

Summary:

Viennese Wines and Lavish Adventures

Designing a Luxury Wine Tour between Salzburg and Vienna.

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Motivation

Over the past few years, I have gained experience operating one-day wine tours. The idea behind the one-day tours was to provide a delightful afternoon for tourists and show off some wineries near Vienna.

Additionally, I recently spent a fantastic week in Bordeaux, where a colleague of mine organised our entire schedule very well. She organised visits to high-end chateaux and gourmet restaurants. I enjoyed that vacation so much that I would have been willing to pay her a premium.

The combination of these experiences got me thinking about the possibilities of a similar wine vacation in Austria. While I managed to find tour operators in France, Italy and Spain, I could not find any for Austria, so I wanted to look at its feasibility.

Purpose and Scope

The dissertation serves as a business concept. It should provide adequate insights into the wine and luxury tourism market. Additionally, it should estimate the costs involved based on a preliminary schedule. Finally, it should give insights into the necessary pricing.

The business concept is geographically limited in scope to the area between Vienna and Salzburg, two of Austria's main tourist hot spots. Furthermore, the paper focuses on the general potential and possible profitability of such an experience. It does not include marketing or sales strategies but discusses possible tour design choices.

Methodology

The business case is split into two distinct sections. The first half focuses on a theoretical background of luxury and tourism. The critical insights gained from this analysis are then used in the second half to design an example tour offer, provide an overview of costs and suggest possible offer prices.

Summary

Luxury tourism is on the rise. Wealth is relative, and for many a vacation in general can already be considered luxury.¹ Exclusivity and luxury go hand in hand.²

To raise exclusivity for a luxury service, businesses can use monetary, social and hedonic factors.³ The hedonic nature of premium wines, meaning a base understanding of the service is required to enjoy it fully, pairs well with the concept of a luxury tour.

Finally, today's luxury tourism is about unique experiences. Things that can not be done elsewhere.⁴

Wine tourism, on the other hand, is mostly considered to be part of a larger tourism setting.⁵ The majority of tourists combine seeing wineries and tastings with culture or relaxation activities. However, all wine tourists value authenticity and knowledgeable staff.⁶

Based on these previous findings, the thesis shows an example tour schedule, an overview of costs and possible price points. It also discusses the challenges and barriers of market entry in this project.

Conclusion

The paper explored a combination of luxury travel and wine tourism. Due to the hedonic nature of wine, it pairs well with raising the exclusivity of luxurious services. Additionally, luxury is evolving into a form of self-expression and is no longer just about material goods. Today's luxury tourists value a unique experience more than traditional luxury resorts.

Unlike luxury tourists, wine tourists don't qualify as an entire group. Wine tourism is almost always part of some larger tourism landscape. However, the critical value in making a wine tourism experience exceptional, namely authenticity, can create unique experiences and affect our senses like barely any other form of tourism.

Austria, with its growing tourism numbers, beautiful sights, national parks and lively gourmet scene, seems to be an excellent place for offering this type of adventure. Unfortunately, the barriers to market entry due to Austria's strict business licensing system make it challenging to provide this product quickly. Nevertheless, this makes it all the more interesting because it keeps competitors away from the market for longer. I believe there is a potential market for small-scale luxurious wine endeavours.

¹Iloranta, "Luxury tourism – a review of the literature" (2021).

²Ko et al., "What is a luxury brand?" (June 2019).

³Wirtz et al., "Luxury services" (Jan. 2020).

⁴Aeberhard et al., "Luxury Relevance of Selected Megatrends in Tourism" (2020).

⁵Charters and Ali-Knight, "Who is the wine tourist?" (June 2002).

⁶Cifci et al., "Demystifying the authenticity experience of locally guided wine tours in the meal-sharing economy" (Jan. 2022).

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