

RAILROAD, HERITAGE AND WINE CULTURE IN THE RIBERA DEL DUERO IN VALLADOLID (CASTILE AND LEON, SPAIN)

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In recent years, the wine tourism has found an important market share in the economic activity in areas associated with the production of wine, whether long established or newly created. The new culture of tourism and the opening of markets have discovered the importance of this activity, generally understood as a set of resources related to the wine culture, cuisine and heritage of a territory. The expansion has been seen in various places, both in Spain and in the rest of the world, mainly due to the diversification of activities, an important asset when it is especially related to local economies. In this sense, local players are increasingly considering wine tourism as a dynamic force for the economy, since on the one hand, for the wine business, diversification and combination of the wine industry with tourism offers significant alternative business opportunities through the direct sale of wine, while representing a new way of generating brand awareness and visitor loyalty to the values, principles and products of a winery. Moreover, for tourism entrepreneurs, wine tourism is an important opportunity to generate additional demand for its traditional tourist product, in this case, rural tourism, a tourist typology which suffers a strong seasonal component concentrated on weekends, long weekends and summer time and an increasingly fierce competition between destinations and establishments to attract demand flows. Finally, for the territory, wine tourism can become a spur to the development of new business opportunities, creating synergies of collaboration between local agents to launch a new product although strongly dependent on the wine sector.

In Spain it is possible to see wine tourism development projects implemented in different Denominations of Origin. For example, through an initiative promoted by the Association of Wine Cities of Spain (ACEVIN) and the General Secretariat of Tourism they have developed the draft of the Wine Routes in Spain, which aims to promote these routes through 22 different locations throughout the country. Some of the main destinations of this project are La Rioja, Jerez and El Penedès, which together receive nearly half a million tourists in their wineries. Each one of them responds to a different model, and so, while in La Rioja we can really talk about wine tourism, where the primary motivation

of the activity is the wine and its culture, in the case of Jerez and El Penedes we have to speak of sun-and beach tourism, which takes advantage of being at a coastal destination for a short trip to a winery. The Ribera del Duero, with its emerging development, responds to the pattern observed in La Rioja, where the tourism and the visits to the wineries are primarily concerned with their own wine and heritage which interior tourism can offer.

Given this growing importance of wine tourism, the paper below intends to show the potential for wine tourism and to propose various joint promotional activities within a defined area in the Denomination of Origin Ribera del Duero, space which has historically had an important wine industry, as well as economic and infrastructural elements of great value. One of these elements, the railway Valladolid-Ariza, is taken as the fundamental basis for a proposal for the wine tourism revitalization gathering the rest of heritage, landscape, gastronomy, art and cultural resources that are located on the stretch of the Ribera del Duero in Valladolid. The wine and the railway are considered as two key elements in the history of the Ribera del Duero in Valladolid, and through them we propose to create a wine tour with the train as its driving force (Ribertrén). For the implementation of a such a route the necessary balance between supply and demand should be considered, while taking into account the diversity, quality and theming offered through the devised route. This novelty tourist product should be structured by strong corporate coherence elements, among which the most important ones are corporate image, needs and territorial barriers, proposed schedules, distance to cover and infrastructure available in the area, in this case the railway Valladolid - Ariza (now without any use).

Generally a wine tour as a tourism product must be identifiable and recognizable by tourists through the different components or particular elements (in this case the wine and the heritage of the Ribera del Duero in Valladolid), while taking into account the needs and expectations of the traveller. In short, a wine route should consider the integration under one thematic concept of resources and tourist services of interest of a wine region, in order to build a product from the destiny own identity, facilitate joint marketing of the entire area and ensure the satisfaction of demand, thus promoting the comprehensive economic and social development of the same. In the case of the Ribera del Duero in Valladolid, due to its history and future potential, it appears to meet the necessary conditions to propose the creation of a train wine tour. In this territory, through the last sixty years there have been a series of social, economic and landscape changes of some significance mainly due to the farming crisis of the mid-twentieth century. Nevertheless, the wine industry was consolidated as the engine of the economy through the production of quality wines, and, in recent decades, a newly-born wine tourism has allowed the development of a more robust economic fabric.

The autonomous region where the Ribera is placed, Castile and León, is one of the most important regions in visitor numbers and hotel establishments of interior tourism. The Community offers various forms of tourism among which we can highlight mountain, adventure, cultural, culinary tourism, and for some years also wine tourism. In this sense, gradually this type of tourism is finding a place in the business in rural areas in Castile and Leon by creating restaurants, hotels, cottages, museums, interpretation centers, etc.. The wine potential that Castilla y Leon has, being one of the regions with the highest weight in this industry, has allowed at the same time a significant development of this

type of tourism in specific protected denominations of origin (PDO) such as El Bierzo, Toro, Rueda, Cigales. But undoubtedly the regional paradigm is in the Ribera del Duero, with a total of 263 wineries registered in the provinces of Valladolid, Segovia, Burgos and Soria. The municipalities that make up this area have many attractions, for example: heritage resources such as churches, monasteries, castles, etc., a rich cuisine with a set of products that have the highest distinctions of quality; a well-cared wine landscape along the terraces and glaciais of the river Duero and popular and religious festivals such as the Easter Week in Peñafiel declared of National Tourist Interest.

The aim of this paper is therefore to develop a series of proposals to help develop this economic activity in Ribera del Duero in Valladolid. We intend to link wine tourism to a particular area between Valladolid and Penafiel, along an area of approximately 56 kilometers. The core of this journey, between Quintanilla de Onisimus and Peñafiel is nicknamed the Golden Mile and was connected till the end of the last century by the railroad Valladolid - Ariza. Today is structured by the National Highway 122, however, the consideration of the railway as the axis of the proposal has to do with the fact that it still retains its own idiosyncrasies, so that it practically runs through much of the lands of the vineyards of the major wineries in the DO. Throughout this journey a unique and closeby landscape is provided that can not be appreciated from the road and therefore we believe that the old railway line can be used for this activity, thus providing a double benefit, the recovery of the rail service and its exploitation for tourism. This would require a rehabilitation of the infrastructure (currently unaffected) for later use as a tourist resource around the wine culture. The comfort and safety the train offers is essential for a tour of these characteristics, and on this idea and with the established infrastructure we will consider a proposal linked to the train tour to learn about the wines, the wineries, monuments, etc. In turn, it will bring more people to the riches of this land and the wine culture.

With all that the proposal is twofold, it firstly aims to provide a revitalisation perspective of an area with great potential for attraction and secondly the recovery of rail infrastructure in constant danger of being dismantled, where various rehabilitation initiatives have failed or have not been carried out. Finally, it is important above all to focus on the enological value of this product, because without the wine culture there is no wine route, and without wine route there is no tourism product. Viticulture is the main theme of this product and the tourist must feel it at all stages of their journey and in any part of the tourism chain that the proposal is. Somehow, from the beginning of the activity to its completion, they should be able to breathe wine culture.

