

UNIT 7 ABSTRACT

European Wine Producers Endeavouring to Gain Competitive Advantage in a Densely Saturated Wine Market with Innovative & Inventive Approaches. Is this the Future for the Sustainability of the Wine Market?

Avant-Garde Individuals Turning Wine Grapes into Wine Value

By Artemis Burger

Candidate No. 10057051

MOTIVATION

My motivation comes from many curiosities, the main drive being my passion for the European wine-growing areas of Europe, especially Greece, Italy and Austria. Since I was a child I was fascinated with vine-growing scenic landscapes of Europe, perhaps due to the fact that it was absent in my childhood in Cheshire, England.

My organised visit with the Weinakademie to Feiler-Artingers vineyard made me realise how incredible the conversion to organic and biodynamic had been for Kurt Feiler. He explained sustainability and the biodynamic doctrines and it was confirmed to me viewing his healthy vines and tasting his pure wines. Hence my research had to be with 3 organic/biodynamic wineries. This was a prerequisite as I feel the land needs to be sustained for future generations.

Another Weinakademie visit to Kracher in 2015, where I met Clemens Strobl from Weinmanufaktur Clemens Strobl and found his stand intriguing. I was immediately drawn to his bottle designs and savvy marketing ideas. This was of great interest as I thought about implementing these ideas elsewhere and wondering if other Vintners had caught on.

Another motivational point was meeting Vittorio Navacchia from Tre Monti, Emilia Romagna in Vienna 2015 at an event. His wines from an indigenous grape Albana and the pure expression from this amphora wine were incredible. I felt the branding/price of the bottles didn't convey all the time, effort and experimental passion that was undertaken at his winery. So we kept in touch and I am currently assisting Vittorio in rebranding.

Lastly, my passion for Greek indigenous grape varieties, my favourite being Malagouzia & Assyrtiko, always enjoying them on holiday in Greece and frustration at not finding them at home. I visited Porto Carras several years ago as I needed to research the birth place of Malagouzia, my favourite wine. The landscape is captivating, full of biodiversity and the wines really are unique.

Combining the above I realized they had all one thing in common – innovative and inventive approaches, all ethically correct wineries and in their own respective ways gaining competitive advantage!

PROBLEM/OBJECTIVE

The challenge was to research into their innovative and inventive approaches to establish whether these approaches were helping them gain competitive advantage in a densely saturated market and from all the research gathered find out whether this was the future of the sustainability of the European wine market. Were the three chosen wineries undertaking enough? Were they turning wine grapes to wine value? If so, how were they achieving this? If not, where was the glitch!

Regarding Porto Carras, I needed to find out more about Porto Carras/Malagouzia. How they re-discovered this grape? Why? There current situation and is there future demand for native varieties? Did the native varieties at this winery help them override the financial crisis?

METHODOLOGY

The most important method was to visit the wineries and talk to the people behind the wines as I needed an authentic-based research.

Porto Carras – Halkidiki Greece,

Tre Monti – Emilia Romagna, Italy,

Weinmanufaktur Clemens Strobl, Wagram, Austria

It was inspiring to walk through the vineyards, wineries and sample wine with these people.

I needed to see the vines, wine cellars and sample the wines and ask these vintners my questions about past, present and future. How they perceive the future of their wineries.

There was also a lot of background research via books, internet, magazines and newspapers.

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CONCLUSION

How I foresee the future of the European wine market with reference to my three chosen wineries and expanded research.

It is definitely the case that being innovative, inventive is the way to gain competitive advantage in a densely saturated wine market. After my research with my chosen wineries I would say that they all have created a niche/USP and are able to utilize & sustain this approach. Switching to organic, biodynamic or natural wine is the way forward too for these respective wineries and generally the trend is swaying in this direction.