

**EXPLORING WINE TOURISM AND COMPETITIVENESS TRENDS:  
INSIGHTS FROM PORTUGUESE CONTEXT  
ENOTURISMO E TENDÊNCIAS DE COMPETITIVIDADE: PERSPETIVAS  
DO CONTEXTO PORTUGUÊS**

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**Resumo**

O Enoturismo é um segmento do mercado muito vinculado aos destinos rurais, onde as pessoas podem usufruir da diferença e autenticidade dos seus produtos locais para promover a atividade turística, estimulando assim a procura de uma determinada região. Esta tipologia de oferta tem evidenciado um crescimento em Portugal e em todo o mundo ao longo dos últimos anos, com exceção dos últimos dois em virtude da pandemia. É um segmento do mercado turístico atualmente relevante e apresenta um grande potencial de

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crescimento a médio e longo prazo. A presente investigação pretende constituir-se como um contributo para aprofundar o conhecimento sobre o mesmo e/ou abrir horizontes de investigação nesta área do Enoturismo, principalmente na região Demarcada do Douro, Concelho de São João da Pesqueira, assim como identificar um melhor conhecimento do setor, nomeadamente na área da procura, por forma a possibilitar o desenvolvimento do produto e, também, identificar as motivações na escolha do destino turístico. Foca-se na análise do tema do enoturismo com uma enorme preponderância na Região Demarcada do Douro, em particular no Concelho de São João da Pesqueira. O objetivo geral da investigação consiste em compreender a importância do enoturismo na promoção do destino São João da Pesqueira. Por conseguinte, como objetivos específicos, o estudo pretende identificar as preferências do turista, as motivações na escolha do destino turístico, identificar um melhor conhecimento do setor, nomeadamente na área da procura, para assim possibilitar o desenvolvimento do produto, identificar e valorizar a perspetiva enoturística e identificar o impacto do enoturismo no desenvolvimento regional e local.

Nas principais conclusões, é possível destacar os pontos fortes do destino, as características únicas, a paisagem, o produto (vinho), a história e a diversidade de produtores de vinhos, as novas atrações, proximidade, infraestruturas, clima, ciclo de vida do turismo e dinâmica do visitante, tendo em conta se é a primeira visita ou não. Em relação à influência do enoturismo no território, *é fundamental e assume um papel crucial no Concelho, de forma transversal, uma vez que está relacionado com outras atividades*, em que assume um papel de divulgação por todo o mundo, é um setor em plena expansão e que atrai imensos turistas à região, que fixa pessoas no interior, pois também dá muito trabalho a quem lá vive. Adicionalmente, o enoturismo pode ser uma alavanca na cocriação sustentável de novas experiências de turismo, de ideias inovadoras para se implementarem no concelho futuramente, que coincidem com algumas ideias já existentes em outras Regiões e Países.

Relativamente ao futuro do setor do enoturismo, as estratégias passam pela valorização do destino, por apostar na diferenciação pela qualidade e pela inovação de novas propostas, como por exemplo a criação de rotas turísticas, ou a criação de novos hotéis envolvidos com a paisagem, pela diversidade vitivinícola, pela sua história. A mesma será de evolução, as regiões têm a função de valorizar a sua imagem de marca, aproveitando o enoturismo, as características do seu vinho, juntamente com a sua gastronomia, valorizando os seus recursos particulares e endógenos, e neste sentido proporcionar

experiências únicas, de modo a divulgar e promover o turismo na região e por sua vez o impacto económico.

**Palavras-chave:** Região Demarcada do Douro; Turismo; Enoturismo; Turismo de experiência.

### **Abstract**

Wine Tourism is a market segment closely linked to rural destinations, where people can take advantage of the difference and authenticity of their local products to promote tourism activity, thus stimulating the demand for a particular region. This supply has experienced a very significant increase in Portugal and worldwide over the last few years, except for the last two due to the pandemic. It is a segment of the tourism market currently relevant and has great potential for growth in the medium and long term. This research aims to be a contribution to deepen the knowledge about it and/or to open research horizons in this area of wine tourism, especially in the Demarcated Douro region, Municipality of São João da Pesqueira, as well as to identify a better knowledge of the sector, particularly in the area of demand, in order to enable product development and also to identify the motivations in the choice of tourist destination. It focuses on the analysis of wine tourism with a huge preponderance in the Douro Demarcated Region, particularly in the Municipality of São João da Pesqueira. The general objective of the research is to understand the importance of wine tourism in promoting the destination São João da Pesqueira. Therefore, as specific objectives, the study aims to identify tourist preferences, the motivations in choosing a tourist destination, identify a better knowledge of the sector, particularly in the area of demand, to enable product development, identify and enhance the wine tourism perspective and identify the impact of wine tourism on regional and local development.

In the main conclusions, it is possible to highlight the destination's strengths, unique characteristics, the landscape, the product (wine), the history and diversity of wine producers, new attractions, proximity, infrastructure, climate, tourism life cycle, and visitor dynamics, considering whether it is the first visit or not. Regarding the influence of wine tourism in the territory, it *is fundamental and assumes a crucial role in the region, in a transversal way, since it is related to other activities*, in which it assumes a role of dissemination throughout the world; it is a sector in full expansion attracting many tourists to the region and by anchoring the labor force within the territory, because it also provides

business activity to those who live there. Additionally, wine tourism can be a lever in the sustainable co-creation of new tourism experiences, of innovative ideas to be implemented in the territory in the future, which coincide with some ideas already existing in other regions and countries.

Considering the future of the wine tourism sector, the strategies include the valorization of the destination, through the differentiation for the quality and innovation of new proposals, as for the creation of tourism routes, or new hotels involved with the landscape, by the wine diversity, by its history. The regions must enhance their brand image, taking advantage of wine tourism, the characteristics of its wine, along with its gastronomy, their endogenous resources, and in this sense provide unique experiences, to disseminate and promote tourism in the region and in turn the economic impact.

**Keywords:** Douro Demarcated Region; Tourism; Wine Tourism; Experience Tourism.

## **1. Introduction**

Wine tourism is an activity with a close and direct relationship with wine, providing varied and dynamic experiences, interacting with the heritage and wine culture, to obtain emotions, attachment, and numerous sensations when visits are made, converting the tourist/wine tourist into a disseminator of that particular farm, region or brand (Santos et al., 2019, p. 683). Currently, wine is an indispensable element in the culture of many countries, it is considered a way of life, being also related to leisure moments, such as visiting a museum (Santos et al, 2020). Wine tourism is identified as "terroir tourism" (Holland et al, 2014; Kastenholz et al, 2021), characterized by the motivational factor of farm owners territories and wine production, where the mixture with landscapes, nature and cultural factors are of enormous importance, adding the opportunity to taste and know the wine, its production. However, little is known about the numerous visits of wine regions, the role of farms and their wineries, nature and cultural attractions in influencing them. It represents a varied ecosystem (Salvado & Kastenholz, 2017) that brings together three differentiated sectors: the primary sector, which includes the wine industry, agriculture and the production of the fruit that gives rise to wine, the grape; the secondary sector, which integrates the industry involved in wine production, bottling and marketing, and finally the tertiary sector; which includes tourism, organizations that may be public or private involved in the management of the territory and its resources.

Currently, there is a clear interaction between tourism and the wine industry. In academia, this relationship is relatively recent, but important (Treen et. al, 2018). Wine tourism is a combination of tourism and wine. Although this link has existed for years, only recently has wine-related tourism begun to be recognized and valued by public administrations, the wine industry, and researchers. Wine and tourism combine several economic, technological, cultural, geographical, and professional factors. Although wine tourism is sometimes referred to as a secondary activity, the wine industry sometimes sees wine tourism as a determining strategy for the future of its activity (Tanford & Jung,2017).

This research, through the application of a qualitative methodology, with semi-structured interviews to *stakeholders in the sector* and the region under analysis, aims to understand the importance of wine tourism in promoting the destination São João da Pesqueira, identify tourist preferences, the motivations in choosing a tourist destination, identify a better knowledge of the sector, particularly in the area of demand, to enable product development, identify and enhance the wine tourism perspective and identify the impact of wine tourism on regional and local development.

## **2. Literature Review**

The motivation for wine tourism is influenced by its satisfying nature, taking into account the specific characteristics of each tourist (demographics, wine consumption, consumer behavior, brand awareness and affinity, learning, socialization), the characteristics of the wine region (geographical location, regional brand image, winery profile, wine products, landscape, new attractions, accessibility, proximity, infrastructure, climate, tourism life cycle and visitor dynamics, taking into account whether it is the first visit or not). While there is no doubt that the main motivations of wine tourists are tasting and buying wine, participating in wine routes, attending wine-related festivals or events, and pairing wine with food at the winery, other motivations have also been identified such as, learning more about wine, meeting winemakers, socializing with family/friends, having fun in an environment where one can relax, and experiencing what the region has to offer (Byrd et al., 2016). There is little published research on the motivations and expectations of wine tourists. However, there is no doubt that there is no stereotype of the wine tourist - and no one-sided definition. The estates themselves are realistic about market segmentation in reception, although segment analysis is based on general

awareness rather than any precise method of data analysis (Sidali et al, 2015). The structure of the wine industry in Europe has a very low concentration of capital, especially in southern Europe where viticulture is much smaller, often part of a mixed farming structure. Wine tourism in Europe is also complicated by consumption patterns. In central Europe, where production is low (including Germany), consumers have access to a wide variety of international wine styles. In southern European wine producing countries, the market guarantees less access to international wine styles, and visitors may be tourists within their own country (Cunha et al, 2020). In the context of wine tourism, wine is used as a resource to generate tourist flows, mainly with the aim of discovering the origin of the product itself, understanding where and how it was produced. The choice of regions is influenced by the quality of their wines, which determines the success of a destination. Wine as a tourism product has an unusual ability to attract tourists with varying degrees of involvement or connection. For the connoisseur or expert, tasting and buying wine is quite engaging, requiring a lot of dedicated time and effort and descriptors such as variety, vintage, and origin, although some "generalist" tourists just want to spend time in different places or have a different day designated as a "Winescape", or even just tag along with someone (Byrd et al, 2016).

A visit to a wine region is accompanied by a wide range of recreational activities that vary by region and producer. Experiences can be achieved through a range of cultural and educational activities, where visitors observe events and/or people's performances, namely listening to music and reading or in a positive way, including wine tastings in the vineyards, visits to museums, exhibitions, and cultural sites, participating in harvesting, hiking, cycling, and taking photos (Carlsen & Boksberger, 2015).

In the entertainment sphere it is necessary to provide products to attract and capture the attention and preparation of tourists who interact with wine on several levels, with families. Some studies combine the education and entertainment dimensions into one (Carlsen & Boksberger, 2015). Wine tourism helps visitors learn about the characteristics of wine and how it is produced, thus developing awareness of the wine industry. With increased awareness and greater knowledge, wine consumption in the region is expected to increase, benefiting the entire wine tourism industry. Education is therefore an important attribute for the personal development of wine tourists, as it ensures them the opportunity to learn about wine and the local wine industry, as well as gastronomy and culture. In this perspective, it becomes a fundamental strategy for the creation of memories and the guarantee of satisfaction to the visitors (Santos et al, 2020). The

aesthetic experience is the immersion of the senses in the sensory environment, reflected through the cultural and environmental character of the farms' landscapes and human elevation. Applied to wine tourism it involves the core of different characteristics arising from the design of the route, the architecture of the winery and the very environment where the well-known tasting experiences take place (Santos et al., 2018).

There are four levels of cognition at the aesthetic level during the wine tourism experience: the perceptual, where the senses such as sight and smell are involved; the expressive where the associated feelings and emotions are developed; the symptomatic where the signs of tasting are revealing other things; and the symbolic where the ideas and imaginations created in the tourist's mind come from (Santos et al., 2018). "*Brand equity*" is a relevant concept for wine regions seeking to differentiate themselves from their competitors. The wines produced in different regions have unique and distinctive characteristics due to their strong connection to the place of origin. These regions have different tangible and intangible components or social dimensions that must be explored to create their own identity and brand recognition. For an emerging wine region, the search for a brand *equity* identity can achieve two important objectives: i) prepare the region to compete in a competitive market due to the historical dominance of traditional regional producers; ii) provide the region with leverage to work with farms to reinforce the positive value of regional brands. The perception that countries and regions should be considered brands is gaining recognition by researchers (Byrd et al., 2016).

In this perspective, the wine appellation of origin as a global brand is the most important certification guarantee of the authenticity of the product and the destination, and functions as a protection and value system. A wide variety of attributes contribute to the image of a wine region, such as wine products, production systems, landscape features, climate, cultural and heritage assets, local people, and their way of life (winegrowers, winemakers, and chefs), leisure activities (dining out, relaxing, nature, shopping, wine tasting, traveling, cooking) and community attractions. Satisfaction in the context of wine tourism is explored from different perspectives: winery and wine landscape attributes, post-visit and future purchase decisions, service and hospitality attributes, and authenticity of experience (Liberato et al., 2022; Tanford & Jung, 2017).

It is asserted that the attributes of the wine landscape (activity, authenticity, ambiance, socialization) combined with perceptions (price and service quality) lead to greater or lesser customer satisfaction and loyalty. Satisfaction is an emotional evaluation that

reflects the extent to which consumers believe that using a particular service evokes positive feelings (Quadri-Felitti & Fiore, 2013; Tanford & Jung, 2017).

Wine tourism is an integrated system consisting of three main components that induce the success of wine tourism: (1) consumers/visitors; (2) destinations/regions and (3) supply. Location and tourists are the main factors that determine supply and demand. The tourist is the focal point of any measure instituted by the wine tourism aspect from the beginning. Regardless of the region, given its growth potential in wine tourism, it is always necessary to know what tourists are looking for, what the destination has to offer and how to do it (Tanford & Jung, 2017).

Wine tourism includes other products and activities, more specifically wine routes, agricultural experiences, museum spaces related to the wine theme, excursions and walks through vineyards and landscape experiences, wellness products, business travel among others (Sousa, 2017), and can be reconciled with other motivations and other types of tourism, such as rest, business travel, leisure, visiting family and friends (Sousa, 2017). From a tourism demand point of view, wine tourism is considered a niche market, wine the wine-growing region and the culture inherent in wine production play an important role in the choice of destination. Due to the ability to meet the ever-increasing demand of tourists, wine tourism has become increasingly important globally (Sigala, 2014). All wine regions are attractive, it is necessary to invest in innovative programs (Santos et al., 2018). Douro and Alentejo are the regions in Portugal with the largest number of sites dedicated to Wine Tourism. This important strategic product provides multiple benefits to local businesses and economic actors. Firstly, it constitutes a new business opportunity that integrates with the existing wine production, thus enhancing economic activity. It is also considered a more personalized way to promote products and improve the company's image. This fact makes it possible to educate consumers about the concept and special features of the product (Santos et al., 2018).

Tourism business models, where wine tourism is included, have observed a constant innovation, especially in terms of virtual reality, as they promote relationships with destinations where the tourist consumption patterns are diversified, being an interesting way to deal with seasonal activities, such as the grape harvest. Traditionally, wine tourism focuses on experiences related to wines and wineries, however the concept of "*terroir tourism*" is gaining strength, and it is noted that there are different types of wine tourists, while some show more general interest in exploring the characteristics of

the territory, which includes the landscape and culture, others show special curiosity in the properties.

In the process of creating tourism products, five key elements are usually considered; (1) The initial phase corresponds to the motivation for the trip; (2) The base, i.e. resources and attractions serve as the foundation for the destination); (3) The creation process, including existing resources, infrastructure and services, leading to its Interaction with tourism product; (4) communication with the target market; and, (5) results, which are the consumption of tourism products in the destination, as is the case of wine tourism. Regarding the properties of the region, this process is difficult to evaluate and monitor due to the various characteristics of the destination, considering the interactions of tourists who usually visit these regions (Lameiras, 2015; Santos et al., 2018).

It is determinant to understand the relationship between the wine tourism industry and the types of consumers related to it, because by understanding the relationship between tourism destination managers, DMOs will be able to meet consumers' needs. According to Lameiras (2015), wine tourists have many characteristics in common:(1) higher education level and training, (2) growing interest in rural tourism, (3) an interest in food, (4) a search for authenticity, (5) a need for peace and tranquility, and (6) an awareness of the importance of outdoor activities and health. Today's tourist wants something more targeted and more personalized. There is, however, no unanimity regarding the definition of wine tourists, considering their profile. It would be important to define the wine tourist's profile because this way one would better understand the Wine Tourism phenomenon (Lameiras, 2015).

In general, wine tourism can be divided into three levels that differentiate it from other tourism experiences. These correspond to primary (vineyard, grape production), secondary (wine production) and tertiary (wine tourism services) (Martins et al, 2017). Wine tourism is not only for wine lovers, people interested in grape varieties and culinary traditions, but also for those who like to relax with a glass of wine, people who like to expand their knowledge, who like to see interesting things. Wine tourism is related to motivation, mainly the attraction for wine. In the Mediterranean region, where wine tourism has great historical and cultural significance, it is considered a consumer product of the upper middle class (Zawadka, 2018). This can be a trip related to the attraction of wine regions, a form of niche and destination development that represents a direct sales and marketing opportunity for the wine industry. For several authors, beyond the purchase aspect, from the learning point of view, visiting a winery to learn more about wine, how

it is produced or processed, beyond the act of tasting, is also a motivation. Other tourists also visit wineries for social reasons or related to health benefits of wine. Recently a phenomenon has emerged - "winearchitecture" - which is the visit to a winery or farm being itself a work of architecture, becoming a tourism and leisure product (Lameiras, 2015). In general, one can divide the motivation of a tourist to a wine region into two points: the macro level, which can be attributed to the choice of the region to visit, and the micro level regarding the winery/intake to visit, as well as the experiences that are intended to be enjoyed. These motivations that promote visits to wineries can also be divided into primary (buying the wine) and secondary, (everyday life and the search for personal enrichment experiences). There are several motivations that lead tourists to visit these regions, namely, the tasting, the wine, its connection with the gastronomy, having contact with the production environment, i.e., the vineyard and the wineries and the wine producer (Guerra et al., 2020).

Tourist perception consists of three distinct elements: past experiences, preferences, and information. All elements can influence the tourist's choice of destination. Previous bad experiences can have the effect of negating new options of returning to the same place. Also, when it comes to shopping, whether in cellars or other shopping places, the same attitude is noticeable due to negative experiences. On the other hand, a good experience can work in exactly the opposite direction. Satisfaction with a positive experience at a winery is important because it is an opportunity to increase brand and product awareness, which can add positive associations to the brand and facilitate future purchases after the visit (Tanford & Jung, 2017).

Preferences refer to an individual's priorities, sometimes reflecting the personality of the individual, where specific needs are sought. The combination of motivations and perceptions associated with the experience builds an image of the destination and attraction in the individual. These mental images are the basis for evaluating and selecting relevant personal destinations. The image created is the sum of an individual's beliefs (possibly multidimensional), thoughts and impressions about the destination, and an opinion of a potential tourist destination, which means that the resulting images are not necessarily the same in each tourist (Tanford & Jung, 2017). The recognition that the quality-of-service tourists receive during their travels is as important, if not more important than the quality of other elements of the tourist experience, takes on special relevance in the context of wine tourism, where wineries' efforts are tailored to all customer needs such as the case of understanding and satisfaction. Wineries can be a great

"showcase" for producers to showcase their products, however, they should be used not only for immediate profit, but also to build customer relationships and build brands (Clemente-Ricolfe et al, 2012; Guerra et. al., 2020; O'Neill & Charters, 2006).

Tourists' expectations are mainly related to the quality of wine, but above all to the quality of service at the wineries, as the service and attitude of the employees and their friendliness, the service itself, the enthusiasm, the knowledge and the topics treated with reliability and quality of service are points that tourists repeatedly consider as the main aspects of the visit. For visitors, employees should be friendly, understanding and understand their needs, which leads to the importance of recruiting and at the same time training employees (Guerra et al., 2020). Elements of the farm visit experience are important variables in determining post-visit buying behavior. Both service quality and social aspects are considered very important in brand loyalty and purchase behavior, given the different variables that influence this relationship (Tanford & Jung,2017). Cunha et al (2020) divided wine tourists into four groups (Table 1):

**Table 1.** Classification of wine tourists

<b>Wine lovers</b> <i>(Wine Lovers)</i>	<b>Knowledgeable</b>	<b>Curious</b>	<b>Beginners</b>
<b>They have a comprehensive wine education base.</b>	Informed Effectively identified based on interviewees	They are likely to have no other previous wine education experience.	They can be called "wine novices".
<b>Likely to take a wine class. Acquisition of training in the area</b>	Very interested. Characteristics distinct enough to be segmented in this way	Interested: Learning about wine storage and aging	Unique educational experience when visiting a farm.

**Source :** Adapted from Cunha et al (2020)

There is an overlap between wine tourism and gastronomy, as they collectively represent a way of life in which both are tangible. Recent research shows that food and wine are the main reasons for traveling to an area, not necessarily a second travel activity. The relationship between food and wine is very important for the tourism industry, as evidenced by the support of the tourism level entities (DMOs). Visitors are looking for an "overall experience", unique, that is, authenticity. They want their experience to be authentic and unique to them. The interaction with the winery staff, i.e., the winemaker and other employees, contributes to the experience, which gives them peace and tranquility away from home, from the city, from a week of work, from the day-to-day routine. Wine tourism facilitates the involvement of the tourist with the rural world,

helping to preserve the authenticity of each region, publicizing its handicrafts, landscapes, architecture, museums, and gastronomy heritage, helping to fight the exodus and give a certain development to the wine regions, exploring and maximizing the tourism potential of the wine industry, bringing advantages to the local community and to it (Guerra et. al, 2020). There is a relationship between the wine chosen and the travel choices of wine consumers. Regarding the importance of motivation in wine tourism research, it can be concluded that wine tourists have a certain need to consume wine, as well as for leisure and entertainment, i.e., the connection to wine and the destination (Becker & Jaakkola, 2020). The key to a successful wine tourism experience is authenticity (Voltar et. al., 2020). Sharing with gastronomy can increase the visitor's perception of authenticity in the tourism experience by making the consumer identify with the region and culture and assume positive behavioral intentions towards the tourism experience. Given its experiential consumption, wine is considered a product, a way of life, a consumer choice rather than a necessity. Rural landscapes, in addition to experiences in nature, wine tasting, visiting vineyards frequently and learning about the production process, or even conversations with wine producers (Back et al, 2021). There are several strategic and competitive advantages and opportunities in persistent growth, development, and cementing, and here the wine tourism experience plays a crucial role in wine tourism vacations, tourism products and destinations (Santos et al, 2020). In a farm visit experience, there is a quite significant impact regarding sensory impressions, i.e. on sight, taste, hearing touch and smell, and here there is an important crossover of emotions in these constructs (Santos et al., 2020). Employees play a key role in the quality of service provided during a wine tourism experience. Customer expectations are high, with a strong emphasis on friendly, knowledgeable employees who are attentive to visitors' needs and able to provide personalized attention. The authenticity of the tourist experience is reflected when human resources demonstrate passion in what they do and influence consumer purchases (Marlowe et al, 2016).

In their empirical economic reference model, Back et. al. (2019) argue that experience is distinct from the creation of goods and services. Wine tourism is a product considered as a lifestyle, a consumer choice rather than a necessity, i.e., experiential consumption (Back et al, 2021). The innovation process is gaining space in academic studies, mainly in the application to specific tourism contexts, as is the case of wine tourism, which is why there has been a greater focus on this aspect in the last forty years (Szolnoki et al., 2014; Sousa, 2019). In this sense, innovations reflect a "know how"

combined with new uses such as interaction, dissemination and sharing of this same, revealing here the fundamental role of *stakeholders* as important agents in this environment of involvement (Sousa, 2019).

In the analysis and evaluation of tourism and sustainability in wine businesses there is a focus mostly in recent years (Berghoef & Dodds, 2016; Karagiannis & Metaxas, 2020). These authors mention, as the priority in promoting wine tourism, sustainability, both in the next generation and in the practitioners of this type of tourism, revealing similar aspects between wine business practices and, simultaneously, revealing similar aspects between sustainable wine tourism business practices and innovation evolution. Wine tourism is rich in multisensory stimuli that help in the promotion and planning of attractive tourism experiences, reconciled with sustainable development (Karagiannis & Metaxas, 2020). According to Gómez and Molina (2015), wine tourism is a tourist activity, wine is the main symbol of attraction, which can induce different interpretations of destinations. As a tourism product, wine tourism not only contributes to the promotion of the development of a particular area, but also promotes its services. Wine tourism has completely different characteristics from other types of tourism, by the involvement of the five senses (taste, sight, hearing, touch, and smell).

The existing literature on the sensory dimensions of wine tourism focuses on one or two senses - overview and tasting, which are used in visitors' experiences at farms, wine routes or wine events (Brochado et al, 2021). In experiential marketing strategies, wine tourism is a privileged tool that promotes interaction between brands and consumers, as well as between consumers themselves, through brands to enhance co-creation and strengthen emotional connections with products and places, and for such connections to occur and be positive, it is necessary that the experience of the surrounding environment, including facilities, vineyards and secondary tourism resources, result in positive emotions; that relationships with wine tourism service providers, other resources, and residents, is also enjoyable to reinforce the positive emotions of the wine experience (Brochado et al, 2021). The growing interest of visitors in gastronomic and wine tourism in wine regions justifies the need for in-depth knowledge of their motivations and perspectives in this area. Despite this, empirical studies that analyze the influence of co-creation experiences on gastronomic and wine tourism in wine regions are still scarce. Another good example of a study where the objective is to analyze different co-creation experiences of gastronomic and wine tourism from a tourism perspective, distinguishing specific dimensions and qualities of these experiences, comparing different types of

experiences provided in two Portuguese wine regions, is the case of Bairrada and Dão wine regions (Carvalho et al., 2021). Among the analyzed experiences and considering the dimensions of co-creation in wine tourism and their interaction, the particular elements dependent on the context and the visitor were highlighted. Authenticity was considered as an additional quality dimension of the analyzed co-creation experiences, which contributed to the creation of distinct and memorable gastronomic and wine tourism experiences in both regions.

In terms of supply, wine tourism can be seen as a set of all activities related to visits to wineries, museums and other institutions connected with the sector, with the main objective of acquiring experiences related to the themes of wine, knowledge of wine and its tasting, and knowledge of the regions, institutions and organizations visited, including wineries, farms, festivals, events, guided tours, accommodation, restaurants and bars, handicrafts, food production, infrastructures and destination support activities. It presupposes a direct contact between the visitor and the viticultural activities and the products resulting from these activities, as well as the landscape and architectural heritage associated with the viticultural culture and production (Sousa & Simões, 2018; Treen et al, 2018). Consumers are increasingly looking for different types of offers and experiences, and want to spend their time in an exciting, comfortable, and authentic environment, creating supply challenges and allowing wine tourism to respond to the new needs of tourists. As a result, winery owners seek to build recreational activities that allow tourists to experience different sensations and that have a strong occupational component, especially educational, betting on the creation of their own facilities where people can taste the wine while providing relationships with other visitors or employees of the winery. The company invites visitors to its production space, allowing them to see live the production of the wine, using real raw materials and being able to interact directly with those involved in the winemaking process (Brochado et al, 2021).

On the supply side, there is a strong need to promote development and attractiveness factors through marketing actions involving wine and tourism, such as: routes and itineraries to and within regions, well signposted wine routes. Promote recreational activities to increase visitor choice; space to sell regional products within the winery or region, maintain a consistent image associated with wine. For this purpose, the association to a region's denomination of origin can allow, in terms of supply, to promote the attributes and regional, local, or personal identity of the wines produced in that region. The very concept of appellation of origin has a strong regional attribute, linking the brand

to the region (Brochado et al, 2021). The regions have the function to enhance their brand image, taking advantage of wine tourism, the characteristics of its wine, along with its gastronomy, enhancing its particular and endogenous resources, and in this sense provide unique experiences, to disseminate and promote of tourism in the region and in turn the economic impact (Santos et al., 2018).

### **3. Methodology**

The present study, descriptive exploratory, presents a qualitative methodology, proceeding to an analysis of the influence of wine tourism in the Demarcated Douro Region, in the Municipality of São João da Pesqueira. The value of qualitative research lies in its ability to provide a different perspective providing deep *insights*, but with an interpretive and subjective approach. With qualitative data (Lanka et al., 2021) chronological order can be preserved, events leading to consequences can be understood and useful explanations can be obtained, with an apparent quality when more likely to reveal unexpected discoveries and new integrations to help researchers move beyond concepts, modifying the concept structure. In terms of characteristics, the method focuses on the ability of participants to provide the necessary qualitative information; gather saturated and highly detailed reports from *stakeholders*, which are subsequently selected, compared, and analyzed; and sample sizes tend to be smaller (Lanka et al., 2021). This approach was chosen because the study was designed to cover the Douro Demarcated Region, where 8 organizations related to wine tourism were included; there are different real possibilities in each entity; and the data obtained in the study also needs to be analyzed separately. First, it is necessary to conduct research on the designated topic, which will theoretically support the interview exposition, as well as topics related to the literature review and research context. At a later stage, the entities selected and considered the most suitable to participate in this study will be contacted, where the interview will be applied. Regarding data treatment and analysis, the same will be done to each of the interviews, through transcription, in order not to lose the most important information for the realization of this dissertation (Minayo & Costa, 2018). This study aims to understand, through concrete and specific data regarding the typology of the destination demand, the impact of wine tourism in the Demarcated Douro Region, particularly in the municipality of São João da Pesqueira.

**Table 2.** Research Objectives

General Objective	- Understand the importance of wine tourism in promoting the destination São João da Pesqueira.
Specific Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Identify the importance of Wine Tourism for the promotion of the territory.</li> <li>- Identify the preferences of the tourist in the Demarcated Douro Region, particularly in the municipality of São João da Pesqueira.</li> <li>- Identify the motivations in the choice of tourist destination, São João da Pesqueira.</li> <li>- Identify a better knowledge of the sector, namely in demand, to enable product development.</li> <li>- To identify and enhance the wine tourism perspective of São João da Pesqueira.</li> <li>- Identify the impact of wine tourism on regional and local development.</li> </ul>

Gathering information from qualitative methods can be done through written notes, audio or video recordings of interviews, and available documents. The interview is the most widely used technique in the process of empirical qualitative work (Minayo & Costa, 2018). However, depending on the research, there are three types of individual interviews: closed interviews, which consist of raising opinions through a fully structured questionnaire, in which the interlocutor's answers depend on questions formulated by the researcher; semi-structured interviews, which can be asked in advance taking into account the combination of questions with open-ended questions which gives the interviewer more control over what he wants to know, while providing space for free and spontaneous reflection on relevant topics; and open or in-depth interviews, in which there is a conversation between interviewer and interviewee, with the limitation of the parameters of the study (Minayo & Costa, 2018). In this sense, the collection of information in this research was based on a semi-structured interview with 12 open-ended questions and compared to closed interviews. Considering the other side, and compared to open-ended interviews, in these semi-structured interviews, there is the possibility of having more focus of the conversation on the intended research questions (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018). The interviewees/participants were asked to fill in their sociodemographic data to characterize them. Following this, and to meet the described objectives, the questions formulated for the interviews were distributed according to specific objectives, and were based on the literature review, as shown in the following table.

**Table 3.** Interview Questions

Interview Questions	Literature
<b>Goal 1: Identify strengths of the destination</b>	
1. What are the main qualifying and differentiating factors of São João da Pesqueira as a wine tourism destination?	Brochado et al, 2021; Tanford & Jung,2017. Tončev et al., 2016.
2. Is there another municipality in the Douro Demarcated Region that can compete with São João da Pesqueira in terms of wine tourism? What are the differences?	Tončev et al., 2016.
<b>Objective 2: To understand how they describe wine tourism at the destination and its organization</b>	

3. How do you characterize the tourism demand of the municipality of São João da Pesqueira?	Araujo et al. 2020; Hall et al. 2020. Gossling et al. 2020; Pan et al. 2021.
4. Regarding the supply, at the wine tourism level, do you consider it sufficient and adequate to the demand needs?	
Objective 3: To assess the contribution of wine tourism to local development and whether the community is aware of it	
5. What is the contribution of wine tourism to the municipality of São João da Pesqueira, considering that the local community is always aware of tourism?	Sidali et al., 2015; Tanford & Jung, 2017. Guerra et al. (2020).
6. Do you consider that there is adequate training in the wine tourism area to help local development?	Byrd et al, 2016; Lameiras, 2015; Guerra et al, 2020.
Goal 4: Characterize the relationship between public and private sectors	
7. How do you characterize the intra and intersectoral articulation in the territory regarding wine tourism?	Salvado & Kastenholz, 2017; Cunha et al., 2020; Marlowe et al., 2016; Sousa, 2019.
8. How can the creation of new public/private partnerships give rise to new experiences, with wine tourism as a backdrop?	Payne et al., 2020; Vitale et al., 2019. Brochado et al, 2021; Santos et al, 2020.
Goal 5: Analyze the importance of wine tourism in the promotion of the territory	
9. What role does wine tourism play in promoting the territory?	Kastenholz et al, 2021; Salvado & Kastenholz, 2017; Santos et al, 2020.
10. Is there a sustainable co-creation of tourism experiences in the territory? How can wine tourism be a lever in this aspect?	Vitale et al., 2019; Payne et al., 2020. Back et. al., 2019; Marlowe et al., 2016.
Objective 6: Find out how the possible insertion of strategies is understood by the supply	
11. What differentiating strategies can be implemented to ensure the development of wine tourism?	Araújo et al., 2020; Sigala, 2020. Gossling et al., 2020.
12. How do you define the wine tourist profile?	Lameiras, E., 2015; Cunha et al., 2020. Becker & Jaakkola, 2020; Guerra et al. 2020.

The interview, within the scope of this research, is addressed to selected stakeholders and entrepreneurs within the context of wine tourism in the destination, constituting the sample of the study, as it is considered that they are actors with specialized knowledge regarding market strategy, destination development, practices adopted and medium-term vision for the sector in the region. This study considered theoretical saturation, i.e., after a certain moment in the interviews, there would be no information to add regarding the analysis of data from previous interviews, thus constituting the sample. Through the sociodemographic questionnaires, whose data are shown in the following table, it is possible to verify that the ages of the participants vary between 29 and 44 years old; that three of the interviewees are female and five are male; that the academic qualifications held are at the higher education level and that the functions performed by the interviewees in the organizations are mostly in higher hierarchical positions.

**Table 4.** Sociodemographic data of the interviewees

NO.	Interviewee's Role in the Organization	Age	Gender	Academic Qualifications
P.1	Manager	44	Male	Undergraduate
P.2	Trainer	35	Male	Undergraduate
P.3	Manager	33	Female	Undergraduate
P.4	Enologist/Wine Producer	36	Male	Undergraduate
P.5	Enologist	29	Male	Master's Degree
P.6	Wine Producer	32	Male	Master's Degree
P.7	Tourism Technician	33	Female	Master's Degree
P.8	Architect	29	Female	Master's Degree

**Table 5.** Organizations Represented

City	Vila	Interviewed Organization	Date	Duration
	Ervedosa do Douro/ São João da Pesqueira	Toca da Raposa" Restaurant Cais da Ferradosa" Restaurant	04.08.2022	00:27:28
	São João da Pesqueira	Professional School of Alto Douro	05.08.2022	Zoom 00:22:06
	Soutelo do Douro	House of Work Agrotourism New House	05.08.2022	Email
<b>Peso da Régua</b>		Vinoquel Wines Óscar Quevedo, Lda.	07.08.2022	00:24:02
	Pinion	Dois Lagares Wine Company (Quinta de Santo António)	09.08.2022	00:21:21
	Ervedosa do Douro	Ancestral References and Viticulture Ltd.	11.08.2022	00:28:22
	São João da Pesqueira	Wine Museum	16.08.2022	Email
	Pinion	Architecture Unipessoal Lda. Porto and Alto Douro	18.08.2022	00:23:08

After the implementation of the interviews and data collection, the analysis and interpretation of these will take place, that is, content analysis will be performed, which consists of three stages.

## 4. Results

### 4.1 Strengths of the destination

According to the participants, the qualifying and differentiating factors of the municipality are the climate, the soils, the landscape framework, which is world heritage (P.3, P6), the unique *terroir of the region* (P.7), taking into account that in the panorama of the Douro is the largest producer of port table wine in the Demarcated Region (P.1), considered an *ex-libris* for wine lovers (P.2). In fact, it has an added value that is the differentiating character in relation to other municipalities, or in relation to the supply that may exist in other regions (P.1), because it has the greatest diversity in viticulture, with unique characteristics (P.8), and the largest number of small producers (P.5), more farms,

more history (P.2, P.4). *"We can never forget that São João da Pesqueira is the largest producer of table wine and port wine in the Demarcated Region of the Douro, which means that all the brands that we know and that operate in the market have their space in the area of our municipality, so there we have an added value, the differentiating character compared to other municipalities or compared to the supply that may exist today in the different municipalities of the Douro" (P.1).*

**Table 6.** Summary of evidence of qualifying and differentiating factors

Subcategories	Interview Evidence
Unique Features	<i>"... mainly for its unique characteristics" (P.8), "...the differentiating character compared to other municipalities..." (P.1), "...is the ex-libris for wine lovers...the most emblematic region" (P.2.)</i>
Landscape	<i>"...the climate, the soils, the framework of the landscape that is world heritage..." (P.3), "Landscape, heart of the region..." (P4), "...in terms of differentiation in this region is the landscape..." (P.6).</i>
Product/Wine	<i>"...the largest producer of table and port wine, in the Demarcated Region..." (P.1), "...our product, the vineyard, the wine..." (P6), "...the wine, the humility of the people of the Douro..." (P.7).</i>
History	<i>"...where are the most famous farms and with history in the production of port wine or fortified wine." (P.2), "...which is world heritage, and also our history." (P.3).</i>
Diversity of wine producers	<i>"...diversity of small wine producers that you can find." (P.5), "...this is where we find more wine quantity and diversity, more farms." (P.4)</i>

a) Destination Competitors

Through the answers given during the interviews, it can be confirmed that all interviewees agree on the competition with the destination competitors, since almost all the other Douro municipalities are ahead of São João da Pesqueira in what is the supply (P.1), compared with the municipality of Peso da Régua which offers more in terms of logistics of the river with the same, where there is more wine tourism supply and more worked (P.4), or even Tabuaço in which, in terms of wine tourism, is very well prepared to receive tourists because it has more offer, for example. (P.6, P.7). *"Yes there is, it is the municipality of Peso da Régua. It offers more in terms of logistics of the river with the municipality, better conditions for buses and caravans, and more wine tourism supply and more worked out for those who come without knowledge. It also has more accommodation which makes all the difference. Pesqueira lacks a hotel for example." (P.4)*

On the other hand, the differentiating supply of the municipality provides visitors unique experiences (P.2) where the bet is quite varied and is booming (P.3), because in reality São João da Pesqueira has a huge potential, a diamond in the rough that is not being worked (P.1), taking into account that the territory continues to look only and exclusively to make wine, not exploring other aspects such as wine tourism (P.1). The endogenous

products of high quality are one of the differentiating aspects of the destination competitors (P.3), but the territory is undervalued in relation to wine tourism (P.6). There is also the lack of a hotel in São João da Pesqueira (P.4) and it is necessary to improve accesses (P.5) to be able to compete with the destination competitors.

**Table 4** - Summary of evidence from the target competitors

Subcategories	Interview Evidence
Potential	<i>"...São João da Pesqueira has a huge potential, only that it is not being worked, hence I say that almost all the other municipalities of the demarcated region are far ahead..." (P.1), "... São João da Pesqueira is unique, and its territory is emblematic and unique in the world." (P.2).</i>
Housing	<i>"...more accommodation that makes all the difference. Pesqueira lacks a hotel for example." (P.4)</i>
Supply	<i>"...all the municipalities in the Demarcated Region base their supply on what is route 222, on what are the riverbanks..." (P.1), "There are more and more offers for those who come to us" (P.3),</i>
Access	<i>"... the municipality of Peso da Régua offers greater in terms of logistics of the river with the territory, better conditions for buses and caravans" (P.4), "Yes, counties where access is easier..." (P.5)</i>

## 4.2 Understanding how they describe wine tourism at the destination and its organization.

### a) Characterization of tourism demand of the destination

To identify the characteristics of tourism demand, the interviewees were asked to describe the wine tourism of the destination and its organization. The main features identified were the increase in demand (P.6), a demand for better products and remarkable experiences (P.3) but that contrasts with a mediocre supply, an offer considered insufficient and not adequate to the needs of demand (P.1). *"The supply is little, although there is a lot of demand in this aspect, there is supply, but it is in the big farms, it is a market level that is not accessible to everyone, and this supply already has internal packages, that is, in terms of appreciation of the land itself is not the desired one." (P.6)*

The demand has increased in recent years and it is a niche market to be explored (P.8), especially in the summer and harvest seasons, consequently, (P.7), but in reality it has much to give and it is necessary to make a greater dissemination of the destination (P.5), it lacks to do the homework and create conditions to attract tourists (P.4). *"...wine tourism is too focused on the experience indoors, i.e., within the walls of some farms, and this is not getting through to the outside..." (P.1).*

**Table 5.** Synthesis of evidence of the tourist demand characterization of the destination

Subcategories	Interview Evidence
Unique Experiences	<i>"It is a search for unique and gastronomic experiences, it is a search for history, for traditions." (P.2), "It is characterized by the search for the best products and remarkable experiences, a search for learning and experiencing traditions..." (P.3).</i>
Disclosure	<i>"We lack to do our homework and create conditions to attract tourists." (P.4), "Weak, although we already notice a greater dissemination of the territory so that there can be more evolution in this sense." (P.5), "...there is much to work on through marketing..." (P.7).</i>
Seasonal	<i>"...we see the case of Alijó and Sabrosa with an offer that lasts practically the whole year to receive tourists, and this type of experience in the case of São João da Pesqueira will exist but programmed or scheduled..." (P.1), "...taking into account my professional experience, it is mainly in the summer season and the grape harvests..." (P.7).</i>

#### b) Supply matched to demand

In this context, most of the participants consider that the supply is not adequate to the demand needs, they mention that there should be more supply in terms of wine tourism (P.6), although the one that exists is valued, where there is room to grow (P.4).

*"No, there is room to grow. In recent years the demand has been greater than the supply, and I think that the municipality of São João da Pesqueira can have its space without having to compete with others." (P.4).*

Although the demand is increasing in the territory, there is also a huge effort on the part of entrepreneurs, of the farms in the offer of diversification of pioneering or innovative experiences to attract customers to the region (P.2), new farms constantly turned to wine tourism (P.3), this process has to be reversed so that there is a balance between supply and demand, and this will bring enormous benefits to the territory.

**Table 6.** Summary of evidence of supply adequate to demand

Subcategories	Interview Evidence
Search	<i>"It has been more in demand, but with a lot to give..." (P.4), "...although there is a lot of demand in that aspect, the supply is little..." (P6), "...if it was a few years ago, maybe, now I think we are reaching a point where there is more demand than supply..." (P.8).</i>
Supply	<i>"I think not, that is, there should be more offer, in terms of wine tourism, although the one that exists is valued..." (P6), "..., therefore, to what extent the municipality of São João da Pesqueira is well positioned in terms of offer at the level of wine tourism, in my opinion this supply does not exist..." (P.1)</i>

### 4.3 To assess the contribution of wine tourism to local development.

#### a) Contribution of wine tourism to the destination

According to the interviewees, wine tourism *is fundamental and assumes a crucial role in the Municipality* (P.6 and P.2), *in a transversal way, since it is related to other activities*, such as gastronomy, (P.1). This was considered as *one of the most important sectors*, (P.7) in the Region/Council. In this context, during the interviews, the most mentioned were, gastronomy (6 participants), accommodation (5 participants), landscape (8 participants), wine and vineyard (8 participants).

First, in the references to wine tourism, there is agreement on some aspects related to its presence in the territory. Some participants referred this area, this product (P.7, P.5, P.8) very important in the Territory, nowadays it is fundamental (P.6) and will play a crucial role in the development of the local community, to preserve the authenticity (P.1, P.2).

On the other hand, some interviewees consider that there is still a lot of work to be done in publicizing and promoting the theme in the region (P.5, P.4). *"I think it is an excellent contribution to the local economy, to boosting businesses, it has a huge value to the community..."* (P.3)

**Table 7.** Summary of evidence of the contribution of wine tourism to the destination

Subcategories	Interview Evidence
Evolution	<i>"You can already see signs of improvement, but it's still not enough" (P.4), "...it's evolving towards accountability to offer the best we have around." (P.2).</i>
Disclosure	<i>"...there is a promotion of the region..." (P.2), "The contribution of wine tourism to the region is a lot, however it is still not very well worked out..." (P.7)</i>
Stimulation/Contribution	<i>"...stimulates the local economy..." (P.2), "... it contributes to more jobs in the municipality..." (P.3), "...among the few farms that practice wine tourism, in that aspect they give work..." (P.6), "At present I think the contribution is very residual." (P.5).</i>

b) Adequate training in wine tourism

To identify if there is adequate education for the area under study, the interviewees were asked if they consider that there is training to help local development. In fact, it was found that, on the one hand yes, mostly in the large farms that already bet on wine tourism, where the largest slice of business related to the business is found (P.5), these companies try to offer an excellent service, with well-trained professionals and informed about the history of our region (P.2). *"...mainly in the larger farms/companies, where the largest slice of business related to wine tourism is found." (p5).*

However, there is not enough training, especially outside the big farms. There is a lack of promotion in language and service technique (P.3), leading to accept any kind of people without training in the area (P.6), but there is a professional school that is doing a good job in the areas of catering and wine production, but it is still not enough (P.3, P.4), there is still a long way to go. *"My opinion is that this region lacks a lot of training in wine tourism" (P.7).*

**Table 8.** Summary of evidence of training in wine tourism

Subcategories	Interview Evidence
Insufficient training	<i>"In my opinion no, vocational schools try to provide adequate training, but it is still not enough..." (P.3), "there are signs of improvement, but it is still not enough..." (P.4), "In my opinion is that this region lacks much training at the level of wine tourism." (P.7).</i>
Sufficient Training	<i>"Yes, I consider, the companies try to offer an excellent service, with well-trained professionals..." (P.2), "Yes, especially in the large companies/farms, where the largest share of business is" (P.5), "...there are some staff, some people have..." (P.6).</i>

#### 4.4 Characterize the relationship between public and private sectors.

- a) Intra and intersectoral articulation of the destination in relation to wine tourism

To identify the relationship between public and private sectors, the interviewees were first asked about it. It was found that there is no unanimity on this issue, since only three respondents consider that there is, saying that there is a consistent and solidary articulation, with some support from the municipality so that the sectors work for the benefit of the region, where all are heading in the same direction, so that there is a reception of excellence for the customer (P.2, P.3 E P.5). *"There is some articulation between the various companies in the region and there is support, in this case, some support from the municipality, so that all sectors work for the benefit of the region and in terms of receiving excellence for the customer." (P.3).*

On the other hand, most of the interviewees assume that there is a great need for collaboration and cooperation among everyone to enhance wine tourism in the region (P.4), having difficulties in characterizing this possible connection between the public and the private sector, because it does not exist (P.6, P4, P.7, P1). *"This is one of the problems of the region as a whole. There is a lack of collaboration and cooperation among everyone so that we can enhance wine tourism with the creation of wine tourism programs." (P.4).*

**Table 9.** Summary of evidence of intra and intersectoral articulation

Subcategories	Interview Evidence
Collaboration	"...so that all sectors work for the benefit of the region..." (P.3), "...collaboration among all is lacking..." (P.4),
Cooperation	"...consistent and supportive articulation...a demand for all sectors in the region and everybody wins from that." (P.2),
Programs	"We have seen a noticeable evolution." (P.5), "... farms are looking for local catering, so that the customer can leave with a better experience." (P.1),

#### b) Creation of public/private partnerships with new experiences

Regarding the creation of these public/private partnerships, considering new experiences related to wine tourism, the interviewees were very direct, and in fact mostly agreed that wine tourism has a key role in this aspect (P.3, P.4, P.5, P.7, P.8). They mentioned that if new partnerships were created, the connection of wine companies among them and supported by the public sector, it would be possible to boost more the wine tourism area (P.4), with the creation, for example, of a hotel, with wine tourism as a backdrop (P.6), the region would gain immensely, giving the municipality of Tabuaço as an example of good practices in this regard. In terms of creating new experiences, they talked about massages with wine, the creation of a regional cake with products such as port wine (P.7). *"Yes, it would be interesting, for the region, to create public/private partnerships, in order to promote the municipality more." (P.7).*

On the other hand, the minorities of the interviewees reported that this type of partnership has no legs to stand on (P.2), that it will take generations to change mentalities, because when there is a brand winning a lot it is difficult to work on this aspect (P.1), the path is totally uphill and needs to be worked on. *"I think it is a partnership that has no legs to stand on, in our region the investment is all private. Profit is sought, service excellence, and this in the public does not exist" (P2).*

**Table 10.** Synthesis of the evidence on the creation of public-private partnerships

Subcategories	Interview Evidence
Link	<i>"The linking of wine companies with each other supported by the public sector..." (P.4).</i>
Evolution	<i>"It would be an added value in terms of evolution in some aspects related to tourism, and in the case of wine tourism even more." (P.5),</i>
Investment	<i>"...in our region the investment is all private..." (P.2, ...the city council could invest in a hotel, alone, or in partnership with the private, with wine tourism as a backdrop..." (P.6).</i>
Events	<i>"...annually, they hold the wine fair, the Vindouro..." (P.8).</i>

#### 4.5 Analyze the importance of wine tourism in the promotion of the territory.

a) The role of wine tourism in promoting the destination

Considering the role of wine tourism in promoting the destination of São João da Pesqueira, it can be said that everyone agrees, in the sense that wine tourism has a crucial and fundamental role (P.1, P.2, P.5, P.6, P.8), it plays a role of dissemination all over the world (P.3), it is a sector in full expansion (P.5), it attracts a lot of tourists to the region (P.6), it keeps people in the interior, because it also gives a lot of work to those who live there (P.8). *"Wine tourism may have a fundamental role in the development of local communities and in the development of local businesses and the affirmation of the municipality in the Douro as a whole..." (P.1)*. However, a participant says that the importance of wine tourism in the municipality is still very short, it lacks to disseminate and promote (P.4). *"Still very short, lack to publicize and promote. When we talk about wine tourism, it is associated with a territory in the region (Peso da Régua)" (P.4)*.

**Table 11.** Summary of evidence of the role of wine tourism in promoting the destination

Subcategories	Interview Evidence
Important	<i>"a role more of dissemination throughout the world, our territory is mainly known for quality wine tourism, the tourist demand for the product and the contact with the theme are fundamental to this success." (P.3), "wine tourism is a very important product in our territory, especially Vindouro, which is undoubtedly the territory's wine-based festival" (P.7).</i>
Crucial	<i>"It assumes a crucial role in the promotion of the territory, our Douro and namely São João da Pesqueira is in the mouths of the world.", (P.2), "...wine tourism is such a point..." (P.8).</i>

b) Sustainable co-creation of wine tourism experiences

In the question of how wine tourism can be a lever in the sustainable co-creation of new tourism experiences all interviewees gave innovative ideas to be implemented in the territory in the future, from the combination of wine tourism and gastronomy (P.1), preserving the theme, the territory, its authenticity (P.2), talking about the sustainability and dignification of tourism in the Douro (P.3, being able to "take" a couple of tourists and go for a ride through the vineyards in a 4L (classic car) and do a wine tasting (P.6), ride in a hot air balloon and drink a glass of Port wine (P.7) or even do a horseback ride in the middle of the vineyards and have a picnic with endogenous products (P.8). *"A number of sustainable experiences could be done, such as riding in a hot air balloon and drinking a glass of port wine..." (P.7). "...differentiating events, for example a horseback ride in the vineyards, and have a picnic...it would be an amazing niche market...there is the horse culture in the old vineyards...it would be a good idea..." (P.8)*

**Table 12.** Summary of evidence of the creation of wine tourism experiences

Subcategories	Interview Evidence
Innovative Ideas	"...I can only conceive wine tourism with gastronomy...we can create a unique harmonization..." (P.19), "...the product is the key to success, it can preserve authenticity and businesses know that." (P.2), "Tourism in the Douro has to be sustainable...there has to be a protection of our territory and our products." (P.3), "...for example, some footbridges there on the Torto River, it would be fundamental, it would be a success allied to wine tourism, or some river pools, they are innovative ideas for the municipality." (P.6), "...a set of sustainable experiences such as riding in a hot air balloon and drinking a glass of port wine, it would be something unprecedented in the Douro..." (P.7), "...a differentiating event like this...for example a horseback ride in the middle of the vineyards combined with a tasting...would be a niche market..." (P.8).

#### 4.6 Ascertain how strategies are understood by the supply side.

##### a) Future strategies to ensure development in wine tourism.

"I don't think there are any epic formulas, it's about betting on the innovation of the supply, trying to offer more and more an authentic supply, differentiating from other territories. Wine tourism can be a lever here in this aspect for several reasons of general accountability that must exist for the preservation of the theme and the territory." (P.2). Some interviewees consider that wine tourism is not yet being properly worked (P.1), and that, for this, one should bet on differentiation by quality and innovation of new proposals (P.3) such as the creation of tourist routes (P.5) or the creation of new hotels (P.7) involved with the landscape, by the wine diversity, by its history (P.4).

In general, it is necessary to have a union of all, associated with the creation of better conditions for means and people, more and better accesses, and a greater involvement of municipal services in the promotion of the territory, in the training of professionals, (P.4), and the creation of a hotel in the municipality in the shape of a grape, for example. (P.7). "There are places in the Douro, other municipalities, where it is no longer necessary to advertise what exists there. In the case of São João da Pesqueira this has to be done, there is a need to create tourist routes and show what is done." (P.5).

**Table 13.** Synthesis of evidence of future strategies

Subcategories	Interview Evidence
Tourist Routes	"...In the case of São João da Pesqueira this has to be done, there is a need to create tourist routes and show what is done around here." (P.5),
Hospitality/Sustainability	"One should bet on quality, on differentiation...new proposals, bet on economic and environmental sustainability." (P.3), "...innovative things here, but they are ideas from other counties, a hotel like the one in Tabuaço, would certainly be a success..." (P.6), "...I'm not very good at thinking outside the box, but have you ever thought of a hotel shaped like a grape, allied to wine tourism, I'm not an architect, I don't know if it would be feasible, but I think it would look good in our landscape..." (P.7).

## b) Wine Tourist Profile

The participants were asked to define the profile of the wine tourist of the Municipality, and were highlighted the curious and the explorers, about 40/50% of them not knowing completely, and the rest already with some initiation and with a curiosity to know and know more. (P.1) It is also one who seeks experiences, a little of the traditions of the territory he visits and specially to know its history (P.2), "drink" a little of our history (P.3). They agree in the definition of the profile of the wine tourist of the Territory, classifying him as the curious, explorer (P.5, P.1, P.2), and adventurer (P.3, P.8), the one who comes to capture that picture, that place (P.5). *"I think that in general those who seek the territory, in the context of wine tourism, are people mainly from various classes, especially from the middle/upper social class, because they are also those who can pay to have more differentiating experiences, they are people who are curious about the type of wines, explorers of the region and then without a doubt they are passionate about wine."* (P.7).

**Table 14.** Summary of the evidence of wine tourist profile

Subcategories	Interview Evidence
Curious	<i>"...already with some initiation, with a curiosity in knowing and getting to know..." (P.1), "The profile of the wine tourist in the territory is to be a little curious, looking for new experiences..." (P.2), "There is a bit of everything, the curious..." (P.5),</i>
Explorer	<i>"... There is a bit of everything, the explorer..." (P.5), "It has a profile of an adventurer, who wants to know the historical heritage, who comes looking for new experiences..." (P.3), "...the visitors who come here are explorers..." (P.6)</i>
Passionate about wine ("Wine Lovers")	<i>"...they are also people who are very curious about the kind of wines that are out there and then definitely the wine lovers." (P.7).</i>

The profile identified suggests some challenges for the destination.

## 5. Conclusions

Wine tourism is clearly important in the Region under analysis, and in the Municipality of São João da Pesqueira. In this context, wine is used as a resource to generate tourism flows, mainly with the aim of discovering the origin of the product itself, understanding where and how it was produced (Santos et al., 2020). In this sense, it is unanimous that wine tourism, wine as a tourism product, have an unusual capacity to attract tourists with various degrees of involvement or connection. Wine can be seen as a product in which some consumers are highly involved and others less so (Cunha et al., 2020).

The general objective of the research is to understand the importance of wine tourism in the promotion of the destination São João da Pesqueira. Therefore, as specific objectives, the study aims to identify tourist preferences, the motivations in choosing a tourist destination, identify a better knowledge of the sector, particularly in demand, to enable product development, identify and enhance the wine tourism perspective and identify the impact of wine tourism on regional and local development. To achieve the defined objectives, in the development of the study a qualitative methodological approach was selected, consisting of a descriptive exploratory study, based on semi-structured interviews with entrepreneurs and *stakeholders* of entities that are directly involved with the wine tourism area. With this purpose, the study had a sample of 8 participants, and the interviews took place in person, during the month of August, and allowed to respond to the objectives previously defined. It is also important to emphasize that the main advantage of this research is the diversity of the analysis in covering entrepreneurs and *stakeholders* from various areas that encompass wine tourism within the municipality. Therefore, it is noteworthy that the perspectives of entrepreneurs and *stakeholders* of entities of the tourism sector in the region were uniform, mainly in the agreement of the importance of the theme itself.

Regarding the identification of the destination's strengths, among all interviewees five distinct areas were considered: the unique characteristics, the landscape, the product (wine), the history, and the diversity of wine producers. Firstly, the unique characteristics and landscape fit the literature review (Brochado et al., 2021; Tanford and Jung, 2017; Santos et al., 2020), such as production systems, landscape features, climate, cultural and heritage assets, local people, and their way of life (winemakers, winemakers and chefs), leisure activities (dining out, relaxing, nature, shopping, wine tasting, traveling, cooking) and community attractions. Wine was clearly the most cited strength of the participants, and, throughout the literature review, identified as "terroir tourism" (Holland et al., 2014; Kastenholz et al., 2021), characterized by the motivational factor of farm owner territories and wine production (Zawadka, 2018; Cunha et al., 2020; Brochado et al., 2021). Other areas highlighted in the interviews, are new attractions, accessibility, proximity, infrastructure, climate, tourism life cycle and visitor dynamics, considering whether it is the first visit or not (Byrd et al., 2016). Finally, history was mentioned a lot by the participants, but few authors mentioned this aspect (Carrión et al., 2019). Regarding the way they describe wine tourism in the destination and its organization, the characteristics

of the tourist demand and the supply adequate to the needs of the demand were identified. In the characteristics of tourism demand, the interviewees were asked to describe the destination's wine tourism and its organization. The main features identified were the increase in demand, demand for better products and remarkable experiences.

It is a very important tourism product that can promote regional development, create employment and investment opportunities, being the wine routes a privileged means of product development and promotion of the destination (Brochado et al., 2021; Guerra et al., 2020; Santos et al., 2020). Regarding the existing supply in the territory, according to the interviewees, it is actually a mediocre supply, an supply considered insufficient and not adequate to the demand needs, and according to the authors previously cited, wine tourism is an integrated system consisting of three main components that induce the success of wine tourism: (1) consumers/visitors; (2) destinations/regions and (3) supply (Tanford & Jung, 2017). In terms of supply, wine tourism must be seen as a set of all activities related to visits to wineries, museums and other institutions connected with the sector, having as main objective the acquisition of experiences related to wine themes (Santos et al., 2020). The participants reveal that there is room to grow, in recent years the demand has been greater than the supply, but there is an effort for existing businesses, to adapt to existing needs, and this meets what the authors say, the relationship between tourism destination managers, DMOs will be able to meet the needs of consumers (Zawadka, 2018).

According to the interviewees, wine tourism *is fundamental and assumes a crucial role in the Municipality, in a transversal way, since it is related to other activities, which corroborates the review carried out because, as a tourism product, wine tourism not only contributes to the promotion of the development of a certain area, but also promotes its services. Wine tourism has completely different characteristics from other types of tourism* (Brochado et al, 2021).

When trying to identify if the local community is sensitized to local development, in fact, it was found that, on the one hand, yes, mostly in the large farms, those that already bet on wine tourism, where most of the businesses related to this theme are located, on the other hand, they say that, in general, there is a huge lack of training in wine tourism in the region, however there are signs of improvement, but it will still not be enough. From the perspective of the authors previously mentioned, for visitors, employees must be friendly, understanding and understand their needs, which leads to the importance of recruiting and, at the same time, training employees (Guerra et. al, 2020), that is, if the customer reception

team is well trained, act with confidence and feel able to talk to tourists, it will undoubtedly be an advantage in selling the product, i.e., the wines it has to offer (Byrd et al., 2016). Regarding the characterization of the relationship between public and private sectors, the interviewees were asked about it and it was found that there is no unanimity on this issue, that is, only three participants consider that it exists, they even say that there is a consistent and solidary articulation. In this sense, three essential points were identified: collaboration, cooperation, and the creation of new programs. In this sense, innovations reflect a "know how" combined with new uses such as interaction, dissemination and sharing of this same, revealing here the fundamental role of *stakeholders* as important agents in this environment of involvement (Sousa 2019). Regarding the creation of these public-private partnerships, taking into account new experiences related to wine tourism, the interviewees were quite direct, and agreed that wine tourism has a key role here in this aspect, as mentioned in the review part, the innovation process is gaining space in academic studies, mainly in the application to specific tourism contexts, as is the case of wine tourism, hence the greater focus on this aspect (Szolnoki et al., 2014, 2018; Sousa, 2019). Previous studies (Villanueva & Moscovici, 2016) have shown that cooperation and a continuous effort between the various sectors for long-term sustainability can stimulate the success of wineries and farms. Regarding the importance that wine tourism has in the dissemination of the municipality, and taking into account the analyzed answers of the interviewees, it can be said that everyone agrees, in the sense that wine tourism has a crucial and fundamental role here, in that it assumes a role of dissemination throughout the world, it is a sector in full expansion and that attracts lots of tourists to the region, that keeps people in the interior, because it also gives a lot of work to those who live there. The regions have the function of enhancing their brand image, taking advantage of wine tourism, the characteristics of its wine, along with its gastronomy, valuing its particular and endogenous resources, and in this sense provide unique experiences, to disseminate and promote tourism in the region and in turn the economic impact (Santos et al., 2018). When asked how wine tourism can be a lever in the sustainable co-creation of new tourism experiences, all interviewees gave innovative ideas to be implemented in the municipality in the future, which coincide with some ideas already existing in other regions and countries, such as the Guadalupe Valley, located in Baja California, Mexico. Among the analyzed experiences and considering the dimensions of co-creation in wine tourism and their interaction, authenticity was considered as an additional quality dimension of the analyzed co-creation experiences, which contributed to the creation of distinct and memorable gastronomic and

wine tourism experiences. Through the creation of a Wine Route, tourists can learn about the traditions, customs, culture, and history that this wine territory has to offer, such as visiting different wine-related houses and restaurants in the region (Carrión et al., 2019).

One of the last objectives of this study corresponds to the definition of strategies for the future of the wine tourism sector. In this sense, the future strategies mentioned in the interviews are to focus on differentiation by quality and innovation of new proposals, such as the creation of touristic routes, or the creation of new hotels involved with the landscape, the wine diversity, and its history. The future perspective for wine tourism will be of evolution, the regions have the function of enhancing their brand image, taking advantage of wine tourism, the characteristics of its wine, along with its gastronomy, valuing its particular and endogenous resources, and in this sense provide unique experiences, in order to disseminate and promote tourism in the region and in turn the economic impact (Santos et al., 2018). The case of Extremadura is considered a good example in terms of cocreating sustainable tourism experiences where wine is one of the stakeholders, and this has contributed to the development of the Spanish region from an investment point of view and in accordance with the strategic objectives of sustainable development (Santos et al., 2020).

The last objective of this study corresponds to the definition of the wine tourist profile of the municipality, which is the object of study, and in this sense, according to the literature review and given the general situation of wine tourism, there is no consensus on its definition. It is very important to define the wine tourist profile because it allows to better understand the wine tourism phenomenon (Lameiras, 2015). The interviewees highlighted the curious and the explorers, about 40/50% of them not knowing completely, and the rest already with some initiation and with a curiosity in knowing and knowing more, they say that, also, is the one who seeks experiences, a little of the traditions of the territory that he visits and especially to know its history, the one who comes to "drink" a little of our history. They agree in defining the profile of the wine tourist in the Territory, classifying him as curious, explorer, adventurer, the one who comes to capture that picture, that place, fitting in with Cunha et al. (2020).

Wine tourism induces the involvement of tourists with the rural world, helping to preserve the authenticity of each region, disseminating its handicrafts, landscapes, architecture, museums and gastronomic heritage, improving wine regions' development, exploring and maximizing the tourism potential of the wine industry, increasing the benefits of the activity through economic dynamics in the region (Guerra et al., 2020,

Liberato et al., 2021), which proves to be interesting for the generality of the Douro demarcated region and specially for the region analyzed in this research.

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