the tendency of cycle tourists to engage in a broad range of experiences whilst in a destination, that the packaging with other activities as adventure and outdoors; food and wine and culture and history, is essential. They also tend to repeat the location (Common Ground Trails for WestCycle, 2017).

2.6 Summary of the information

In summary the region Rioja Alavesa, mainly characterized by the vine monoculture, is attractive in terms of tourism due its natural, cultural and gastronomic heritage, plus the wide amount of services possible to find as restaurants, accommodation, museums, bars, tours, among others. Also, the support of Wine Routes of Spain and Basque Government and its initiatives related to the tourism in Euskadi, added to the constant growth of the wine tourism in Spain, the increasing interest in rural houses as preference for accommodation and the compatibility to combine and diversify the wine tourism offer with oleotourism and active tourism (specially bike tourism) creates a perfect environment for tourist initiatives as EnoAventura that in its product combines all kind of activities related to the vineyard, the wine and its culture; activities related to the olive oil and its process (visits to oil press and olive groves, and olive oil tastings), and activities where is possible to enjoy the landscape and the natural resources of Rioja Alavesa in an active way (trekking, bicycle rides, kayaking, among others). Also the recent diversification into the management of a rural house complex in Lapuebla de Labarca has proved to be a success and also an opportunity to complement the stance with a package of different and diverse activities.

3. METHODOLOGY

The main two objectives of this work are to determine (in general terms) if, the integrated product of wine tourism, oleotourism and adventure tourism, plus accommodation; offered by the tourist services company “EnoAventura” (which operates in the Rioja Alavesa area), are complementary to each other and aligned with the tourism development of Basque Country and the new trends. In this way it is possible to see if the decision to offer this diversity of products has been correct or if has been something that does not make sense and that has diverted the efforts in the wrong direction. The second goal is to improve its performance giving proposals to improve the weak aspects and enhance the good ones.

Although this area is recognized for the quality of its wines and its rugged landscape in which the monoculture of the vine, the Toloño mountain range and the Ebro River stand out, it is essential to know what is happening in relation to wine tourism in Spain and in Rioja Alavesa; what is the Basque Country's strategic tourism plan and which trends it is joining. Thus in order to align objectives and actions.

In addition, this area has oleic tradition and a cuisine recognized by the use of local products and also has natural resources, that allow the practice of adventure sports. For this reason, information relative to these types of tourism has been review to analyze how do they complement each other in a region that mainly attracts the public for its wines and cellars.

In order to contextualize the company in the different subjects of their interest, the information gathered is related to:

- Rioja Alavesa, its attractiveness and towns.
- The vision, actions to improve the competitiveness, global trends and sustainably of Basque Country tourism plan
- Wine tourism in Spain and Rioja Alavesa with information related to the Wine Routes of Spain, the evolution in the number of visitors, types of tourist, their age, if they are local or foreign, their motivations, preferences in terms of accommodation, preferred months to visit, the composition of the travel group, time of stance and sociodemographic profile.
- Olive oil tourism and data about the consumer's profile and the similarities with the wine tourist
- Adventure and cycle tourism, the trends and the consumer profile (age range, nationality, motivations), requirements and preferences

After the review, an analysis of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (S.W.O.T.) of the company has been made, through which the specific objectives have been defined: 1) Improve the efficiency and the standards of quality of the company and its product. 2) Increase online presence through a digital marketing strategy. 3) Attract more people from

the surrounding cities. 4) Understand the Chinese tourist and try to access that market by contacting with Chinese travel agencies.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

After investigating the current situation of wine tourism in Spain and Rioja Alavesa, plus to a literature review on complementary tourist activities in the area, as oleotourism and active and cycle tourism, followed by a look at the tourism plan of the Basque Government along with the new trends, it is possible to affirm that the diversification of the business into the accommodation (with the implementation of Ikustieder), plus the start-up of the project Rioja Alavesa Bike, as well as having other adventure activities in addition to the offer of wine tourism and oleotourism, are on the right line due to the potential to complement and add value to tourism in the region.

4.1 S.W.O.T. Analysis

Enoaventura, in addition to having strengths and opportunities in the region, also has weaknesses and has to face some threats, for which there are still things to improve, being always critical of the negative aspects and taking full advantage of the positive ones.

In this section the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and treats are exposed and discussed in order to set objective and propose some actions to improve the performance of EnoAventura.

Strengths:

➤ Complete knowledge of the region Rioja Alavesa together with its cultural and gastronomic heritage as its natural resources. It allows to create diverse and unique experiences that involves all the attractions of the area complementing each other.

➤ Contact with different styles of wineries (traditional, of architectural interest and award-winning wines) and complementary service providers such as restaurants, bars, hotels and others. In this way the experiences offered are more complete and adaptable to different kind of tourist as they have the option to choose in relation to their preferences.

➤ Family relation with a traditional vineyard and winery and a cooperative oil press. This is an advantage that gives flexibility and the opportunity to create authentic experiences.

➤ EnoAventura is one of the first tour operators who started to work with this kind of diverse and experiential activities in the region.

➤ EnoAventura is highly diversified in different style of tourism as oleotourism and active tourism, both complementary to wine tourism (the main attraction of Rioja Alavesa) and that makes the area more attractive, encouraging tourists to extend their stay.

➤ The oleotourism has shown to be an excellent complement to the wine tourism. As Rioja Alavesa also has an oleic tradition, this extension to the wine tourism has had a good reception by the tourist and other tour operators working in the area that outsource this services with EnoAventura, via olive oil tastings and visits to the oil press and olive groves. Also due the characteristics of this crop, this kind of tourism has the potential to combat the seasonality of wine tourism, since the harvest of the olive, in Rioja Alavesa, occurs during December, after grape harvest and subsequent vinification.

➤ The executive director of the company has the mountain guide certificate. This certification allows him to guide the activities, increasing the profits and diversifying the traditional offer of tourism from the region.

➤ EnoAventura carried out its actions based on sustainable tourism and aligned with the objectives of the Rioja Alavesa Wine Route, that holds the Biosphere certification, emphasizing the care and respect of the environment as well as the work, culture and traditions of local communities, understanding the importance that those have in the regional economy and in the conservation of the essence of Rioja Alavesa.

➤ Diversification in the accommodation business through the management of a rural house, as the interest in this kind of housing has increase in the last years. This gives the possibility to create packages with accommodation included and also contributes to the revitalization of the local economies.

➤ Gives the opportunity of personalized and customized experiences, adapting to the client´s needs. In this way is it possible to combine different kind of experiences related to wine, olive oil, gastronomy or adventure and create activities for 1 day, a weekend or even a whole week.

➤ Adoption of some principles and technology propose by the “Definitive guide of the Sustainable Tourism” written by Biosphere. These technologies have helped to improve the efficiency, the operability, the sustainability and the security of the rural house “Ikustieder”.

Weaknesses:

➤ Lack of human capital. EnoAventura is run only by its owner and creator, hiring sporadic guides when it is necessary to carry a service in which he cannot attend due to lack of time or difficulties with the language. Also, as it offers a wide range of activities and services and also has to deal with administrative issues, business relationships, marketing & promotion, public relations among others. Thus, the lack of human capital is a key point if the company wants to raise their sales, commit goals and maintain the quality of the product offered.

➤ Lack of English. The percentage of foreign visitors is growing in the region every year and in the last year reached 30,6%. Also EnoAventura receives an important amount of English speaking tourists and has connections with local receptive agencies and foreign agencies that send tourists whose first or second language is English

➤ No web site. Nowadays a quality website is a requirement for a business. It helps your business transcend boundaries and reach more people.

➤ No digital marketing strategies. The digital marketing in the tourism industry is key as a mode of communication and a way to develop and maintain long-term relationships with the clients. Also it can give valuable information for the business.

➤ No TripAdvisor profile. TripAdvisor is the social network preferred by travelers, where they search and give recommendations and reviews of different touristic services. It offers a fast and direct interaction with the clients and the possibility to increase the reliability and visibility of your business.

➤ No work guideline. To have a work manual for the guides would help to have an idea of the characteristics of the tour and a clear comprehension of the message that wants to be delivered to the tourists, ensuring the quality of the services.

Opportunities:

➤ The Basque Government is committed to improve, in a sustainable way the tourism in Euskadi, promoting the collaboration of the different private and public actors and subsidizing the activity in order to energize the economy and to diversify the touristic offer

➤ The wine tourism is increasing in Spain and in Rioja Alavesa, attracting every year more visitors

➤ Rioja Alavesa is relatively close to important cities as Logroño, Vitoria, Pamplona, Bilbao and San Sebastián.

➤ It has been a place of investment for famous wineries building cellars and hotels of architectural interest and well known all over the world.

➤ The wines made in the region are well known for its quality

➤ The unique landscape of Rioja Alavesa offers other attractiveness that allows to practice active tourism and other gastronomic experiences as oleotourism. Also the profile of the visitors adapts to all of that kind of tourism.

Threats:

➤ The lack of differentiation and reconnaissance of Rioja Alavesa, as a particular wine region, by the regulatory council of the D.O.Ca. Rioja, in addition to the desire to standardize

the image of the Rioja denomination, ignoring traditions, wine culture and the peculiarity of the landscape of Rioja Alavesa.

➤ The lack of homogeneity (or great heterogeneity) and reasons that justify the delimitation of D.O.Ca Rioja (as is known) in its different territories. This resulted in the rejection of the declaration of “The cultural landscape of wine and vineyard of Rioja and Rioja Alavesa” as a cultural heritage of humanity by UNESCO, due the lack of conditions of integrity and authenticity of the area presented (Larreina González, 2016).

➤ The duality of the D.O.Ca Rioja, in which two autonomous communities participate (three if Navarra is added, but which participates to a lesser extent), with two governments and different approaches, generates managements problems and confusion in the visitor (Larreina González, 2016).

4.2 Objectives and actions

After analyzing the company in its weaknesses, strengths, opportunities and threats, plus the contextualization into the wine tourism in Spain and Rioja Alavesa, plus the information gathered about other types of tourism developed by the company, as oleotourism and adventure tourism; that complement each other, adding value to the general touristic offer of Rioja Alavesa and also boosting and energizing the economy of the region; that now it is possible to set some objectives and propose some actions to achieve them, improving the business, optimizing the efforts and leading the company in the right direction.

In this section the objectives are presented, which are broken down into specific actions related to different aspects of the business.

1) Improve the efficiency and the standards of quality of the company and its product: it is expected to increase the efficiency and optimize the time invested in carrying out the tasks related to the administration and management of EnoAventura, which together with the implementation of certain improvements and work guides will add value to the product improving the quality standards of the company.

In terms of administrative aspects:

➤ As EnoAventura has a wide offer of tourist services and also deal with administrative issues it is highly recommended to hire at least one person to share responsibilities and duties related to the management and execution of the experiences; the business relationships and the marketing and promotion of the company. This person should speak English as a requirement due the large number of foreign visitors that are attracted to region and because EnoAventura works with several foreign issuing agencies of English speakers as first or second language.

➤ Being aware of the global context and the new directions and trends on tourism. Nowadays, the number of tourists increases every year, where new markets (as the Chinese) begin to be more attractive and open to the world. The ways in which tourists travel and move have been changing, influencing the type of trips they make and the time they spend in each destination. In addition, tourists are more informed and become increasingly demanding in terms of their requirements and needs while they are travelling; being aware of the importance of sustainable tourism and more open to the use of technologies that keep them connected and facilitate their travel. This is why it is recommended to update the statistics and trends related to the tourism of this report annually and to collect relevant information from tourists to have an internal profile of them with basic information as nationality, motivations, how do they discover the region and the company. In this way EnoAventura would be more prepared to receive them and to fully fill their needs.

➤ Hiring a channel manager to facilitate the management of the tourist products offered by EnoAventura. This IT tool allows you to centralize the tourist offer from the same point to sell the products on many platforms without having to go to each one of them every time one is requested; thus maintaining better control of reserves and inventory, minimizing human errors while saving work time, increasing revenues due to the increase in online bookings and also collecting statistics on business performance, which gives more control over sales strategies by decreasing the action time to correct them. Some companies that offer the service are: <https://www.doblemente.com/>; <https://www.ruralgest.com/>; <https://ibizi.net/>.

Related to the product:

➤ Establish a work guide with the routes in which you work, the places where activities are done, the external service providers, the restaurants, besides creating a guideline with the necessary information for each tour so that the message given to the tourist is always consistent, regardless of the person guiding the tour. In this way, the probability of making mistakes or giving false information would be reduced and induction for new workers or guides would be facilitated.

➤ It is possible to add value to the tastings (both wine and olive oils) organized as part of the activities and services offered by EnoAventura. For this, the creation of technical tasting sheets of the wines (appendix 1) and olive oils (appendix 2) tasted is recommended. In this way the profile of the products to be tasted will be defined avoiding improvisation mistakes on the part of the tasting guide. To make the tastings more attractive, it is suggested to add aromatic samples that will serve as a guide for the tasting and giving the possibility of educating and challenging the clients with entertaining games. For this it is recommended to group the

aromas according to the style of the wine (or olive oil) and family of aromas, as can be seen in the tasting wheels (appendix 3 for wine and appendix 4 for olive oil).

➤ For the project Rioja Alavesa Bike it is recommended to create a bicycle maintenance schedule. As the cycle tourist has high quality standards they expect bicycles and related material of a good quality, in this way the bicycles will always be ready to be enjoyed by customers. It will also lengthen the life of bicycles. In addition, as the technological development and the smart touristic destinations with focus on the innovation, sustainability and the visitor will mark the future of the destinations, it is suggested to implement smart digital bicycle locks (<https://mobilock.nl/en/>) controlled via an application on a smartphone. This system has the advantages of an easy adaptation for needs of the company, does not required key, is intuitive and integrates payment solution, monitor operations and analyses the business. It is also suggested and leave a fixed number of bicycles in the most requested points. In this way customers can rent bicycles without having to make a previous reservation, thus increasing their satisfaction

In terms of sustainability

➤ Reduce the use of plastic and disposable materials, preferring biodegradable or reusable supplies, for example, dispensaries for soaps and shampoo, biodegradable bags for the garbage cans. It is also recommended to promote recycling enabling trash cans, with their respective colors, to collect recyclable material.

➤ Make present the sustainable attributes that add value to your product and services. Remember that the sustainability is a factor of competitiveness that improves the credibility and reputation of your business; attracts new clients conscious about sustainability; differentiates from the competence and adds value to your product and services, while helping to conserve the region in terms of environmental, economic and social aspects.

2) Increase online presence through a digital marketing strategy: The internet and the social media has been identified as big influencing factor in wine tourism and one of the most efficient ways to manage the brand and address a specific audience (Quero Guerrero, 2018), giving users a wide number of product and / or service options, with the possibility of making payments online (Carrera Calderón & Vega Falcón, 2017). It also provides advantages over traditional means of communication such as directionality, interactivity, flexibility, accessibility, improvement in services and cost reduction. So we cannot ignore that the online presence and the use of social media has become a necessity (Sigala & Haller, The Impact of Social Media on the Behavior of Wine Tourist: A Typology of Power Sources, 2019). Social media have empowered the tourists to co-create and co-promote their tourism experiences (Sigala, 2017), by: sharing multimedia content (text, videos, photos); empowering the customer to take

decisions (due the accessibility of social media on any device, place and time) about what to consume; how and when to buy and why to consume and share specific tourism experiences as a way to construct their online identity; also, it gives the opportunity to the tourist to participate, interact and create relationships with other tourists. Nowadays digital marketing is one of the key focus areas for a business that helps to develop and maintain long-term relationships with the market and also contribute to the better achievement of the business goals and to gain insights about consumer behavior to better satisfy their needs (Kaur, 2017).

- Define the Unique Selling Proposition (USP) of the company: The USP is what differentiates your product from the competitors. It could be a better service, the quality, the price or everything that makes you stand out. It should be simple, attractive and representative of your product and brand. The best way to write your USP is defining the characteristics of your product (what it is?); the benefits (what does it do for your client?) and the implications (the impact that it has in your client).

- Create a website: today, a quality website is a requirement for a business; it helps to transcend geographical boundaries, to reach new customers and also works as digital destinations where the audience can access at any hour any day. The website is often a central tool for the digital marketing of a company and in general the stable information, as the sales part (booking system, reservations) is placed there. A good quality website should keep the content concise and with the USPs clearly visible; with all the services clearly listed down along with the relevant information. The images, in high resolution, should show the services offered in order to help the tourist to take an informed decision. The website should be clear and allow the user to make purchase without need of assistance and must be updated regularly in order to adapt the needs and preferences of the customers, that are in constant change (Kaur, 2017). The content must be aligned with the marketing strategy of the company (also complementary to other communication media as Facebook, Instagram, among others) and should put the user first, being simple, practical and easy to understand. The information delivered needs to be quality, relevant, simple and use visual content, as photos or videos (without having copyright), that captures attention easier than text.

Another fundamental aspect for a website is search engine optimization (SEO) (Kaur, 2017). It plays an important role in determining the website traffic and determines the online popularity, increasing website visits. It is important to pay attention to both on-page and off-page SEO activities. The first step for an effective SEO is the use of relevant and carefully chosen keywords (Google, the biggest search engine also understands synonyms of the keywords) for the tourism business. The focus should be creating quality backlinks rather than just increasing their numbers. It is also recommended to use long-tailed keywords, because

would lead to more conversions rather than short-tailed keywords. However, it is important to understand that SEO is an ongoing process that takes time to show results.

A website needs to be mobile-friendly, as everything that a business does digitally. Today, 4 billion people own a mobile phone and most of online users access the internet through it (Kaur, 2017).

Therefore, when designing a web page, the following questionnaire should be taken into account (Oniad, 2018):

Does your web page load fast?

Does it have an attractive design?

Do the menus and sub-menus follow a logic?

Is it easy to go back to the previous menu when you are in a section?

Is it displayed as well from the mobile or tablet as from the computer?

Does it include your keywords?

Do you explain well what services and products you offer?

Does it contain internal and external links?

Finally, remember that a website represents the quality the business stands for and it should be developed and maintained keeping in mind the functionality of the industry (Kaur, 2017).

➤ Improve the presence in social media: this is a new tool that allows your company to get know your customers and prospects; that can increase brand awareness, brand engagement, word of mouth, liking and social validation. Social media is more than promote packages and facilities. It is essential that a business becomes a part of the conversation users are having on these platforms, so in this context the focus should be on posting content which adds value to the audience in order to improve the engagement rate. A good formula to engage with your audiences on social media is to apply the 80/20 rule (Kaur, 2017); 20% of your content to promote the brand and 80% to content that really interest the audience and engages them in conversations. Also videos and infographics are an interactive way to get notice and engage the clients.

Although launching a successful social media campaign in tourism seems easy; it is a complex task. The success factors of a social media campaign are (Királ'ová & Pavlíčka, 2014): 1) in-depth understanding of social media; 2) allocation of resources for planning; 3) clear identification of goals based on analysis; 4) timing; 5) online and offline promotion including advertising and strong public relations; 6) innovation; 7) creativity; 8) focus on

emotions; 9) provision of relevant information of the business (and destination) in all stages of visitor's decision making process, before, during and after the visit; 10) visitor relationship and support services; 11) continuous monitoring and assessment of the campaign; 12) corrections if needed.

The most relevant social media platforms for a tourism business are: Facebook, Instagram, Twitter; LinkedIn and YouTube; where Facebook and Instagram are the two most important platforms for a tourism business (focus on them). Anyways it is important not to consider all these platforms as one as each of them comes with its own set of USPs (Kaur, 2017).

Facebook is the most notorious social network in Spain where 9 out of 10 people use it (Annual study of the social networks 2017; 2017 as cited in Quero Guerrero, 2018) and it is good to increase the engagement since it allows to publish in a segmented way by sex, country, language and interests. It also allows direct contact with the company, as the data is reflected for contact through different channels (call, message, contact us, register or send an e-mail). In addition, it should be noted that Facebook has the most intergenerational profile where the number of users between 18 - 39 years is almost the same as with those over 40 years. To publish content on Facebook it is important to take into account the following factors: type of project, objectives and target audience; for this reason there is not just one strategy in social media, but there are certain tips to post on Facebook (Inboundcycle, 2017): - Post 1 or 2 times a day maximum. - Varies the content between posts with link and posts with image. Generally, a post with an image will achieve more scope and a post with a link will get more clicks. More elaborated texts and the time the user takes to read it have been better evaluated by Facebook; for that reason, it is better to post more elaborated text rather than just a headline or a word. - Hashtags do not work in Facebook at the level of thematic searches but work to make the text more visual, so it is recommended to put one in the main keyword of the post. - Make diffusion of your post in groups of interest, so in that way you will add interactions and reach.

Instagram, initially, serves as a media for online photography and evolves in advertising, promotion and marketing, providing precise and accurate information. The purpose of online photography (as a symbol of reality and user experience as a traveler) is to create a good perception about tourism destination, shaping the brand and giving the opportunity for tourists to share their experiences with others (Groves & Dallen, 2001), generating this silent word of mouth (Fatanti & Suyadnya, 2015).

Fatanti and Suyadnya, in their article "Beyond User Gaze: How Instagram Creates Tourism Destination Brand?", analyzed that Instagram has become one of the favorite channel for promoting destination images by tourism operators due its role as an online photo album that can be accessed by others and users can use as promotion channel.

As a social media, Instagram elaborates the power of visualization, individual response, and the additional facility like geotagging (that allows the users to point out the location where the photo was taken), video posting and Instagram direct. In addition, the hashtag supports the user to spread the pictures to other users and allows them to classify or topic the images or videos in a more specific way making easy the search of related information.

In this context, the user of Instagram is younger than Facebook users (65% of Instagram users is younger than 39 years), gives a lot of attention to the image and it is interesting for the brands; so the use of high quality images is compulsory in order to attract and seduce the public, generating the desire to visit the destination (Quero Guerrero, 2018). Nowadays, Instagram is becoming the more dynamic channel in the face to the future since 80% of internet traffic comes from Smartphones. Thus, in this way Instagram will have much more weight in the future for the communication of the companies. (Quero Guerrero, 2018).

In general, to get the maximum level of interaction it is necessary to segment the target market where the communication will be delivered. The accounts with high number of followers that are not interesting for the company, end up losing share and do not get extra interaction with other users; so, even when it is important to have a good amount of followers for the engagement index, it is even more important to manage how to reach your target depending on the consumer profile. In addition, the touristic companies that highlight the positive attributes of the product or the attractiveness of the destination cause grater interaction with the users.

In order to segment the consumers some recommendations are proposed (Quero Guerrero, 2018): 1) Tell stories through people make the user feel questioned. 2) Provide information about the area. It is better to provide the information to the user to contact the company; the possibilities are multiple in a web environment and they can choose another option easily. 3) Generate interesting news related to the destination and the business in a systematized way. The creation of a calendar with a defined editorial line will help to increase user loyalty. 4) Post about a greater variety of topics of interest (sports, music, nature, tourism and so on).

Nowadays, when a consumer wants to make a decision about a product or service the first thing he/she does is search the internet for more information to help him/her to decide. According to the TripBarometer 2017/18 Global Report 86% of travelers will not book accommodation without reading reviews first and 89% usually do some research on a destination's activities and restaurants before travelling.

TripAdvisor, with more than 200 million visits per month, is one of the preferred social network and a strong influence on inspiration for destination choice for travelers worldwide where users search and contribute with recommendations and reviews (positives or negatives) about attractions, restaurants, accommodation, leisure services and tourism. For this reason and because nowadays the people trust a lot in the evaluations of other users in social

networks, the products and services advertised in this platform enjoy a very strong and quality positioning (Cortes García, 2015). This platform offers a quick and direct interaction with the clients, that upload pictures and reviews from your business, and to whom you can answer their questions, advise and even help them plan their trips immediately, improving their experiences and also your business due the direct opinions and feedbacks given by them allowing thus assess what your business fails and take measures to improve and better satisfy the customers. Therefore, it is highly recommended to create a TripAdvisor account to gain visibility and the confidence of potential clients, which would otherwise be more time consuming, difficult and expensive.

3) Attract more people from the surrounding cities: Rioja Alavesa is located in a strategic place for the wine tourist due the proximity to important cities as Logroño, Vitoria, Bilbao and Pamplona. It is also known that much of the wine produced in rural areas is consumed in cities and that a large part of the tourist who visit the Wine Routes of Spain comes mostly from nearby autonomous communities (Iliescu, 2016). Their main motivation is to visit cellars and their interests in discover the heritage and the historical footprint of the wine culture, as the traditions of the towns and their people, have been growing. Also, an important percentage of wine tourists are fans, passionate and enthusiastic of the wine and its culture and with interest about to learn more. In the appendix 5 is presented an experience that involves traditional family cellars in the town Lapuebla de Labarca (at only 16 km far from Logroño), that could help to reach the goal, energizing the economy of the town and giving more visibility both to the cellars and the wines produced there. To reach the target audience, it is proposed to make alliances with wine bars and specialized wine shops, which already having a base of clients interested in wine, can promote the proposed activity adding value to what they already do by showing the people a winegrowing reality (different to the classic visits to the famous cellars) that they have only a couple of minutes from their cities and that is usually foreign to a large number of wine lovers because of its low level of tourism promotion.

4) Understand the Chinese tourist and try to access that market by contacting with Chinese travel agencies: China has quickly become in a mayor issuing market with more than 100 million tourists in 2014 and it is expected that by 2020 that number will be doubled (Funds Society, 2017 as cited by Zhu, 2017). According to the survey “Outbound Tourists Behaviour Quuestionnaire 2015” (conducted by the Chinese National Tourism Academy and cited by Zhu, 2017) the basic characteristics of the Chinese tourist abroad are: In terms of sex, 61,4% are women and 38,6% are men. Related to the age, 64% are between 25 – 44 years and 37% have around 24-25 years. 66,8% have higher education. 46,3% travelled for first time and they tend to travel for more than 5 days and some motivations to travel are to find the authenticity

and simplicity of small cities as a scape of the big cities; experiment the culture, try new food and enjoy the art and leisure; buy luxury products and the honey moons, both as a symbol of social status (Kairos, 2012 cited by Zhu, 2017).

Between 2013 and 2016 the number of China's tourist flows in Spain has grown at an annual average of 35% according the statics from the Beijing office of the Tourism Institute of Spain. According Zhu (2017) Chinese tourist prefer to visit developed countries where there are strong historical and cultural backgrounds or natural landscapes and famous places of interest. Their main purpose of travel is to enjoy leisure, however they aspire to a wide range of experiences and wine tourism is increasingly popular among Chinese tourists. Also they have shown a great interest in Spain, its culture, gastronomy, wines and landscapes; so, adapting wine tourism offer to the Chinese market is valuable and significant. Thus, it is recommended to contact with the Chinese agencies from the list of contacts that the Basque Government has collected at different fairs related to tourism and to work together to offer interesting experiences that fit with their profile and motivations.

5. CONCLUSION

In the last years the wine tourism in Spain has been gaining popularity, increasing the number of visitors and helping to diversify the economy in rural places, fixing their population and generating employment and wealth

The Wine Route of Rioja Alavesa has its attractive in terms of tourism due its natural, cultural and gastronomic heritage, plus the wide amount of services possible to find as restaurants, accommodation, museums, bars, tours, among others.

The support of Wine Routes of Spain and Basque Government and its initiatives related to the tourism in Euskadi, added to the constant growth of the wine tourism in Spain and Rioja Alavesa, the increasing interest in rural houses as preference for accommodation and the compatibility to combine and diversify the wine tourism offer with oleotourism and active tourism (specially bike tourism), due the similarity in terms of tourist profile and motivations added to the landscape conditions creates a perfect environment for touristic initiatives as EnoAventura, that in its product combines all kind of activities related to the vineyard, the wine and its culture; activities related to the olive oil and its elaboration and activities where is possible to enjoy the landscape and the natural resources of Rioja Alavesa in an active way; adding value to the tourist offer of the region and the Basque Country generating a diverse number of authentic and innovative activities and managing to connect with tourist agencies (both in the region, Spain and with foreign issuing agencies), and with a public that appreciates discovering the region and its heritage from the hands of a local and living experiences in which it is possible to get involved. Also the recently diversification into the management of a rural

house complex in Lapuebla de Labarca has proved to be a success and also an opportunity to complement the stance with a package of different and diverse activities.

After analyzing the information gathered in addition with the S.W.O.T. analysis the follow objectives were presented as a way to face the weaknesses and threats and take advantage of the strengths and opportunities presented, so, to do that would be necessary to:

1) Improve the efficiency and the standards of quality of the company and its product: a) In terms of administrative aspects; hiring someone prepared in English and with knowledge about wine, olive oil and gastronomy (if it is possible) to share responsibilities; being award of the global context to adapt to the new trend in tourism and hiring a channel manager to facilitate the management and centralizing the tourist products offered by the company, maintaining, in this way, a better control of the reserves and inventory and minimizing human error, saving work time and increasing revenues. b) In terms of the product creating a manual with the instructions and relevant information of the experiences; adding value to the tasting standardizing the tastings with a methodology (both in wines and olive oils) and adding aromatic samples to make the tasting more attractive to the clients and finally creating a bicycle maintenance schedule for the project Rioja Alavesa Bike to fulfil the requirements and demands of the clients. C) In terms of sustainable aspects to continue with the objectives of the Basque Government in terms of tourism, adding value to the brand and adapting to the new trend in which tourists are increasingly aware of its impact and are looking for sustainable and greener options.

2) Increasing the online presence through a social media plan, creating a webpage adapted to the user's requirements; improving the presence in social media via Facebook and Instagram and creating online reputation through TripAdvisor.

3) Attracting visitors, mainly wine lovers, from the surrounding cities in collaboration with wine bars and wine shops, through experiences that involve traditional family cellars and other business related to the wine in the town Lapuebla de Labarca.

4) Understand the Chinese tourist profile and trying to access that market by contacting with Chinese travel agencies, due the increasing in number of them interested in travel to Europe and to discover wine regions, experiment the culture, try new food and enjoy the culture and leisure.

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7. ANNEXES

Appendix 1. Wine tasting sheet, accompanied by a tab of the wine's palette



Wine Tasting Sheet EnoAventura

Wine:

Style:

Year:

Region:

Varieties:

° Alcohol:

Service T°

Visual aspects

Color:

Intensity:

Aromatic aspects

Cleanness of aromas:

Intensity:

Aromas (see tasting wheels):

Taste aspects

First impression:

Evolution (how wine change):

Final impression:

Balance:

Sweet:

Acidity:

Bitter:

Salinity:

Alcohol:

Body:

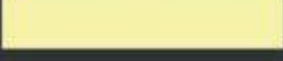
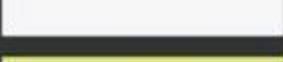
Texture:

Conclusion

Price range:

General quality:

Pairing:

Gama de colores de los vinos			
	Rojo rubí		Amarillo dorado
	Rojo púrpura		Amarillo limón
	Rojo vino		Rosa claro
	Rojo óxido		Salmón
	Rojo tomate		Amarillo
	Naranja salmón		Amarillo pálido
	Rosa ligero		Amarillo pajizo
	Rosa		Ocre
	Rosa fresa		Caoba
	Rosa salmón		Acerado
	Frambuesa		Amarillo verdoso
	Rojo violeta		Rosa pálido
	Violeta burdeos		Yodo
	Púrpura		Cobrizo
	Violeta		Ámbar
	Naranja oscuro		Blanco
	Naranja amarillo		Bermellón
	Naranja rojo		Naranja

Source: <https://catatu.es/blog/color-vino/>



Olive Oil Tasting Sheet EnoAventura

Olive Oil:

Style:

Region:

Varieties:

Aromatic aspects

Cleanness of aromas:

Intensity:

Aromas (see wheels of aromas):

Defects (is apply):

Taste aspects

Viscosity/thickness:

Greasy:

Balance

Sweetness

Bitterness

Pungency

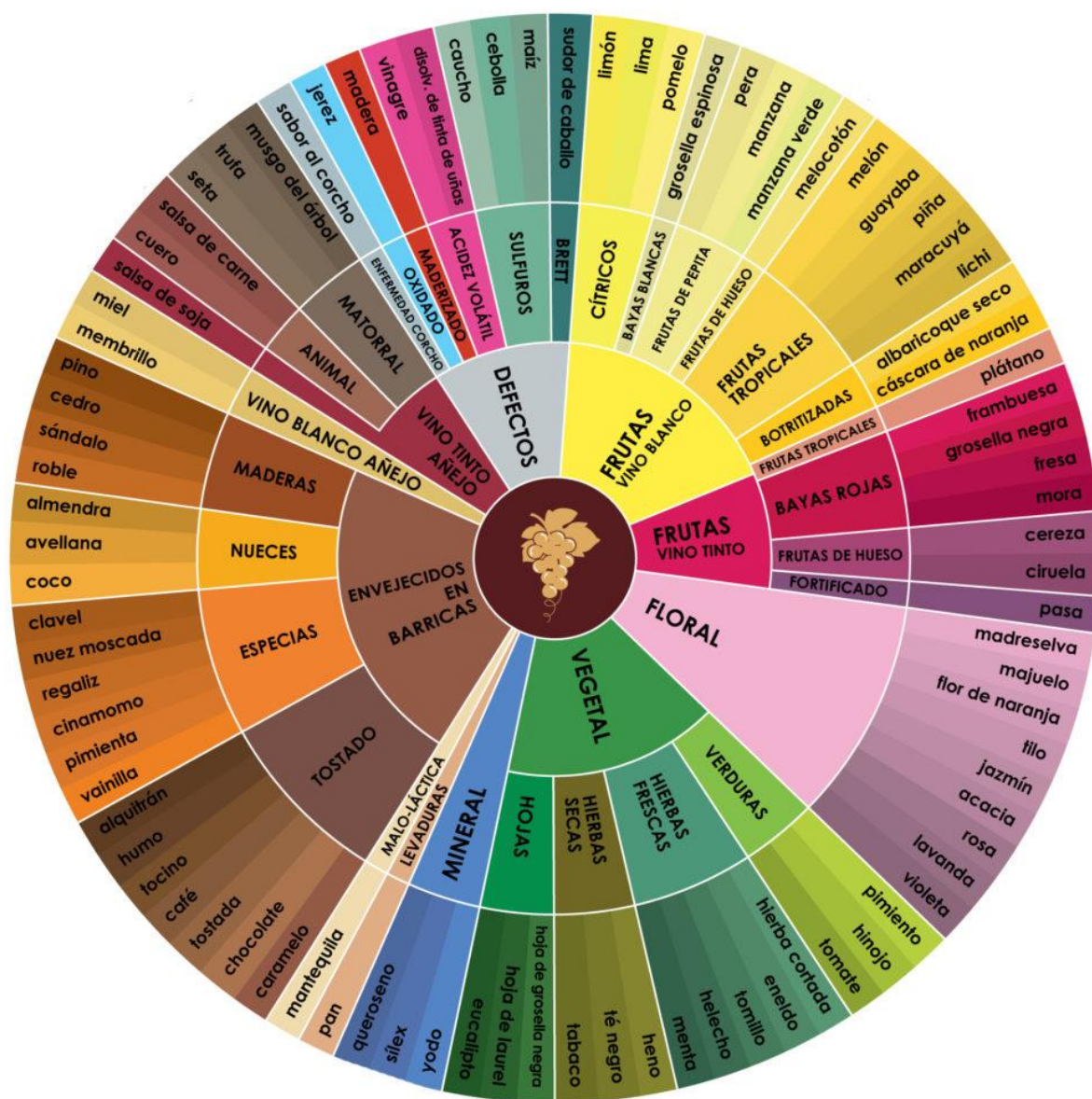
Conclusion

Price range:

General quality:

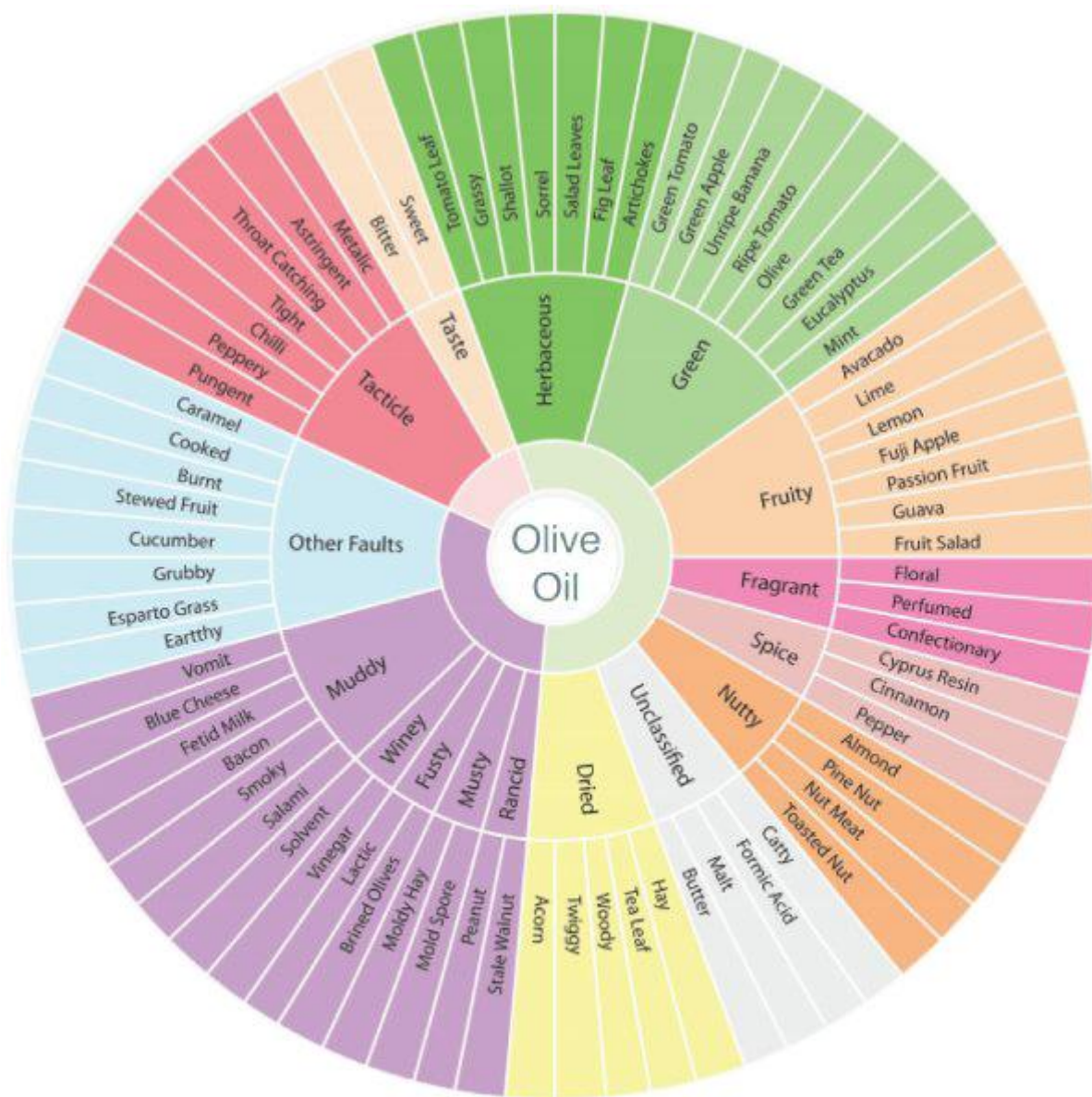
Pairing:

Appendix 3. Tasting wheel for wines.



Source: www.aromaster.com

Appendix 4. Tasting wheel for Olive Oil.



Source: <https://www.saolive.co.za/2017/02/21/olive-oil-flavour-wheel/>



Visit wineries of family tradition in Lapuebla de Labarca, Rioja Alavesa

Just 16 km from Logroño and at the foot of the Ebro River is Lapuebla de Labarca (DOCa Rioja), where 850 inhabitants live directly or indirectly related to wine and more than 30 wineries registered in the "Consejo Regulador de la DO" Ca Rioja "

Located in the sub-zone of Rioja Alavesa that delimits in the north by the Sierra de Toloño and to the south by the Ebro river, with an area of 11,500 hectares of vineyard and a local economy based mainly on the monoculture of the vine and the elaboration of DOCa wine. Rioja, its vineyards stand out for its rugged geography, its centuries-old vines, the system of cultivation in micro parcels distributed in terraces and the quality of its wines.

We want you to know closely the winemaking tradition that is lived in this town, by the winemakers and wineries who pamper the vines and make the wines in their family wineries, many of them with underground cellars of the 16th century medieval era that today in day they are used like rooms of casks for the aging of their broths.

A different experience that will allow you to immerse yourself in the culture that floods every corner of this town knowing all kinds of details of Rioja wines from a different perspective

Bodegas Miguel Angel Muro

(<https://bodegasmuro.es/>)



First winery in the town that since 1892 begins to sell part of its bottled harvest. At present, it has been a pioneer in the adoption of new technologies in the elaboration without neglecting the family tradition that represents it.

Bodegas Belezos

(<http://www.zugober.com/es/>)

Family winery with a viticultural tradition, respectful of the Rioja Alavesa "terroir" and which is committed to the limited production of high quality and traditional wines, both of a classic and traditional style and others of a more modern and innovative style.



Visit to the traditional Rioja Alavesa vineyard with a snack.



We take you to enjoy an aperitif made up of cold meats and cheeses from the area and seasonal products from the Ebro orchard accompanied by wines from the region. All this in the peculiar vineyards that give rise to the famous Rioja Alavesa wines. Here you will learn about the particularities of the crop, such as the evolutionary phases in which it is found and the

tasks necessary for a quality production that will allow you to know the value and effort of a bottle of wine.

Bodegas Pavoni

(<http://www.bodegaspavoni.com/>)

Family winery with vitivinicultural tradition located in Lapuebla de Labarca in which the characteristic Rioja Alavesa carbonaceous maceration wines are made, maintaining the traditional method



Visita Tonelería Quercus

<http://www.toneleriaquercus.com/es#>



Quercus is a pioneer in the selection and classification of wood in the forest itself; It was the first cooperage to manufacture oak barrels from La Rioja, Navarra and other regions of Northern Spain and also the first Spanish company to process 100% of the wood in its own sawmill. In this visit you will discover everything about the elaboration of barrels, from the drying of the wood, the assembly and the roasting of them, which will be used later

in the aging process of the wines.

The food will be in charge of the visitor and for this the restaurants of the town have elaborated some varied special menus.

Roundtrip transportation included from Logroño (10:00 - 18:00 hours approx.)