



MASTER THESIS
DOMINIO DEL CHALLAO: WINE TOURISM IN HERITAGE
VILLAGES

VICTORIA BRAVO

**Internship developed at Dominio del Challao,
LABASTIDA, RIOJA, SPAIN.**

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Abstract and keywords

This Master Thesis project describes the process and methodological approach for a wine tourism product creation in a unique context, the medieval village of Labastida in Rioja Alavesa, Spain. The project explores several crucial concepts related to the specificities of countryside businesses and village economies such as rural revitalization, economic diversification, and networking. The main aspects of the wine escape concept and experience creation process were used to inform product design. The local tourism ecosystem was analyzed in a background online research that included: websites and social media document review, strategic plans, and reports, tourism asset assessments, visitor hat research, and visitor satisfaction analysis. The result was the creation of the tourism offerings of Dominio del Challao winery in several stages: SWOT analysis, competitors' analysis, product briefing including its objectives and main characteristics, followed by the storytelling main points and the design of the needed structural areas for the tourism reception. The last stage was the communication strategy proposal for launching the product and the process finished with recommendations for future strategic alliances that could improve visitor satisfaction. The results of the project highlighted the importance of wineries as key roles in rural revitalization, the need for business and the benefits of networking and cooperation between small stakeholders, as well as the central role of quality service and unique settings in the success of wine tourism ventures.

Keywords : **village wine tourism, rural revitalization, networking in the wine business, product creation, communication strategy.**

List of abbreviations

DOCa : *Denominación de Origen Calificada* (Qualified denomination of origin)

SWOT: Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats

UWEA: Ultimate Wine Experience Australia

MICE: Meetings, incentives, congresses and expositions

KPI: Key Performance Indicators

FAM TOUR: familiarization tour

1. Introduction

1.1. *About Dominio del Challao*

Dominio del Challao is a Spanish- Argentinian project located in the historical village of Labastida in Álava, Spain. It is in the Basque Country Autonomous Community, and it is part of the *Rioja DOCa* appellation.

The winery is the result of a partnership between Carlos Fernandez, owner of Bodegas Tierra – located in Labastida – and Manuel Michelini Mufatto, son of two Argentinian winemakers and co-owner of other three wineries located in Argentina, Uruguay, and El Bierzo in Spain.

The project started in 2019 when they were introduced by a common friend in the wine industry; Manuel had been exploring the area of Labastida and thought it was a perfect location to start a new winery. Carlos comes from a longstanding family of winemakers and viticulturists in the area. Together, they combined the modern view and energy of young Manuel and the know-how and rooted winemaking of Carlos and founded Dominio del Challao.

The goal of the winery is to re-interpret the world-known region of Rioja, producing elegant and long-lasting wines that express a modern and high-quality approach to winemaking. Their philosophy is focused on respecting the unique terroir of Labastida, located between the Ebro River and the Sierra Cantábrica, as well as preserving the important architectural and winemaking heritage of the area.

The winery is in the village center, near the main Cathedral, and surrounded by households. They own a small *calado* – underground traditional cellars from the Reinassance in Rioja wine region– which is still in use and where their wines are aged in oak *foudres* and in bottles. The production facilities are shared between Bodegas Tierra and Dominio del Challao and wines are produced in stainless steel tanks as well as concrete vats. There are no current facilities available to host tourists or tastings, nor a wine shop.

Their first vintage was in 2019 and it was first released in November 2022 for distribution and consumers. Three main labels are produced: Angelita, Garnacha del Challao and Challao. The wines range from €25 to €135, and they have been well received by the specialized press and the consumers.

The winery's main objectives are to become one of the most recognized projects in the area and to strengthen the brand's positioning and awareness, therefore, the idea of having a tourism area is being considered. The owners believe that they could take advantage of the one-to-one relation provided by hosting the consumers in the winery as well as the direct sales that are originated by this.

The winery produces small quantities of premium wines, and it would be desirable to avoid transportation costs by selling directly in the winery. They also shared the fact that because of the current stage in the brand development, hosting consumers in the winery could enhance brand recognition. With this first interest in mind, the intern's task was to create the strategy and design the tourism area offerings as well as to introduce the first promotional campaigns.

1.2. Activities during the internship

During the internship, the main activities were directly related to the creation of the tourism area of the winery. The owners and partners were considering opening the winery for visitors and therefore the strategic, experiential, and esthetical design of the area were developed by the intern.

To facilitate organizational and strategic decisions the first analysis was focused on the wine tourism destination at two different levels: the wine region known as Rioja Alavesa and Labastida Village. This first approach helped to understand the focus of tourism in the autonomous community and the alignment of the potential project, any future funds from the government, and the dynamics and main indicators of the tourism activity in the area, which informed the marketing strategy and the draft of the buyer persona for the project.

Secondly and accordingly to the winery's objectives, philosophy, and sales goals, a product design was done for the tourism area. This encompasses the design of the areas where the visitors will be hosted, the characteristics of the experience, the structural elements of the product communication, and suggested strategic alliances for the future.

2. Methodological Approach

The final objective of this Master Thesis is to create a wine tourism product for Dominio del Challao winery; for this purpose, a methodological approach was designed and followed.

Firstly a thorough literature review was conducted focused on concepts considered relevant such as rural revitalization, co -o petition, networking, and the winescape. Studies related to consumer behavior and customer satisfaction were also explored.

An on – site observation was done during the internship to understand the village organization, communal characteristics and daily touristic rhythm. One exploratory interview was conducted with a local tour guide, and this conversation informed the questions that guided the consecutive background research and served as a first guide to understanding the challenges and strengths perceived by professionals in the area.

As a way to better understand the characteristics of the destination, background research was done, following a set of questions centered on describing the current touristic

scenario of the destination. This quest was conducted in different phases, specifically: websites and social media document review, strategic plans, and reports, tourism asset assessments, visitor hat research, and visitor satisfaction analysis. Each of these steps was used to create a SWOT analysis and a product briefing, which helped design the tourism strategy and the product offering of Dominio del Challao.

3. Literature Review

When facing the challenge of creating a new wine tourism experience in the specific context of a historical village in Spain, there were different concepts and aspects of relevance.

Firstly, the concept and practices related to rural revitalization became central. Unveiling the role of wine tourism and specifically of winery entrepreneurs and owners in the process of constructing value and enhancing the local development in the villages was the first approach to the subject. It was in search of a reason to open the winery for visitors that this path was explored by trying to answer the question: why should wine tourism experiences be offered in Labastida?

This first question led the literature review towards a wider view which explored the specific dynamics of historical village preservation and the forms that entrepreneurship can take to lead to rural revitalization. The example of tea villages in China was taken to exemplify this.

Secondly, and once the importance of economic diversification in rural areas was stated, the search focused on how the unique dynamics of the village businesses and rural tourism can be managed to assure balanced development and benefits. The co-opetition model and the networking concepts were explored to understand these organizational aspects, studies performed in the agritourism businesses in Tuscany, Italy proved to be very helpful to understand the scope of networking. This quest was conducted to answer the question: how should businesses interact in a village environment to promote visitor satisfaction and sustainable business development?

Continuing with the analysis, the concept of winescape was introduced. The last level of investigation was related to the uniqueness of the wine tourism experience, its environment, and its hedonic nature as well as the elements of success. To understand what makes a wine tourism experience unique the intern approached different papers regarding the characteristics of the winescape, the factors of success in the cellar door visitation, and the hedonic and experiential characteristics of visiting a wine region. This informed the possible strategy to be taken to create the wine tourism product of Dominio del Challao and answered the question: how should a wine experience be to reflect the wine region and provide a pleasurable moment?

In the following sections, each of these concepts will be approached with the intention of answering the triggering questions and informing the pilot product creation.

3.1 *Rural revitalization*

The importance of promoting economic diversification in rural areas has been proved by several analyses performed on different regions around the world. The lack of employment and de-population is a sign of rural decline being observed all around Europe and Asia. The balance between city and village development needs to be revised. In this context, rural revitalization emerges as “a process of constructing and cultivating a good relationship between talents and places” (Shen, Jing, and Rung-Jiun Chou, 2022)

“Its core value lies in the revival of local areas, the enhancement of local development capacity, and the provision of local employment opportunities” (Taguchi, 2018). “It is based on the principle of small-scale, cross-domain and diverse relationships in order to establish a positive cycle of places, talents, and careers” (Dohse and Gold, 2013) .

This process is then understood as an endogenous and bottom up development where the sense of place, key leadership and the participation of the local talent determine the cultural and industrial opportunities of the village.

The diversification of rural areas is a crucial strategy to reduce the vulnerability of these populations and their difficulties to cope with external changes. The promotion of local tourism could be considered an attractive prospect to generate new sources of income and encourage heritage preservation. “A link between tourism and agriculture has been widely recognized and implemented as a method to support rural development and reduce poverty, especially in developing countries “(Torres and Momsen, 2011).

An example of how the rural revitalization process takes place in heritage villages can be taken from the case of Xiamei in China. Jing Shen and Rung-Jiun Chou conducted a study with in-depth interviews, fieldwork, and participatory observation exploring how tea tourism could revitalize an ancient village.

Several central elements of this process that proved successful, could be mirrored in the specific context of Labastida village in Spain. The results showed the key role of leaders and local talents, as well as spatial types created in the village with different functionalities. At the same time media and internet marketing were highlighted as driving forces of rural revitalization.

Considering the key takeaways of the Xiamei study, the central elements to be considered for successful rural development in a village context are:

- The economic foundation is determined by the local industry, in this case, the long-standing wine production businesses in the area. These companies should be using local talents who will become the human resources of this endogenous

process. This can encourage another driving force of revitalization which is the return of adults to start businesses.

- Local leaders and key figures must take the lead in promoting heritage and tourism development. This role could be played by the local families related to the wine industry for hundreds of years. This shows that wineries, as local key figures retain not only an economic role but also a more important social role of being the promoters and contributors to the sense of place.
- The general development is characterized by different stages, where the human factor has proved to be central. The cultural factor composed of the heritage and linked with the local clans is another key element together with the functional factor, specifically, how the space is organized in the village.

The main learnings from this exploration showed that wineries might play several roles in the village context such as the economic, being the main activity of the area, and spatial, since cellar doors and any new buildings created to host visitors would change the village's appearance. At the same time, they are the nest of local leaders and talents. This increases the value of the wineries and entrepreneurs' actions and adds a crucial dimension to be considered by the Dominio del Challao team and any other winery looking forward to diversifying in a rural context.

Mutual cooperation and experience-sharing helped the local talents to become bottom-up forces in the process. Regarding this aspect, the specific dynamics of the village's economic organization, the importance of networking, and the management implications are described in the next section.

3.2 Networking and co-opetition

When approaching destination management and specifically at a business level, the relations between the different businesses working in the same village have proved to be a determinator of performance and tourist satisfaction. While the region's assets were listed to understand the attractiveness of the destination, the subject of how these businesses work together became an aspect to be examined.

Shpresim Domi and Giovanni Belletti conducted an empirical study with agritourism businesses in Tuscany and the main findings stated that the commercialization of origin products and the participation in networks had both a positive effect on the performance of the agritourism farms. "Networking mediates the relationship between origin products and performance" (Shpresim Domi and Giovanni Belletti, 2022).

The multifunctional model used in these farms is a process that starts with the broadening of the activities - such as tourism- , and continues with the deepening which could be quality differentiation, innovation in production, and marketing. A third level is the

re-grounding, deeply connected to the system to which the farm belongs. All the connections at the territorial level are re-designed in order to better link the economic activities to the local resources and activate collaborations with other farmers and actors, including agencies and non – governmental organizations. This model could be used by wineries to understand how offering a new service such as tasting, and visits enriches their business performance and specifically how a deepening in the product characteristics will differentiate the offer. Following the system's logic, this will also re-ground the wineries' relationships in the area which might take the form of collaborations with other local producers and other industries in order to complete the product offering.

This consideration of the multifunctionality of rural businesses shows that the creation of tourism experiences would benefit from a "collective" action or association. The different stages of development could even naturally drive producers to communicate with each other to share experiences and address specific subjects to solve local problems, facing the challenges of attracting and retaining customers. The combination of functional, social, and product resources is very specific to the local heritage and could be the base of the co-creation process. "Being a member of a collective action (e.g., OPs consortia or associations) and/or partnering with other producers' organizations, adds value to specific territorial resources (Ortiz-Miranda et al., 2010), competes against the power of large retailers and better fulfills the demand for high-quality products" (De Wolf et al., 2007).

Partnerships and collaborations could be an interesting business strategy for rural areas where the geographical location and shared goals and limitations could become the nexus between different businesses. For this, the co-opetition model could be of use. The findings from Mariana Sigala study about the Ultimate Wine Experience Australia Association can enlighten the extent of the efforts to create such associations as well as the benefits for the partners.

This strategy or system has been proved to be beneficial for tourism businesses since the field represents a high density of suppliers with complementariness and inter – dependencies among each other. Chim-Miki & Batista-Canino (2017) defined coopetition as "a hybrid behavior resulting from the cooperation– competition that occurs between networks, organizations, or within organizations, (including relationships between competitors, suppliers, complementary businesses, government agencies, local population and customers) as a result of joint actions to achieve a common goal despite individual interests, thus generating co-production. "

Although co-location could seem to be a basic driver of this synergy, "networks are formed when there are agreements and understanding of a common purpose and coopeting partners agree and align their practices towards the achievement of shared goals and collective benefits" (Czakoń, Mucha-Kuś, & Sołtysik, 2016; Czernek, Czakoń, & Marszałek,

2017). This should as well be moderated by a governance system that can define goals, monitor them, and communicate the individual and shared results of the businesses. In this matter, the UWEA is an excellent example as “is managed and co-ordinated by a third-party organization that operates like a marketing representation company and/or an intermediary commissioned to build partnerships and synergies between the coopeting network and the potential partners (e.g. the travel trade, tourism organizations, tourism suppliers etc)”(Sigala, 2022).

This association shows a coordination based on common goals and the results show an increase in the number of visitors and the daily expenses.

In the context of village tourism, the possibility of creating a tourism hub with shared goals focused on: attracting visitors, the quality of service, and local development could be proved successful. The possibility of partnering with other wine villages around Spain might offer a unique experience marked by authenticity in an outstanding rural environment.

Wineries working in this village context might benefit from connecting and working with local partners such as other wineries, restaurants, bars, and hotels as well as colleagues from other regions. This process could enrich and create a unique product that showcases the beauty of the countryside, the characteristics of each village and wine region, and the philosophy of the winemakers. Despite a third party would be needed to coordinate the associations and the marketing efforts, producers might have to be the pioneers and take the first step towards a coordinated tourism effort.

3.3 *The Village Winescape*

From the business perspective – in this case, Dominio del Challao new wine tourism area- it becomes fundamental to understand which are the elements that characterize a successful wine tourism venture while at the same time creating a product that responds and makes the most of the unique location of the project, Labastida village.

One question then arose: are there any differences between a cellar door located in the countryside and a cellar door located in a village?

Secondary research was centered on finding the visitor`s motivations to travel to a wine region and assessing if Labastida village and the winery could create a product to satisfy these expectations. The connection between place and service offerings has been mostly described in the “ servicescape” model, later adapted to “winescape” model by Johan Bruwer *et al.*, in different studies.

Despite the wide use of this concept mostly created and adapted to the wine regions in the New World and the debate around it, it offers a set of beneficial aspects that were useful for this research. On one side it permits a place–service connection that is needed to understand the unique village setting and its implications. On the other side, it provides a set

of listed elements that characterize a wine region that participates in touristic activities; therefore, it was used to assess the potential and viability of a new wine tourism project.

The Servicescape theory (Bitner, 1992) contends that the physical environment in which a service response is experienced affects the perception of service quality and satisfaction. This helps to expand the concept of the wine tourism services as them not being restricted to the cellar door, the quality of the wine, and the service but broadening to the experience of landscape, signs, symbols, culture, and spatial functionality.

The winescape is nested in 8 different dimensions:

1. Destination features: nature-related environment, for example, rolling hills, lakeside views, etc.
2. Destination features: winery structures and vineyards.
3. Destination features: heritage-related, towns/villages
4. Products – wines and other industry products
5. Ambient factors: atmosphere, climate
6. Signage and layout: spatial functionality and proximity
7. Service staff and residents
8. Fun: type and variety of the activities available.

As it is visible from this list, the elements that could be “controlled” or “delivered” by the winery are only a few, while a big part of the destination features, products, ambient factors will be determined by other local elements such as people, local culture, and natural landscape.

If we apply the concept of winescape to a village setting, we can see that the main dimensions are present with even a potential highlight of the ambient factors such as the local atmosphere and the presence of the residents. The village can offer a variety of activities, gastronomic, social, artistic and the proximity between them can be very attractive for visitors. The simple experience of sharing the space with residents and “experience their way of life”, the ambiance, markets, foods, the perception of time in this small villages can be a strength and competitive advantage for village wineries.

When thinking about the difference between countryside and village wineries, although further investigation would be needed to list every aspect, this first exploration shows that the elements of the winescape are present in both spatial situations and that even some specific factors and features could be enhanced in a village context.

3.4 *Wine tourism experiences*

After the concept of winescape was studied, a central aspect emerged: how should the experience be designed? This part of the research focused on the main drivers for wine

tourists to visit wine regions and the factors that influence visitors' satisfaction. These examples and results will be used to inform the final product creation.

The behavior of wine tourists has been usually linked to the behavior of wine consumers in different studies due to the fact that "an important outcome of the tourism experience can, among other things, be a greater consumer affinity with the wine product. Ultimately wine producers want to improve brand awareness and wine tourism and cellar door wine sales can therefore by default play a definite role in achieving this goal "(Brown and Getz, 2005).

Consumer needs have utilitarian and hedonic components, and this second approach was recognized in the 1980's when the "experiential view" explained the special nature of certain products and services with a high hedonic component, such as wine and leisure activities. When purchasing these products consumer decision-making is not always based on rational problem-solving, rather "decisions are often the results of 'primary process thinking': fun, amusement, fantasy, arousal, sensory stimulation" (Holbrook and Hirschman, 1982, p. 135).

Consumption of wine and visiting wine regions is then assessed as a "hedonic" activity which main objective is not to satisfy a need but to look for sensory stimulation, a satisfactory experience, and fun. These holidaying activities and experiences occur in the winescape but are not narrowed only to the wine consumption aspect.

Several scholars have described a shift in the imagery of a wine region, from wine production centered to more aesthetic and experiential aspects : "the imagery shifted from an overriding landscape theme of neatly cultivated vineyards set within wine regions with unspoiled natural scenery to a stronger emphasis on the natural scenery, cultural, and leisure-rural features of the wine region." (Williams, 2001b) .

Although visiting cellar doors is the essence of wine tourism, and the unique consumption setting (Gill et al., 2007), it is also pointed out that winery visitors report an attraction to the setting that enhanced their experiences. Visitors express that core destination appeals are different features such as "attractive scenery, pleasant climate, moderately priced accommodation, easy to obtain information, well-signposted wine trails, and a variety of things to see and do" (Getz and Brown, 2006, p. 155).

Thus, wine tourist are not only looking forward to visiting wineries and vineyards but their aim is instead "the culmination of a number of unique experiences that include the surrounding environment, ambience, atmosphere, regional culture, and local wine and food "(Johan Bruwer and Karin Alant,2009). At the same time, it includes a high social context as visitors usually travel in groups and with very close relationship partners like spouse, partner and friends.

In Enhancing consumer value in wine tourism, Jack Carlsen and Philipp Boksberger (2015) meta- analyzed thirteen extant studies of wine tourism experiences across a range of wine regions to identify and classify the key attributes. Two key attributes emerge as critical to the wine tourism experience: service quality and setting, the cellar door setting and staff knowledge, ability, and skill in all aspects of wine service are the essential ingredients in enhancing consumer value in the wine tourism experience.

This needs to be assessed by wineries and entrepreneurs as the desires of today' travelers are more focused on the experience than on the product itself, which means an important change in the way tourists are hosted. Considering secondary motivations - other than tasting and buying wines - such as "socializing, learning about wine, being entertained, traveling in a rural setting, scenery, relaxation, having a day out" (Carmichael, 2005; Carlsen, 2004; Dodd, 1995; Getz, & Brown, 2006) becomes crucial for any wine tourism strategy.

The design of a new wine tourism product should consider this findings and focus on two very important aspects.

1. While for some, the primary motive to engage in wine tourism activities is the wine, for others, is part of their tourist experience while traveling. Segmentation needs to be done and understanding the reasons behind the visitor's motivation is crucial.
2. According to Arnould *et al.*, (2002) the consumption experience is spread over a period of time and divided into four main stages :
 - a. (1) pre-consumption experience (searching and planning);
 - b. (2) purchase experience (choice and encounter with the environment);
 - c. (3) core consumption experience (sensation); and
 - d. (4) remembered/nostalgia experience (reliving the past experience)

Each of these stages should be considered when designing the product communication and on- site experience as well as for the use of the online communication and social media presence.

This part of the research highlighted a widening of the wine tourism experience outside of the cellar door towards the landscape, atmosphere, and culture; there is a seek for and hedonic experience which is found in the wine region. Sheth, Newman, and Gross (1991) proposed a consumer value typology from which two appear as the most important for wine regions and that are under the control of the management: emotional value and epistemic value. Wine tourism is essentially a sensorial experience and as such should affect an emotional response, as Galloway *et al.* (2008), Pan *et al.* (2008), and Charters, Fountain and Fish (2009) have found. The Epistemic value derived from educational and entertainment attributes should also be considered.

The experiential shift as well as the importance of the service quality and settings are the main elements to be considered by wine tourism entrepreneurs. Regarding the specific

characteristics of a village context, some unique characteristics could position village wineries and businesses in an advantageous condition: the close connection with the village ambiance, culture and heritage, the possibility of various offers, activities and stimuli to visitors looking forward to “experience a place” and not only a product could be strengths to attract visitors.

In this setting, there seems to be a shift from a “private place” which is the winery’s facilities, isolated in the countryside, surrounded by their property to a shared and open space such as a village. Villages are usually surrounded by vineyards that are collectively owned or parcellated between different grape growers, which offers a collective culture and interpretation of the landscape, the main character of this experience is “ the people of Labastida” and not necessarily a single project or winery. These collective and shared spaces become the base of a unique offering canalized in the villages and attractive to tourists looking for a holistic and integrated experience of the place.

4. On site observation: Labastida

4.1. History

Labastida Village is located in the southern area of the Basque Country. Is one of the 18 villages (or municipalities) that form the Rioja Alavesa subregion, part of the *Rioja DOCa*.

The village’s heritage goes back 4.000 years during the neolithic period, dolmens and excavations performed in the area have shown this long-standing heritage. During the Middle Ages, several fortifications and cathedrals were built, many of which remain standing today. Its location between the kingdoms of Navarra, Castilla, Aragón, and Álava made Labastida an important village since it was the entry point to the Basque area. During this time, wine production flowered and Labastida was the major producer of wines in Rioja.

After the Phylloxera crisis – which arrived in Rioja around the 1920s -, Labastida was isolated from current trends and especially from the productive centers for different reasons; many young people emigrated from the village and the region was involved in the civil war, supporting Franco’s regime and occupied by Italians. The village didn’t have access to railways and therefore it wasn’t convenient for the installment of big winemaking projects, thus producers became grape growers for wineries located in other bigger and better-connected villages like Haro.

Today the wine production of the village has increased and it is known for the settlement of small, personal projects and it is a very popular destination for visitors during the weekends. Tourism and wine production have promoted a renaissance of the village, which is taking advantage of its location and high-quality conditions for wine production in order to attract visitors.

4.2 *The village*

Around 1500 people live in Labastida, described as an enchanting place, with an outstanding cathedral and heritage households. It is also the starting point of hikes and walks to the Toloño mountain and the Sierra Cantábrica.

Labastida could be described as a traditional Basque Village as it combines the main traditional elements of this area: local restaurants where traditional food is served, wineries, a village church, and the main road where various historical households are located. The *façade* of the houses is maintained, and the overall architecture remains of the Middle Ages. The wineries and shops are located near houses, schools, and restaurants and there are usually locals walking around and enjoying the community. Refer to annex 1 to see a satellite photo of the village with the main touristic attractions marked.

In the next sections, the research focused on understanding the current state of tourism in Labastida and Rioja Alavesa. A thorough background research was done and the results helped the intern understand the local characteristics and the touristic potential of the area.

5. **Background research**

5.1. *Online document review: websites and social media*

The review was guided by different questions that were answered through online research. This part of the investigation was focused on understanding the current online positioning of the destination and the main messages being created and perceived by potential visitors in their online experiences. The results are organized in table 1.

The value propositions are centered around local products like olive oil and wine and the calm and beauty that the countryside offers. Mostly focused on visitors from Madrid and Barcelona, there is a clear offer of “disconnection” and enjoyment with the senses.

Most of the experiences are available to do all year long, there are no specific seasonal activities, although the highest visitation moments are during the harvest time in September and October, as well as during the long weekends and short holidays during the year.

The wineries offer products depending on their facilities, but most of them have tasting rooms and propose a tour around the production facilities and a tasting accompanied by traditional *pinchos* like “chorizo” and locally produced olive oil. Wine bars usually have daytime opening hours and visitors can access the winery to have wines by the glass or for short tastings.

More elaborate offers include vineyard visits, historical vintage tastings, lunches, wine courses, and blending games. Three very interesting experiences that differentiate Rioja from other wine regions around Spain are the local wine museums like Villa Lucia and Vivanco,

Table 1. Online document review in websites and social media

Question	Results
What are the value propositions of the destination?	• Small family-owned wineries and great modern buildings, vineyards to stroll and relax. Monumental villages are full of charm. • Disconnect and submerge in the vineyards. • Villages offer gastronomy, wine, olive oil, and nature. • Offers are focused on groups of friends and couples.
What are the experiences offered? Is there any seasonality in the offerings?	The experiences are centered around: • Wineries • Nature • Gastronomy • Architecture • Villages • Routes to do by car. • Patrimony
Which are the products offered?	Day tours include wineries, wine museums, and heritage. The long-standing architectural and cultural heritage is appreciated in the villages, churches, palaces, hermits, and dolmens. During the summer there are different activities around the Ebro River as well as hiking trails. There are also yearly festivities such as Easter and the special celebrations of each village during the summer months and harvest time
Is there any collaborative promotion of products and experiences?	The "Ruta del vino de Rioja Alavesa" is one of the Spain wine routes and it exists since 2006. There are 23 villages participating and the web page offer suggested routes and a reservation platform. Euskadi Gastronomica, is a basque country gastronomic association where several local restaurants that follow specific quality measures are included.
How is the destination's presence in social media?	The destination appears on social media such as Instagram. Local associations and government-led tourism centers have IG profiles where they promote visits and share information. The three more important profiles are Rioja DOCa, Rioja Alavesa, and Labastida. There are different personal blogs that detail their visiting experience and suggest itineraries to travel to the area.

harvest activities that include full-day programs in the wineries with the family, and offerings for corporate tourism. Many of the wineries offer locations for congresses and meetings followed by tastings and lunches in the place.

5.2 Document Review in plans and strategies, local and regional level

To understand the current state of tourism and the future objectives of the destination in terms of planning and funding wine tourism projects, a review of the local plans and strategies was done. It focused on the official websites of government institutions and local associations. The main tourism indicators were also reviewed and summoned.

Figure 1. National and regional tourism indicators. Source: INE <https://www.ine.es/> ; Informe MONITOR DOCa RIOJA, Observatorio turístico de Euskadi .

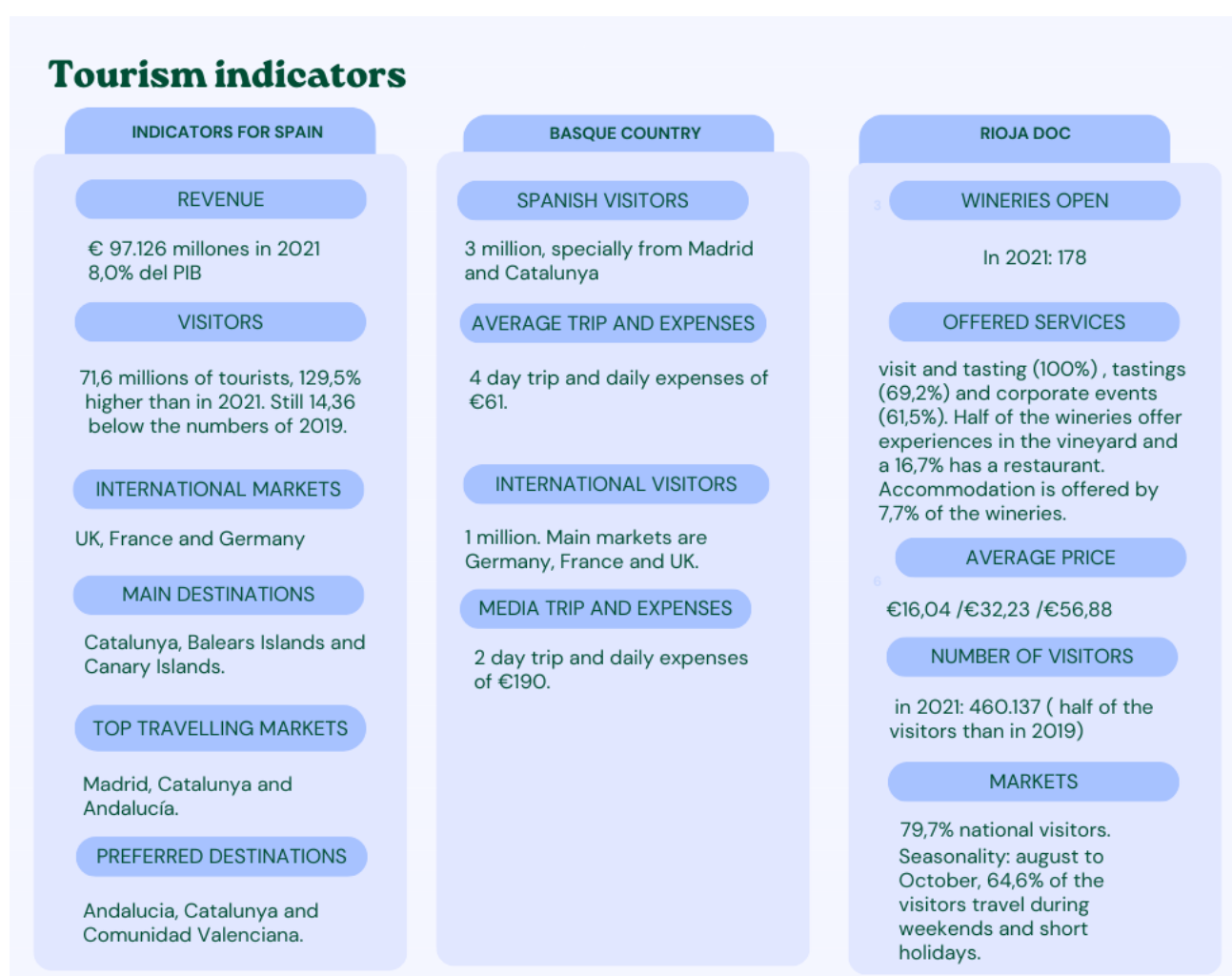


Table 2 shows the results from the review performed.

Table 2.Document review in regional planning and strategies

Question	Results
What type of reports and projects exist for Rioja Alavesa and Labastida?	There are two different strategic plans and reports elaborated on the destination, one by the Euskadi autonomous community and another one by the DOCa Rioja. Strategic plans key takeaways: Rioja DOCa: The strategic vision of the DOCa is to position as one of the most recognized wine regions for its quality, singularity and sustainability to seduce consumers. The main action axes for this objective are related to the revalorization of the brand through communication, product categories, and storytelling, the promotion of wine tourism, centered in the quality variety of experiences and promotional activities, the impulse of digitalization and innovation, sustainability and risk management. Basque Tourism: Its mission is to create a destination with memorable and unique experiences that showcase the values of sustainable tourism. The strategies and funds are focused on promoting local products and culture and highlighting the exceptional value propositions of Euskadi (its natural, historical, and cultural patrimony).
What type of reports and projects exist for Rioja Alavesa and Labastida?	They have three main objectives: better productivity with less cost and seasonality, better growth with more daily expenses, de - concentrating visitors, and diversifying the offer and sustainability. The communication is planned around two main aspects: the identity and lifestyle of the Basque country and the diversity of the destination.

Question	Results
What type of reports and projects exist for Rioja Alavesa and Labastida?	Rioja Alavesa has gained certifications focused on environmental and social sustainability as well as the implementation of technology in different phases and experiences of the destination. • DTI: improve the competitiveness of the destinations in five areas like government, innovation, technology, sustainability, and accessibility. • Biosphere: focused on tourism sustainability is based on the 17 objectives of sustainable development and the 169 goals of the 2030 United Nations Agenda. • ETIKOA : ethical work norms.
What are the main associations and their main roles and responsibilities?	• Rioja Alavesa Wine Route : wine route that connects villages and businesses. Promote the experiences and the territory and offer a reservation platform. • Alava Tourism: official regional tourism department platform. Promote the region's tourism destinations and experiences. • Visit Euskadi : official tourism department for the autonomous community. • Basquetour : Basque tourism agency, it is a public society that depends on the Tourism, Commerce and Consumption Department of the Basque country . Created to lead and implement the current competitiveness strategy in the tourism area. • Saretour : Basque tourism net focused on connecting professionals and businesses with the local government and between them. They offer assessments, professional courses and opportunities for networking and alliances.

5.3 Asset Assessment: Rioja Alavesa wineries, restaurants, hotels, tourism agencies

Table 3. Asset Assessment in Rioja Alavesa

Question	Results
Which are the main aspects that differentiate Rioja Alavesa?	The unique heritage combination of the Basque country and La Rioja. It is a central point where two cultures encounter. The area is world-famous for its gastronomy and is the most recognized DOCa at a national and international level. The medieval villages are well preserved and the landscape is very accessible to visit by car, train, or bus.
Which is the connection between these businesses?	Businesses are connected through suggested itineraries on the local tourism web pages or private agency tours. There are also minivans and private cars available for rent. One unique example of collaboration is done by the <i>enobus</i> , which leaves from Bilbao or Vitoria and connects different wineries every month.
Is there any organization of these businesses in a route or special events?	The Rioja Alavesa Wine Route is the main association connecting businesses and experiences and their wine page offers information to create a personal itinerary and suggests options related to wineries, restaurants, heritage cities, hotels etc. The events are mostly organized by each village on special dates but there are no coordinated efforts to create events or products between different businesses.
How many things can be done in a day?	The usual daily activities as a visitor in Rioja Alavesa include • Two wineries and lunch in a local restaurant • Hikes, a winery for lunch, and a village visit • Village tour, lunch and a winery. Most of the transportation is offered from Vitoria, Logroño and Laguardia and the 3 main villages recommended in every blog and webpage are Laguardia, Labastida, and Elciego. A fourth village, Haro is highly attractive to visitors since it concentrates the highest number of centenary wineries and top rated wines from the DOCa.

In order to be acquainted with the tourism offering, an assessment of the current businesses and experiences offered was done. A list of the wineries located in Rioja Alavesa and their main products and assets were created; hotels were also listed (see annex 2) . In the table 3 above the main questions and results of this assessment are summoned.

5.4 *Visitor Hat Research*

In this part of the research the intern acted as a tourist, planning a trip to the destination, and analyzing the results. This process is intended to imitate the search path that a visitor experiences when planning a trip to the destination. The results were used to assess the strengths and weaknesses in the information offered online as well as the main featuring businesses and experiences. The chart with the keywords that launched the research and the results can be seen in the annex 3.

5.4.1 *Key takeaways*

The destination is well positioned as a wine tourism destination in Spain, it has good connectivity through local routes, and the information available is perceived as “trustworthy”. Besides the content available on official web pages most of the wineries offer the possibility to reserve online.

Several blogs describe itineraries to get inspired or to follow on a trip to the destination.

The wine routes are not routes *per se*, but a business hub, promoted in the same web page and connected because of similarities in the services or location.

The contact with the wineries seems simple and there are varied tourism agencies that offer daily tours and personalized itineraries. There is a general perception of “know-how” and availability, variety of services, and experiences.

Planning a trip is easy and the information is reinforced on different platforms. The connection between villages and cities seems accessible.

5.6 *Visitor Satisfaction Research*

A main aspect of encouraging repeat visitation is visitor satisfaction. To understand the visitors’ opinions and feedback about their experience in Rioja Alavesa, a review of rating websites such as TripAdvisor was done. The aim was to find the top-rated activities, the level of satisfaction of the visitors, and the most current complaints.

Several activities were rated highly in the region, the research focused on wineries, hotels, and restaurants. The top-rated comments are related to the “amusement” during the visit, the attitude and clarity of the tour guide, as well as the quality of the wines - also the quantity poured- and the food served to accompany them.

Most common complaints are related to the quantity of wine poured, little explanation about the wine process, problems with reservations, and poor service.

5.7 Interview with a local tour guide

An exploratory interview was done with a local tour guide to inform the main questions to be developed in this research. The interview guide is available in Annex 4 and the main key takeaways are summoned below:

- The region is trying to transform into an attractive destination for foreign markets that are looking for high-quality products, and private tours and that would be willing to pay more for a unique and exclusive experience.
- Highest seasons are May and June / August and September. The area is not highly attractive during the summer or during the long, cold winter.
- Labastida might benefit from its location, which is in between two of the most visited villages, Laguardia and Haro.
- Many agencies and tourists are interested in a “tasting” product rather than visiting and tasting.
- The wineries and tourism agencies expect 2023 to be a successful touristic year with a high quantity of visitors, almost what they expected in 2020.

6. Results and strategies

As stated in the introduction of this Master Thesis project, the objective of the research was to inform and inspire the creation of a wine tourism product for Dominio del Challo. The background analysis resolved that creating a wine tourism product in Labastida had high potential. Firstly, the regional and DOCa strategic planning considers wine tourism businesses and A priority for investment; funds and regulations will be focused on the development of wine tourism as wine is considered part of the heritage of the Autonomous Community. The landscape and regional assets and businesses can create an attractive destination for the main national and international markets, with a high potential for networking and collaborating that could enhance profitability and help achieve a high level of visitor satisfaction.

The creation of the wine tourism product was organized in different phases: first, the background research facilitated the understanding of the wine tourism reality in the destination, the main tourism indicators – including the most important target markets – and the SWOT analysis. This first part was aimed to set the bases for product creation.

The second stage was the analysis of the competitors, the definition of the target market, and the product briefing which includes the product's objectives and main characteristics.

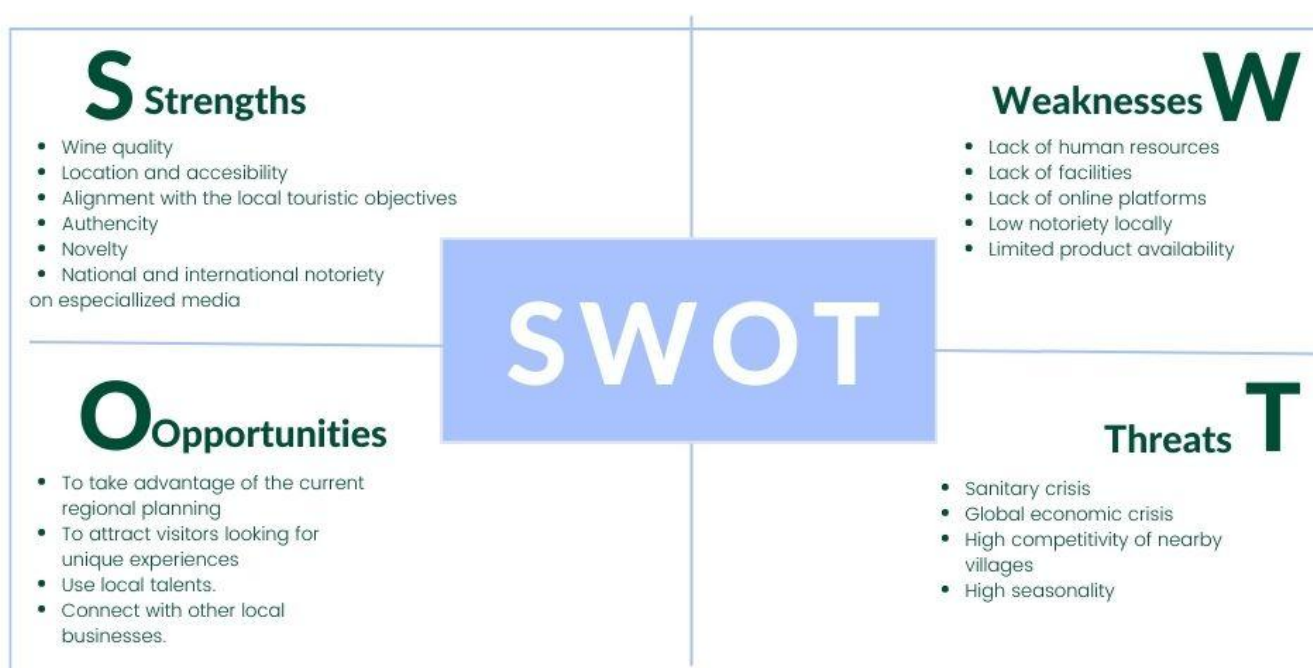
The third stage included the storytelling key takeaways and the needed structural resources – such as the hosting areas design – for the project to be launched.

The fourth stage is a recommended communication strategy to help promote the project. The main stakeholders were mapped to facilitate this task as well as some general recommendations and strategies are given.

Finally, strategic alliances for the future are traced and should be explored in the future.

6.1 SWOT Analysis

Figure 2.SWOT analysis



As it can be seen in the figure above, although the strengths and the opportunities are numerous the weaknesses are challenging aspects as they are related to the structural aspect of the businesses such as human resources and product availability. The winery needs to first, build the spaces to receive the tourists and assure that a strong professional leads the implementation of the business, prioritizing, long-lasting relationships with the community and the local resources to minimize the structural risks.

On the other hand, the business strengths such as quality, accessibility, novelty, and authenticity could make Dominio del Challao highly attractive for national and international markets and the potential of creating a high-quality and financially beneficial product is high.

6.2 The competitors

The main competitors in winetourism experiences are the best-positioned nearby villages such as: Laguardia, Elciego and Haro and the wineries located within.

The main elements to be considered to assure the competitiveness of the new product are:

- Facilities: most of the producers have new facilities prepared and ready to host tourists. The spaces are modern or reused historical buildings where the design is focused on landscape appreciation and wine consumption.
- Web pages: high quality designed web pages are very common in the product offering, the history of the family, online shop and online reservations are available.
- Variety of experiences: the top-rated competitors offer seasonal products during harvest time and develop at least three options of visits depending on the season, the wines offered, or the possibility to visit the vineyard.
- Gastronomic experiences: because of the long-standing gastronomic tradition of the Basque Country, most wineries offer “pinchos” with the tasting as well as charcuterie and cheese boards. Restaurants with tasting menus are also highly attractive in the area.
- Events spaces: Rioja developed a MICE (Meeting, Incentives, Conferencing y Exhibitions) program to encourage visitation and position the destination as an attractive venue for corporate events. Thus, wineries have meeting rooms and open spaces to host different social events.

6.3 *The Target Market*

Considering the tourism indicators of Rioja and Álava specifically, three buyer personas were created. The aim is to focus on the main Spanish markets such as Madrid and Barcelona as well as the highly interested international travelers coming from France, Germany, UK and the US. Business to Business targets were also considered.

Buyer persona:

- Target A : Maria and Luis are described in figure 3
- Target B: Antonio, a 50 years old business man from Barcelona (see annex 5)
- Target C: Jason and Laura, a couple from New York (see annex 5)

Business to Business profiles:

- Tourism Agencies from the Basque Country, Madrid and Barcelona focused on personalized service and small groups
- Boutique hotels located in the region
- Online platforms: well positioned in the main foreign markets – USA, Germany, and UK- that offer curated experiences and direct contact.

TARGET PERSONA

ONLINE PROFILE

They use Instagram and Facebook, they do the weekly supermarket purchase online. For travelling they use google, blogs and trip advisor.

ROUTINE

Maria Works in an office from Monday to Friday and Luis works remotely from home. Both go to the gym during the week and also meet their friends and colleagues for dinner or drinks. During the weekends they leave Madrid and enjoy a short trip or a visit to the family.

HOW DO THEY BUY?

Friends recommendations, their personal research and recommendations on social media and internet. They appreciate a good product presentation and packaging with sustainable philosophy and authentic local products that have an impact in the local economy. They are interested in trying new things and modern products that are committed with the community. They look for quality certifications but they enjoy the feeling of "discovering" a new product with their own criteria.

Target Market A: María y Luis
Age: 30 to 45 years old
Country: Spain, Madrid
Studies: Master or PHD
Income: €30.000 yearly
Marital Status: in a couple



LIFESTYLE

Maria and Luis are professionals, highly involved with their work that live in Madrid. They take two long holidays a year, one in winter and one during July. They travel during weekends and short national holidays with their Friends and family.

They have visited the big cities in Europe and they did Erasmus during college. They enjoy drinking wine with family and friends and lately they have discovered a new interest in wine and gastronomy. They are looking to do a trip to relax and learn to La Rioja, to see the vineyards, enjoy the landscape and the good food.

Figure 3. Target persona A

6.4 Product briefing.

Dominio del Challao is a boutique winery located in a medieval village in Rioja Alavesa. The project is led by a young Argentinian winemaker, Manuel and his partner, a local vigneron Carlos. Together they create a limited production of wines with the aim of showcasing the uniqueness of the Rioja Senserrana wines with their modern and respectful know-how. The objective is to preserve the long-standing wine-making tradition of the region while respecting the natural surroundings and the great conditions to produce wine. The tourism experiences at Dominio del Challao are focused on three elements: the place, the people, and the wines. Every step of the visit is focused on enjoying the village way of life while interpreting the landscape and tasting the highly rated wines produced here.

This product was designed to satisfy national and international travelers that are looking for an authentic product, simple but elegant with clear professionalism and know-how while keeping wine consumption uncomplicated, natural, and unpretentious. The spaces and moments are thought to admire the local calm and beauty and to stimulate the senses. Visitors looking for a relaxing moment, with high-quality services and products that respect the environment will find an incredible experience at Dominio del Challao as they look for a high-end and exclusive experience in the countryside.

The visitors will be able to find Dominio del Challao experiences on different online platforms, and on Instagram with a direct link for reservations and; the winery will focus on

the “ word of mouth” that the relation with local businesses such as hotels and restaurants can offer.

Following the analysis of the local offer and the concepts stated in the literature review, the main elements of the strategy of product creation were identified and justified by the current trends in customer behavior, the need for rural revitalization, and the benefits of networking. The bullet points of the product creation will be:

- Authentic experience, focused on the product and the people.

The aim is to have an unpretentious experience, respecting the local people’s character while offering high-quality food and service.

- High-quality service and settings

As the top-rated elements for visitors satisfaction, the human resources will be trained to assure a warm and dedicated service and the facilities will be built to make the most of the natural settings.

- Winery’s involvement in the community and use of the village spaces

The winery will develop relations with local businesses to look for high-quality gastronomic products and the possibility of renting an old house in the village to offer accommodation and gastronomic services will be considered.

- Strategic alliances with local suppliers and businesses

The benefits of networking have been stated before and the project will focus on creating hubs and nets with the businesses from Labastida and as well with village wineries all around Spain.

6.5 Unique selling point

- Unique surroundings and landscape
- High quality service, gastronomy and wine
- Boutique project with a high end “know how”
- Quality, elegance, and simplicity.

6.6 Objectives and KPI`s

1. Become a reference wine tourism service in the area. The KPI for this will be the number of people received and the feedback left on the trip advisor platform.
2. Increase 20% of the direct sales in the first year. The KPI for the analysis of this objective will be the quantity of wines sold in the first year.

6.7 The experience

Following the contributions from Arnould *et al.*, and the division of the consumption experience into four main stages, the first promotional campaign and design of the experience will be based on this process spread over time:

6.7.1 Pre-consumption experience (searching and planning);

To assure a successful pre-consumption experience Dominio del Challao will reach local businesses such as hotels and boutiques which whom the target market is shared, in order to promote a word-of-mouth recommendation.

The main platform during the first months will be the Instagram profile and selected online platforms where it will be possible to contact the winery and reserve online.

6.7.2 Purchase experience

Reservations will be held by phone contact, email contact, online platforms, and a reservation plug-in on IG. The wines will be sold in the winery and the possibility of shipping will be offered.

6.7.3 Core consumption experience

The experience's main characteristics will be simplicity combined with a high-quality service. A small project that highlights the professionalism and elegance inscribed with respect of the place and the wines.

- The visit

It will start in the winery doors with a small presentation of the project and the wines, and comment about the itinerary. The visitors will be taken with the winery's van into the nearby vineyard – 10 minutes away – where the first stop and wine tasting will be done. There will be a pergola in the vineyard where an explanation of the landscape and the grape-growing will be done together with the tasting of white wine accompanied by a local "pincho". Next, the visitors will be taken back into the winery where they will visit the underground cellar and ageing area. This will be followed by the guided tasting of two more wines in the main tasting room.

- The wine bar

The visitors will be able to arrive and enjoy the facilities of the tasting room, choosing wines by the glass. A selection of charcuterie, cheeses, and local pinchos will be offered.

- The gastronomy

Dinners and lunches will be served under reservation with a private local chef. During harvest, there will be a seasonal product, "the sunset" where people will visit the winery and enjoy a light dinner in the vineyard with wines in the late afternoon.

- The events

Two yearly events will be held during the first year. One at the end of the harvest to commemorate the ending of this crucial moment in the winery and one during the spring time

to be able to taste the new coming wines. The potential of organizing it collaboratively with the other producers from Labastida will be considered.

6.7.4 Remembered/nostalgia experience

In order to remember the past experience, the guests will be invited to join our wine club and receive newsletters about the yearly news and the upcoming events.

6.8 *Storytelling*

The milestones and concepts that should be communicated in every visit or contact point with Dominio del Challao are:

- The search for a perfect place to produce wine and the finding of Labastida.
- Modernity and up-to-date studies together with respect for the local traditions
- Exchange in between nationalities and generations
- Respect for nature
- The know-how of the winemaker and grape growers
- The wines: expressive, elegant, clean and long lasting.

6.9 *Facilities*

6.9.1 Tasting room

It will be built as a pergola in an ancient terrain in the upper part of the *calado*. It will have different tasting venues as well as space to keep all the needed supplies and an area designed as a wine shop.

6.9.2 Vineyard pergola

It will be located at the limit of the highest vineyard with an incredible view. It will be a pergola with room for 14 people to do a tasting or enjoy a light lunch.

For details about the facility's design, refer to annex 6.

7. **The communication plan**

7.1. *Stakeholders mapping*

Below a prioritized stakeholders chart shows the main publics that will be considered for communication. The first approach will be done to assure the success of the product launching and the positioning of the product in the market. To see a full chart of the stakeholders, refer to annex 7.

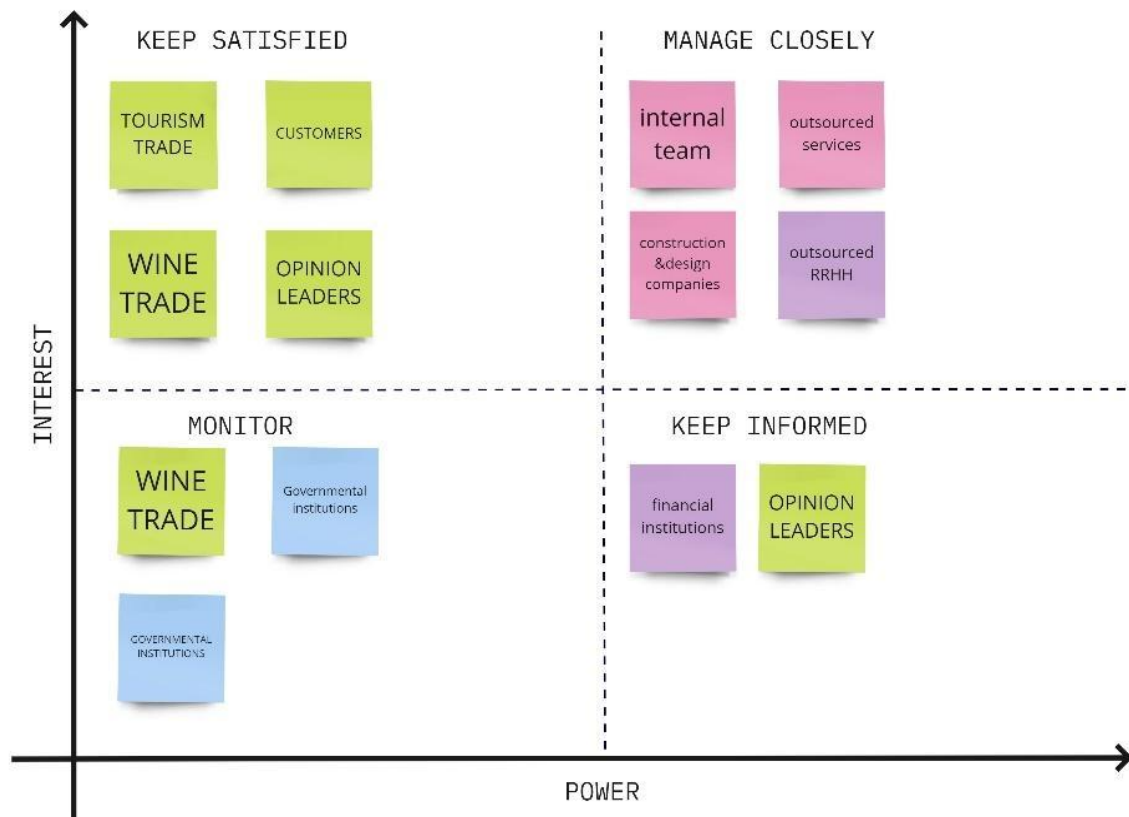


Figure 4. Prioritized stakeholders

Considering these different stakeholders, a campaign was drafted to reach the priority publics that the project has to keep satisfied: tourism trade, customers, and opinion leaders. The internal public should be also considered immediately to assure a healthy organizational culture.

7.2 The communication strategy

7.2.1 Tourism trade: agencies, restaurants and hotels:

- Personal Approach

These businesses will be approached personally first and later by an e-mailing campaign describing the details of the project and the product. A small event is recommended to be held in the structure of a “fam – tour” so that local businesses can experience the service of the winery and later recommend it.

- E-mailing campaign

The selected hotels and restaurants will receive an online brochure to understand the product offering and to have direct contact with the team members at the winery. This will be used to offer news about new products and upcoming events as well.

7.2.2 Customers

- Social Media

Instagram will be the main social media where the main philosophical concepts will be highlighted: the place, the people, and the experience. For more details about this strategy, refer to annex 8.

- Online Platforms

A list of the online platforms that target the desired public has been created and they will be approached to offer Dominio del Challao products and reservations on their sites.

7.2.3 Opinion leaders

- Media and influencers

Local magazines will be contacted to offer information about the experiences available and a selected list of journalists will be invited to the winery to meet the team and experience the touristic offer.

After the first three months, an influencer analysis will be done and the selected ones will be invited to the winery with the objective of increasing the reach of the IG content to the target market.

8. Strategic Alliances recommendations

As part of a small village and in consonance with the networking results in areas like Tuscany, creating alliances is highly recommended for Dominio del Challao. The businesses in Labastida can collaborate together to offer a variety of experiences “in place” that can create a half-day or full-day program for visitors, assuring entertainment, quality of services, and the unique touch of the local community. The wineries located nearby could also collaborate by designing complementary experiences that justify for a visitor to go from one to the other to complete their village experience. This path should be explored.

In order to have high-quality gastronomic products, the winery should partner with local producers that own gardens or small productions of cheese, charcuterie, mermelades, etc. Every product in the table of Dominio del Challao will be locally sourced and a space for marketing and showcasing these products is recommended.

While creating this project and reading about different alliances in other countries, the idea of creating a net of village wineries became very attractive. Following the example of the Ultimate Wine Experience Australia Association, a platform and an association connecting unique wineries located in small villages all around Spain could be extremely interesting and successful. Creating cooperative nets, moving the visitors from region to region, and assuring a real and authentic countryside experience with high-quality products, and the participation of the hosting community could be a starting point.

9. Conclusion

This Master Thesis project navigated through the process of creating a wine tourism product in a unique and relevant setting, the medieval villages of Álava in Spain. This was firstly approached conceptually, in order to understand the relevant studies and findings surrounding this task. The concept of rural revitalization became central as it was understood that the process of activating the village economy as well as encouraging economic diversification must be a bottom-up process; the importance of the regional and local key roles and people introduced a social turn to the equation and added extra value to winery owners, as they are the local strongest industry. As part of the community, they might have to take their own hands the lead of the revitalization of these villages. Experiential consumption was deeply considered in the product creation as the wine regions attractiveness is also measured by the product offering, the ambiance, and the quality of service.

The on-site experience during the internship helped understand the local philosophy and community as well as the daily touristic rhythm. The background research was also interpreted in light of this personal experience and settled the main bases to inform the new product viability, potential, and characteristics.

The Dominio del Challao tourism product was created to satisfy the need of modern travelers, based on a concept of wine tourism that prioritizes the experiences that promote connection with the place and the people, that understands products as a result of local history, philosophy, and daily life. Village wineries should make the most of their social environment, as they are located in the heart of the local culture and heritage and this can be beneficial for both, visitors and the community. This product could be a first step in understanding the challenges and unique characteristics of these wineries. In terms of business strategy, this example showcases the need for connections with the community and other businesses and the respect for an authentic product that will be appreciated by the modern consumer.

This project is presented as a first exploration of the village's unique touristic environment for wine tourists, and it explored new ways of thinking about the wineries' role in their community. The product specificities were related to the winery owners' preferences as well as the intern's previous professional experience in the wine tourism industry. Despite the specific design of the visit and experience, the project highlighted the importance of the strategy when starting a wine tourism product which is sometimes neglected in small businesses with not enough staff. The informality related to the wine tourism product in small projects could be harmful to the economic viability of the area while, if strategically designed could create interesting benefits in terms of sales and branding for the winery.

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12. Annexes

Annex 1

Satellite view of the heritage village: Labastida



Figure 5. Labastida satellite view and touristic attractions

Annex 2

Rioja Alavesa winery visit's assets.

Table 4. Rioja Alavesa winery's visits

Wineries in Rioja Alavesa		average price	experiences
Baños de Ebro	Amador Garcia	€15 a €50	hiking and wine/ harvesting family activity/ workshop " searching for Baco" / aroma workshop / visit and tasting / winemaker for a day
	Dominio de Berzal	not available	vineyard visit, tasting and pinchos
Elciego	Luberri Monje Amestoy	not available	tastings

	Murua	€25 a €80	visit to the vineyard, winery and tasting / guided vineyard visit/ tasting/ winebar/ private events
	Pago de Larrea	€12 a €20	visit and tasting in the winery/ tasting in the vineyards/ blind guided tasting
	Valdelana	€20 a €65	pairing with the stars/ fusion visit/ winery and variety garden / lunch in the winery or the vineyard/ tasting courses/ events
	Viña Salceda	€10 a €25	viewpoint, winery and tasting/ stroll in the vineyard and tasting / vip experience
	Bodega Marques de Riscal	€ 22 a €50	visit (winery and vineyard), tasting and pinchos/ visit to " Valle Salado de Añana "
Elvillar	Altos de Rioja	not available	tasting/ wine sales/ visits to the winery
	Lar de Paula	not available	not available
	Bodega San Roque	not available	not available
Labastida	Gonzalez Teso	not available	not available
	Mitarte	€15 a €50	visit and guided tour/ stroll in the vineyard / wine tasting in underground cellar
	Bodegas y Viñedos Labastida Solagüen	desde €16	tour in the winery and tasting
	Tierra	de €20 a €50	visit in the underground cellar, wine process and tasting / visit to the vineyard, cellars and tasting
Laguardia	Bodega Las Orcas	not available	no description
	Campillo	de €22 a €60	visit, tasting and aperitif / visit to the vineyard, wines and aperitif/ aroma workshop
	Casa Primicia	de €15 a €30	visit and two wines tasting/ single variety tastings/ ecologic wines / five flagship wines
	Carlos San Pedro Pérez de Viñaspre	de €5 a €10	35 min visit, carbonic maceration explanation, video and tasting
	El Fabulista	de € 8 a €36	theatrical visit/ guided tours/ specialist tours/ gastronomic offer
	Gómez de Segura	not available	terrace/ guided tours/ food threading / one day harvest/ " patatas con chorizo" and meat course/ lunch in the vineyards
	Javer San Pedro Ortega	€ 39	visit with all the senses, aperitif, vineyards and tasting
	Viña Lamioga	not available	wine and tasting workshop
	Mayor de Migueloa	de €15 a €57	tastings/ tastings and cheeses/ tasting menu

	Cosme Palacio	not available	not available
	Ruiz de Viñaspre	not available	guided tastings/ wine bar/ information about the village
	Solar de Samaniego	de €20 a €60	visit and tasting / traditional menu/ paired menu
	Orube de Solar Viejo	de €15 a €25	visit / tastings/ vineyards and tasting/ pinchos/ tasting courses
	Vallobera	de €30 a €60	visit, tastings and cheese table / vineyard visit, rioja doc explanation, tasting and cheese table
	Viña Real	€15/ €50/ €70	visit, tasting and aperitif/ tasting and viewpoint / lunch in the winery/ picnic / brunch/corporate events
	Ysios	€35 a €150	tasting/ winecar and tasting/ vineyard and tasting/ wine bar/ private visit
Lanciego	De Luis R	not available	gastronomic offer: traditional menus
Lapuebla de Labarca	Bodegas y Viñedos Casado Morales	not available	visits, tastings and gastronomy
	Covila	€ 12	visits and tastings
	Estraunza	not available	not available
	Loli Casado	€15 a €55	winery and gardens/ gardens and vineyards/ "chozo", tasting and outdoor lunch/ family visits/
	Muro	not available	rural house /visit and tastings / hikes
Leza	Lozano	€12 a €40	accesible winetouris/ instaspots/art for children/hot ballons, horses and bicycles in the vineyards
Oyón - Oion	Faustino	€22 a €150	visit, tasting and gift/special vintage tasting
	Ondalán	€10 a €40	visit, tassting, olive oil and cheese table / historical centre and underground cellar / vineyard and tasting / visit and lunch
	Valdemar	€20 a €32	events / virtual tasting/ visit and tasting with "pincho" / vineyard and lunch/ terrace and wine bar
Párganos	Eguren Ugarte	€15 a €90	visita, underground cellar, tasting and "pinchos" / events/ segway visit/ horses / basque traditions/ tasting course
	Garcia de Olano	€ 12	visit and tasting / visit and lunch
	Torre de Oña	€25 a €55	palace/private lunch/ visits and tasting/ picnic in the vineyard/ winebar / meeting espaces/ inspiring days (art)
Samaniego	Amaren	de €25 a €120	visit and 6 wine tasting / vineyard, tasting and pinchos

	Baigorri	de €20 a €75	visit, tasting and pintxos/ wine bar/ harvest activities/ brunch/ "vendimia" menu
	Bello Berganzo	not available	not available
	Bodegas Heredad de Aduna	not available	not available
	Ostatu	de €22 a €30	tastings/ visits/ wine bar / events
	Pascual Berganzo - Alútiz Vinos	de €10 a €50	video, visit and tasting/ vineyard and tasting/pairing with "pinchos"/ lunch in vineyard/cellar and tasting
	Pascual Larrieta	de €6 a €14	visit, tasting and pinchos
	Remíres de Ganuza	not available	guided visit
Villabuena de Álava	Bideona	de €28 a €40	vineyard visit and tasting/ winebar/ private events
	Hnos Frias del Val	€ 12	visit and tasting
	Izadi	de €20 a €70	visit, tasting with gourmet products/ electric bicycle, tasting and visit / bicycle and tasting/ lunch / events
	Juan José García Berrueco		
	Luis Cañas	de €22 a €90	visit, tasting and wine glass/ visit, "tapas" and tasting / private visit and historical reserve tasting
	Viñedos y Bodegas de la Marquesa Valserrano	not available	visit, cellars and tasting / aroma game/ chocolate and wine/ vineyard and vineyard lunch
Agencias de turismo	Cellar tours		especialized in tourism in Spain, Italy, France, Portugal, Ireland, Southafrica, Chile and Argentina
	A la carta - wine and gourmet experiences		taste the best of Spain, Italy, France and Portugal
	Evadium	desde €40 a €300	Laguardia/ Haro/ Logroño
	Rioja in Style	desde €300	Marques de Riscal/ Haro / Laguardia
	Viavinum		personalized trips
	Rutas de vino by vintage spain		food tours en Madrid/ especializes in the Russian market/ personalized tours
	turismodevino.com	de €7 a €200	visit to traditional vineyards
	Thabuca wine tours	desde €300	discover Labastida/ Rioja Alavesa /boutique wineries and restaurants
	Platinum Travel		different options in Europe. Spain and Portugal as one , winetourism in Rioja and Ribera combined .
	Spain corporate travel	desde €40	Artadi y Roda, Haro, Vivanco, Izadi y Bodegas Contador

	Hola Rioja		based in Logroño, selected wineries in Rioja Alavesa and Haro. Tourguide services
	Love Rioja	de €237 a €500	tour in 2 wineries and recognised restaurant
	Rioja like a Native		tour standard/ personalized tour from Bilbao and San Sebastian
	Earra Tours	desde €300	personalized trips and tastings
	Basque Destination	de €100 a €190	Rioja Alavesa/ arquitectonic tours/ bike tours/day tours
	Local Experts Tours	de €230	2 wineries and lunch in Laguardia
	San Sebastian trips	desde €300	tasting in 4 wineries and visit to a natural monument

Table 5. Rioja Alavesa targeted hotels

Hotels	Price per night
Hotel Silken Villa Laguardia	€ 80
Hotel Viura	€ 120
Palacio de Samaniego	€ 296
Hospederia de Los Parajes	€ 121
Legado de Ugarte	€ 100
Hotel Castillo El collado	€ 150
El retiro del Obispo	€ 100
La casa de Lorenzo	€ 100
Agroturismo Valdelana	€ 75
Casona del Boticario	€ 90
Santa Maria Briones	€ 250
Aurea	€ 230
Sercotel	€ 100
Eurostars Marques de Vallejo	€ 110
Torre de Briñas	€ 200
Palacio Tondon	€ 218
AC hotel La Rioja	€ 188
Casa Robla	€ 145
Mercedes Etxea	€ 110
Hotel Jatorrena	€ 80
Señorio de las Viñas	€ 100
Villa de Ábalos	€ 115

Annex 3

Visitor Hat research findings

Table 6. Visitor Hat research

Key word : Bodegas Rioja Alavesa	https://www.raoriginal.eus/bodegas the wine platform for hotels and visitors . 54 unique wineries that create the only Original Rioja Club. https://marquesdemurrieta.com/pages/sobre-nosotros-marques-de-murrieta wineries in Logroño https://www.rutadelvinoderiojaalavesa.com/es/bodegas
Keyword: enoturismo rioja	https://www.solardesamaniego.com/ https://www.raoriginal.eus/bodegas https://marquesdemurrieta.com/pages/sobre-nosotros-marques-de-murrieta
keyword: visitar rioja alavesa	https://booking.com/ https://visitriojaalavesa.com/ https://www.thebasqueroute.eus/
keyword: como visitar La Rioja	https://www.weekendesk.es/articulos/5f06dd20fc9fc60026cafcff/un-fin-de-semana-enoturistico-en-la-rioja?gclid=Cj0KCQiA6LyfBhC3ARIsAG4gkF9QLh3qHr4yLbIB8CRQInsrYaoFE-hd5O9uKqG1abyHPe1EUKLYdHUaAjBIEALw_wcB&gclidsrc=aw.ds focused on Haro , Logroño y Vivanco www.getyourguide Options leaving from Bilbao and San Sebastian https://viajeros30.com/2020/04/07/que-hacer-y-que-ver-en-la-rioja/ Mentioned villages: Logroño, Haro ,Briones, San Vicente de la Sonsierra, Briñas, Cuzcurrita de Río Tirón, Sajazarra Santo Domingo de la Calzada.
Keyword: mejores bodegas de La Rioja	https://www.raoriginal.eus/ https://www.tripadvisor.com.ar/Attractions-g187511-Activities-c36-t132-La_Rioja.html
Keyword: mejores bodegas de rioja alavesa	https://www.traveler.es/experiencias/galerias/las-mejores-bodegas-de-rioja-alavesa/1591 architecture, enchanting villages - Marques de Riscal - Ysios - Baigorri https://viajes.nationalgeographic.com.es/gastronomia/once-bodegas-rioja-alavesa-que-merecen-visita_14769

Keyword: que hacer en Rioja Alavesa	www.viator.com/ es private tours in medieval villages and private blogs en pueblos medievales y bodegas blogs: https://imanesdeviaje.com/que-ver-y-hacer-rioja-alavesa-ruta/ - Laguardia - Elciego - Dolmenes - Bodegas - Restaurantes https://viajeros30.com/2022/12/16/que-ver-en-rioja-alavesa/ - Laguardia - Lagunas - Elciego - Dolmenes - Lanciego
Value propositions	Sleep in between barrels, discover the gastronomy, enjoy the landscape, live unforgettable moments. Wine, food and great experiences. For a momento, a day or a weekend, as long as you want. Discover everything Rioja Alavesa has to make you happy. Centenary culture, enogastronomy the best accommodations. Infinity of vineyards from the Sierra to the river that change color according to the season, interrupted by medieval villages, history and vanguard. Family wineries Incredible buildings constructed by prestigious architects With family, friends or in a couple. Active tourism and nature Dolmens
Target market	Groups of Friends and couples

Annex 4

Interview guide

1. How do you see Rioja today?
2. Do you see any differences between the 3 sub-regions (Rioja Alavesa, Rioja Oriental, Rioja Alta) in terms of tourism?
3. When does the "tourist season" starts? When are visitors coming to Rioja?
4. What kind of visitors do you have in the agency?
5. How does a regular tour is organized, what places do you usually visit?
6. Do you know Labastida? Do you usually visit the area with your tours?
7. What is your agency interested in? Tours, tastings, visits?
8. What do you think it could be added in the Rioja Alavesa experience?

Annex 5

Target Persona

TARGET PERSONA

ONLINE PROFILE

he does online searches to be inform and seek for information, but he always goes to his friends and family to make purchasing decisions. When he reserves he keeps in mind the Prestige of the hotels and prefers for tourism agencies to organize his trips.

ROUTINE

he works everyday at the bank and has lunch at small city restaurants. During the weekend he goes to local fairs and buys good quality and fresh products. He has two favorite restaurants in his village which are up to his taste and service standards and goes there once a week. He goes out on holidays with all the family during the summer and during the year he takes short trips on long weekends. He has seen most of Europe and he likes to visit places where he is comfortable and there is good food and wine. He likes Spain and he has decided to take a trip with his wife to explore La Rioja.

HOW DO THEY BUY?

Friends recommendations and the word of experts.

Target Market B : Jean Pierre
Age: from 50 yo 70
Gender: Male
Country of residence: France
Studies: Masters
Income: more than €40.000
Marital Status: Married with children



LIFESTYLE

Jean Pierre works in a bank in Toulouse, he has two children, one is in university and the other one is working and living in Marseilla. He lives with his wife in a calm neighbourhood and he is enjoying the years before his retirement. He is a wine lover and appreciates good gastronomy, he is knowlegeable and loves cooking.

Figure 6. Target persona B

TARGET PERSONA

ONLINE PROFILE

They use Instagram socially but have assistants and agencies that help them with the research and planning.

ROUTINE

They both work 8 hours a day and spend the rest of the time at home. They meet their friends during the weekend and on special holidays. They play golf and run. They take short holidays and don't have time to plan them , so they usually trust friends and agencies to plan it for them.

HOW DO THEY BUY?

good price – quality relation. Unique and not available everywhere, certified quality by specialists .

TARGET MARKET C : Jason and Laura
Age: +40
Country: USA
Studies: bachelor/ masters
Income : middle – high class
Civil status: married with children



LIFESTYLE

Jason and Laura live in New York and they have travelled to Europe several times, with their children and on a couple. They enjoy the easy living in Europe, the food and the wines and they usually throw dinners in their house with friends and European wines. He loves Spanish wines and reads a lot about them and collects them. This is their first time in La Rioja and they are very excited to discover wines that are unique and not available in the states

Figure 7. Target persona C

Annex 6

The facilities:

Tasting room design

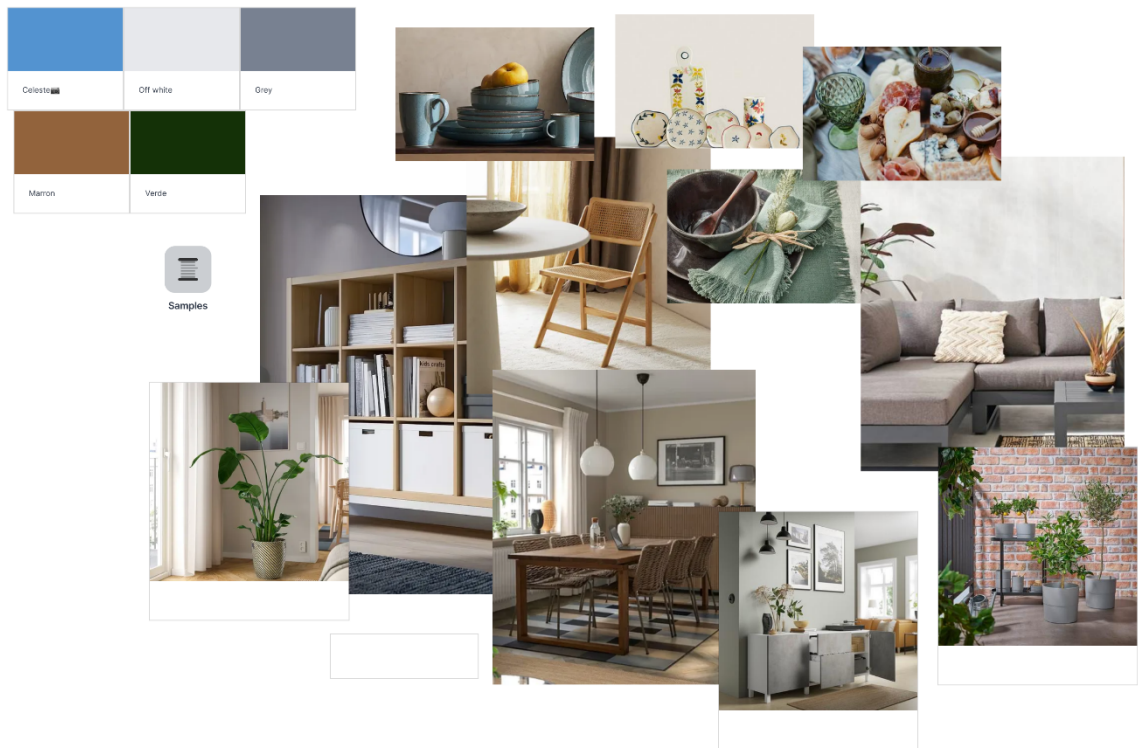


Figure 8. tasting room Moodboard

Vineyard Pergola

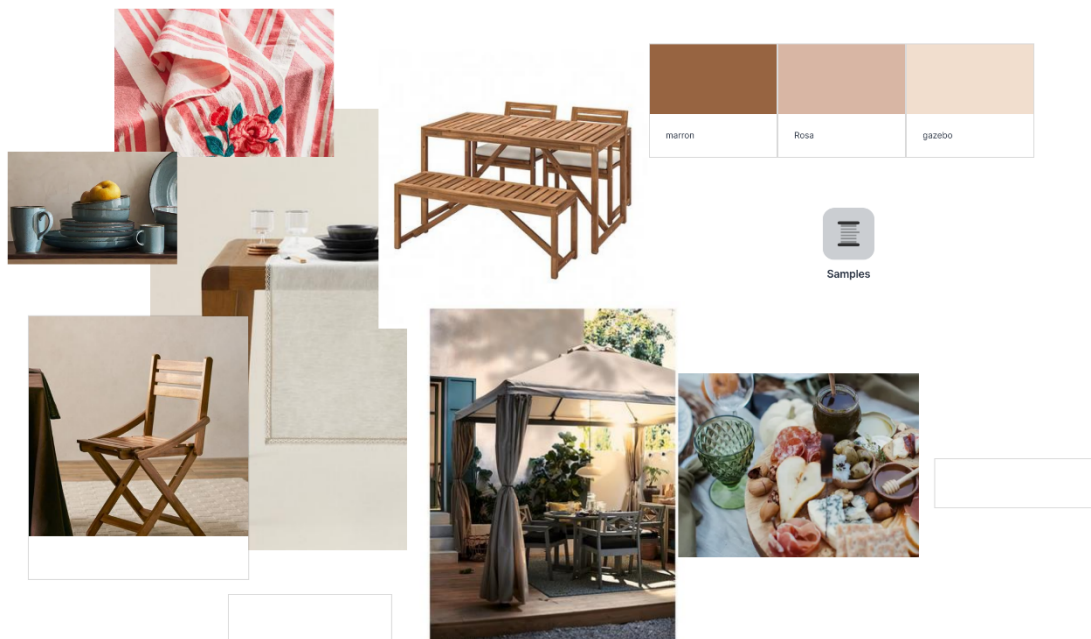


Figure 9. Vineyard Pergola Moodboard

Annex 7

Stakeholders mapping

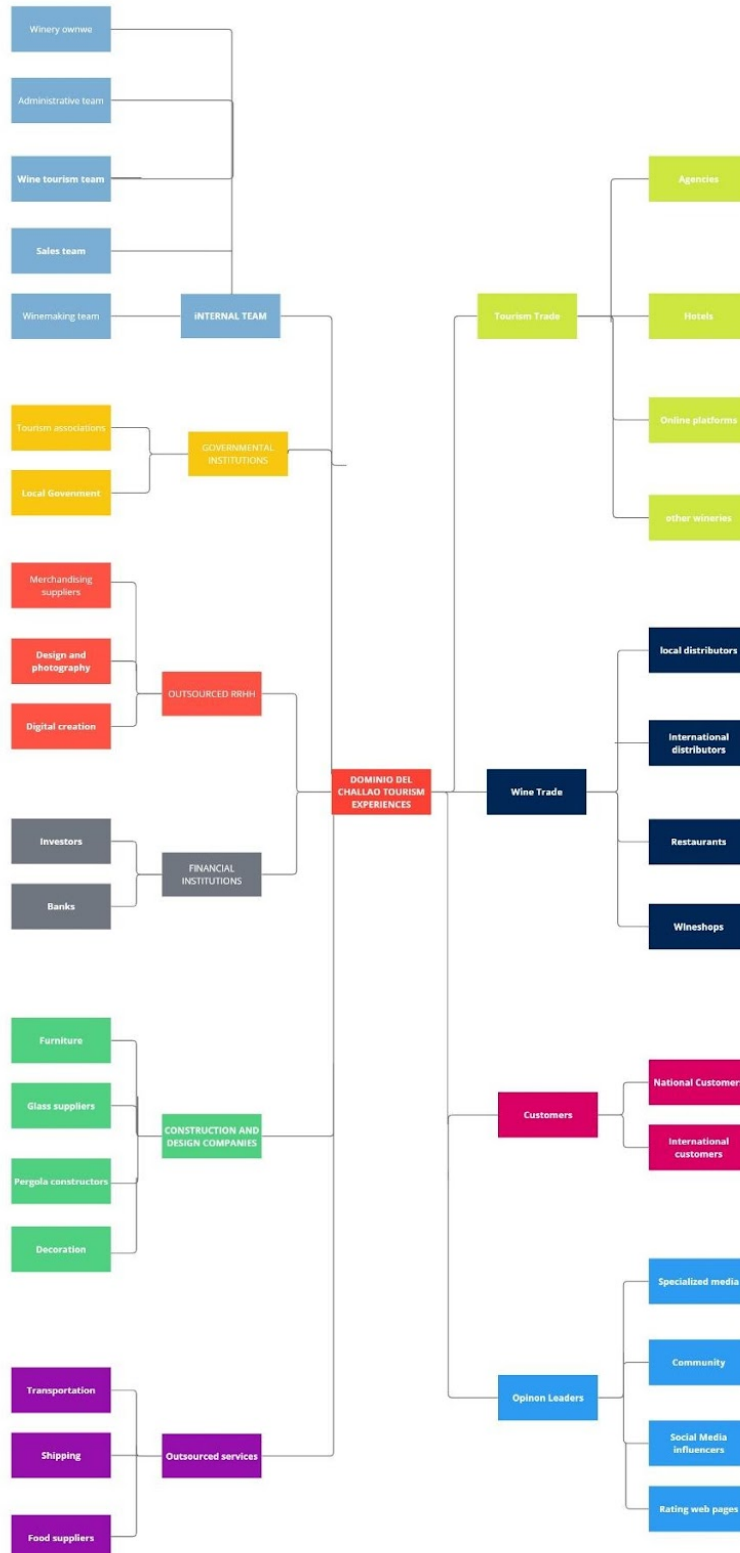


Figure 10. Stakeholders mapping

Annex 8

Instagram strategy and inspiration

Instagram

During the first development phase, Instagram will be the main platform from promotion and contact with visitors and prospective buyers. Thus, the platform must communicate: the history of Dominio del Challao, its production philosophy and the visit experiences, and providing contact options.

Inspired in the main concepts of the storytelling, the main elements that will be highlight are:

1. The search and objective of the projects: Manu`s exploration to find the ideal place, Carlos “ know- how” and the shared goal of producing great wines with elegance and ageing potential.
2. History: the heritage of Labastida, the vineyards and underground cellars
3. Nature: the unique surroundigs where this wines are produced – Sierra, the river Ebro, the soils and climatic conditions- . The natural yearly process of the vines, its cycle.
4. The know- how: the details and decisions behind the production of highquality wines, the blends, the use of oak, the wine style and the ratings and prizes.
5. The experience: the visit, the products, the moments at Dominio del Challao

Instagram inspiration

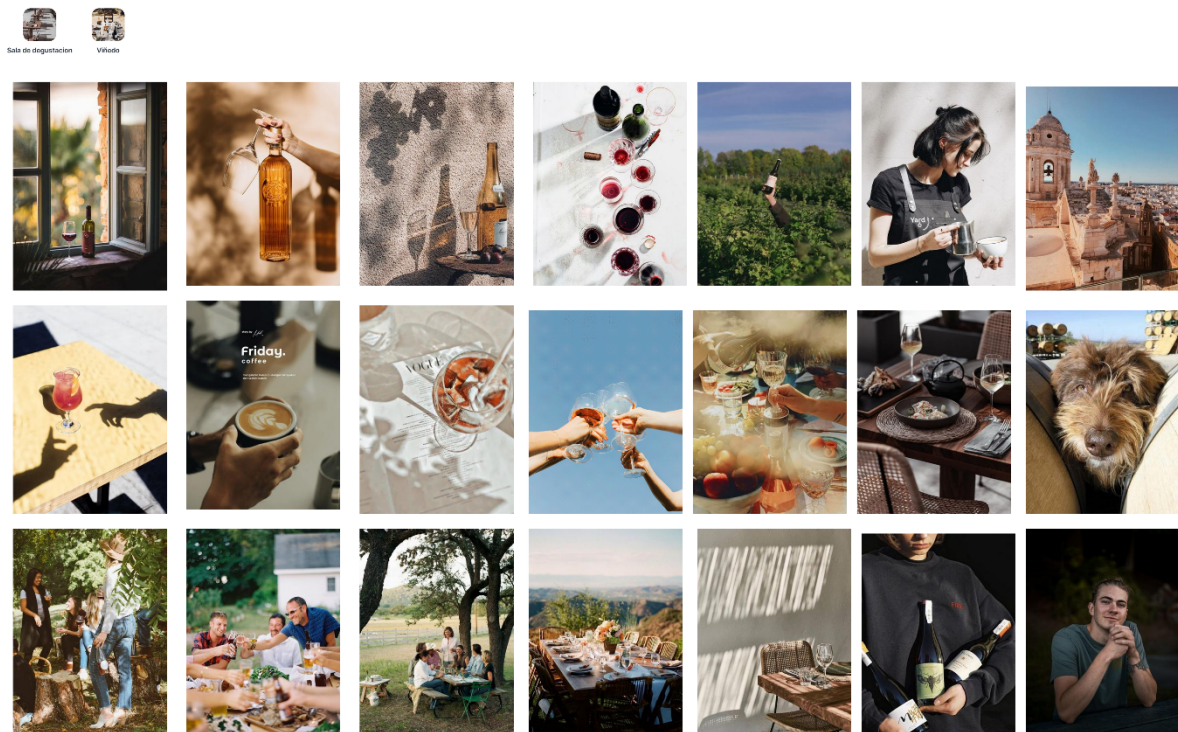


Figure 11..Instagram Moodboard

