

## Perspectives for the development of wine tourism in certain regions of Macedonia

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**Abstract:** Considering the fact that in Macedonia 24 thousand hectares are under vineyards, which on average amount to about 240 thousand tons of wine, supplemented with the benefits of natural development, it can be said that there is great potential for developing a modern form of alternative tourism. In order to achieve the goal, a SWOT analysis and a TOWS matrix on the resource basis for the development of wine tourism in Macedonia will be made. This will provide insight into the current state of wine tourism and will see the possibilities for its development. Successful examples from other countries will also provide recommendations for activities that should be undertaken for the development of wine tourism, as well as respect for the principles of sustainable development.

**Keywords:** wine tourism, regions, Macedonia, wine roads.

### Introduction

Wine tourism is a global phenomenon that gets more and more popular every day. People around the world are more interested in experiencing new and different experiences during the holidays, and wine tourism just allows them, while including all the senses: taste, smell, touch, sight and hearing. Namely, tourists can simultaneously taste the wine, feel the smell of the vineyards, participate in the production process, see the local cultural heritage and hear the sounds of nature. Visiting the vineyards and wineries, tourists come into direct contact with the culture of the local population, exchange positive experiences with other people and get to know the cultural values of the destination.

For wine tourism it can be said that it is culturally educational because it includes content related to food and wine, wine festivals, local architecture and heritage; romantic, based on the fact that wine, food and environment are awakening the romance of people; educational, because visitors can learn more about wine and culture and recreation, because of the opportunities for walks around the vineyards or surrounding areas.

It can be said that wine tourism is a specific, modern and alternative type, differentiated based on the motive activity of the wine region. It is motivation that is the main principle that the concept of wine tourism can not be precisely defined. Namely, some visitors are interested in the way wine is produced, others have a taste for tasting, others simply want to just enjoy the overall ambience. But in any case, wine tourism is any experience associated with the poetry of the wine regions, whether the visitor has an active or passive role. Wine tourism usually takes place in the natural ambient of the vineyard, but it can also take place in an urban environment when visiting wine festivals and exhibitions.

Undoubtedly, wine, food and tourism are closely linked, and Macedonia can boast of quality wine and rich traditional cuisine. It remains only to supplement these two elements with cultural, recreational and other activities and to form a tourist product that will become recognizable and position the country high on the tourist map. This can be achieved by building a long-term strategy for the development of wine tourism, where the emphasis will be on improving the infrastructure,

defining the wine routes, modernizing the wineries, providing professional staff and of course creating an appropriate marketing concept in the work. The involvement of all stakeholders of the tourism activity in the development strategy of wine tourism will certainly divide the roles, but will increase profits, wineries and local service providers, and thus the state. It is also necessary to first make a full analysis of the total potential for the development of wine tourism, which would identify the possibilities for implementing the steps of the strategy and at the same time eliminating the threats and negative impacts.

### **Wine tourism**

Wine tourism in the modern world has existed for a century and a half, starting with the "Grand Tour" that took place in the United States and Europe in 1934. For the first time, the first crushing road "grand crus road" was created across the wine region of Bourgogne, France. In 1935, in Germany for the first time a wine route has been set up to help winemakers in the Palatinae region. Later, in 1953, wine trails are also open in Champagne Alsace. (Lignon Darmaillac, 2011). At the time, wine tourism was not yet considered, because the wine routes were not enough to develop tourism. Wine trails in California and South Africa were formed later as tourist itineraries, wine tourism as a concept was recognized as a union between wine business and tourist offer. In Europe, although wine trails were created for visitors, few of them were open to wine tourists, or only a small part organized tours and tastings of their products and sold them on site. (Manila, 2010). In 1998, for the first time in Australia, a wine tourism conference was organized, focusing on descriptive and comparative studies on finding new forms of tourism (Getz and Brown, 2006). Then Wine Tourism International Salon was organized in Lyon in 2009, International Wine Travel market held in Bordeaux in 2009, Bacchus wine conference at Dijon, Annual International Wine Tourism Conference and Workshop, First European Conference on Wine and Food Tourism in Pisa etc.

Wine and tourism have always been linked, but for the last 20 years, the correlation has been perceived as a function of the tourism industry, for which the wine is an essential element of attraction to the destination. According to Tomljenovic (2009), wine and tourism reflect the competitiveness of a particular destination. There are no universal definitions of wine tourism in the literature. Many of the authors and organizations dealt with this notion, defining it from different perspectives. However, each of these definitions helps to perceive the specificity of wine tourism, which is a total of interactive processes, phenomena and relationships that arise from visitors' interest in the production and / or consumption of wine as a style, lifestyle, culture and tradition of a particular wine region. (Pivac, Romelic & Kosic 2009). A number of wine tourism definitions refer to the experiences and motives of tourists. According to them, wine tourism is a visit to wine regions, wineries, wine festivals and exhibitions that are organized for relaxation (Johnson, 1997). According to Hall, Sharples, Cambourne & Macionis (2000) wine tourism is a visit to vineyards, wineries, wine festivals and exhibitions, where wine tasting is an attraction / experience which is a primary motive for a visit. Getz (2000) includes definitions of marketing elements and defines wine tourism as a journey related to the attractiveness of wineries and wine regions, which is also an opportunity for direct sales. Through this definition Getz points out that a number of underdeveloped countries started developing wine tourism in which they saw the opportunity to restore their vineyards and improve the economic situation of the wine regions. This author is a beginner of the thesis for mutual benefit and mutual interaction that is perceived in wine sales, education of visitors, attraction of new market segments, valorization of other natural and cultural values, with the number of visitors growing, the new image and income increase (Razovic). The same author emphasizes that there are three main holders of wine tourism: wine producer, tourist - consumer and tourist agency that promotes the destination. Other studies point to the fact that the cultivation of the vine and wine production technology are directly related to the cultural heritage, with wine tourism having similar characteristics with the cultural tourism, because "people who are participants in wine tourism and gastronomy are essentially and participants in cultural tourism" (Williams and Kelly 2001). We have already mentioned that the development of wine tourism is developing tourism in the destination, and especially rural

destinations, by increasing the wine sales, building a positive image of the destination and increasing the number of tourists. Its development depends on the policy and program of the state, the destination marketing, the tourist organizations and the independent businessmen. Since the development of the wine tourism according to Geic (2011) have:

- ✓ Wine industry:
  - increasing the sales of wine,
  - educating the visitors of the winery and the wine region,
  - attracting new market segments,
  - realization of bigger incomes,
  - creation of new business cooperation,
  - opportunity for creating new products.
- ✓ Destination
  - increasing the number of tourists, their demand and consumption,
  - developing a positive image of the destination,
  - attracting new and retaining existing tourists.
- ✓ The local community
  - attracting new investments,
  - developing new service and entertainment content,
  - creating a positive image of the region,
  - organizing manifestations,
  - employment of the local population,
  - general development of the region.

The demand for wine tourism consists of various motives, experiences, perceptions and expectations that change depending on the needs of potential consumers. The motives range from buying good wine, to education about the way of production, enjoying nature's walks, familiarizing local food, etc. In essence, the motives can vary depending on the perception that is created for a particular destination, and which consists of three elements: experience, personal priorities and information (Lovrinevic, 2017). According to the research, an average wine tourist has a university degree at the age of 45-60, and is economically independent. His goal is not only to taste wine, but also to be acquainted with other people, their culture and history.

There are four types of wine tourists (Geic, 2011):

- ✓ A professional, a person who knows oenology, discusses details and precisely determines the qualities of the wine.
- ✓ Impressed beginner, a person who loves wine, enjoys food, travels with friends.
- ✓ Boom, a person with high purchasing power, who through the wine realizes social status, has basic knowledge, loves famous brands.
- ✓ An alcoholic, a person who regularly visits the wineries, drinks large quantities of wine, but does not enjoy it.

The wine tourist offer is a combination of wine cellars, wine routes, the destination as an attraction, its image, and so on. However, in order to complete the offer, not just one product – wine - but also the development of other forms such as rural tourism, religious tourism, cultural tourism, etc. is needed. The wine tourism product in itself should contain elements from different carriers and only such can be placed on the market as a successful tourist story. Table 1 shows the typology of wine tourism products.

**Table 1.** Typology of wine tourism products

<b>Product typology</b>	<b>Product description</b>
Wine trails	Marking the wine regions for the detection of grapes and wineries
Mountaineering in grapes	The designated itinerary allow the discovery of grapes in the drive
Studying oenology	Courses for acquaintance with the marketing of wine tourism, culture, tradition and production technology
Visit the wine cellars	Getting acquainted with wine cellars and wine production
Museums of the wine	A cultural place representing world achievements in wine production
Festivals and events	Events for preserving the local tradition, promotion of wine, promotion of production and production
Expert presentations, fairs, tastings and sales actions	Presenting guilt for strictly commercial purposes

*Source: Manila, M. (2012). Wine tourism - a great tourism off the face of new challenges, Journal of tourism, Iss. 23. p. 56*

### **Wine tourism in regions of Macedonia**

The Macedonian wine story has its roots since the 13th century BC when the Old Macedonians made wine from grapes that were grown and mixed with honey to better preserve it. They kept the wine in amphorae in which they placed olive oil on top to stop breathing. Then the amphorae were buried in the ground to stay cool and mature. During the Roman Empire, Macedonia was one of the most famous grape growing regions, and this continued in the Byzantine period (up to the 7th century). With the spread of Christianity, wine production increased as wine was part of many church ceremonies. During Turkish slavery, wine production was forbidden, according to Islamic laws. At the beginning of the 20th century in Macedonia the grape vine was represented on 30000 hectares which until 1914. were completely destroyed by the phylloxera (an insect that attacked the root and the leaf of the vines). In 1928, King Aleksandar Karadjordjevic planted grapes and built a winery in Demir Kapija, and got the name Villa Maria. After the Second World War, barrels and wine-producing equipment owned by small wine producers were nationalized. There were 13 wineries that mainly produced bottled wine. Areas under vines reach their maximum in 1981. When registered 38 759 hectares.

Today in Macedonia there are about 24,000 hectares of vineyards, and wineries annually produce about 236,000 tons of grapes or 220 million liters of wine, which puts the country at 25<sup>th</sup> place in the world. Wine production accounts for about 17-20% of gross domestic product, and wine is the second most exported product. Macedonia has modern vineyards planted with renowned varieties of wines, of which the most famous are Vranec (red) and Smederevo (white). Cabernet Sauvignon, mercury and chardonnay are also known.

Viticulture in Macedonia has a tradition and potential, which should be developed and become one of the driving forces in the development of the economy, and hence the tourism, which will give the country a kind of stamp and make it a recognizable tourist destination.

Starting from the fact that the wine, ie its consumption is one of the motives of the participants in the wine tourism, it is safe to say that the Macedonian wines can satisfy the tastes of the customers. Fruity aroma in red wines comes from vineyards planted in places with lower altitude, and the freshness and harmony of white wines is from the vines where there is a colder climate. This is primarily due to the fact that in Macedonia the climate varies from Mediterranean to continental, the average rainfall is 170 l / m<sup>2</sup> in the western mountainous parts to 50 l / m in the eastern parts. In Macedonia, there are nearly 260 sunny days a year, which helps in the long ripening process where sugar and grains are concentrated in the grapes, providing rich color and complex aroma.

In addition to wine tasting, the development of wine tourism in Macedonia has other features:

- Educational, which refers to acquaintance with the entire process of breeding vines, grape harvesting, familiarization with the characteristics of different grape varieties, the manner of wine

production, the manner of storage in the wine cellars, the manner of serving, food compatibility and etc.

- Cultural, which arise from the participation of wine festivals and wine tastings, where visitors are introduced to each other, exchange experiences and culturally rise, creating their own lifestyle.

- Recreational, which relate to the possibility of making walks through the wine plantations, but also the surrounding mountains, enjoying the clean air.

- Scientific research outlined through the possibilities for obtaining new knowledge about the wine.

Until now, there are insignificant attempts to develop this alternative form of tourism in Macedonia, but with the inclusion of all available resource and good management, it can be said with great certainty that wine tourism can be successfully developed.

Successful examples of the development of wine tourism can be found anywhere in the world. In addition to traditional wine producers, France, Argentina, Italy, countries such as Australia, Chile, New Zealand are investing enormous resources for the development of wine tourism. Even the United States, which does not belong to the group of large wine producers, manage to create wine tourism destinations. Such is the example of the Napa Valley, the popular wine region of California. Namely, this region where only plums were produced in the past, has grown into one of the most important and most visited wine regions in the world, with 5 million visitors annually. Most of them enjoy the picturesque wine roads of Napa, the numerous wineries (about 243) and restaurants. In addition to tasting wine and visiting the wineries, Napa offers other tourist experiences related to the wine: walks through the vineyards, traditional lunch at the mountains, relaxation in the spa centers, playing golf for a wine award, cycling through the vineyards, flying with balloon, visiting cultural events, ecotourism, voluntary wine auctions, etc.

There are such successful wine stories in the countries of the region, where the last years invested heavily in the wine tourist attractions.

Macedonia is at the very beginning of the development of wine tourism. Thanks to the enthusiasts, a wine route is realized through the Tikvesh region, where there is a possibility to taste good wine, to taste the traditional Macedonian dishes and to enjoy walks through the vineyards.

The natural conditions are insufficient for the successful development of wine tourism. It requires state assistance, a quality development strategy and a clear vision of the benefits and benefits of the development of wine tourism.

### **Materials and methods**

Secondary data from published sources were used for the preparation of this paper on the basis of which a qualitative analysis of the resource basis for development of wine tourism in individual regions of Macedonia were made. Furthermore, using the SWOT analysis and TOWS matrix, the potentials and weaknesses in the wine tourism in Macedonia will be determined and proposals and guidelines for the development of the wine tourism in the three wine regions in the country will be given.

### **Results and discussion**

Based on the climatic conditions and the location of the vineyards in Macedonia, there are three wine regions, divided into 16 vineyards:

1. Povardarie - Vardar Valley covers 83% of the total production and includes 7 vineyards: Skopje, Veles, Gevgelija - Valandovo, Strumica, Radovish, Ovce Pole - Vinica, Kocani - Vinica, Tikves.

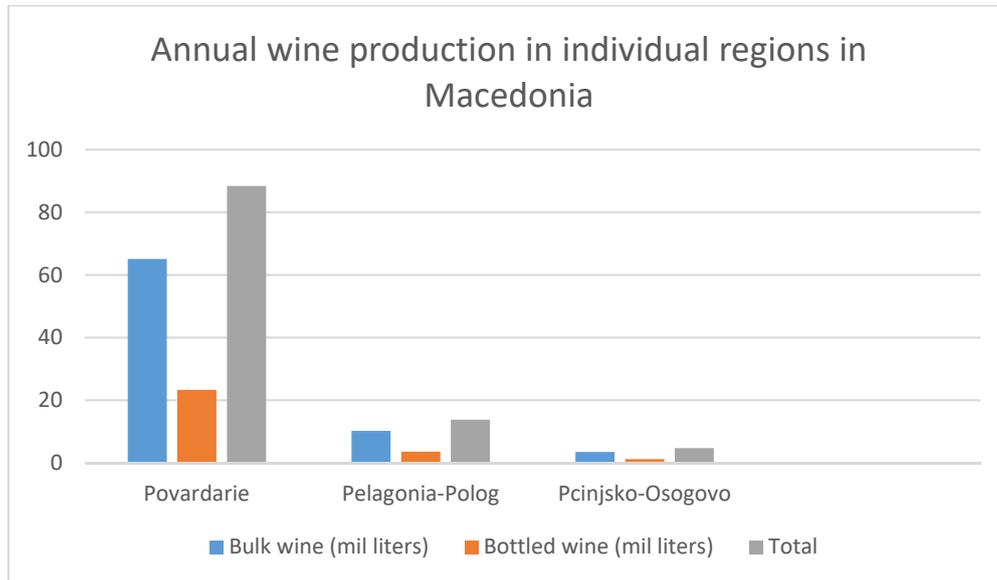
2. Pelagonia-Polog, covers 13% of the total production and includes 6 vineyards: Prilep, Bitola, Ohrid, Prespa, Kichevo, Tetovo.

3. Pcinjsko-Osogovski, covers 4% of the total production and includes 3 vineyards: Kumanovo, Kratovo and Pijanec.



**Figure 1.** Wine regions in Macedonia

Each of these regions has its own vineyards that have a specific location and characteristics. There are 16 vineyards in Macedonia and 64 wineries in total. The annual production of wine is 78.5 million liters of flour and 28.05 million liters of bottled wine.



**Figure 2.** Wine production in 2017

**Table 2.** Characteristics of the wine regions

Wine regions	Wine production (mil liters)	Number of vineyards	Height above sea level	Number of precipitation (l / m <sup>2</sup> )
<b>Povardarie</b>	88.4	7	50-500/600	46
<b>Pelagonia-Polog</b>	13.8	6	600-680	57
<b>Pcinjsko-Osogovo</b>	4.3	3	440-850	50

The largest and most famous wine region is *Povardarie*, where 83% of the Macedonian wine is produced. The vineyards are located at an altitude of 50-500 / 600 meters above sea level, stretching along the Vardar valley and between the high mountain ranges rising to the east and west. The climate is Mediterranean to continental with mild winters and hot summers. Over 124 days a year have temperatures above 25 degrees. Precipitation on average is 46 / m<sup>2</sup> and is evenly distributed throughout the year. Vineyards are grown on different types of soil, the most common of which is the diluvia soil (flat terrain).

*Veles Vineyard* - it covers almost the entire area of the territory of the Municipality of Veles. This south-southwestern vineyard is influenced by the Mediterranean climate, and from the north-northeast the influence of the continental climate is more pronounced. The annual amount of rainfall is 431 / m<sup>2</sup>, and during the vegetation it is necessary to irrigate. Vineyards are located at an altitude of 50-450 meters. The following types of soil are most represented: rindzini, syrozem, smoked and cinnamon soils that are suitable for growing vines.

*Tikvesh Vineyard* - covers the area of the territory of the municipality of Kavadarci, Negotino and Demir Kapija, as well as part of the municipalities of Prilep and Veles. This vineyard includes flat and waves terrains between the Veles gorge in the north and the Demir Kapija gorge in the south. These areas are affected by the Mediterranean climate in the south, the continental climate from the north and the mountainous climate, and such a combination creates ideal conditions for growing vines. The annual amount of precipitation ranges from 43-52 l / m<sup>2</sup>, and in the summer period it is necessary to irrigate. All of the rainforest is covered by an irrigation system. The vineyards are wavy and shoreline, with mild slopes suitable for growing vines, and are located at an altitude of 110-55 meters. The prevailing soils are: syrozem, rindzins and lintels.

*Gevgelija-Valandovo Vineyard* - it covers the area with vineyards in the southernmost part of Macedonia, along the course of the river Vardar and the surrounding of the Dojran Lake. It includes vineyards from the area of the municipalities of Gevgelija and Valandovo. This vineyard is heavily influenced by the Mediterranean climate, and in the winter period the influence of the continental climate is present in the valley of Vardar. The annual amount of precipitation is 54-75 l / m<sup>2</sup>, and in the summer period additional irrigation is needed. Most of the vineyards are grown on soil with mild slopes or along the plains of Vardar, with different exposures suitable for growing vines. Part of the plantations are located at an altitude of 50 meters.

*Strumica - Radovish Vineyard* - covers the surface of the valley of the river Struma and Strmmesnica with Mediterranean climate influences from the south, while the influence of the continental air masses is present in the north and northeast. It contains vineyards on the surface of the most southeastern part of Macedonia, that is, the area of the municipality of Strumica and Radovish. The annual amount of rainfall is 34 - 60 l / m<sup>2</sup>, and in the summer it is necessary to irrigate. A part of the rainforest is covered by an irrigation system. Most of the plantations are on wet soil, soil with mild slopes and plains. The altitude ranges from 224 to 380 meters, the most common is deluvial soil.

*Ovche Pole Vineyard* - covers the surface of the municipalities of Sveti Nikole, Stip, Probistip and part of the municipality of Kocani. This southwestern strain is influenced by the Mediterranean climate, and from the north it is influenced by the cold air masses of the continental climate. It is characterized by warm summers and long cold winters, and during summer it can come and dry. The annual amount of precipitation is 34-56 l / m<sup>2</sup>. Most of the rainforest is covered with irrigation system. The largest of the plantations are breeding ground with mild slopes or flat surfaces, and a small part of the shores and steep soil. The altitude ranges from 250 to 600 meters. Vineyards are usually grown on limes, rindseen and syrozem.

*Kocani - Vinica Vineyard* - covers the surface of the municipalities of Vinica, Kocani and Probistip and part of the municipality of Kocani. This southwestern strait of the river Bregalnica is influenced by the Mediterranean climate, while the influence of the mountain climate is present in the valleys of Kocanska, Zrnovska and Osojnica. The annual amount of precipitation is 45 l / m<sup>2</sup>. Most of the rainforest is covered by an irrigation system. The largest parts of the plantations are grown

on wet soil with mild slopes, and a small part of the shores and steep soil. The altitude ranges from 250 to 600 meters. Vineyards are grown on syroes and eroded diluvial soils.

**Pcinjsko – Osogovo** region covers 4% of the total production and includes 3 vineyards: Kumanovo, Kratovo and Pijanec. Vineyards are located at 440-850 m above sea level, and are planted on shores and wetlands, with mildly sloping slopes with different exposures. The climate is moderately continental with strong winds on the northern winds. Over 110 days a year have a temperature above 25 degrees. Precipitation is an average of 50 l / m<sup>2</sup>, and during the vegetation rare periods of dry periods occur. Vineyards are grown on different types of soil, the most common of which is diluvial, cinnamon and brown soil on limestone. This region extends to the northwestern part of Macedonia and stretches from the Pchinja River to the west, to the Osogovo mountains in the east.

*Pchinja - Osogovo* region covers the following vineyards:

1. *Kumanovo Vineyard* - the average temperature during the vegetative period is 16.6 degrees, and the average amount of precipitation is 65 l / m<sup>2</sup>.
2. *Kratovo Vineyard* - temperature during the vegetative period is 16.6 degrees, and the average amount of precipitation is 65 l / m<sup>2</sup>.
3. *Pijanec Vineyard* - the temperature during the vegetative period is 15.5 degrees, and the average amount of precipitation is 55 l / m<sup>2</sup>.

**Pelagonia - Polog** vine region, vineyards are located at 600-680 meters above sea level, and are planted on the shores and on wavy terrains, with medium mild slopes with southern exposure. High mountain climate prevails, characterized by wet and cold winters and dry and hot summers. Over 87 days a year have a temperature above 25 degrees. Precipitation on average is 57 l / m<sup>2</sup>. Vineyards are grown on different types of soils, of which the most prevalent is brown soil. 13% of the total wine production is produced in this region.

Pelagonia - Polog region covers the following vineyards:

1. *Prilep Vineyards* - average air temperature is 16 degrees, and annual precipitation is 57 l / m<sup>2</sup>.
2. *Bitola Vineyards* - average air temperature is 16.7 degrees, and annual precipitation is 60 l / m<sup>2</sup>.
3. *Prespa Vineyard* - average air temperature is 14.2 degrees, and annual precipitation is 68 l / m<sup>2</sup>.
4. *Ohrid Vineyard* - average air temperature is 16 degrees, and annual precipitation is 71 l / m<sup>2</sup>.
5. *Kicevo Vineyards* - average air temperature is 16.4 degrees, and annual precipitation is 80 l / m<sup>2</sup>.
6. *Tetovo Vineyards* - average air temperature is 16.2 degrees, and annual precipitation is 69 l / m<sup>2</sup>.

### **SWOT analysis and TOWS matrix of wine tourism in Macedonia**

Strategic planning is unthinkable without SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis and TOWS matrix. It is therefore necessary to discover the possibilities and threats, such as variables from the external environment and strength and weaknesses as internal variables. The goal is to present the tourist advantages and weaknesses, as well as the opportunities for development of wine tourism, based on the research of natural and anthropogenic elements, infrastructure, supply and demand. With timely and conscious planning, opportunities can grow into the strengths of this type of tourism, while at the same time detecting and eliminating threats. The TOWS matrix will show the relationship between external and internal factors.

✓ SO the strategy shows the strengths and opportunities and strives to exploit opportunities and turn them into strengths.

✓ The WO strategy compares weaknesses and opportunities, indicating the opportunity to take advantage of opportunities to eliminate weaknesses.

✓ ST strategy means that with the help of the strengths, the threats need to be eliminated or minimized.

✓ WT strategy is a defense strategy that aims to reduce weaknesses and avoid threats.

Which of these strategies will be applied depends on the strategic plans at the state and local level, as well as from the managers of the wineries and vineyards.

**Table 3. SWOT analysis**

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
Favorable geographical position Moderate climate Transport infrastructure Authentic grape varieties Well organized vineyards Quality wines Wine events and tastings Traditional cuisine Many wineries Use of high technology in wine production Hospitable population Long and rich tradition Places of untouched nature Rich cultural heritage Professional staff Good investment climate Free visa regime Competitive prices and services	Insufficient research in the field of tourism Lack of statistical data on alternative forms of tourism Uncoordinated promotional activities Lack of a strategy for the development of wine tourism Non-attractive and poor wine tourist offers Weak cooperation with travel agencies Undeveloped image of Macedonia as a wine country Small number of accommodation facilities in the wine regions Existence of only one wine route Weak or no cooperation among wineries for joint appearance on the market Insufficient involvement of the local population in the development of wine tourism In tourist wine offers there is no incorporation of other alternative forms
<b>Opportunities</b>	<b>Threats</b>
Новите трендови во туризмот Great potential for development of rural tourism Inclusion of alternative forms in wine tourism offers Attracting foreign investment Employment of the local population and raising the living standard State aid for promotion of wine tourism Creation of wine trails across all wine regions Enrichment of the tourist offer with various services Joint appearance of wineries at international fairs and exhibitions Modernization of wineries Stimulating the local population for providing accommodation services Investment in tourism infrastructure Organizing wine exhibitions and events	Insufficient implementation of the concept of sustainable development Competition in the countries of the region An unstable image of the country Passivity and indifference to the local population Migration village town Insufficient interest of the state authorities Slow progress in the economy country Delineation of the EU and NATO integration process.

**Table 4. TOWS matrix**

INTERNAL EXTERNAL	STRENGTHS (S)	WEAKNESSES (W)
OPPORTUNITIES (O)	SO strategy Huge natural and cultural wealth, tradition and quality, a positive trend of wine tourism	WO strategy Creating a development strategy and development plans, enriching the supply, poor tourism infrastructure
THREATS (T)	ST strategy Offer of high-quality wines, unstable image of the country, insufficient assistance from the state	WT strategy Investments in wineries, marketing and quality, achieving market competitiveness

From the analyzed analysis that Macedonia has great potential for development of wine tourism, natural and cultural treasures, quality wines, highly modernized wineries, rich tradition and opportunities for development of other alternative forms of tourism in the wine regions. Although wine tourism in the country is relatively young, the opportunities need to be exploited faster and converted into strengths. This primarily refers to attracting investments, enriching the wine tourism offer, including alternative forms, placing products on the international market, modernizing the wineries, stimulating the local population to be included in the offer, etc. Regarding weaknesses, activities for their reduction and turning into strengths are needed. This especially refers to the creation of a development strategy for wine tourism, greater investment in tourism and road infrastructure, use of travel agencies for the placement of products, enrichment of the offer with attractive contents, etc. It should be noted here that in Macedonia there is only one wine route in the Tikvesh region that can be measured by the successful wine routes in the region and further. Namely, the visitors of this region can visit 10 wineries, one day and two day excursions, to taste the Macedonian traditional cuisine, drive a bicycle through vineyards, enjoy walks in the surrounding mountains, visit cultural and historical sites, and they received a placement service. All this complemented with professional staff and educational content make the Tikvesh wine route attractive to tourists. The remaining wine regions, which also have wonderful natural beauties and cultural and historical monuments, can follow this example and create their own wine tourist offers. All this will contribute to creating a positive image of Macedonia as a wine country, will help in the economic growth of the wine regions, raise the living standard of the population and develop tourism and the economy in general.

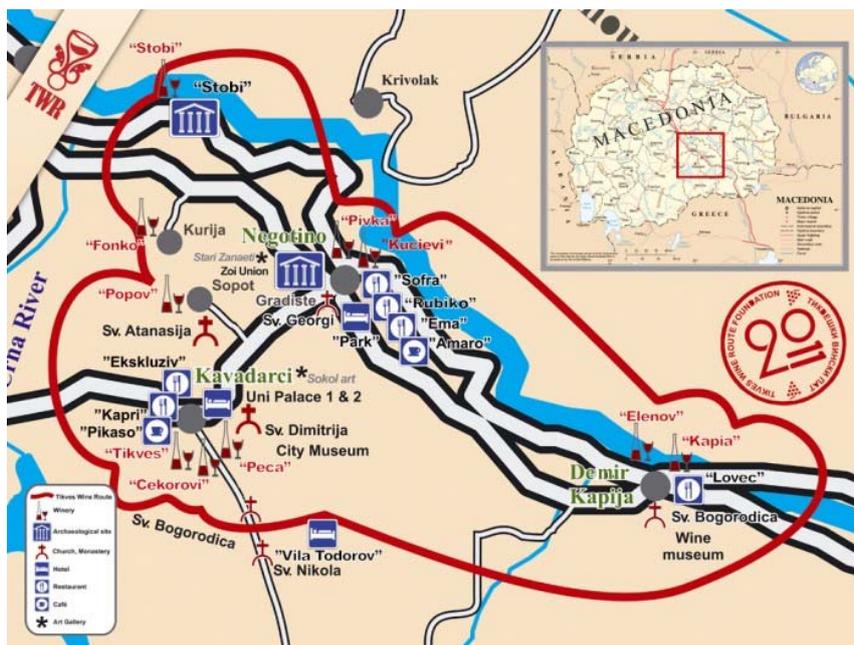


Figure 3. Tikvesh wine road

### Conclusion

Instead of the conclusion, I will propose several steps that should be taken for the development of Macedonian tourism in Macedonia. Namely, although we have a huge natural potential for development, we somehow go slow and lagging in terms of competition in the region and wider. Analyzing the current situation, one can freely say that the possibilities are here, at hand, only they need to be used. Whether it will be done by following the good and successful examples or by making its own development plan, the state together with the private sector should seriously focus on positioning the wine tourism product on the international tourist map. Not only is one wine route and individual performances at wineries if it is desired to promote the development of wine tourism.

Suggest steps to be taken in the direction of the development of wine tourism:

- Construction of a national strategy for the development of wine tourism in the three wine regions.
- Taking measures and activities by the central and local authorities to stimulate the development of wine tourism. Wineries should create a common platform for appearance on the tourism market, because only joint forces can create their own seal and become a recognizable tourist destination.
- Construction of an infrastructure that will make the whole tourist product, in the form of roads, signs, halls and restaurants that cherish the Macedonian tradition.
- Enriching the wine tourism offer by including alternative forms of tourism and creating attractive and authentic content that will attract potential consumers and will retain the existing ones.
- Determination and marking of wine trays.
- Education of the local population and their inclusion in the development strategy
- Organizing special places in the vineyard where visitors will rest and at the same time will present wine related topics.
- Education of professional staff.
- Organizing various educational courses for visitors, such as the preparation of traditional dishes, recognition of different varieties of wine, etc.
- Organization of wine festivals, tastings and other oenological contents.
- Organizing grape harvesting campaigns and various prize competitions.
- Achieve cooperation with the travel agencies for placement of the offer.
- Marketing activities for market research, promotional actions for the promotion and sale of wine.
- Strict quality control.
- Raising the world of people for rational use of resources.

On the other hand, involvement of the local population is also necessary, because the development of the wine tourism positively affects both the development of the country's economy and the local development. Namely, the development of military tourism will greatly improve the economic, social and social development of the local population, which can find its interest in several areas and forms:

- Realization of income from renting rooms, providing catering services.
- The most rational is if the guiding and presenting activities are performed by qualified and educated residents from the local environment.
- Maintaining courses for visitors to prepare traditional dishes with wine and wine products.
- Employment in wineries and vineyards.
- Brokerage business.
- Possibility for development and other alternative forms of tourism, mountain, hunting, eco...
- Providing transportation services.
- Participation in organization of wine festivals and performances.

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