What the Wine Tourist seeks: the perspective of tourism operators

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Our analysis on the mechanisms that regulate the wine tourism offer go on; analysis that not only brought us all around Italy and in the main countries that are the protagonists of the world wine production, but that allowed us to build an articulated referring map labeled by territories, virtuous practices, necessary competences, dangers to avoid, current tendencies and perspectives.

To the analysis on field, which put us in direct contact with companies and their resources – and that allowed us to understand which are the main problems with which the companies have to confront with to build a wine tourism offer in line with their identity – has also been placed side by

side with a recent market analysis.

The survey illustrated the point of view of those who sell travel packets and analyses the 74 operators' answers; today, in particular, we linger upon how these operators read these wine tourists' preferences.

23% of the consulted professional operators attests that the wine tourists that address to them are mainly Italian; 77% of the operators notes that wine tourists are mainly foreigners. **On one hand, the Italian user has probably a greater maneuver agility, in their own territory, to choose autonomously their itinerary and the type of wine tourism experience they prefer**; on the other hand, it is a fact that the foreign wine tourists' interest for the Italian wine heritage is growing, coming up beside the art and natural experiences request in our Country.

For 54% of the sample, the client prefers experiences that position, as a price range, between 30 and 50 euros; 32% of them prefers exclusive experiences and offers that cost more than 50 euros; practically minor are the preferences for wine tourism experiences with prices that remain under 30 euros. **These data permits to conclude that the visitor is willing to acknowledge a price prize to a wine tourism experience and those who organize it,** if the experience deserves it and justify their travel itinerary integration.

45% of the operators declares that clients book their visit well in advance while 50% of them books the experience a few days before. **Only 5% of the operator observes that clients address to the agency the day before the visit.**
This confirms the clients' interest to the wine tourism experience, which is not at all casual or filling with regard to the travel itinerary; on the contrary, it is so crucial to deserve a booking with a congruous anticipation.

Another proof of the wine tourists' interest for an experience

which goes beyond the simple tasting is that 50% of the tourism operators interviewed confirms that clients are looking for a lunch/dinner experience, accompanied with wines form the cellars, while for 18% of the operator the client loves to give themselves premium visits or entertainment visits such as cooking class, sport experiences, territory hiking, family entertainment and much more; only 32% of the case highlights that clients are not only interested to the classical tasting experience.

To these last data corresponds the operators' precise, **strategic choice which for 50% of the cases declare to choose the cellars to insert in their proposal based on offered services'** quality and variety, while the price lever is surely minor in the cellars' choice with which to collaborate.

Curiosity and knowledge delight are increasingly attracting wine tourists and beside the authenticity request – which results in 33% of the offer – **the presence of integrative experiences catalyzes the operators' attention and orients** the choice toward one cellar rather than the other.

In light of what has emerged as clear preferences from the wine tourism clientele, **tourism operators think that, in 50% of the cases, there are great improvement margins for Italian cellars.**

There are some outstanding recommendations that account for 14% of the instances, but **they have not yet gained enough popularity to adequately describe the Italian wine tourism industry as a whole.**