



MASTER THESIS

WINE TOURISM PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE CHAMPAGNE REGION

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Abstract

This master thesis was completed during the fourth semester of the 2020-2022 WINTOUR Master's Program whilst undertaking a professional internship at Aÿ Champagne Experience. The internship took place between the months of March and July 2022. The thesis represents a project on the wine tourism development strategy for Aÿ Champagne Experience, located in the Grand Cru Village of Aÿ-Champagne. The objective of the master's thesis was to develop the wine tourism offers for Champagne Experience, currently operated by only the owner of the business and to transition the company from an independent tour guide to a tour agency in Champagne. This thesis contains a comprehensive SWOT analysis of the company, a competitor analysis, and the wine tourist profile of Champagne. Proposals for five new wine tourism experiences were included in this master thesis and will be developed and gradually introduced during the tourist season. The results of this study can be useful for wine tourism operators in the Champagne wine region, as they can serve as a guideline when developing new wine tourism experiences.

Keywords: Champagne Region, Wine Tourist Preferences, Wine Tourism Behaviour, Wine Tourism Development

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List of Abbreviations

CIVC	:	Le Comité Interprofessionnel du vin de Champagne
Generation X	:	The demographic cohort following the baby boomers and preceding Generation Y (Born between 1965-1997)
Generation Y	:	The demographic cohort following Generation X and preceding Generation Z (Born between 1981-1994)
PYWY Strategy	:	Pay What You Want Pricing strategy
SWOT Analysis	:	Strategic planning and strategic management technique used to help, an organization identify Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats
UNESCO	:	The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization is a specialised agency of the United Nations.
SEO	:	Search engine optimization is the process of improving the quality and quantity of website traffic to a website or a web page from search engines.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Champagne Region.

The Champagne appellation located about 150 km (90 Miles) east of Paris was established in 1927 and covers a production area of 34 000 ha. The appellation illustrated in Annex 1 includes 319 *cru* (villages) that has been divided into 4 major regions: Montagne de Reims, Marne Valley, Côte des Blancs and Côte des Bar. Seventeen of the villages are classified as *Grand cru* and 42 as *Premier Cru*. ("Geographical Area - Union des Maisons de Champagne", n.d.).

The vineyards are planted between 90 and 300 meters above sea level, on slopes that are mostly exposed to the south, south-east and east ("Geographical Area - Union des Maisons de Champagne", n.d.). Throughout the region, there are approximately 15,800 small winegrowers and 320 Champagne houses.

According to the CIVC, the total production of Champagne bottles was more than 300 million bottles in 2021, with 72% produced by the Champagne houses and 28% from the winegrowers and the cooperatives. (Brutton et al., 2020)

1.2 Wine tourism in Champagne

Wine tourists increased from 7.5 million in 2009 to 10 million in 2016, resulting in total spending of 5.2 billion Euros. According to Atout France/ Visit French Wine, 58 % of wine tourists in France are French, followed by 42 % consisting of foreign tourists, with the British and Belgians leading the way, followed by Germans, Dutch, and Americans. The region of Champagne is the second most popular wine destination in France, after Bordeaux, attracting 18% of the total wine tourists in France. ("When wine tourism celebrates wine", 2017)

The Covid-19 Pandemic of 2020 had a substantial effect on tourist numbers. Between 2016 and 2019 Epernay's tourism office recorded an average of 44138 wine tourists per year with May-November being the months welcoming the most tourists. During the peak of the pandemic (2020) the office only recorded 11731 tourists for the year, but 2021 showed a steady increase of wine tourists with a total of 22860, as illustrated in Appendix 3.

In 2021, 22860 visitors were recorded by the tourism office in Epernay. 53,01% were French nationals and 46,99% were international tourists. The main nationalities recorded were French (54,0%), Belgian (16%), Dutch (14%), Germans (5%), British (4%) and American (2%).

The main reasons for contacting the tourism office included enquiries about Champagne, wine tastings, other hobbies, and the touristic train experience. The tourism office of Hautvillers welcomed 6054 tourists in 2021 and recorded a similar wine tourist profile to the Epernay tourism office. According to the Hautvillers tourism office tourist motivations included Champagne (46%), nature/ hiking /countryside (26%) and wine tourism activities. Most the tourists were aged between 50-64 (48%) followed by visitors aged 25-34 (19%) and 35-49 (17%) as shown in Annex 4.

1.3 Aÿ Champagne Experience

Aÿ Champagne Experience located at 75 rue Jules Blondeau in Aÿ-Champagne is a private tour guide company created by Isabelle Rousseau in March 2018 and is registered as such. Isabelle specializes in private tours from the perspective of a local. She offers wine tourists the opportunity to visit smaller villages in Champagne, the *Grand Cru* vineyards of the region, and facilitates meetings with small family producers near the cities of Reims and Epernay. Wine tourists can enjoy the Champagne region in a four-seater electric E-mehari (maximum 3 tourists) or a premium vehicle for larger groups.

The company has 14 wine tourism experiences, including full-day tours, tours ranging between 2h- 4h hours, a *sabrage* workshop, bachelorette parties and team building activities described in Annex 5. The tours can also be adapted to meet specific needs of guests, depending on the number of villages and champagne tastings the tourists would like to experience.

Aÿ Champagne Experience currently only has one employee, Isabelle Rousseaux, the owner, and manager. She studied law and art history and continued her studies in history and management of French and European cultural heritage at the Sorbonne University, Paris.

Returning to her hometown Aÿ-Champagne 10 years ago, Isabelle's motivation within her company was to share her knowledge and passion for the region with tourists. This included discovering the famous vineyards and villages of Champagne classified as *Grand Cru* and *Premier Cru*, sharing the history, the winegrowers and Champagne Houses and the hidden treasures of the locals with tourists.

Wine tourism development has been slow in Champagne and Isabelle recognized the need and interest of wine tourists to get out of the tourist hotspots of Champagne and enjoy more authentic experiences.

Before the COVID -19 Pandemic, the company welcomed a majority of American, Australian, British, Belgian and German visitors. These tourists travelled mainly as couples, groups of friends or small families. Most tourists stayed for a minimum of two days in Airbnb's or luxury hotels in the region. These tourists wished to discover the Champagne region (discovering the wine and historical heritage of the Champagne region) and were looking forward to meeting local winegrowers and producers.

1.4 Activities during the Internship

The internship commenced in March 2022 and concluded in July 2022. My responsibilities included assisting the owner of Aÿ Champagne Experience with the daily tasks of running the company. Duties included all aspects of wine tourism, marketing, and communication.

Wine tourism activities performed included organization of visits to wine producers, hosting a range of different private tours, including driving and walking tours or hosting wine tourism experiences such as bachelorette parties and *sabrage* experiences.

During the first few weeks of the internship, I was responsible for hosting 2-hour walks in the village and *Grand Cru* vineyards of Aÿ-Champagne. The walk consists of discovering the vineyards and part of the village of Aÿ,

passing in front of Champagne Ayala, the headquarters of the prestigious Champagne House Bollinger and the famous Clos Saint Jacques. The walk ended with the tasting of three Champagne spirits from the distillery Goyard. During the tour, I explained the Champagne appellation, the history of the region and the winemaking and viticultural practices that makes Champagne unique.

In the second half of my internship, I was trained to drive, clean, and take care of the electric E-Méhari vehicle. I was trained to drive in the villages of Champagne, memorize the routes and different stages of the half-day and full-day formulas by car. My training included memorising and practising my presentation for each tourist experience offered by the company. I met the partner winegrowers to learn about their products, their history, and their specialities.

Marketing and communication activities were mostly focused on improving the social media strategy and communication of Aÿ Champagne Experience. My role in these missions of promotion and communication of the company Aÿ Champagne Experience was important to best optimize the resources that the company had and to increase its visibility.

The promotional actions carried out during my internship were to communicate on social networks (Instagram, Facebook and Google Business) through photo and video publications. The goal was to increase the regularity of the social media schedule, grow the following and arrange social media ads to promote the company's offerings.

Graphic Design activities included assisting in designing a new brochure for the company, designing content for social media, and creating a new offer list which could be redistributed to the hotel and restaurant partners.

When I was not occupied hosting tours, my main mission was to improve, update and modify the content of all the company's offers on all the marketing and tourism booking platforms. These included Trip advisor, Winalist, Explore Grand Est, Google Business and Airbnb. The social media advertising campaign as well as the graphic design work has been attached in Annex 11.

2 OBJECTIVES

2.1 Objectives of the Internship

My personal objectives for the internship were to obtain practical experience in a wine tourism company, to improve my knowledge of the Champagne region, apply the wine tourism and marketing knowledge that I have acquired during the master's program, and to assist and improve the wine tourism offers of the company.

2.2 Objectives of the Master Thesis

The aim of the study would be to develop wine tourism offers for Aÿ Champagne Experience and to evaluate if it is profitable to develop the company from a private tour guide organization to a specialized wine tourism travel agency in Champagne.

To create new wine tourism offers it is essential to conduct market research and understand exactly what kind of wine tourism activities, visitors would be interested in experiencing as well as perform a thorough competitor and SWOT analysis.

3 LITERATURE REVIEW

3.1 Wine Tourism in Champagne

Wine Tourism has not been as actively developed in more well-known wine regions, as in the case of Champagne, France. These regions do not have to increase their wine sales and therefore tend to limit the increase of sales due to the tension in the grape market. The participation of the actors in the Champagne industry has been weak in the past as the industry is doing well domestically and the champagnes sell themselves (Menival & Charters, 2008, Newton et al., 2020).

(Newton et al., 2020) conducted a two-part study, the first part of their study interviewed wine growers in the region of Champagne, and their opinion of wine tourism in the region. The small producers, who are all selling wine from their wineries, often do not think that they are involved in wine tourism, it is the responsibility of the larger houses, restaurants, or accommodation providers. It was clear from the interviews conducted by (Newton et al., 2020) that smaller wine growers do not perceive it to be part of an overall marketing strategy of their brand. They continued their study and investigated the opinions of visitors to the region by using a survey covering a series of issues including Champagne and its quality, attractions in the regions, the pricing of a bottle of Champagne and the expectations of wine tourists.

These visitors had high regard for the region, enjoyed visiting it and ranked visiting cellars of producers as important. Wine tourists in this study were predominantly Belgian, French, British, American, and Australian and indicated that they belonged to a higher income group, identical to the tourist profile of the tourism offices in Epernay and Hautvilliers. These types of wine tourists are the type that is valuable customers and should be encouraged (Newton et al., 2020).

Visitor interviews illustrated that wine tourism is not the only factor contributing to the positive image of the Champagne region; a good experience in a local restaurant will predispose consumers to pay more for a standard bottle of wine (Newton et al., 2020).

(Menival & Charters, 2008) studied the impact of tourism on the willingness to pay for a bottle of standard quality Champagne and concluded that tourism had a positive impact on the willingness to pay for Champagne. Interestingly, foreigners were more likely to pay more for a bottle of Champagne than French nationals. This confirms an evident link between tourism and the nationality of the buyer. Results of this study can be used to highlight the usefulness of wine tourism to enhance the value of standard champagne rather than merely the quantity of sales.

Tourism strategies which target foreign tourists should therefore strive to develop comprehensive tourism offers, including touristic attractions, restaurants, and other aspects of the hospitality industry. Therefore, an array of tourism activities will add value to Champagne and the Champagne region (Newton et al., 2020).

3.2 Champagne and Sparkling Wine Consumers and Their Wine Knowledge

(Charters et al., 2011) conducted interviews and tastings with groups of participants from different cultures, categorized as Generation Y (25-40 years old) to study their perception of sparkling wines and Champagne.

During the interviews, the authors observed that each nationality had areas in which its representatives tended to be less or more knowledgeable. Representatives from winemaking countries had a better understanding of wine production, however, UK representatives were more knowledgeable on different styles and types of wine, particularly regarding Champagne brands. (Charters et al., 2011)

American participants only commented on two prestige Champagne brands but seemed unaware of the smaller Champagne growers, where the participants from the other countries noted Moët et Chandon, Veuve Clicquot, Dom Perignon and to some extent Bollinger (Charters et al., 2011).

(Charters et al., 2011), probed the participants about their understanding of the relationship between Champagne and other sparkling wines, and whether they were essentially the same or different. Many participants claimed they are different, not only because of the price, but because of the quality and likely consumption occasion, while others claimed they are the same, with the exception that champagne comes from the Champagne region in France (Charters et al., 2011). The results from a study performed by (Velikova et al., 2016) illustrated that a more realistic young customer does not notice much of a difference between a well-known sparkling wine from their own nation and a bottle of champagne at a considerably greater price.

Interviews during the study also illustrated that for many young New World wine consumers knowledgeable about wine, grape varieties, and brands, the value of the brand does not seem to make up for the high price, especially if the consumer already has some attachment to the local industry. On the contrary, without the impact of the local wine industry, UK consumers have no loyalty to local wine, but rather to traditionally perceived high-quality regions (Velikova et al., 2016).

Sparkling wines and Champagne give consumers a sense of class, maturity and sophistication and helps to portray a life of luxury to impress others. All these factors contribute to the fundamental significance of status associated with champagne and sparkling wine. On the other hand, the impact of alcohol and carbon dioxide (which make one feel good) or spontaneity are elements of fun (Velikova et al., 2016).

3.3 Different Types of Wine Tourist Profiles, Preferences and Creating Value in Wine Tourism Experiences

Wine tourism experiences can be offered in a variety of ways, the most notable of which are events and festivals, cultural heritage, and food and wine pairings. Wine tourism services often include dining, hospitality, education and winery tours and wine tastings at the cellar door (Charters & Ali-Knight, 2002).

Many researchers have studied wine tourists and their motivations and have suggested specific models and categories to define different wine tourist profiles. (Charters & Ali-Knight, 2002) have classified wine tourists into four categories: wine lovers, connoisseurs, wine interested and wine novices.

'Wine lovers' have a solid foundation in wine knowledge and quite likely previously attended tastings and have watched television shows about wine. This category regards itself to be highly knowledgeable and its main wine tourism motivations included purchasing wine, learning about wine, and tasting wine at the winery.

The 'connoisseurs' shared similar lifestyle characteristics with the 'wine lovers', but they have a need for knowledge that is much more acute. As a result of their status as high-yield visitors, the winery may reap significant benefits because of increased visibility. The category described as 'wine interested' were unlikely to have previous wine education, and therefore were more interested and committed to learning about wine and wine tasting.

The last group was described as "wine novices" and their motivations for visiting wineries were less focused as they had limited wine knowledge. The "wine novice" category was more interested in the overall experience including the winery and vineyard visit, compared to only a wine tasting (Charters & Ali-Knight, 2002).

According to (Quadri-Felitti & Fiore, 2012) the 4Es model is relevant and useful in conceptualizing wine tourist experiences as shown in Figure 1. The 4Es can thus be useful as an additional guideline to categorize wine tourists and their motivations when creating wine tourism offers. The 4Es Model consists of 4 sections: education, aesthetics', entertainment, and escapism.

Education has been repeatedly identified as a motivation for wine tourism and the most common educational activities include wine tastings and food and wine pairings. Entertainment refers to the engagement of performers with the customers, this could include tours of the winery and cellar, cultural heritage as entertainment or even art and music. Education and entertainment could be a suitable combination when creating wine tourism offers. (Quadri-Felitti & Fiore, 2012)

Aesthetics in wine tourism refers to immersion into the wine tourism environment, as wine tourists are interested in seeing and experiencing the rural vineyard landscape and wineries. Aesthetics combines well with escapism referring to the need of the wine tourist to escape their everyday environment and enjoy the rural and natural landscapes. (Fonseca et al., 2020). In a similar study (Schamel, 2017) concluded that wine and culinary tourists are experiential consumers and that the 4E-model can be a useful tool to classify the attributes of the hotel offers according to their experiential dimension.

Any offer in the wine and culinary domain which starts with supply attributes (descriptions) that deliver an entertaining experience, followed by attributes which offer an educational experience can be considered extremely valuable and command a large price premium. (Schamel, 2017).

Entertainment <i>Tourists are engaged by performances.</i> ▪ Cellar concerts, music in vineyard ▪ Wine blending demonstration ▪ Farm & food demonstrations ▪ Museum & heritage site visits	Educational <i>Tourists enhance their knowledge or skills.</i> ▪ Wine tastings & seminars ▪ Culinary-wine pairing events ▪ Home wine making seminars ▪ Cooking & craft making classes
Esthetics <i>Tourists are enriched by sensual environments.</i> ▪ Consuming the 'winescape' ▪ Enjoying unique lodging (B&B) and wines ▪ Driving rural roads lined with vineyards ▪ Art & craft fairs at wineries	Escapist <i>Tourists become engrossed by participating in a different time or place.</i> ▪ Vineyard hiking, cycling tours ▪ Hot air ballooning over vineyards ▪ Vineyard tour by horse & carriage ▪ Harvesting grapes, riding a grape picker

FIGURE 1 : THE 4ES MODEL IS RELEVANT AND USEFUL IN CONCEPTUALIZING WINE TOURIST EXPERIENCES.
SOURCE: QUADRI-FELITTI & FIORE, 2012

Many studies have been conducted to study wine tourists and the type of wine tourism experiences they are interested in. According to (Cohen et al., 2013), potential wine tourists display a preference for short travel times and multiple winery visits for the purpose of recreation and the inclusion of a meal in a restaurant. These tourists also have a significant negative reaction to the purpose of the visit to buy wine as well as eating a casual meal, eating at a restaurant has the highest value while eating at a bakery was considered significantly negative.

The results of the study conducted by (Cohen et al., 2013) illustrate that wine tourists prefer a full-day tour compared to a shorter visit and prefer visiting at least 2-3 wineries. It is, therefore, necessary to build alliances with other tour operators and services providers (restaurants, accommodation, etc.) in the region and offer a 'bundle of activities' with various attractions, instead of relying on a single winery tour.

In Rioja, Spain two clusters of tourists were clearly identified, one of which presents a highly wine-oriented purpose for visit, and another with motivations more related to active tourism and local attractions. The results of (Marzo-Navarro & Pedraja-Iglesias, 2009) illustrate that visitors visit a wine region for a variety of reasons, not all of which have anything to do with wine, as a result, the region should be promoted to tourists for reasons other than wine, as there is a desire for a variety of activities.

The main motives for visiting the wineries for many tourists include “to taste wine”, “to enjoy the scenery”, “to have a good time with friends and family”, “to relax”, “to support local wine producers”, and “to taste locally produced foods”. This finding supports the statement that wine tourists are often drawn by the whole “local experience package”, and not only by the wine product itself. (Grybovyeh et al., 2013).

To improve wine tourists' satisfaction, wine destination managers need to consider the core wine related push-pull motivations. “Meeting the wine producer” or dining at the cellar” and the overall wine experience (wineries combined with architecture, visiting wine-related attractions, and discovering local wines) are strongly linked to wine tourist satisfaction. Buying directly from the producers do not lead to satisfaction and therefore adequate

destination attractions and activities should be delivered to wine tourists who seem to be driven more by emotional and learning experiences. (Brandano et al., 2019)

(Brandano et al., 2019) suggests that destination managers should consider wine-related relaxation as the main motivation, where interaction experiences play an important role in pull motivations to drive tourists' satisfaction.

(Bitsch et al., 2020) found that participants of their survey will pay positive prices for wine tourism offers and that PWYW is a good strategy to analyse the willingness to pay for heterogeneous and homogeneous services and offers. They also concluded that there is no difference in willingness to pay between people with or without wine knowledge.

It is important to create valuable wine tourism experiences, that wine tourists will enjoy, remember, and recommend to other wine tourists (Massa & Bédé, 2018) suggest that a winery experience is made up of the following values: "hedonic", "economic", "social" and "legacy".

Economic value can be described as the services wine tourists expect during their wine tourism experience. Results from the study conducted by (Massa & Bédé, 2018) illustrate that wine tourists anticipate a faultless and high-quality tasting at the centre of the experience and want to gain access to more services than merely visiting a winery and purchasing wine during their winery visit. These tourists are looking for high-quality culinary choices, cultural, recreational, and retail choices, as well as a rural wine region's landscape to enjoy.

Tourists tend to associate their wine tasting experience with the perfect food pairing since wine and food are strongly linked and imbued with cultural and symbolic meaning. Wineries, therefore, need to think about wine tasting, catering, excellence, and convenience in terms of economic value, notably by offering a perfect food and wine pairing and by selling, shipping, and delivering bottles and other souvenirs.

Hedonic value "arises from people's pleasure" and consumer reviews highlight the importance of the hedonic dimension when visiting a winery through the aesthetics, the sensorial stimulation, and the recreational aspect. Wine tourists tend to appreciate additional activities and want to try new things and be astonished; they want to relax and enjoy themselves. The more uncommon an activity is, the more tourists will love it and remember it.

Social value can be described as the social interactions when visiting wine destinations. Visiting wine regions with friends and family can help strengthen and improve familial bonds or introduce you to new people. The educational dimension was found to be important in the socialisation process as wine tourists want to participate in a learning experience which includes interaction with a guide as well as their actions. Wine tourists described the wine tourism guide as a storyteller in addition to providing information about the tasting and guests particularly enjoyed the experience when the guide was the owner of the winery.

Legacy value is acquired when wine tourists appreciate/find authenticity through objects in the winery: "barrels", "underground", "cave", "architecture" and "design", but authenticity is also perceived through the notion of time: "tradition", "history", "age", "old" and "century". (Massa & Bédé, 2018). According to (Fonseca et al., 2020) building authentic value requires designing a combination of interpersonal, temporal and material elements in both spectacular and spontaneous experiences.

The spectacular experience will immerse visitors in the complexities of winemaking, giving them first-hand knowledge about how to taste and critically evaluate the product. The spontaneous experience is more rustic, and visitors tend to feel more emotionally connected to the landscape surrounding wine production because of the spontaneous experience. This led to a more authentic and self-actualized experience than the spectacular experience's fast-paced and staged atmosphere.

Wineries need to deliver experiences which encourage tourists to explore what their enterprise has to offer. Given the importance of the customer experience to trigger wine purchases and positive word-of-mouth to promote brand loyalty, the findings can help winery managers to adapt their services in consequence. (Massa & Bédé, 2018).

4 METHODOLOGY

4.1 Online Survey

To gain a better understanding of the preferences and expectations of wine tourists in the Champagne region, a digital survey (created via Google platforms) was created and promoted via social media channels (Instagram and Facebook).

The survey consisted of 19 questions and contained three open-ended and 16 closed-ended questions listed in Annex 9. The closed-ended questions collected information about typical potential tourists: 'geographical locations, knowledge of the Champagne region, Champagne consumption, favourite Champagne houses and their budgets for different kinds of wine tours.

In the open-ended questions they were asked about their expectations of a perfect tour in Champagne and if there were any specific producers or Champagne houses they preferred to visit.

To gain greater insight, the survey was shared on Facebook groups related to the wine industry as well as general Facebook groups, including groups for expatriates and business groups in all the major continents. A promotional social media post was created, and the post was shared by wine influencers to encourage wine enthusiasts to partake in the survey.

4.2 SWOT and Competitor Analysis

To expand the wine tourism offers of Aÿ Champagne Experience a SWOT and competitor analysis was performed. To create innovative wine tourism experiences and tours, it is important to understand the strengths, weaknesses, threats, and opportunities of the company as well as analyse the type of tours the competition is offering and their costs.

5 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

5.1 Wine tourist demographics, wine consumption and knowledge

Most of the survey respondents were in Europe (56,7%), followed by America (12,1 %), Africa (20,1 %), Australia and New Zealand (5,6 %) A smaller percentage (3,5%) of respondents were from the "other countries" such as Middle East (1,9 %) and Asia (1,6 %). These geographical locations of the respondents are similar to the

demographics of tourists Aÿ Champagne Experience hosted in the past and similar to the tourist profile data collected by the tourism offices in Epernay and Hautvillers.

The percentage of respondents from Africa, were relatively high, as the survey was shared by an influencer “the Champagne chick”, who has a large following in South Africa. The results are similar to the target market of Aÿ Champagne Experience and the opinions of these potential wine tourists can be beneficial in developing new tours for the company.

Most of the respondents were aged in the 25-34 age group (31,50 %), followed by 35-44 (26,10%) and 55-64 (11,50%). It was clear that generation Millennials and Generation X, followed by the generation described as Baby Boomers, were most of the respondents. The survey was promoted via social media, and this could be the reason why the generations most active on social media (Generation X and Millennials) are more representative in the survey. The demographics is shown in Table 1.

The results indicated most respondents enjoyed Champagne often (60,6%) or on special occasions (37,2%) and therefore it can be assumed that they can be classed in the 4 wine tourists groups described by (Charters & Ali-Knight, 2002).

TABLE 1 : SUMMARY OF THE DEMOGRAPHICS OF 320 RESPONDENTS

Demographic and consumption frequency statement	% Respondents
Age	
18-24	3.8
25-34	31.6
35-44	25.6
45-55	23.8
55-64	11.9
65-older	3.4
Origin	
Europe	56.6
Africa	20.3
Australia and New Zealand	5.6
America	12.2
Middle East	1.6

Asia	1.9
Other	3.8
Frequency of Champagne Consumption	
Never	2.8
Often	60.6
Only Special Occasions	37.2

Four questions in the survey were used to gather more information on Champagne and regional knowledge level of the respondents as well as to observe if they had any specific brand preferences. Most of the respondents (71,72%) had never visited the region, compared to 28,8% of the respondents who have visited the region before as indicated in Figure 2.

It is, therefore, possible that many of these wine tourists have little knowledge of the Champagne region and their expectations of the regions would be compared to past wine tourism experiences in other regions of the world.

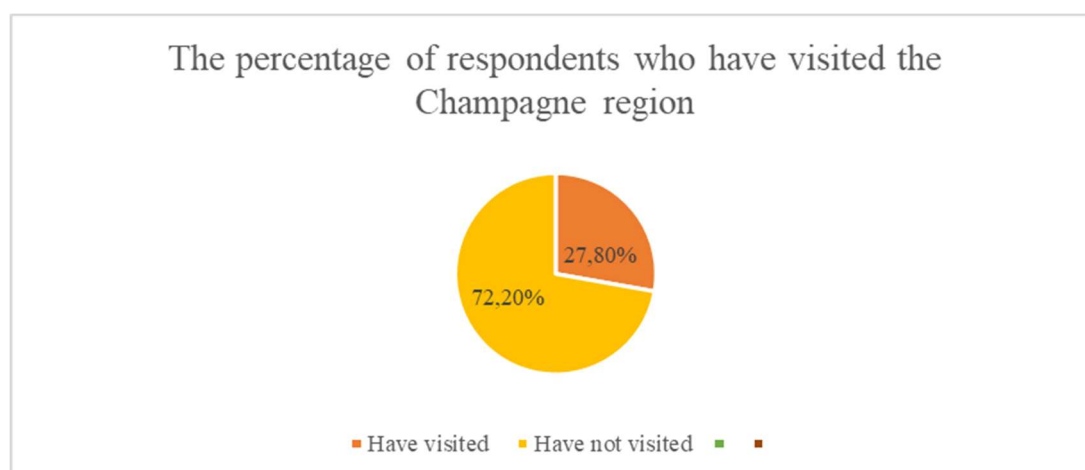


FIGURE 2 : THE PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS WHO HAVE VISITED THE CHAMPAGNE REGION

During the survey, the respondents were asked to select all the platforms they used when researching and planning a visit to a new wine region. The most popular platforms were Google search (83%), followed by social media (54,40%), TripAdvisor (47,50%), Airbnb Experiences (20,9%) and “Word of Mouth” (4,90%), as illustrated in Figure 3. The younger generations are doing their own research when planning a visit and therefore it would be important for wine tourism companies and wineries to have a strong online presence, by having a good SEO and social media strategy. It would therefore be recommended that wine tourism experiences are listed on all major tourism booking platforms and that all visitors are encouraged to write a review about their wine tourism experience.

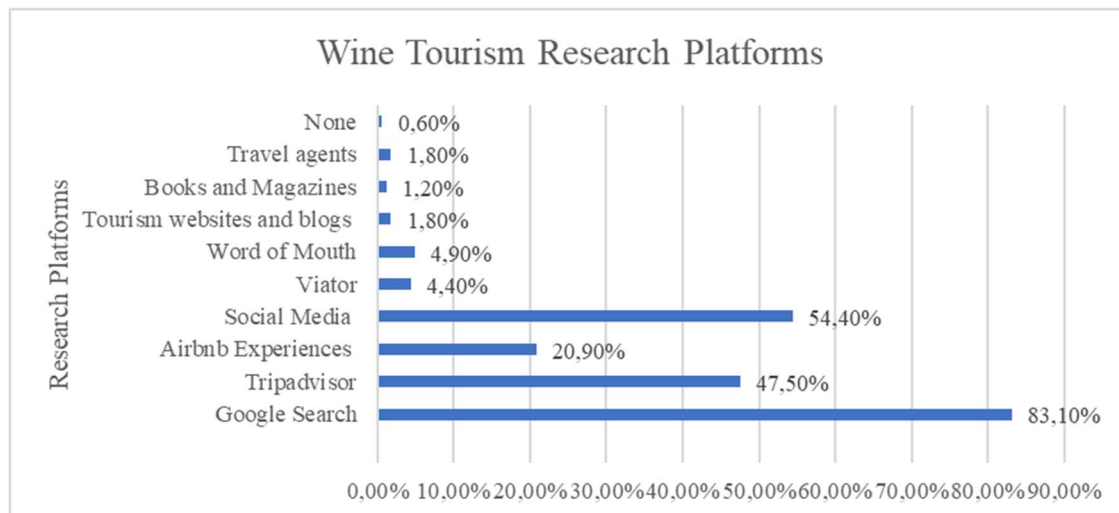


FIGURE 3 : THE PLATFORMS USED BY WINE TOURISTS FOR TOURISM RESEARCH

Respondents were asked to indicate their favourite Champagne brands with the results indicated in Figure 4. Many respondents indicated that the most famous houses including Moët & Chandon (20,6%) and Veuve Clicquot, (12,06%) were their favourites followed by 18,73% indicating that they had no favourite brand. The results illustrated that 11,74% of the respondents do not understand the difference between Champagne and other sparkling wines, as they have indicated the brand's names from sparkling wines produced in other parts of the world. Identical results were found in previous studies performed by (Charters et al., 2011, Velikova et al., 2016).

Respondents showed clear interest in the smaller producers as 9,6% indicated these as their favourite brands. Only 52,2 % of respondents however indicated that they understood the difference between Champagne houses and Champagne growers as illustrated in Figure 5. It is clear from the results that many potential wine tourists are not familiar with the Champagne region and the different types of producers, highlighting the importance to incorporate an educational aspect into the wine tourism experiences and social media strategy.

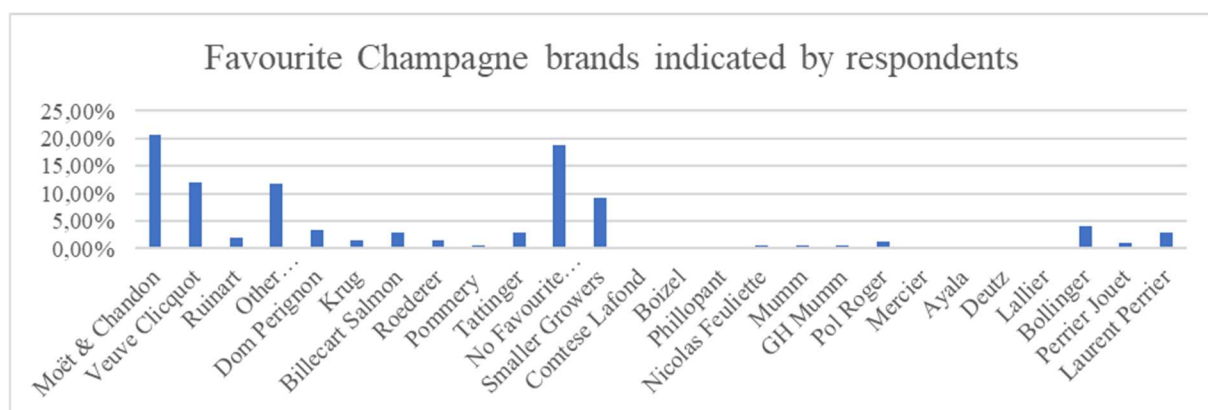


FIGURE 4 : FAVOURITE CHAMPAGNE BRANDS OF WINE TOURISTS

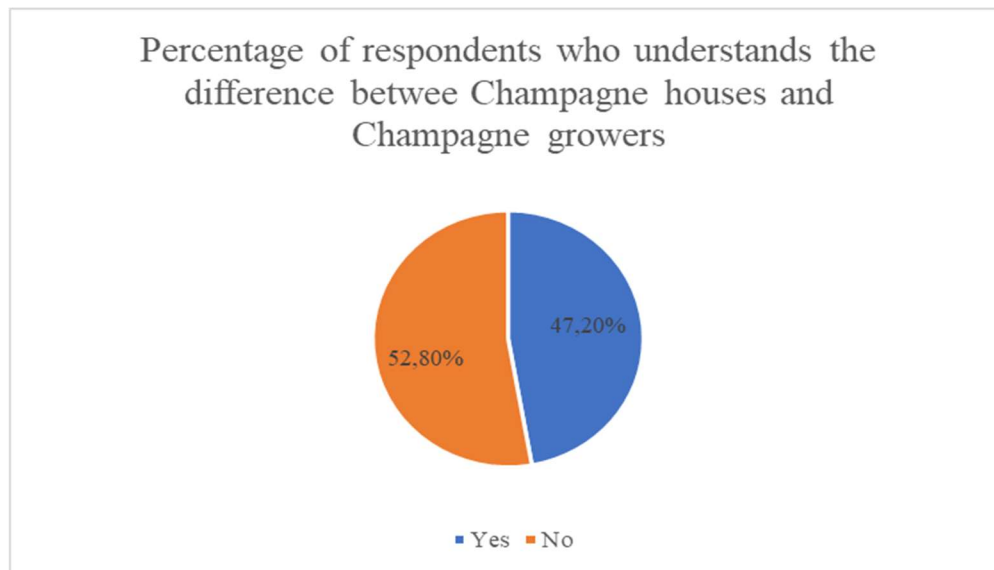


FIGURE 5 : WINE TOURIST KNOWLEDGE OF DIFFERENT TYPES OF CHAMPAGNE PRODUCERS

In a closed- ended question respondents were asked to select Champagne houses or growers they would like to visit in the Champagne region. The list included names of Champagne growers Aÿ Champagne Experience work with regularly, and well-known Champagne houses.

As illustrated by Figure 6 wine tourists are interested in visiting the well-known Champagne houses, with most respondents indicating Moët et Chandon (70,90%), followed by Bollinger (61,3%), Ruinart and Veuve Clicquot (60,6%). Champagne houses listed are some of the well-known Champagne brands in the world and it is clear from this result that many wine tourists would like to visit at least one Champagne house. It could therefore be beneficial for Aÿ Champagne Experience to create wine tours which includes visits to some of these Champagne houses. A smaller percentage of respondents showed interest in the Champagne growers, but this could be because they are unfamiliar with these specific producers.

In an open-ended question, respondents were asked to list any Champagne houses and growers they would like to visit in the Champagne region. This specific question only received 139 responses, with 36,7 % indicating they had no preference when visiting wineries, although 51 of respondents elaborated on the Champagne houses and growers they wanted to visit.

The results are useful for the creation of new wine tourism experiences, and it would be possible to collaborate with these producers, a full list of the Champagne houses and Champagne growers are listed in Annex 8.

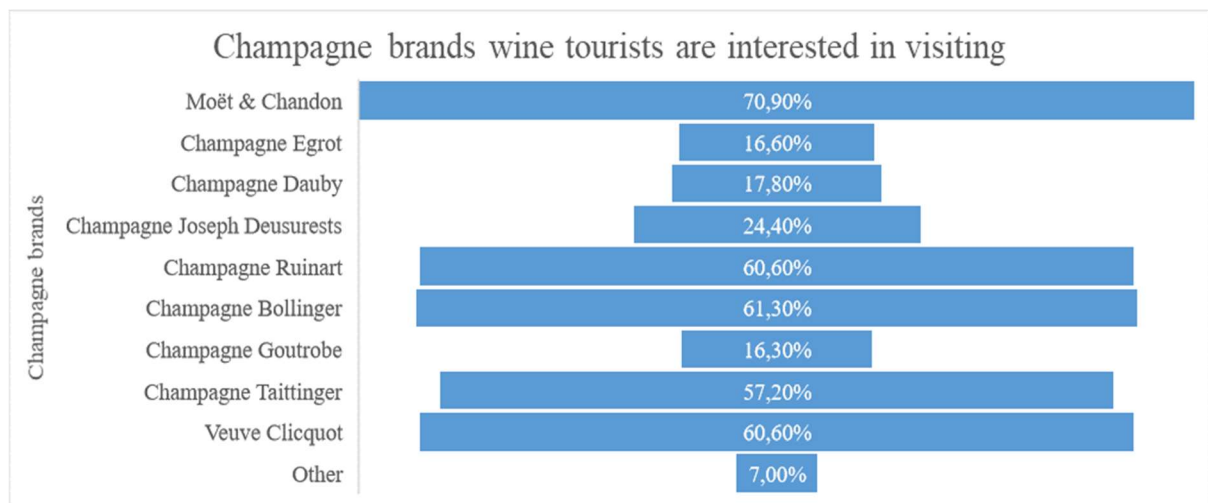


FIGURE 6 : CHAMPAGNE BRANDS WINE TOURISTS ARE INTERESTED IN VISITING

5.2 Wine Tourist Preferences and Expectations

As illustrated in Figure 7 results in the survey illustrated that 81,9 % of respondents were interested in visiting the Champagne region, to enjoy and learn about the wine region, regional food, and history, while 18,1% indicated they wanted to visit the region to buy Champagne and visit the winemaker. The main motivations of these potential wine tourists were to enjoy the region and not just to buy Champagne.

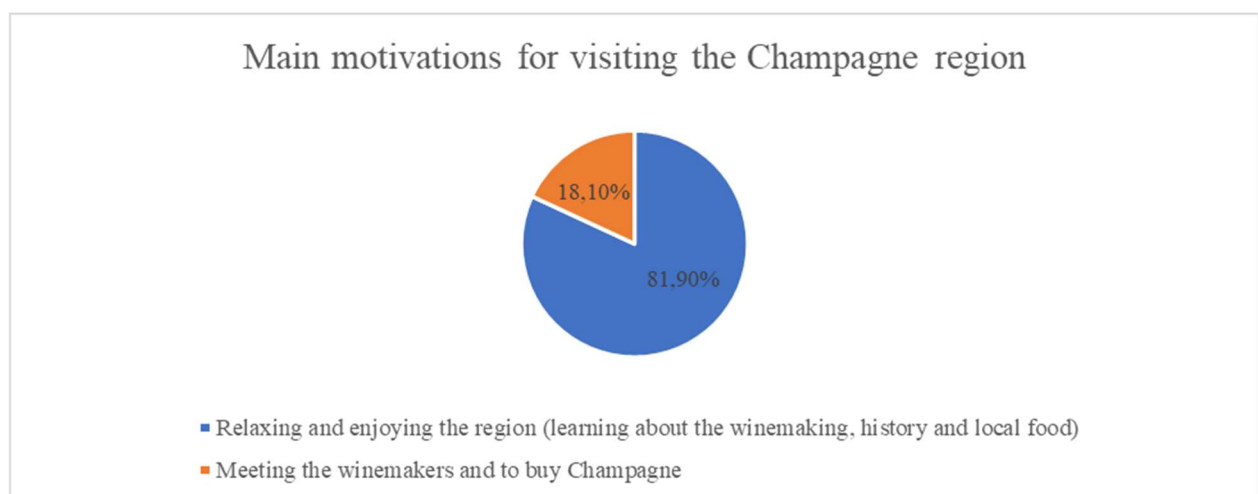


FIGURE 7 : MOTIVATIONS OF WINE TOURISTS IN CHAMPAGNE

Wine tourism literature (Charters & Ali-Knight, 2002, Massa & Bédé, 2018, Quadri-Felitti & Fiore, 2012) has highlighted the importance of the educational aspect in wine tourism experiences. Results of the survey indicated 90% of respondents were interested in learning about the different aspects of winemaking in the region, followed by regional food (81,8%) and the history of the region (76,60%) as illustrated in Figure 8.

Results are similar to studies performed by (Brandano et al., 2019, Marzo-Navarro & Pedraja-Iglesias, 2009), indicating that wine tourists are interested in not only the wine but also regional food as it is closely related to wine

and the history of the region. Therefore, to create high-value, memorable tourism experiences, it is essential to incorporate all three aspects.

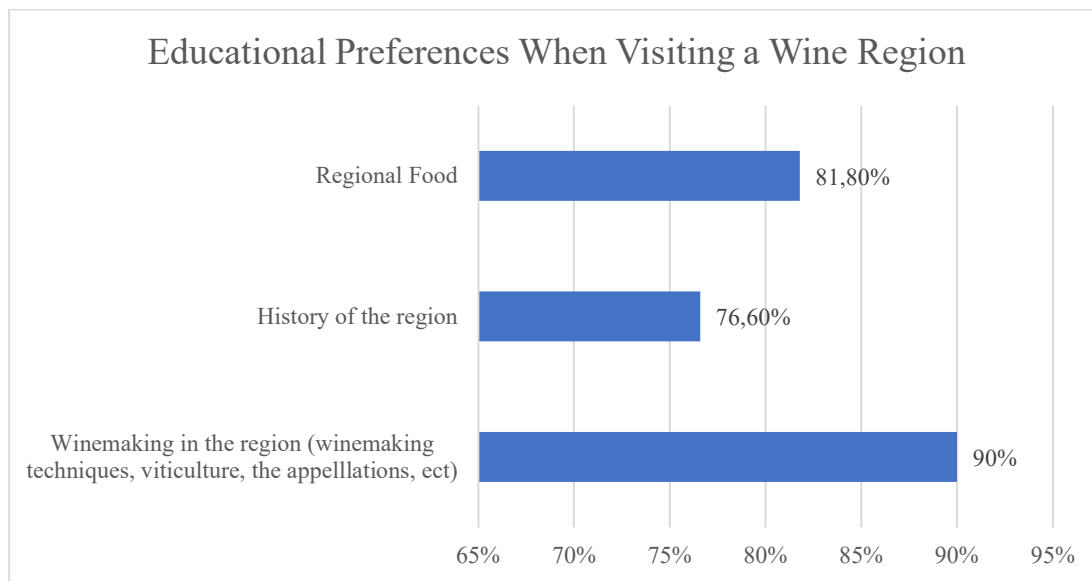


FIGURE 8 : EDUCATIONAL PREFERENCES OF WINE TOURISTS

Wine tourism preferences of potential visitors to the Champagne region have been illustrated in Table 2. Results indicate most wine tourists prefer discovering the region accompanied by a tour guide, compared to discovering the region on their own. The majority preferred a private tour compared to a group tour. When visiting the region with a tour guide, visitors would have the opportunity to learn, relax, and discover the “hidden gems” and would not have to be concerned about driving after tasting Champagne.

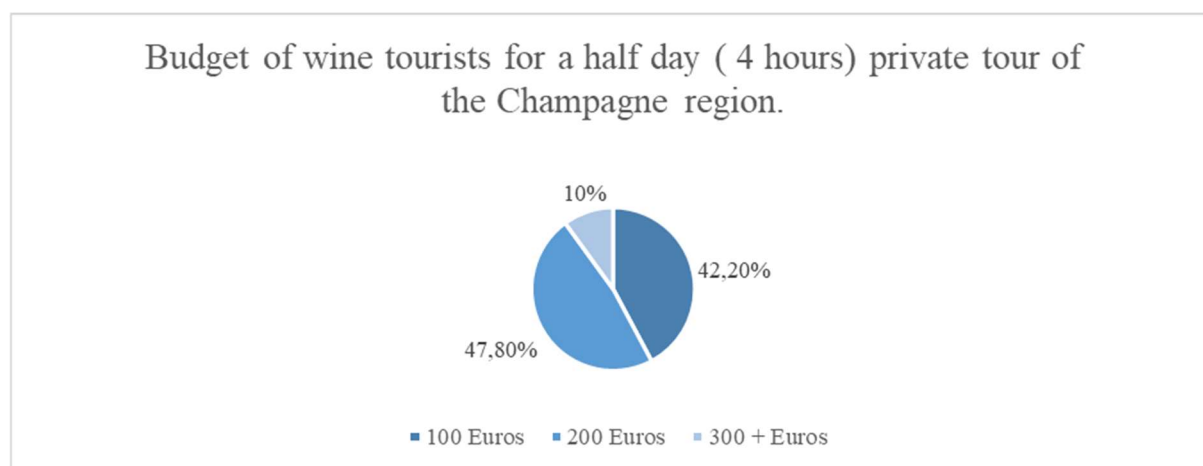
Most of the respondents (85,3%) indicated they would prefer to visit a combination of small Champagne growers and Champagne Houses, followed by 10% indicating they would be interested in visiting smaller producers. Results indicated a strong interest in visiting smaller producers or seeing both sides of the industry. Results could also indicate that wine tourists are seeking more authentic and less commercial experiences.

Results also revealed wine tourists are interested in discovering a new wine region with a tour guide, and preferred private tours to group tours. These results therefore indicated that many tourists will be interest in the private experiences offered by Aÿ Champagne Experiences, and there is an opportunity for the company to grow the current wine tourism offers.

Four questions in the survey focused on the budget of potential wine tourists, for guided wine tourism activities. Respondents were asked how much they were willing to spend on private wine tours compared to group tours in a minibus, as currently offered by the competition companies in the wine region.

TABLE 2: WINE TOURIST PREFERENCES

Wine Tourist Preferences when visiting Champagne	% Of Respondents
Discovering the region with a tour guide	69,70%
Discovering the region without a tour guide	42,30%
Private Tour	61,60%
Group Tour	38,40%
Visiting the Famous Champagne houses	4,4%
Visiting the smaller Champagne growers	10,3%
Visit a combination of the Champagne houses and Champagne growers	85,3%

**FIGURE 9 : WINE TOURIST BUDGET FOR A HALF DAY PRIVATE TOUR**

More than 57,8 % of wine tourists in the survey were content to pay more than 200 Euros for a private half -day tour of the Champagne region as seen in Figure 9; compared to only 15,9 % of tourists who were willing to pay more than 200 Euros for a group tour of the same duration, illustrated in Figure 10. It is clear from survey results that wine tourists are content to pay more for private tours and that the tour packages offered by Aÿ Champagne Experience could be considered affordable for the targeted wine tourist. Tourists were willing to spend more on private tours as compared to group tours of the company's competitors.

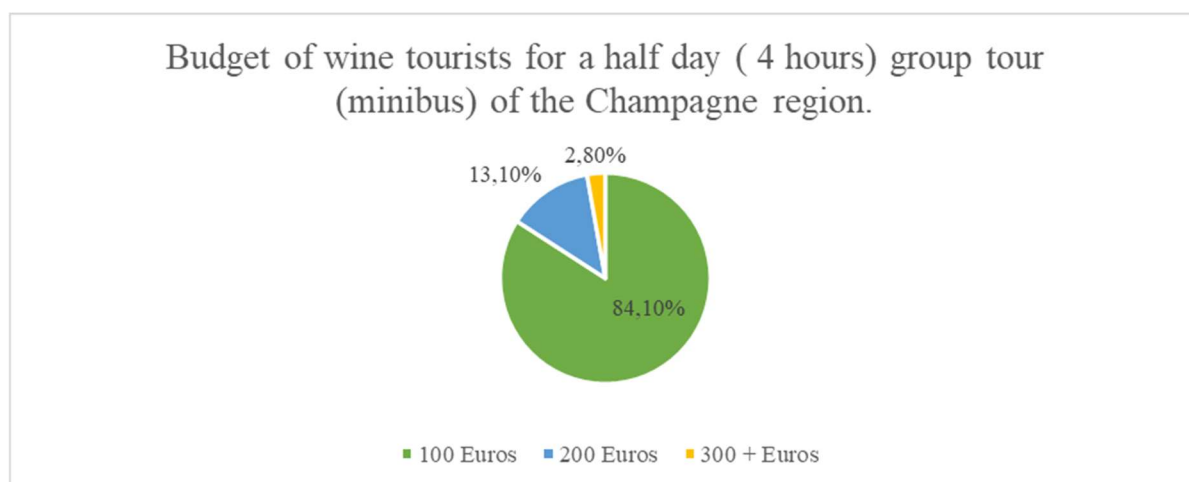


FIGURE 10 : WINE TOURIST BUDGET FOR A HALF DAY GROUP TOUR

Wine tourists were also asked about their budget for full-day private and group tour in the Champagne region. Results from the survey indicated 78,5 % of potential wine tourists were willing to pay more than 200 Euros for a private day tour, although 32,50% of wine tourists preferred to keep their budget below 200 Euros for an 8-hour tour, as seen in Figure 11.

Results indicated wine tourists were willing to pay significantly less for group tours compared to private tours, as only 42.8% were willing to pay more than 200 Euros, illustrated in Figure 12. By comparing these results with the price list of Aÿ Champagne Experience, listed in Annex 5, it could be concluded that the prices of the tours are within the budget of potential wine tourists. Wine tourists are willing to pay for tours, especially for private tours and it would be possible to slightly increase the price of current tourism offers as well, within the 200- 400 Euro price range. Results illustrated that wine tourists are willing to pay positive prices for wine tourism offers, similar to the study performed by (Bitsch et al., 2020).

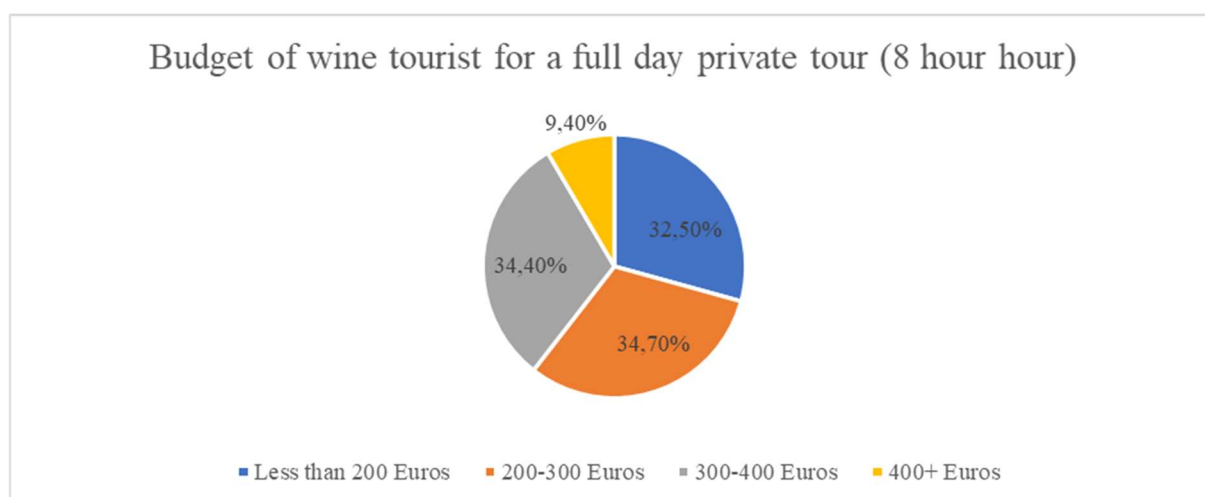


FIGURE 11 : WINE TOURIST BUDGET FOR A FULL DAY PRIVATE TOUR

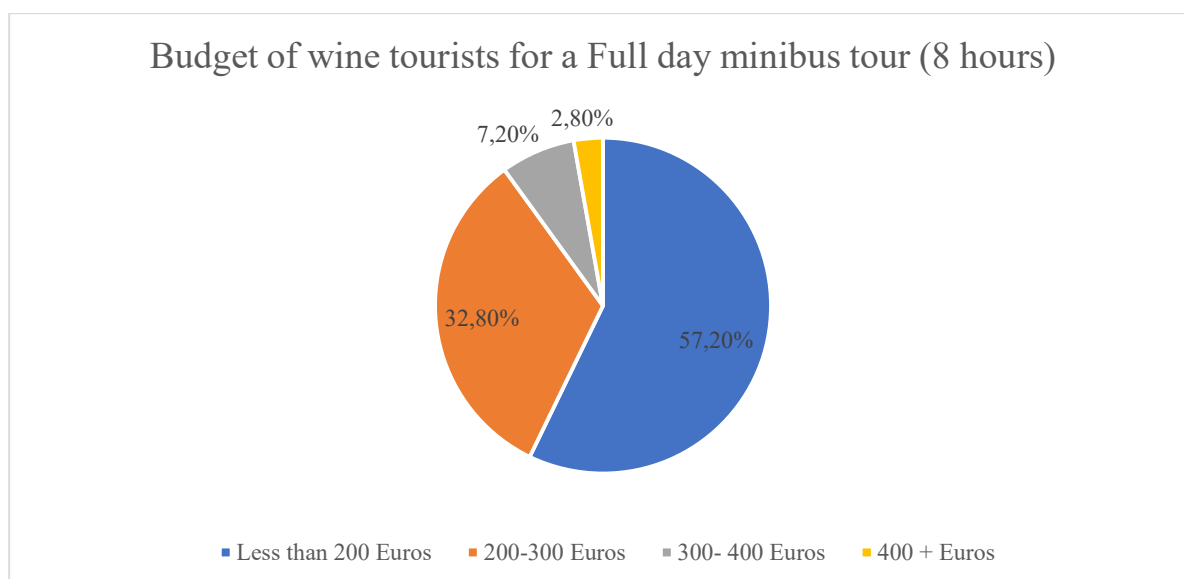


FIGURE 12 : WINE TOURIST BUDGET FOR A FULL DAY GROUP TOUR

In an open-ended question, participants were asked to describe the perfect tour in the Champagne region in a few sentences. Responses were analysed and grouped into two categories: Expectations for the tour guide/driver (Two sub-categories) and expectations for the tour (27 sub-categories), as illustrated in Table 3.

TABLE 3 : DESCRIPTIONS OF WINE TOURIST EXPECTATIONS

Descriptions of expectations	The number of times mentioned during the survey.
Tour guide and driver expectations	
Tour Guide can speak perfect English and is knowledgeable about the region (expert/ sommelier). Passionate about teaching guests about the region and attentive to their needs	21
Private Driver	7
The tour needs to be leisurely, fun, relaxing, and not rushed and tourists do not want to be pressured into buying Champagne.	28
Champagne tour expectations	
Learning about Champagne and the region (technical information)	60
Visiting the vineyards, observing work in the vineyards.	32
Visiting cellars and vineyards.	23

Meeting the winemaker (asking questions, tasting with the winemaker, having lunch with the winemaker)	35
Visiting small producers/ growers	14
Visiting Champagne houses	6
Visiting a combination of Champagne houses and smaller growers	39
Learning about local culture and meeting locals	14
Tasting special champagnes and taking part in unique wine tourism experiences (picking grapes, learning about blending, riddling competitions, etc.)	30
Discovering “Hidden gems” and landmarks of the region	21
Learning more about the history of the region	44
Combining food and Champagne tastings in the tour: Visiting local bakeries, restaurants, and farmers’ markets	69
Champagne and food pairing	37
Lunch is included in the day tour	33
Picnic in the vineyards	5
“Snacks” provided during the tour or with tasting	7
Learning about local cuisine	5
Tasting Champagne and enjoying the wine region and scenery	59
Visiting 1-2 wineries in a day	7
Visiting 2-3 wineries in a day	18
Visiting more than 3 wineries in a day	7
Good sunny weather	10

Family friendly	2
Cycling in the vineyards and villages	2

Results from Table 3 indicate wine tourists /expected to be hosted by a tour guide (preferably a sommelier) with fluent English language skills and knowledge of the Champagne region. (Massa & Bédé, 2018) concluded that wine tourists regarded a wine guide as a storyteller and narrator. Therefore, it is essential for tour guides to have the necessary knowledge of the region and it's products to explain and answer all questions to tourist's satisfaction during their wine tourism experience. Results of the survey indicated wine tourists are interested in meeting the winemaker, as was mentioned in 35 responses. It is clear from the results that visitors would enjoy spending time with a winemaker to ask questions, as well as having a tasting or lunch. Aÿ Champagne Experience should therefore include visits to smaller Champagne growers where the winemaker or winery owner offers the tastings. This will add social and hedonic value as described by (Massa & Bédé, 2018), and will results in high value and memorable experiences.

Visitors prefer a wine experience which is leisurely, fun, relaxing, and not rushed and tourists do not want to be pressured into buying Champagne, as mentioned by 28 respondents. Wine tourists are seeking an experience which offers hedonic, economic, and social value. Therefore, Aÿ Champagne should strive to create wine tourism experiences, in which wine tourists can learn, relax as well as enjoy the winery environment, while tasting the Champagnes.

Results indicated wine tourists are searching for educational experiences, as they are interested in visiting the vineyards and cellars, learning about the Champagne region (technical information) and learning about local cuisine, culture and heritage. Results indicated wine tourists are interested in unique wine tourism activities, for example tasting older Champagnes, riddling competitions, picking the grapes during harvest, and blending workshops as mentioned by 30 respondents. These results align with similar results from (Grybovyh et al., 2013) (Marzo-Navarro & Pedraja-Iglesias, 2009) and (Massa & Bédé, 2018) that concluded wine tourists are always looking for more than just wine tastings and looking for unique experiences.

Results illustrated a strong correlation between wine tourism and culinary tourism, similar to other findings (Cohen et al., 2013) and (Schamel, 2017). Wine tourists indicated they were interested in experiences that combined food and Champagne, these experiences included: Champagne and food pairings, picnics in the vineyard and learning about local cuisine, by visiting local restaurants or sampling local "snacks" during the tour or tasting. Respondents indicated that it is important to have lunch during the wine tour, preferably at a local restaurant, bakery, or farmers market. It is therefore essential to build relationships with local restaurants and wine bars to include lunch in new wine tourism offers.

As in the study performed by (Cohen et al., 2013) wine tourists preferred to visit two to three wineries on a wine tour as indicated by 17 respondents. There was also an interest in visiting more than three wineries when visiting

Champagne, but it is important to not rush tourists. Therefore, Aÿ Champagne Experience could create multiple-day tours, especially for tourists interested in visiting multiple wineries.

There was also a strong interest in tours that combine visiting Champagne houses and smaller growers as indicated by 39 respondents. There are currently limited tours in the Champagne region which combine the different types of producers, and it could be beneficial for Aÿ Champagne Experience to create new day tours which combine Champagne houses and small growers.

5.3 SWOT Analysis

To expand the wine tourism offers of Aÿ Champagne Experience a SWOT analysis was performed, as indicated in Table 4. The main strengths of the company are that it is situated in a *Grand Cru* village and offers personalized and private tours in a unique electric vehicle. Major weaknesses include lack of staff, weak marketing, lack of/weak communication plan and the tours being limited to visiting smaller producers.

There are many opportunities for Aÿ Champagne Experience to expand its wine tourism offers to include Champagne houses and to collaborate with new industry partners including new wineries, wine bars and restaurants. Major sporting events (Rugby world cup and the Olympics) will be hosted in France, and this will increase the number of tourists visiting the country. Aÿ Champagne Experience should consider partnering with luxury travel agencies around the world and create tours for tourists visiting the country for these events.

Located in the north-east of France, and 140 km from Paris, Champagne is also relatively close to the Netherlands, Belgium, Germany, and the United Kingdom. To attract more visitors, Aÿ Champagne Experience could create a social media strategy and advertisements which target tourists from neighbouring countries or tourists visiting Paris.

One of the main threats to Aÿ Champagne Experience is other wine tourism companies in the Champagne region, sometimes offering less expensive tours. It is therefore important to create a marketing and communication plan which will set Aÿ Champagne Experience apart from its competitors. Threats the company has no control over include the uncertainty of the COVID-19 Pandemic and the war in Ukraine, as it has impacted the eagerness of tourists to travel.

TABLE 4 : SWOT ANALYSIS OF Aÿ CHAMPAGNE EXPERIENCE

Strengths	Weaknesses
Private Tours Located in the Grand Cru Village of Aÿ Unique Electric Car (Eco Friendly/ Green tourism) Personalization of wine tourism offers Loyal/ Returning Tourists/ good reviews on TripAdvisor and Google	Weak marketing and communication plan. The company is run by only the owner, lack of staff makes it difficult to manage the business Private tour packages are more expensive than group packages offered by competing . companies offering group tours Tours are limited to mostly smaller growers. Lack of visibility; Internationally and outside Champagne
Opportunities	Threats
Proximity to Paris, Netherlands, Belgium, and Germany. Opportunity to expand the wine tourism packages to include Champagne houses. Opportunity to collaborate with more wineries, restaurants, and wine bars Increased demand for personalized Champagne experiences. Strong development potential throughout the Champagne region. Increased tourist numbers in France due to big sporting events: Rugby World Cup (2023) and Olympics (2024).	Tour agencies with similar group tours Strong competition with other wine regions in France and Europe. Covid 19- Pandemic War in Ukraine (tourists are hesitant to travel to Europe)

5.4 Competitor Analysis

As seen in the SWOT analysis one of Aÿ Champagne Experience's weaknesses is that it does not currently offer tours that combine small Champagne growers and the famous Champagne houses. Table 2 indicates that 61,9% of wine tourists prefer a tour that combines small Champagne growers and famous Champagne houses. It was often observed that Aÿ Champagne Experience's customers visited the Champagne houses with another tour company or independently, most likely to get a better understanding of the Champagne region and its Champagnes.

Wine tourism companies Aÿ Champagne Experience considers as immediate competition can be identified as Ala Francaise Champagne, Sparkling Tours, and Tours in Champagne. These three companies operate in Epernay and

Reims and offer similar tours or experiences. Ala Francaise Champagne and Sparkling Tours, however, offer minibus tours and not private experiences, as offered by Tours in Champagne and Ay Champagne Experience.

Companies considered as indirect competition with different wine tourism offers, but a similar target audience can be identified as Vintage Tours, Bubbles TUK TUK, The Champagne Tour.co and Oenospheres.

The competitor analysis summarizes the main competition companies of Ay Champagne Experience and the tours currently offered by these companies are listed in Annex 6. The companies offering group tours, generally offer wine tourism experiences at lower levels, therefore it is important for Ay Champagne Experience to create a communication/ marketing plan that sets the company apart from its competition.

Only three companies (Ala Francaise Champagne, Tours in Champagne, and The Champagne Tour.co) currently offer wine tourism experiences that combine the smaller growers and bigger houses, with prices ranging between 95 and 450 Euros listed in Appendix 7. After analysing the results of the survey, it could be very beneficial for Ay Champagne Experience, to create tours which combine smaller growers and famous Champagne houses.

6 RECOMMENDATIONS AND PROPOSALS

After analysing results of the survey, the SWOT analysis and competitor analysis it is possible to create proposals for new wine tourism experiences for Ay Champagne Experience. Results of the study have indicated that wine tourists are interested in visiting the Champagne region and learning more about the appellation's winemaking and viticulture techniques, as well as the history and cuisine of the region.

Results indicated that wine tourists are interested in visiting smaller producers or going on a tour which combines visiting small producers and Champagne houses. Currently only a handful of tour companies offer packages that combine visiting bigger and smaller producers, and it could therefore be a competitive advantage for Ay Champagne Experience to create this kind of wine tourism experience.

6.1 Wine Tour Proposals

6.1.1 Full- Day Tours combining Champagne Houses and smaller producers.

The addition of two full-day tours which would include visits to a small producer, a Champagne house, a historical/ cultural landmark, the Champagne vineyard, and a local wine bar/restaurant for lunch is proposed.

The first tour will be based in the sub-region of Champagne known as Montagne de Reims near the city of Reims. The tour will include a visit to Champagne Veuve Clicquot or Champagne Taittinger (depending on their availability) and a visit to the independent producer Champagne Michel Fagot. The tour will include a lunch with a bottle of Champagne at the local wine bar in the village of Riley la Montagne, a stop in the vineyard and a visit to historical landmarks (Reims Cathedral, Riley la Montagne Tunnel and Church of Saint Nicolas).

The second tour will be based in the sub-region of Champagne known as the Marne Valley, near the city of Epernay. The tour will include visits to Moët & Chandon and the independent producer, Champagne Joseph

Desruets. Tourists will enjoy lunch (including a bottle of Champagne) at the local wine bar, visit the vineyard as well as the historical “Abbay Saint-Pierre d’Hautvilliers” where Dom Perignon’s grave can be visited.

6.1.2 A Half-day Tour Combining a Small Grower and a Champagne House

The *Grand Cru* Village of Aÿ is the hometown of Aÿ Champagne Experience as well as a few famous Champagne houses (Ayala, Bollinger and Deutz) as well as many small producers. The proposal is to create a half-day tour (3.5 hours) which combines a visit to a Champagne house, an independent producer, and a visit to the vineyards of Aÿ which has been declared a World Heritage site by UNESCO. Depending on availability, Champagne houses Champagne Ayala or Champagne Deutz will be visited. and small producers Champagne Dauby or Champagne Egro.

6.1.3 Reims Half-day Tour

Designing a half-day tour in the sub-region of Champagne known as Montagne de Reims, near the city of Reims is proposed. Aÿ Champagne Experience does not currently offer a wine tourism experience in this sub-region and therefore it could be beneficial to include such a tour. The tour (3,5 hours) would focus on the story of Veuve Clicquot and will include a visit at the Champagne house Veuve Clicquot in the city of Reims. A visit to a small producer in the *Grand Cru* Village of Bouzy, where the widow created the first Rose Champagne and an educational stop in the vineyard overlooking the Chateau de Boursaut build by Veuve Clicquot, is proposed

6.1.4 Multiple-day Tours

Aÿ Champagne Experience does not currently offer multiple-day tours, but it could be beneficial to create an option where visitors can combine two tour offers stretched over multiple days. Visitors will have the option to combine either of the half-day tours (Connoisseurs or the Veuve Clicquot tour) with a full-day tour (Gold Experience, Epernay Imperial Experience or Montagne de Reims tour) to learn as much as possible about three sub-regions of the Champagne region.

For wine tourists with more time, it would also be possible to combine two-day tours from different sub-regions (Marne Valley, Cote te Blancs and Montagne de Reims). When tourists choose this option, it would be possible to enjoy a tasting of different Champagnes with lunch, instead of a bottle of Champagne as many tourists indicated they wanted to “taste as much as possible”. Appendix 10 has been created to summarize the tour highlights, cost price breakdown and tour price suggestions.

6.1.5 Other Recommendations:

Results from the study have indicated that wine tourists are interested in high-value experiences that are educational, relaxing and combine local cuisine and Champagne. Therefore, it could be interesting to research and develop new wine tourism workshops that could be offered at the headquarters of Aÿ Champagne, including a Champagne tasting workshop and a Champagne and Food pairing workshop.

The results indicated that many potential wine tourists are using tourism booking platforms, social media, online articles and “word of mouth” to research wine tourism destinations. Therefore, it is important to create a marketing and communication strategy, which is consistent and sets Aÿ Champagne Experience apart from its competitors.

It is essential that the website is easy to navigate, and the tour descriptions are up to date and easy to understand. These tour descriptions should correlate with the descriptions on all major tourism booking websites.

7 CONCLUSION:

The aim of the master's thesis was to develop wine tourism offers for Aÿ Champagne Experience and to evaluate if it is profitable to develop the company from a private tour guide organization to a specialized wine tourism travel agency in Champagne.

To create high-value wine tourism experiences it was essential to conduct market research by creating an online survey to better understand what type of wine tourism experiences wine tourists are interested in, as well as perform a SWOT and competitor analysis.

Results from the online survey indicated that potential wine tourists in the Champagne region are interested in wine tourism experiences which are educational and relaxing and that include champagne tastings, but also local cuisine and the history of the region. The results indicated that wine tourists are interested in visiting smaller producers in the Champagne region or will enjoy a full-day tour that combines visits with small producers and Champagne houses.

These types of tours are not currently offered by Aÿ Champagne Experience and therefore the proposals for five new wine tourism experiences were included in this master's thesis and will be developed and gradually introduced during the tourist season. The results of this study can be useful for wine tourism operators in the Champagne wine region, as it can serve as a guideline when developing new wine tourism experiences.

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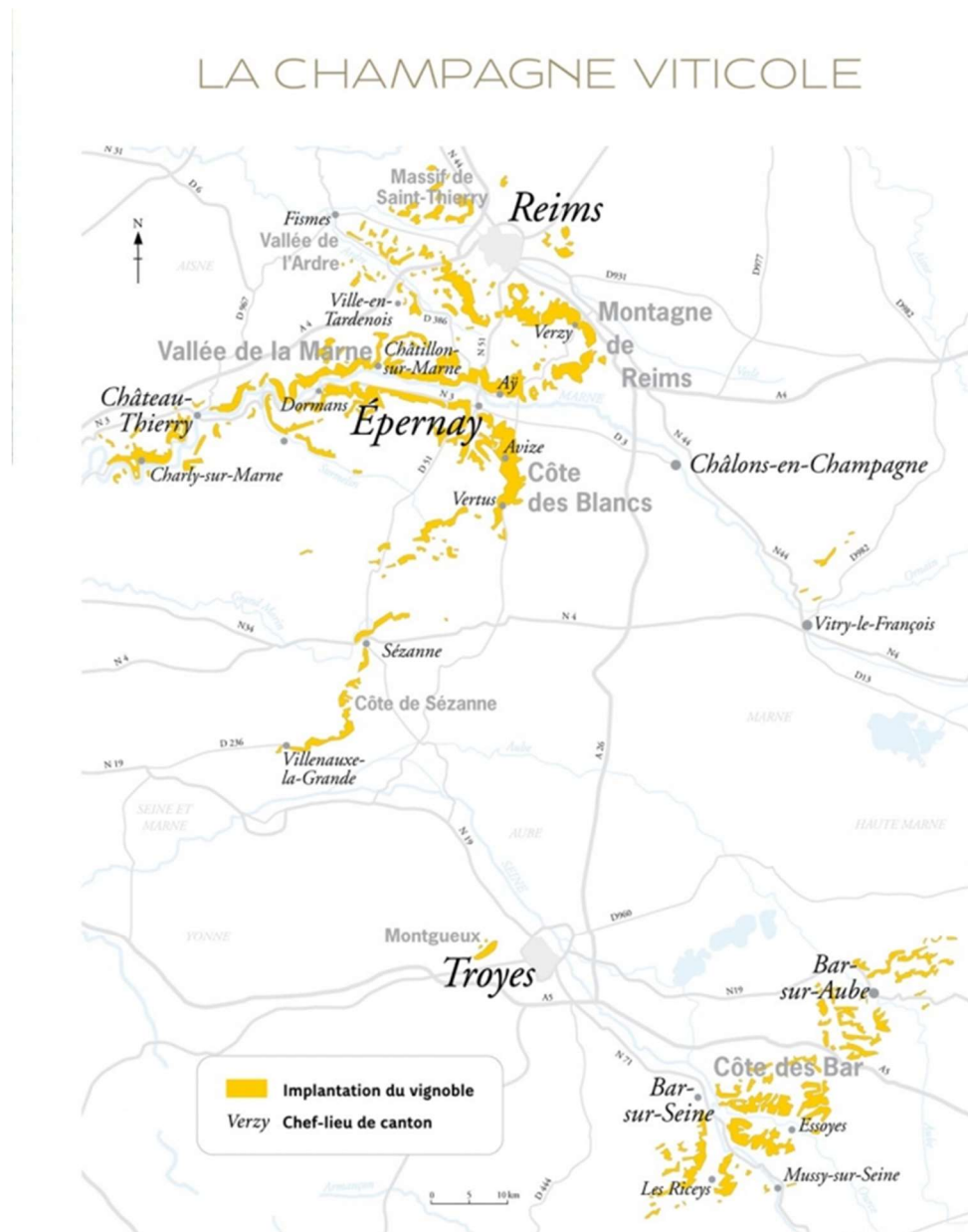
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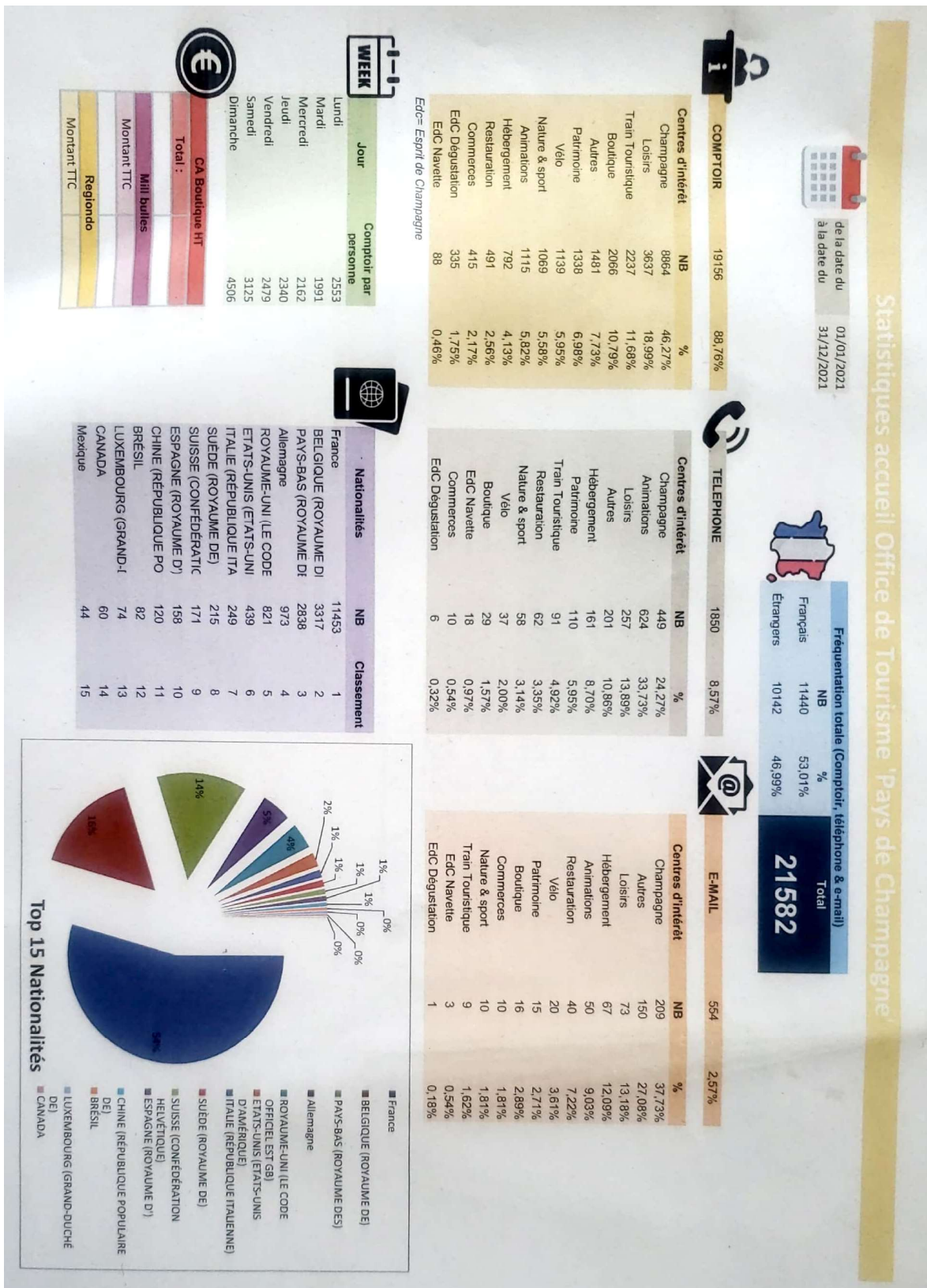
Annexes

Annex 1: Map of the Champagne Region



Source: <https://www.champagne.fr/en/terroir-appellation/champagne-terroir/champagne-vineyards-geography>

Annex 2: Epernay Wine Tourism Office Infographic

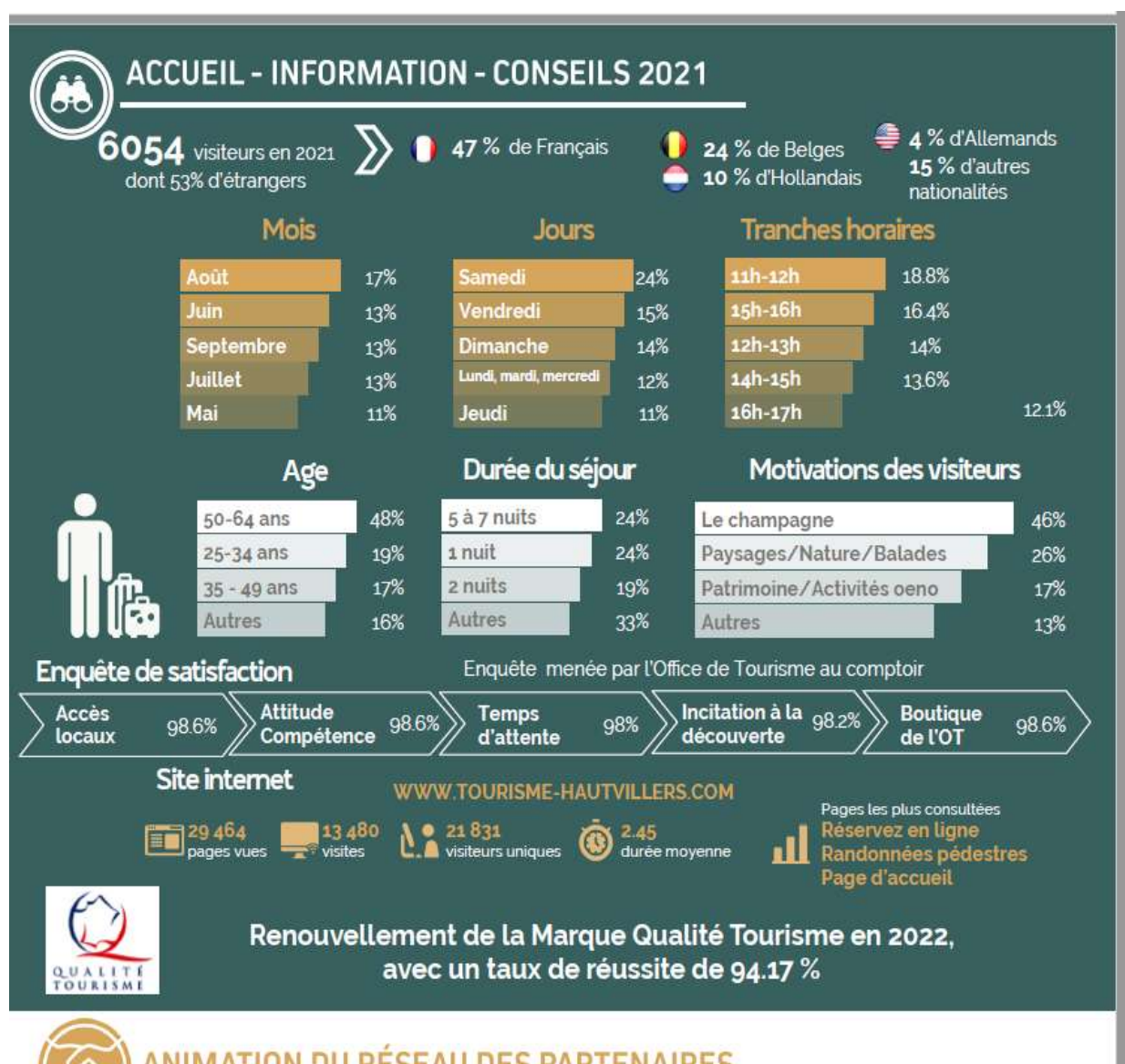


Annex 3: Epernay Tourism Office Tourist data 2016-2021

	Tourists per Annum					
Month	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
January	826	649	936	903	643	147
February	994	941	977	948	999	312
March	1895	1701	1764	1831	441	268
April	2436	4137	3170	3363	0	13
May	5195	5270	5886	5019	0	560
June	4791	5547	6609	6020	339	2705
July	6630	6721	7460	7102	3247	4418
August	7527	6609	8818	6771	3416	5724
September	5524	4323	6632	5621	1612	4569
October	3454	3138	3489	2018	764	1507
November	1872	1368	1491	1125	0	1522
December	955	2085	2078	1933	210	1115
Total	42099	42489	49310	42654	11731	22860

Colour Key	
Off Season	
Shoulder Season	
Tourist Season	

Annex 4: Hautvilliers Tourism Office Infographic



Annex 5: Current wine tourism offers at Aÿ Champagne Experience

Wine Tourism Offer	Description	Duration	Cost
Oenotouristic Escape (Walking tour)	Informative 2-hour discovery walk in the famous vineyards of Aÿ-Champagne near Epernay. During the private tour visitors will have the opportunity to learn more about the exceptional <i>terroir of Aÿ</i> , will immerse themselves in the historic Champagne hillsides and will learn more about the viticultural and winemaking practices of the region.	2 hours	40 €/pers.
Sabrage Experience	Private experience , by sabering a bottle of Champagne from a family of independent producers from the famous village of Aÿ with a local expert.	1.15 hours	47 €/pers.
Family getaway with a search for the natural treasure of Champagne	This 2-hour discovery walk in the famous vineyard of Aÿ-Champagne and tasting of 3 famous Champagne spirits (Ratafia, Fine of Marne and Marc of Champagne) from the Goyard Distillery. Throughout this escapade, explanations and clues will be given to children allowing them to find the natural treasure of Champagne. Pets are welcome.	2 hours	47 €/pers. : Adults 6 € : Children (0 à 10) 10 € : Children (11 à 17 ans)
Expérience Sabrage Spécial EVJF/EVG	Private Sabrage Experiences with friends, for a Bachelor and Bachelor Parties.	2 Hours	47 €/pers.
In the footsteps of Dom Pérignon from vine to glass	This private workshop is to discover the vine to the glass. Visit to the vineyard and the visit a small educational cellar. The workshop includes Champagne tasting with an educational approach at a independent grower, in the village of Hautvillers (the Village of Dom Perignon).	2 Hours	60 €/pers.
Team Building: Aÿ Team Building Experience	3.5 km outdoor trail in the village and vineyards of Aÿ. Champagne tasting Equipment, Safety instructions and graduation ceremony included.	3 hours	55 € excl. VAT/pers. - €66 incl. tax/pers. (from 4 pers. and up to 10 pers.)

The Connoisseurs	Private tour includes, discovery of two different regions of the Champagne appellation: The "Côte des Blancs" and Hautvilliers	3.30 Hours	155 € <i>pp</i>
The Must-sees ++	Discovery of 4 famous villages and vineyards classified Grand cru and 1st cru around Epernay, tasting with independent producer	3.30 Hours	140€ <i>pp</i>
The Must-sees +	Discovery 2 famous villages and vineyards near Epernay as well as their historic hillsides classified as World Heritage by UNESCO with the visit of a family of independent producers followed by Champagne tasting.	3 Hours	110€ <i>pp</i>
The Must-sees	Discover the village of Aÿ (only 5 min. from Epernay and 35 min. from Reims) as well as its historic hillside vineyards with the visit to a family of independent producers followed by Champagne tastings.	2 Hours	80€ <i>pp</i>
Love & Champagne Experience	Visit the charming village of Hautvillers , lighting a candle in the Church of Dom Pérignon, Panoramic vineyard visit, visit to the famous village and vineyard of Aÿ-Champagne and a romantic stroll in the vineyards, and finally a unforgettable romantic gourmet picnic with Champagne.	3 Hours	190 €/pers.
Harvest Experience	All experiences from 2 hours to a day will be adapted free of charge to the atmosphere of the harvest.	Depends on the tour duration.	Free addition to the tour
Gold Champagne Experience	Private day tour with a local guide, stopping in the most famous villages and vineyards of Champagne. Visiting of 2 producers, Church of Dom Perignon Tour, vineyard stop, and lunch and Champagne included.	8 hours	295 €/pers.
UNESCO Experience	Enjoy an unforgettable day in private with your local guide in the most beautiful sites and landscapes of Champagne classified as World Heritage by UNESCO from Reims to Epernay, stopping in the most famous villages and vineyards of Champagne and Visiting one independent producer	8 hours	295 €/pers.

Annex 6: Wine Tourism Companies in Champagne, Offers and Target Market

Tour Company	Description of Wine Tourism offers	Price Range	Target Market
Sparkling Tours	Small group tours in a minibus in the Champagne region to visit Champagne houses & growers	Half day tours 85 €/pers. Full day tours 190 €/pers.	International and domestic tourists. Tourists are usually couples or groups of friends.
My Vintage Tours	A diverse range of wine tourism experiences including vineyard and grower visits. The tours are conducted in old vintage minibuses. Offers include personalized tours for weddings, EVJF and teambuilding experiences.	Offers range between 42-160 €/pers.	International and domestic tourists. Tourists are usually couples or groups of friends or families.
Ay Eco Visit	Vineyard visits with a winegrower in the vineyards of Ay-Champagne, in an electric golf-car vehicle. The winegrower introduces guests to the vineyards and his Champagnes.	50 €/pers.	International visitors, Tourists are usually friends or families.
Oenospheres	Tailor-made and inclusive stays with a private guide to discover the Champagne region. The company offers a range of multiple day packages as well as, EVJF and teambuilding experiences.	Offers range between 325 and 1090€/pers., depending on the offer.	Domestic Market: Tourists and Companies International and local tourists, travelling as couples or small friend groups.

Ala Francaise Champagne	Small group tours in a minibus in the Champagne region to visit Champagne houses & growers.	Half day tours start ranging between 85 -150 €/pers.	International and domestic tourists. Tourists are usually couples or groups of friends.
	The company also offers tours where the tourists can drive with their own car or e-bike tours.	Full day tours	
The Champagne Tour. Co	Small private tours that are fully customizable, depending on the tours.	Tour prices start at 450 €/pers. depending on the visitors	International and domestic tourists. Tourists are usually couples or groups of friends.
	Tours range from half day, full day to multiple days offers and are conducted in a luxury minibus.		
Tours in Champagne	Small private tours in the Champagne region to visit Champagne houses & growers.	Half day tours starting at 160 €/pers.	International and domestic tourists. Tourists are usually couples or groups of friends.
	Experiences range from half-day tours to full-day tours and masterclasses.	Full day tours starting at 300 Euros €/pers.	
Bubbles TukTuk	Private vineyard visits in a traditional electric TukTuk. The tours range from an hour visit in the vineyard to a 2-hour tour that includes a Champagne tasting.	Tour prices range between 48 and 165 €/pers. depending on the size of the group and the tasting option.	International and domestic tourists. Tourists are usually couples or groups of friends.

Annex 7: Wine Tourism Offers Combining Champagne Houses and Champagne Growers (Competitor Analysis)

Veuve Clicquot Tours		
Tour Company	Tour Description + Tour details	Price
Ala Francaise -Champagne	Veuve Clicquot, Family grower tour & Lunch Highlights: Lunch included Tastings 8 A short tour of the cellars of the Veuve Clicquot and a tasting glass of the famous “Yellow Label” Champagne. Discovery of Champagne Avenue (Epernay) and the village of Hautvillers (Church and Vineyard) followed by a champagne tasting class. The tasting class is followed by a lunch at a Champagne house (includes Champagnes and regional specialties- snacks not a full lunch) and a visit and tasting at a family grower.	230 €/Adult 135 per Child (10-17 years)
The Champagne Tour. Co	On the Footsteps of Veuve Clicquot Tour Highlights: Cellar visit and tasting at Champagne Veuve Clicquot Ponsardin, a tasting glass of the famous “Yellow Label” Champagne. Vineyard visit with a view of the Chateau de Boursault built by Madame Clicquot Ponsardin as well as a vineyard visit in the Grand Cru village of Bouzy, where Madame Clicquot was born and created the first blended Rosé Champagne.	Price requested Half-day private tour 450 €/pers. + tastings 50 Euros extra if the tour is on a Sunday.

Tours in Champagne	Veuve Clicquot special tour	Duration 4 hours
	Tour Highlights	160 €/pers.
	Pick up directly at your place in Reims or Epernay.	2-6 People
	Visit the well-known cellars of Veuve Clicquot and enjoy a tasting of 2 different Veuve Clicquot Champagnes.	
	Go shopping in the Veuve Clicquot shop.	
	Enjoy a drive in the UNESCO classified landscapes and vineyards of Champagne.	
Champagne Taittinger Tours		
Tour Company	Tour Description + Tour details	Price
Ala Francaise -Champagne	Morning Champagne Taittinger & Family Grower	Duration: 4 hours
	Tour Highlights:	95 Euro for Adults
	Guided drive through Reims	60 Euros for Children (10-17 years old)
	Tour the cellars of the world Champagne House Taittinger and a tasting of flagship Champagne.	
	Educational vineyard stop	
	Visit and tastings at a family run boutique winery	

Moët et Chandon Tours		
Tour Company	Tour Description + Tour details	Price
Ala Francaise -Champagne	MOËT & CHANDON, FAMILY GROWER DAY TOUR & LUNCH Tour of the underground cellars of Champagne House Moët & Chandon Discovery of Champagne Avenue in Epernay and picturesque village of Hautvillers including a stop in the vineyard Tasting class Casual lunch at a typical Champagne House with Champagnes and regional specialities Visit and tastings at a family-run boutique winery Duration: 9 Hours Tastings: 10	180 Euro per Adult 125 Euro per Child Aged between 10-17 years old
Tours in Champagne	Moët & Chandon special tour You will be pick up directly at your place in Reims or in Epernay. Visit the famous cellars of Moët & Chandon. Enjoy a tasting of 2 different Moët & Chandon champagnes in the tasting room. Go shopping in the branding Moët & Chandon shop. Enjoy a drive on the Champagne Avenue in Epernay along all the big houses.	Duration 4 Hours Price 160 pp Amount of people 2-6 people Use of convertible car- weather permitting

Annex 8: AnnList of Champagne houses and Champagne Growers that Interest Wine Tourists

Champagne Houses	
Krug	6
Pommery	3
Canard Duchene	1
Laurent Perrier	7
Dom Pérignon	8
Pol Roger	4
Cattier	1
Perrier-Jouët	5
G.H. Mumm	7
Ruinart	3
Billecart Salmon	5
Charles Heidsieck	3
Joseph Perrier	1
Roederer	3
Mercier	2
Bollinger	2
Ayala	3
Lanson	2
Boizel	1

Champagne Growers	
Larmier Bernier	2
J&H Fagot	1
Drappier	6
Paul Bara	1
Gosset	2
Vilmart	1
Selosse	5
Camille Saves	1
Louis Nicaise	1
Small Growers	1
Salon	3
Barnaut	1
Legras & Haas	1
Jacquesson	1
Marc Hebrart,	1
Philipponnat	1
Egly Ouriet,	1
Jacquinot et fils	1
Pierre Peters	1
Henriot	1
J.Lassalle	1
Le Clare-Caspard	1

Jacquart	1
Breton Fils	1
Tribaut	1
Elodie D	1

Annex 9: Master Thesis Survey Questions

Online Survey Questions

1. What is your Location?

2. Choose your age group?

3. How often do you drink Champagne?

4. Do you have a favourite Champagne house or producer? Please type the name below:

5. Do you know the difference between Champagne Houses and Champagne Growers?

6. Have you ever visited the Champagne wine region?

7. What is the main reason, you would like to visit Champagne?

8. When planning a trip to a new wine region, what platforms do you use when researching and planning your trip?

9. Which of the following Champagne producers and Champagne houses would you like to visit on your first/ next trip to Champagne:

10. Are there any other Champagne houses or producers that you would like to visit on your trip to Champagne? Please write the name below:

11. Please select all the boxes, applicable to the following statement: When visiting a new wine region, I would like to learn more about:

12. When planning a trip to a new wine region, what do you prefer:

13. When visiting the Champagne wine region, what do you want to see and experience?

14. When visiting Champagne with a tour guide, what would you prefer:

15. What is your budget for a half day (4 hours) per person for a private tour of the Champagne wine region

16. What is your budget for a half day (4 hours) per person for a group tour (minibus tour) of the Champagne wine region:

17. What is your budget per person for a full day (8 hours) private tour of the Champagne wine region:

18. What is your budget per person for a full day (8 hours) group tour (minibus tour) of the Champagne wine region:

19. Please describe in a few sentences what you would describe as a perfect tour in the Champagne region.

Annex 10: New Tour Proposals, Cost Breakdown and Price Proposals

Full Day Tours			
Name	Tour highlights	Cost breakdown per person	Tour price per person
Epernay Imperial Experience	- Duration: 8 Hours - Visit and tasting at Moët et Chandon. - Drive through the Avenue de Champagne - Lunch at Champagne bar in Epernay/Hautvillers (Including a bottle of Champagne) - Educational Vineyard pitstop at the viewpoint in Hautvillers - Visit to the Abbaye Saint-Pierre d'Hautvillers and Dom Perignon's grave. - Visit and tasting at independent producer in Hautviller.	Winery visits and tastings: 45 Euro Lunch and Champagne: 25 Euros Other costs: Price of tour guide/ Car: 100 Euros Total Day Cost : 170 Euros	300 Euro
Montagne de Reims Experience	- Duration: 8 Hours - Visit and taste at Veuve Clicquot or Champagne Taittinger - Visit to small producer - Educational Vineyard stop - Lunch at Champagne bar in Rilly-la-Montagne - Visit to historical church in Rilly-la-Montagne	Veuve Clicquot and Taittinger visit: 35 Euro Champagne Michel Fagot visit: 15 Euro Total tasting cost: 50 Euro Lunch and Champagne: 25 Euros Another cost, Price of tour guide/ Car: 100 Euros Total Day Cost: 175 Euros	300 Euro

Half Day Tours			
Veuve Cliquot Experience	Duration: 3.50 Hours • Visit and tasting at Veuve Cliquot • Visit to small producer (Champagne Herbert Beaufort) • Vineyard stop overlooking the Chateau de Boursaut (built by the widow)	Visit to Veuve Cliquot: 35 Euro Visit to Small producer: 15 Euros Additional Cost (Guide and Car): 50 Euro Total Cost: 85 Euro	160 Euro
Ay Grand Cru Experience	Duration 3.50 Hours • Visit and tasting at Champagne Deutz or Champagne Ayala • Vineyard visit in Ay • Visit to small producer (Champagne Egro or Champagne Dauby)	Visit to the Champagne Ayala/ Deutz: 35 Euros Visit to small producer: 15 Euro Additional Cost (Guide and Car): 50 Euro Total Cost: 85 Euros	150 Euro

Multiple Day Tours Option			
2 Day Champagne Experience: Gold and Montagne de Reims or Epernay Imperial Experience	Duration :16 Hours Depending on the tours selected by visitors	Total cost ranging between 175 -200 Euros per day. Maximum cost for tour agency: 400 Euros per person	600 Euro

Annex 11: Graphic design and Social Media Tasks Performed During The Internship



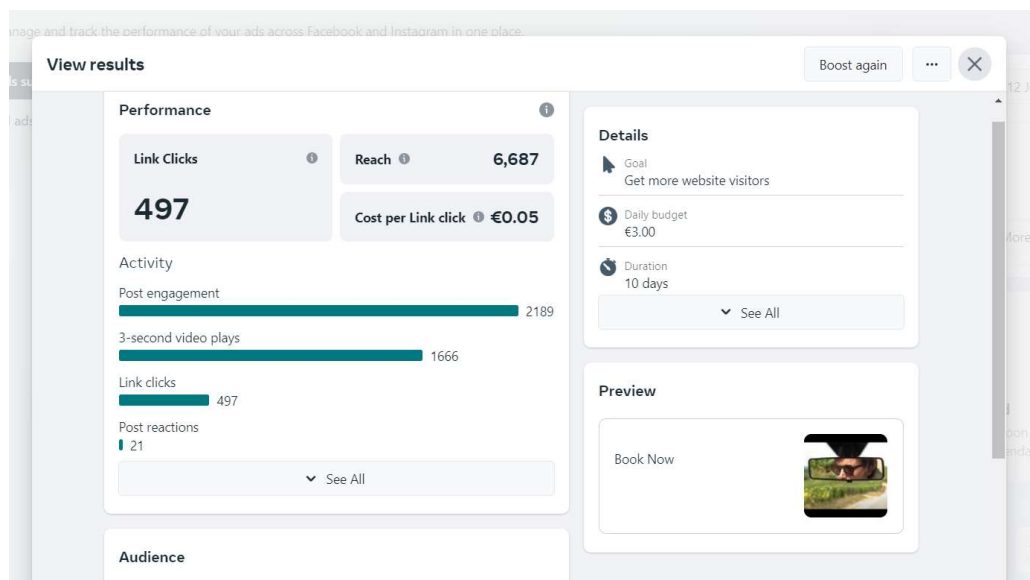
WORKING WITH ISABELLE AND A GRAPHIC DESIGNER TO CREATE THE NEW BROCHURE OF AY CHAMPAGNE EXPERIENCE.



DESIGNED WITH CANVA TO PROMOTE THE TEAM BUILDING ACTIVITIES OF AY CHAMPAGNE EXPERIENCE ON SOCIAL MEDIA.



DESIGNED NEW “STORY COVERS” FOR INSTAGRAM USING CANVA.



CREATED A SOCIAL MEDIA ADVERTISEMENT CAMPAIGN FOR FACEBOOK AND INSTAGRAM, TO LAUNCH THE NEW PROMOTIONAL VIDEO.

Full Day Private Tours

1j Gold Champagne Experience



Tasting of 6 Champagnes &
3 Famous Champagne spirits
(Ratafia, Fine and Marc)



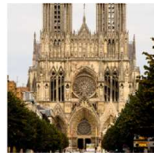
Lunch at a Champagne bar
is included &
1 Bottle of Champagne
(per group of 2).

295 €/PERS.

Optional : picnic +50€/pers
or/ & Sabrage +25€/pers
Child : 40€



1j UNESCO Experience



Tasting of 3 Champagnes &
3 Famous Champagne spirits
(Ratafia, Fine and Marc)



Lunch at a Champagne bar
is included &
1 Bottle of Champagne
(per group of 2).

295 €/PERS.

Optional : picnic +50€/pers
or/ & Sabrage +25€/pers
Child : 40€



1j Epernay 'Impérial' Experience



Tasting of 4 Champagnes &
3 Famous Champagne spirits
(Ratafia, Fine and Marc)



Lunch at a Champagne bar
is included &
1 Bottle of Champagne
(per group of 2).

295 €/PERS.

Optional : picnic +50€/pers
or/ & Sabrage +25€/pers
Child : 40€



1j Montagne de Reims Experience



Tasting of 4 Champagnes &
3 Famous Champagne spirits
(Ratafia, Fine and Marc)



Lunch at a Champagne bar
is included &
1 Bottle of Champagne
(per group of 2).

295 €/PERS.

Optional : picnic +50€/pers
or/ & Sabrage +25€/pers
Child : 40€



1j Private "à la carte" tour in Champagne



The number of tastings
will depend on the Champagne
houses chosen



We will book a table for you
at a restaurant of your
choice.

295 €/PERS.

** The Champagne tastings are
not included in the price of
the tour



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Half Day Private Tours



3H30 The Connoisseurs

The half-day private tour includes meetings with 2 families of independent Champagne producers, discovering the cote de blancs" region, the historical hillsides of Champagne, the villages of Aÿ and Hautvillers, and a private guided tour of the Dom Perignon Church.



Tasting of 6 Champagnes &
3 Famous Champagne spirits
(Ratafia, Fine and Marc)

155 €/PERS.



2H The Must-Sees

Half day private tour that includes discovering two famous Champagne villages, meeting a family of independent Champagne growers (classified Grand cru/1st Cru), visiting the village and vineyard of Aÿ and a private tour of the Church of Dom Pérignon in Hautvillers.



Tasting of 3 Champagnes &
3 Famous Champagne spirits
(Ratafia, Fine and Marc)

110 €/PERS.



3H30 The Must- Sees (Extended tour)

The half day private tour includes discovering four famous Champagne villages (Aÿ, Hautvillieres, Mutigny and Mareuil-sur-Aÿ), meeting a family of independent Champagne growers (classified Grand cru/1st Cru), a private tour of the Church of Dom Pérignon in Hautvillers and a tasting of 3 Famous Champagne spirits.



Tasting of 3 Champagnes &
3 Famous Champagne spirits
(Ratafia, Fine and Marc)

140 €/PERS.



2H The Must- Sees (Pressed for time)

Two hour private tour that includes discovering one famous Champagne villages, meeting a family of independent Champagne growers (classified Grand cru/1st Cru) and visiting the village and vineyard of Aÿ.

90 €/PERS.



2H Dom Pérignon Private Workshop

Private, informative and interactive workshop from vine to glass to meet Dom Perignon the "spiritual father of Champagne" through history of Champagne and Champagne region. The workshop includes a on-site visit of an educational cellar with explanations of Champagne making process and a Champagne tasting at a small family producer in Hautvillers.



Tasting of 6 Champagnes.

60 €/PERS.



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Private Walking Tours



2H Oenotouristic Escape

Private 2-hour discovery walk of the famous Aÿ-Champagne vineyard near Epernay & Reims. Learn about the exceptional *Terroir*, history of the village and vineyard of Aÿ Grand Cru, and the viticulture and winemaking practices.



Tasting of
3 Famous Champagne spirits
(Ratafia, Fine and Marc)



Pet Friendly

40 €/PERS.



2H Family getaway: a Search for the natural treasure of Champagne

Private 2-hour discovery walk in the famous vineyards of Aÿ-Champagne near Epernay and Reims. Learn more about the exceptional *terroir*, history of the village and vineyard of Aÿ Grand Cru, and the viticulture and winemaking practices. Throughout this escapade, explanations and clues will be given to children allowing them to find the natural treasure of Champagne and this quest will be an opportunity for them to learn about the vegetative cycle of the vine.



Tasting of 3 Champagnes &
3 Famous Champagne spirits
(Ratafia, Fine and Marc)



Children will
taste
organic juice.



Pet Friendly

45 €/PERS.



Scan the individual QR to read more about each tour



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Unique Experiences



1H15 Sabrage Experience

The half-day private tour includes meetings with 2 families of independent Champagne producers, discovering the cote de blancs" region, the historical hillsides of Champagne, the villages of Aÿ and Hautvillers, and a private guided tour of the Dom Perignon Church.



Tasting of 6 Champagnes &
3 Famous Champagne spirits
(Ratafia, Fine and Marc)

47 €/PERS.



2H Love & Champagne

Half day private tour that includes discovering two famous Champagne villages, meeting a family of independent Champagne growers (classified Grand cru/1st Cru), visiting the village and vineyard of Aÿ and a private tour of the Church of Dom Pérignon in Hautvillers.



Tasting of 3 Champagnes &
3 Famous Champagne spirits
(Ratafia, Fine and Marc)

110 €/PERS.



3H30 Bachelor/ Bachelorette

The half day private tour includes discovering four famous Champagne villages (Aÿ, Hautvillieres, Mutigny and Mareuil-sur-Aÿ), meeting a family of independent Champagne growers (classified Grand cru/1st Cru), a private tour of the Church of Dom Pérignon in Hautvillers and a tasting of 3 Famous Champagne spirits.



Tasting of 3 Champagnes &
3 Famous Champagne spirits
(Ratafia, Fine and Marc)

140 €/PERS.



2H Teambuilding

Two hour private tour that includes discovering one famous Champagne villages, meeting a family of independent Champagne growers (classified Grand cru/1st Cru) and visiting the village and vineyard of Aÿ.

90 €/PERS.



2H Tailor Made-Experiences

Private, informative and interactive workshop from vine to glass to meet Dom Perignon the "spiritual father of Champagne" through history of Champagne and Champagne region. The workshop includes a on-site visit of an educational cellar with explanations of Champagne making process and a Champagne tasting at a small family producer in Hautvillers.



Tasting of 6 Champagnes.

60 €/PERS.



Scan the individual QR to read more about each tour



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