

Weinakademiker thesis - Abstract

Viticulture in Quebec, status and perspectives

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Motivation

Canada is known as a wine producer, Ontario and British Columbia are recognised for producing quality wines mostly based on international varieties. I wanted to better understand why the 3rd Canadian province in terms of wine volumes is so ignored despite of a seldom range of grape variety and a dynamic scene.

Problematic, Objectives

Quebec is not yet on the world wine map but some references started to appear on Michelin star restaurant wine pairings. At the same time vibrant wine bars in Montreal, Quebec and Gatineau are promoting the Quebec wine scene with high qualitative products. The objective of this thesis is to deep dive into Quebec strengths and weaknesses as well as identifying future opportunities.

Methodology

A first steps has been to contact local syndicates to get a market overview supported by statistics and strategic plans. Numerous actors have then been interviewed: winemakers, research institutes, agronomists, sommeliers in order to collect a wide range of data and view. Each stakeholder having a different perspective. Research publications, websites, specialised newspapers have of course supported the analysis.

Content

Section 1 Has Quebec a terroir ?

- Where are Quebec vineyards located ? What makes them so special ?
- What are the challenges of the Quebec climate and impact on winegrowing and winemaking
- Who are Quebec growers and winemakers ? How are vineyards farmed ?

Section 2 Has Quebec a wine identity

- What is planted and why ?
- What is the level of expertise of the different stakeholders ?
- What is the impact of vineyard management on Quebec wine identity ?

Section 3 Wine ecosystem

- Government, local syndicate and professional association: roles and responsibilities ?
 - How are universities and research Institutes contributing ? How is it governed and funded ? Is it matching with winemakers expectations ?
 - Is Quebec wine supported by sommeliers and consumers ? What is the role of the Quebec monopoly ?

Section 4 Way forward

- What are the main weaknesses and threats and how could it be better answered / supported ?
 - What are the strengths that can be pushed forward and who should coordinate the actions ?
 - Do they have all pre-requisite for internal and/or external growth ?

Conclusion

Quebec's wine industry is in its early stage, showcasing strengths such as diverse plantings, technical expertise and engaged professionals. While more communication and integration are needed for growth, the province's relatively recent history allows for the creation of unique wines, avoiding the uniformity seen elsewhere. Maintaining both hybrids and Vinifera, alongside experimenting with blends and cold-hardy viticulture, can enhance Quebec's presence in the wine world. Notable examples illustrates such potential for recognition. Furthermore, a vibrant wine scene can stimulate economic development in rural areas and promote the consumption of local products, contributing positively to the region's overall growth.