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# HOW CAN WINE TOURISM PROMOTE SAUTERNES WINE ON FOREIGN MARKET ?

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## Preface

In order to obtain my European Engineer Degree at AERES University in Dronten, one course is dedicated to the writing of a thesis, allowing to justify the skills acquired during the courses and the end-of-study internship of this programme.

It was obvious for me to choose a subject related to my future professional career in the wine industry and the studies I am currently doing. The topic of wine tourism and foreign markets was chosen based on my different experiences. This summer I worked as a wine tourism guide in a Château in the Sauternes vineyards. This job allowed me to improve my contacts with customers, to better understand the whole appellation, and to notice the different interests of foreigners to come and taste the wines of Sauternes.

This part of wine tourism was also part of my internship in Spain, in the Rioja Alavesa region. I also attach importance to the export part of wine marketing, to observe market trends in different countries. For this reason, my main task during my internship was to export the wines to France and Belgium.

It is all the more interesting this world of wine tourism in the Sauternes appellation. Because these are unique wines, made in a specific way, and are generally produced in small quantities.

I would like to thank my thesis coach Mr. Taco Medema for his precious help and his availability. I would also like to thank Loli and Jesus from Bodegas Loli Casado who helped me to understand the importance of sharing their passion with their customers and who trusted me to organise my time as I wished, to be able to do this thesis and develop the export market. And the team of Château Lafaurie Peyraguey and in particular Iris and Mathilda, for teaching me many things about the world of wine and for encouraging me.

Finally, I would like to thank my parents for having supported me in this journey, Theo for his presence and encouragement, and Pierrot for having allowed me to access this training.

Enjoy your reading,

Laura Louet

Lapuebla de Labarca, January 2022.

## Summary

A very specific form of tourism takes more and more place each year in France, it is wine tourism. Wine is the second largest French export sector and is the first surplus agro-food sector and the second surplus sector in France, after aeronautics and ahead of chemicals / perfumes. France has been recognized as the world's leading tourist destination for years. In 2020 the arrival of the Covid-19 reduced by nearly 50% the international tourism revenue generated during the first 7 months of 2020. However, a specific wine from the southwest of France, Sauternes, has seen its market decline for a few years, so it is interesting to know how wine tourism can promote this product for export.

To provide recommendations and conclusions to professionals, it is necessary to know what attracts tourists most to do this type of activity, as well as consumption habits of people who drink Sauternes. For this the parameters wine tourism and consumption will need to be analysed. That is why the main question of this thesis is : « How can wine tourism promote Sauternes wine on foreign markets ? » The starting point is that having already done wine tourism contributes to having consumed Sauternes wine at least once.

To answer this question, a questionnaire was set up. 134 people responded, of which 53% are men. 60% who have already done wine tourism and 85% who have already consumed Sauternes wines. The questionnaire is accompanied by interviews intended for professionals. The 4 people questioned highlight that wine tourism is necessary to be able to communicate on this type of product which is in a niche market. Statistics showed that there is a significant connection between having done wine tourism activity and ever consumed Sauternes wine, that means the alternative hypothesis is accepted. The alternative hypothesis is that the having done wine tourism activity is linked of having at least consumed once Sauternes wine.

Promoting Sauternes wines through wine tourism is a good solution for branding and attracting people on vacation. The fact of being able to have a special moment with the winegrowers makes it possible to create links and to make people appreciate the product, the customers can then consume new ones abroad.

## List of figures

Figure 1 : Distribution of wine tourists in France .....	7
Figure 2 : Map of the Graves and Sauternes appellations .....	8
Figure 3 : Best of wine Tourism ranking award .....	9
Figure 4 : Vineyards and discoveries label .....	10
Figure 5 : Table of questions on wine tourism and Sauternes for individuals .....	16
Figure 6 : Table showing the flow of interviews for wine tourism professionals.....	17
Figure 7 : Nationality of respondent .....	18
Figure 8 : Age of respondents .....	19
Figure 9 : Gender of respondents .....	19
Figure 10 : Highest level of education.....	20
Figure 11 : Monthly salary of respondents .....	20
Figure 12 : Knowledge of wine tourism.....	21
Figure 13 : Experience in wine tourism .....	21
Figure 14 : Knowledge of Sauternes wine .....	22
Figure 15 : Experience in Sauternes wine .....	22
Figure 16 : Perception of Sugar .....	23
Figure 17 : Desired price of a bottle .....	23
Figure 18 : Consumption of Sauternes .....	24
Figure 19 : Reason to participate in wine tourism activity.....	24
Figure 20 : Context for taking part in wine tourism activity .....	25
Figure 21 : Type of wine tourism activity .....	25
Figure 22 : Way of booking a wine tourism activity .....	26
Figure 23 : Table 1 : Observation of the variables « having already done wine tourism » and having already consumed a Sauternes wine » based on the questionnaire .....	32
Figure 24 : Table 2 : Observation of the variables « having already done wine tourism » and having already consumed a Sauternes wine » based on the formula of the Chi <sup>2</sup> test.....	32

# Table of Contents

Disclaimer.....	1
Preface.....	2
Summary .....	3
List of figures .....	4
Table des matières .....	5
1. Introduction.....	6
1.1. Wine tourism in France .....	6
1.2. Sauternes wine market.....	8
1.3. Promotion of Sauternes wines .....	9
1.4. Research on the link between the wine tourism and the promotion of Sauternes wine .....	12
2. Material and methods.....	14
3. Results .....	18
3.1. Respondent profiles.....	18
3.2. How is Sauternes wine perceived ? .....	22
3.3. Why do wine tourists come to visit wine companies ? .....	24
3.4. How is wine tourism a beneficial activity for a wine Sauternes company ? .....	26
3.5. Statistical analysis : is there a significant connection between ever done wine tourism and ever consumed a Sauternes wine ? .....	31
4. Discussion of results.....	34
4.1. Discussion of the research execution and methodology.....	34
4.2. Discussion of the type of respondent, how the Sauternes is perceived, and motivation for wine tourism (sub-questions 1 to 3) .....	34
4.3. Discussion of benefits of implementing wine tourism (sub-question 4).....	37
4.4. Discussion of statistical analysis .....	38
5. Conclusions and recommendations .....	39
5.1. Conclusion .....	39
5.2. Recommendations.....	40
References List .....	41
Appendix 1 : Questionnaire in English (also used in French) .....	44
Appendix 2 : Table of words given by respondents .....	46

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1. Wine tourism in France

France has been recognized as the world's leading tourist destination for years. In 2020 the arrival of the Covid-19 reduced by nearly 50% the international tourism revenue generated during the first 7 months of 2020 (République Française, 2021). The Tourism sector represents 8% of the GDP which corresponds to a turnover of 180 billion euros, with nearly 2 million direct and indirect jobs, and the reception of 90 million visitors from all over the world for the year 2018 (Diplomatie.gouv, 2020). The heritage of this country attracts local and international tourists for its culture, gastronomy and natural landscapes. It is necessary to take into account the impact of the Covid-19 crisis to justify the use of data before the onset of this crisis. Because in fact, the year 2020 represents more than 60 billion euros in lost revenue linked to the different lockdowns (République Française, 2021).

While tourism continues to increase and diversify into various activities (hotels, restaurants, sports, culture, nature, sustainability, or gastronomy), wine tourism is increasingly developing in wine appellations around the world despite the fact that it is an activity considered "as a relatively young and devolved tourist research area" (Frost 2020). "Gastronomy and wine tourism represent an opportunity to revitalize and diversify tourism, [...] involving many different professional sectors and bringing new uses to the primary sector." (UNWTO, 2021). Wine tourism generally takes place in a rural environment, where there is room to operate a vineyard (Mitchell 2012). In France, 10 million wine tourists discover the world of wine, 42% of whom are foreigners. Wine tourists spend 5.2 billion euros per year in France, which represents an average of 1256€ for a wine tourism stay, including 240 € of expenditure linked to the purchase of wine on site (ISVV, 2021). Wine tourism makes it possible to distribute products linked to the world of wines at a reasonably low cost for direct sale to consumers (Byrd 2016).

The two most visited regions in France are Bordeaux with 18% and Champagne with 17.2% wine tourists. These two regions enjoy great notoriety, and immense prestige for the quality of their wines, allowing them to reach the top of the ranking. Alsace with 16.9% of visitors and Burgundy with 16.2% follow the first two appellations very closely. Finally, the Loire Valley, Provence and the Rhône Valley are distributed the other important part of visitors at 13%, 11.5%, and 11.5% (France, 2020).

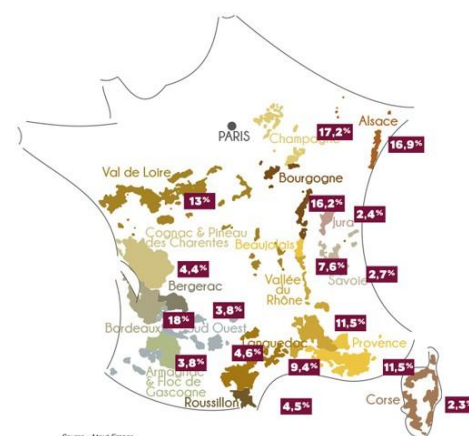


Figure 1 : Distribution of wine tourists in France

Wine tourism is a kind of tourism related to doing wine activities. Tourists come to meet professionals from the wine-growing world in different places, Châteaux, properties, cellars, stores, museums or other to come and taste, buy and discover a wine-growing region (CNIV, 2021). This activity makes it possible to develop the economic sector of tourism and wine by increasing the distribution of products sold (wines, visits, stays), to develop an environmental aspect while preserving the wine-growing landscapes, and to develop the culture of art of living and traditions. This helps to share a piece of French culture with foreign winetourists. Several activities are available to wine tourists, tastings, tours, museums, wine workshops, parties in wine appellation, competitions, fairs and much more. We can notice that there are 4 types of visitors, whether foreign or French. Initially, epicureans who wish to come and taste or buy wine without a specific goal, they represent 40% of visitors. Then there are the classic visitors who wish to discover wine regions without knowing them, 24%. Third, are the exploratory visitors who represent 20%, they choose their activities according to the appellation and search to know the smallest details of the wines. Finally, the rarest visitors who are experts in wine represent 16% of tourists. They generally work in the world of wine, and want to make a link between history, regulations, terroir and the product (CNIV, 2021).

Professionals in the wine world are mainly motivated by the fact of having a more profitable direct sale, by improving the reputation of the establishment, by the creation of a customer file, to have additional income, to share his work and have direct contact with clients (CNIV, 2021). To help businesses in the tourism sector, the French State has set up an organisation : Atout France, responsible for strengthening the positioning of the destination



France internationally and supporting the development of tourism in the country. This agency initiate investment projects in the region through various measures aimed at optimizing traveler satisfaction : classification of hotels/bed and breakfasts, or Vignobles & Découvertes label (Atout France, 2021). In order to help winegrowers to develop the wine tourism part of their vineyard, Atout France is implementing actions and measures in favor of the development of wine tourism. Such as improving the quality of the wine tourism offer, by creating a classification of wine tourism experiences, by reinforcing the requirements of the Vignobles & Découvertes label, by creating new training courses, by lifting certain regulatory obstacles on architecture, agricultural work, by carrying out public inquiries on related subjects, or by making more accessible wine tourism with hotel partnerships, and the digitization of businesses (Cadet, 2018).

## 1.2. Sauternes wine market

The Sauternes region is located to the south of the Bordeaux vineyards, and is made up of 5 different towns Barsac, Sauternes, Bommes, Fargues and Preignac, which represents 2% of the Bordeaux vineyard (Peyraguey, 2021).

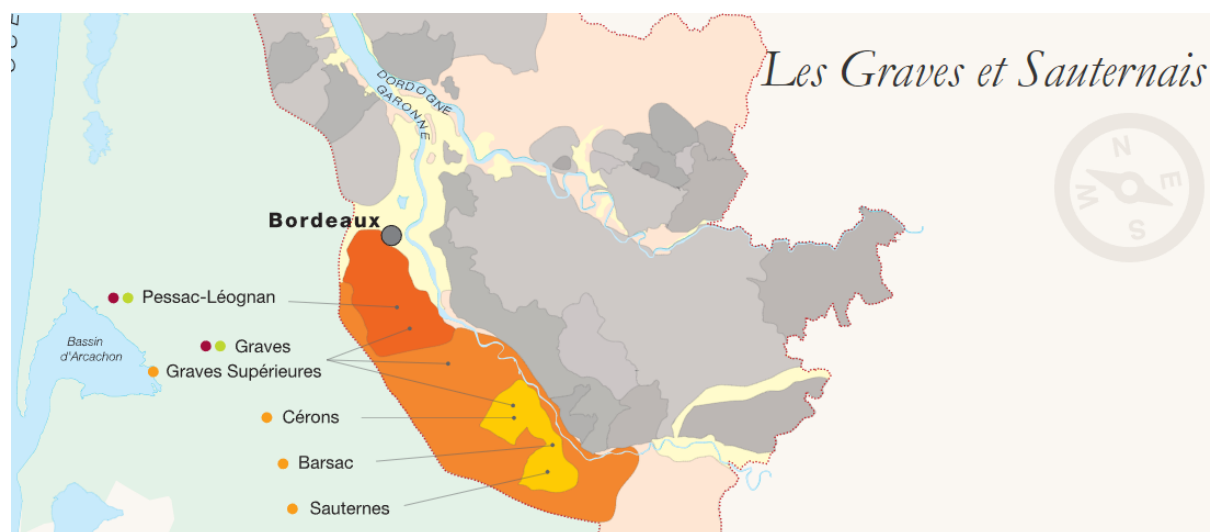


Figure 2 : Map of the Graves and Sauternes appellations

The Sauternes appellation is part of the 1855 classification which classifies 27 Châteaux into three categories : 1 Premier Grand Cru Supérieur, 11 Premiers Crus, and 15 Deuxièmes Crus (Bordeaux, 2021). To make a wine with the Sauternes appellation, it must come from one of these grape varieties Sémillon, Sauvignon Blanc, Muscadelle and Sauvignon Gris (Winetourism, 2019). To fit into the specifications, the winegrowers must wait until the end of October to harvest, so that Botrytis (a fungus that allows rotting, which will concentrate

the aromas and sugars of the berries) can develop on bunches of grapes with the aim of making a sweet wine (Ployon 2020). The « noble rot » that comes from this fungus thrives thanks to a unique microclimate. The junction between the warm waters of the Garonne river and the cold waters of the Ciron river allows the creation of a thick fog, which will provide the humidity necessary for the development of *Botrytis cinerea* (Barsac, 2021). The harvests are done manually and require an average of 2 months of work. From one hectare of vines the winegrowers obtain 15 Hl of must, against an average of 50 Hl for the Saint-Emilion appellation. This helps explain the price difference between a bottle of Sauternes and another appellation, as rare things are more expensive. After the harvest, the grapes will be pressed slowly for a good extraction of the aromas before starting the alcoholic fermentation (transformation of sugars into alcohol). To keep a quantity of sugar between around 130 g / L, the cellar master will carry out a mutage. Mutage is the addition of sulphites (SO<sub>2</sub>), to block the action of yeasts on the transformation of sugars into alcohol (Poupault, 2015). The area of the restricted appellation, the small amount of production, and the hard work put into this type of wine, explains why some people see this wine as a luxury product (LA RVF, 2020). Sauternes is exported to all countries of the world, the United States, the United Kingdom and China are the three largest importers of this type of wine (LA RVF, 2020). Export represents 31.4% of the distribution of Sauternes (including 61% in Europe and 39% in third countries), with 68.6% on the French market. The traditional CHR circuit represents 54% of the distribution of Sauternes wines, with 39% for mass distribution and 7% for hard discount (vin, 2019).

### 1.3. Promotion of Sauternes wines

In order to promote Sauternes wines on these different markets, several marketing ways have been implemented. The Bordeaux Chamber of Commerce and Industry has created a competition called Best Of Wine Tourism. This competition makes it possible to highlight the visits of wine companies in the Nouvelle-Aquitaine region. For this, several categories of the competition are set up, architecture and



Figure 3 : Best of wine Tourism ranking award

landscapes, innovation, accommodation, catering, or even environmental practices. The categories allow each property to compete on the theme it wishes to develop in order to communicate with wine tourists. Each year, the list of winners is highlighted by Best Of Wine Tourism, and the Gold Laureates receive an award that reassures tourists (Best of Wine Tourism, 2021)

Along the same lines, the « Vignoble & Découvertes » Vineyard and Discoveries Label was created in 2009 by Atout France, which is the organization responsible for tourism in France. The label is accessible to tourism and wine companies offering a range of tourist products, and is valid for 3 years. Companies must comply with the label regulations, in order to be able to communicate on this label (Atout France, 2021).



Figure 4 : Vineyards and discoveries label

The wine route which passes through Sauternes allows tourists to be directed to this wine region. This route is created from collaborative strategies between the various operators of the region who maintain this wine route in order to highlight the territorial actors (Giuseppe 2020).

To be able to successfully sell a tourist activity, wine, or any other item related to this environment, each company should create an identity and a marketing plan to promote them. More than three-quarters of marketers use brand identity-driven marketing tools, according to the CMO Club (The CMO club is a community for heads of marketing to share ideas). The ANA and Winterberry Group report, Know Your Audience : The Evolution of Identity in a Consumer-Centric Marketplace, highlights that marketers in the United States invested nearly \$ 900 million in 2018 in services and solutions dedicated to brand identity, and this number is estimated at more than 2.6 billion dollars for 2019 (Appel 2018). Marketing begins with the brand identity of a company, it develops correctly through three pillars, values, personality and relationship (Kusi 2021). This concept makes it possible to distinguish each company in order to be able to sell the products and please the greatest number of customers. However, we do not know exactly which type of business or product will be appreciated the most by consumers. There are wines with different aromas, made in different ways, which allow us to meet the demand of all customers according to their tastes and trends.

The diversity of wine tourism services allows customers to understand the world of wine in their own way. An activity is unique, and prepares itself for months before it can be marketed. As it was mentioned earlier, there are several themes around wine such as the environment, accommodation, catering, architecture and even culture. Wine tourism professionals draw on their own experience and imagination, to be able to create an activity related to the company and what is expected by customers. The establishment of wine tourism brings many advantages in the promotion of wines. In the Alsace wine region the direct sale of wines has increased by 23% because of the total marketing of companies.

It also helps to retain customers, and they will probably be led to order the wine they have discovered on vacation in a place closer to their home. Wine tourism also makes it possible to reduce the individual expenses of companies in terms of marketing and communication by sharing common networks with the Vigneron & Découverte or Best of wine Tourism label (Sénat 2021). The company must submit an initial application file. This is then instructed by Atout France and presented to the Superior Council of Wine Tourism, which issues a favorable or negative opinion. At the end of this procedure, the "Vignobles & Découvertes" label is awarded for a period of 3 years, after which it must be renewed. The company does not have to pay any fees to promote these activities with this label, which reduces financial costs compared to various communication actions. In addition, the association of large cognac houses, small producers, hotels and restaurants, has been shown that it could strengthen the territorial attractiveness of a region. This makes it possible to communicate together for the same purpose, to promote a territory (Thanh 2018).

The success of Sauternes may vary depending on the country of origin of the tourists. For example, sugar is the most popular added ingredient among Americans (DHHS NH GOV, 2020), which could link the fact that the United States is the top importing country of Sauternes. We need to understand how Sauternes is a wine appreciated by foreigners, and what they want to visit in relation to this theme. In addition, it should be understood that the Sauternes market remains an unstable market. It is replaced as an aperitif with dry white wines or rosé, and for dessert with Porto or Champagne. This wine is generally enjoyed with foie gras for Christmas or the New Year event. The way it is associated with foie gras for the end of the year celebrations is increasingly controversial over the force-feeding of geese, so new food and wine pairings have to be found. Sauternes is also criticized for the amount of

sugar it contains (César Compadre, 2016). Today the trend is more towards a balanced diet, and foods that are easier to enjoy. So wine growers must reinvent themselves and offer more modern wines to respond to this new trend. The Sauternes appellation is constantly innovating, which can sometimes displease consumers who are attached to the original product.

#### 1.4. Research on the link between the wine tourism and the promotion of Sauternes wine

These three variables linked to Sauternes and tourism (image of Sauternes, consumer tastes and variety of wine tourism activities) remain uncertain in order to offer an activity that can enhance the wines of this appellation on foreign markets.

To understand how wine tourism can be an advantageous promotional factor for Sauternes wines. It is vital to understand what motivates foreigners to do tourism and link these motivations to the implementation of marketing and tourism tools developed by professionals in the wine industry (Var 2006).

Today several articles indicate that wine tourism plays an important role at national and regional level. This activity creates additional income and permit the development of a strong relationship between local culture and its economy (Guzel 2021). However, we do not know exactly what wine tourists expect when they come, but the experience that the stranger comes to have is a long-term experience, including consuming the wine upon returning home after the visit, bringing back fond memories (Hojman 2012). Moreover it has been shown that if the Bodegas of Rioja in Spain can lead the improvement of the appellation value and the image of wine tourism. This development will increase exports, investments and the number of tourists (Gomez 2015).

Therefore this thesis will have to answer the main question :

**« How can wine tourism promote Sauternes wine on foreign markets ? »**

In order to be able to respond to this problem which puts wine tourism in the foreground to develop the declining Sauternes wine market. The research will have to appeal to wine professionals and Sauternes consumers, who are in the best position to be able to inform us about what they want to see implemented on this subject.

To be able to find solutions, more precise sub-questions are put forward :

- What is the profile of wine tourists in Sauternes ?
- How is Sauternes wine perceived ?
- Why do wine tourists come to visit wine companies ?
- How is wine tourism a beneficial activity for a wine Sauternes company ?

Analyzing the answers to these sub-questions will allow us to understand the current trend around Sauternes, to provide solutions to Sauternes wine companies wishing to develop their sales abroad through wine tourism.

The main objective of this research is to find out how wine tourism can be an advantageous factor for the promotion of a declining wine in foreign markets. This will allow the appellation of Sauternes to promote these wines through the tourist influx enjoyed by France, which is the number one travel destination in the world, as previously mentioned. In addition, the questions will help to understand the current trends of Sauternes, to be able to help professionals put in place new marketing strategies to dust off the image of this wine. Finally, the answers will make it possible to understand what visitors expect from these wine-related activities and to use the trend of short and local circuits.

## 2. Material and methods

In order to answer the main question of this thesis, a research was carried out with the following sub-questions by following a specific research method. For this, primary and secondary research has been set up.

Primary research was based on qualitative and quantitative method research, which consisted of collecting information from consumers and professionals working in wine tourism in the Sauternes appellation. To do this, a questionnaire was sent to consumers, to understand what motivates them to buy Sauternes wine and to find out what interests them in wine tourism. After the results of the questionnaire presented, a statistical test makes it possible to establish a link between the motivations for buying Sauternes and the role of wine tourism. In addition, wine tourism professionals were interviewed to understand how wine tourism can add value to wine sales in the properties where they work. Setting up a survey makes it possible to obtain data quickly and remotely, which is why this method was chosen.

The interviews intended for professionals made it possible to have a guideline during the discussion, while obtaining additional information which is not possible in a questionnaire. The questionnaire collected quantitative information for sub-questions 1 to 3, the interviews provided qualitative data for sub-question 4.

The goal was to have as many people as possible responding to the questionnaire in order to have a representative sample of the population making it possible to provide a precise estimate. To determine the sample size a test was set up, the confidence level, margin of error and population size should be determined. The population size was determined by the number of wine tourism coming to France in 2016 : 10 millions (Atout France, 2016). Once the margin of error has been determined, which is 10% because if you use a 10% and 95% margin of error for the percent confidence level, you can be "sure" that if you had asked this question from the entire population, between 85% (95-10) and 100% (90 + 10) would have given the same answer. Finally, it is necessary to determine the level of confidence which reflects the degree of certainty of the margin of error. It is expressed as a percent and interprets how many times the true percentage of the population who would choose an answer is within the margin of error. The level of confidence is 95%, because it is the percentage most used for this test. The test result tells us that we would need 97 respondents to have a representative sample size (SurveyMonkey, 2021).

The questionnaire was communicated using social networks such as Facebook and LinkedIn, which are free sites and bring together different groups organized around wine, whether for professionals or individuals. The participants in the questionnaire could be of any nationality, the French were also invited to answer because they participate in the consumption of Sauternes abroad. Interviews with professionals took place after the results

of the questionnaire. The professionals had to be French, from the Bordeaux region to understand the effect of wine tourism on this wine region.

The following table allows to define the questions for the questionnaire related to the 3 sub-questions, which make it possible to understand the important points of the problem.

	Sub-question	Survey question
1)	What is the profile of wine tourists in Sauternes ?	1) What is your nationality? <b>French / English / Dutch / German / Spanish / Italian / Belgian / Irish / Portuguese / Swiss / American / Chinese</b> 2) If other, <b>please specify</b> 3) What is your age ? <b>&lt;18 / 18-29 / 30-39 / 40-49 / 50+</b> 4) What is your gender? <b>Male / Female / Other</b> 5) What is your highest level of education? <b>Without diploma / Primary school / High school / Bachelor's degree / Master degree / PhD</b> 6) What is your salary per month? <b>&lt;€ 1,190 / € 1,191 - € 2,499 / € 2,500 - € 4,999 / € 5,000 - € 10,000 / &gt; € 10,000 / Do not wish to communicate</b> 7) Do you know the term wine tourism? <b>Yes No</b> 8) Have you ever done wine tourism ? <b>Yes No</b>
2)	How is Sauternes wine perceived ?	9) Do you know the wines of Sauternes ? <b>Yes No</b> 10) Have you ever consumed a Sauternes wine? <b>Yes No</b> 11) About the sugar content : <b>Not very sweet / Moderately sweet / Very sweet / Too sweet</b> 12) Which price would you like to spent for a bottle of Sauternes wine ? <b>&lt;5 € / 6 € -20 € / 21 € -50 € / 51 € -100 € / &lt;100 €</b> 13) Which words come to your mind, when you think of Sauternes wines? 14) How often do you consume Sauternes ? <b>Once a week / Once a month / Once every 3 months / Once a year / Never / I don't know</b>
3)	Why do wine tourists come to	15) What is the main reason for you to participate in wine tourism activity ? <b>To taste wine / To buy wine / To learn about the wine world / To improve my wine knowledge /</b>



	visit wine companies ?	<p><b>To meet professionals in the wine world / To do an original activity</b></p> <p>16) If other, <b>please specify.</b></p> <p>17) In which context would you like to do a wine tourism activity?  <b>During the holidays / At the weekend / After work / In a professional seminar</b></p> <p>18) What type of activity are you interested in ?  <b>A tasting / A tour of the property / An oenological workshop (learn all the details of the wine) / A food and wine pairing / An unusual visit (scooter ride, tasting in a cabin, etc.)</b></p> <p>19) How do you book a wine tourism activity?  <b>By calling the company / With the tourist office / With vouchers or gift boxes / With specialized sites (winalist, rue des vigneron, etc.).</b></p>
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Figure 5 : Table of questions on wine tourism and Sauternes for individuals

The questionnaire was published from December 2 to December 25, 2021, in english and in french in order to obtain a sufficient number of responses. Once the responses to the questionnaires were collected, they were analyzed using graphs and tables, in order to draw conclusions.

Along with this questionnaire, 4 wine tourism professionals were interviewed to show how wine tourism is a beneficial activity for a Sauternes company in order to obtain qualitative data for sub-question 4. The choice of 4 people was chosen to be able to interview people by telephone before December 24, the people interviewed work in the Sauternes wine sector. The first person to have been interviewed was Marie DOUMERC who works at the South Gironde tourist office. The second person was Clémence Planty Hospitality manager at Château Guiraud, a company recognized in the wine tourism sector and its environmental theme. The third person was Laure de Lambert Compeyrot, director of Château Sigalas-Rabaud, voted the property's best accommodation by Best of Wine Tourism. Finally, the last person was Iris Cottrau-Lejeune, wine tourism manager at Château Lafaurie-Peyraguey, recognized for its Relais et Château hotel and its 1 star gourmet restaurant in the Michelin guide.

The interviews followed the following guideline :

Discussed subjects
<b>Presentation of the interviewee :</b> Gender, level of education, length of service in the company.
<b>Presentation of the company in which the person works :</b> Company name, number of employees, agricultural area, turnover, annual production.
<b>Presentation of the wine tourism center :</b> Number of people, types of activities, Method of communication.
<b>The key number for wine tourism in the company :</b> Number of tourists per year, price of visits, most requested visit, average customer basket, percentage of foreigners on the year.
<b>Developments related to wine tourism :</b> Percentage of turnover for wine tourism part, customer loyalty.
<b>The advantages and disadvantages of wine tourism :</b> 3 advantages and 3 Disadvantages.
<b>The links between wine promotion and wine tourism :</b> Free answer.

Figure 6 : Table showing the flow of interviews for wine tourism professionals

After receiving the data from the questionnaire and interviews, a statistical chi-square test was applied to find links between having already done wine tourism and having already consumed a Sauternes wine. The two variables “wine tourism” and “consumption” were analyzed in this test.

The alternative hypothesis to the test (H1) is that the fact of having already done wine tourism has a link with the fact of having already consumed a Sauternes wine. The null hypothesis (H0) would mean that there is no link between having already done wine tourism and having already consumed a Sauternes wine. If H0 is not accepted, the H1 hypothesis will be accepted (Statiscs 2021).

After the various data analyzes of the data, the results obtained made it possible to reach a conclusion and recommendations on the use of wine tourism to develop Sauternes internationally.

### 3. Results

In this chapter, the results of the questionnaire and the telephone interviews will be presented. Each sub-question to answer the main question, is explained with a paragraph and a simple way to summarize the information collected. The last part of this chapter will provide a statistical analysis of the results.

#### 3.1. Respondent profiles

The main question of this thesis is : "How can wine tourism promote Sauternes wines on the foreign market ?" To have as many nationalities as possible, and to leave the opportunity to all foreign markets, there were no restrictions on the nationalities of respondents. Figure 7 shows that 59% of respondents or 79 people have the French nationality, which is represented by the blue color. 12.7% of respondents are Dutch or 17 people. 9.7% are Germans or 13 people. 8.2% are Spanish or 11 respondents. 2.2% are Italians or 3 people. 1.5% are Americans or 2 people. 1.5% are Romanians or 2 people. 1.5% are Chinese or 2 people. 0.7% are English or 1 person. 0.7% are Taiwanese or 1 person. 0.7% are Armenian or 1 person. 0.7% are Russian or 1 person. 0.7% are Indian or 1 person.

What is your nationality ? Qu'elle est votre nationalité ?  
134 réponses

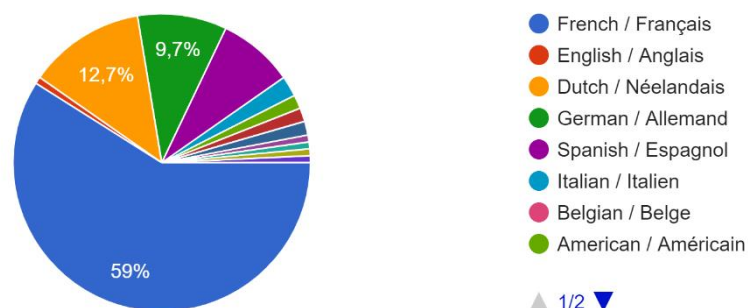


Figure 7 : Nationality of respondent

The next figure provides information on the age groups of the people who answered the questionnaire. More than half of the respondents are between 18 and 29 years old, which is shown in red with a percentage of 58.2%. The 30-39 year old category comes in second, represented in yellow with 20.1%. The third category is that of 40-49 year olds in green with 11.9%. The 50 and over category is represented at 9.7% in purple. Finally, the last category is that of the under 18, in blue with 0.7%.

What is your age ? Quel âge avez-vous ?

134 réponses

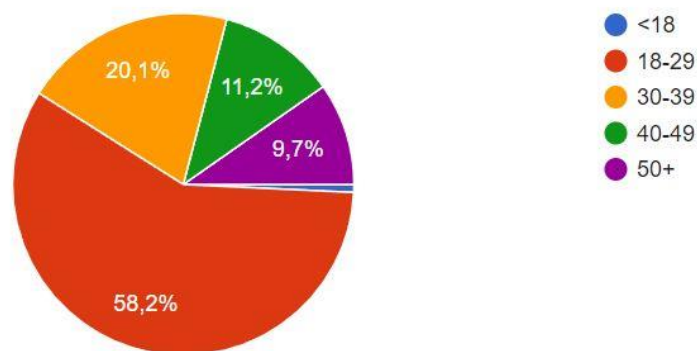


Figure 8 : Age of respondents

Figure 9, informs about the gender of the respondents. The majority of men responded to the questionnaire with 53%, compared to 47% of women.

What is your gender ? Quel est votre genre ?

134 réponses

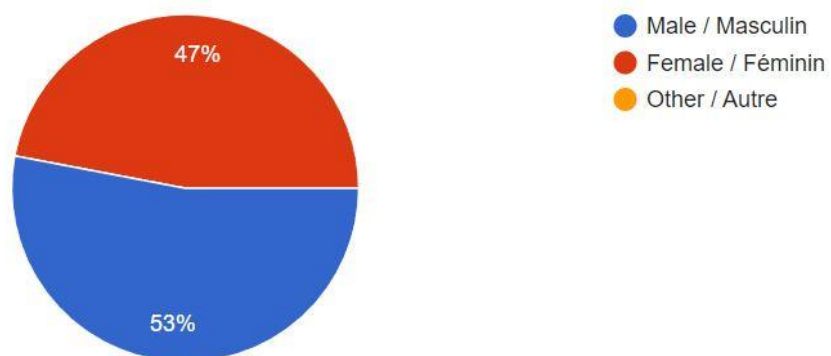


Figure 9 : Gender of respondents

The following figure shows the highest degree obtained that the respondents have. The majority of them, or 44.8%, have a Bachelor's degree, which represents an intermediate level of study. 30.6% of respondents holds a Master's degree. 18.7% stopped their studies after the high school. 3.7% stopped their studies after the primary school. 1.5% do not have a diploma. 0.7% of respondents have a PhD.

What is your highest level of education ? Quel est votre niveau d'étude le plus élevé ?

134 réponses

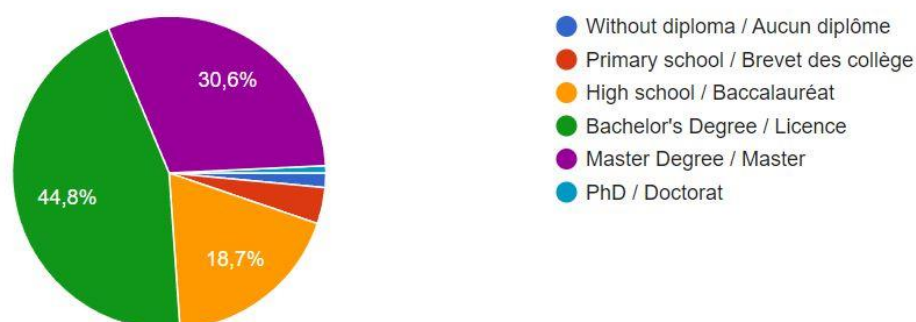


Figure 10 : Highest level of education

Figure 11 represents the monthly salary that respondents receive. Almost half of them (43.3%) earn between € 1,191 and € 2,499 per month. 28.4% of respondents receive less than € 1,190 per month. 12.7% of respondents receive between € 2,500 and € 4,999 per month. 9.7% of respondents receive between € 5,000 and € 10,000 per month. 0.7% of respondents do not wish to communicate their salary.

What is your salary per month ? Quel est votre salaire mensuel ?

134 réponses

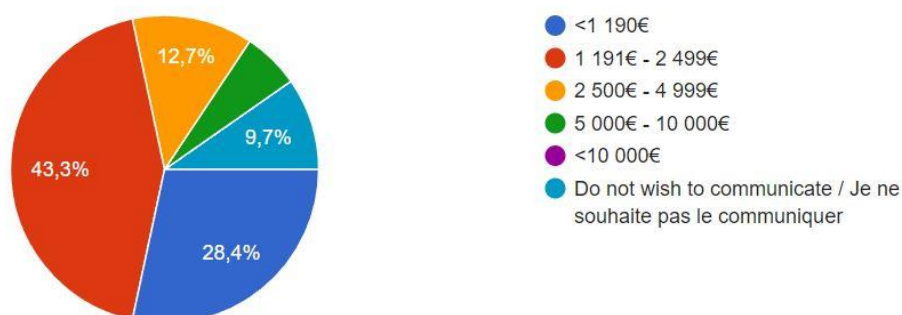


Figure 11 : Monthly salary of respondents

Figure 12, informs if the respondents know the term wine tourism. The majority at 81.3% (109) respondents say yes and 18.7% say they do not know this term.

Do you know the term wine tourism ? Connaissez-vous le terme oenotourisme ?

134 réponses

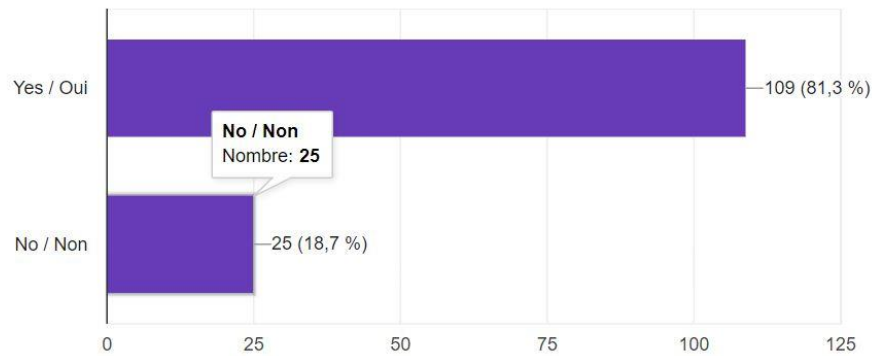


Figure 12 : Knowledge of wine tourism

Figure 13 shows how many respondents have already done wine tourism. But before the question was answered, a brief explanation of wine tourism was given, so that all participants could understand the context. The majority at 60.4% have already done wine tourism, against 39.6% who have never participated in wine tourism.

Have you ever done wine tourism ? Avez-vous déjà fait de l'oenotourisme ?

134 réponses

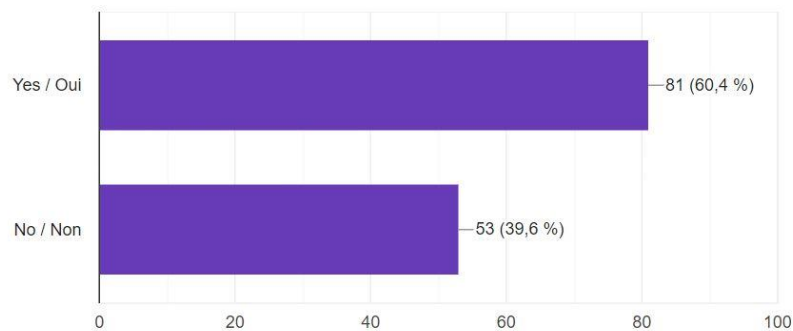


Figure 13 : Experience in wine tourism

### 3.2. How is Sauternes wine perceived ?

The second sub-question was : "How is Sauternes wine perceived ?". To be able to answer this question, it was first necessary to know whether the respondents knew Sauternes wines. To this question 110 people or 82.1% of respondents answered yes and 18.7% answered no.

Do you know the wines of Sauternes ? Connaissez-vous les vins de Sauternes ?

134 réponses

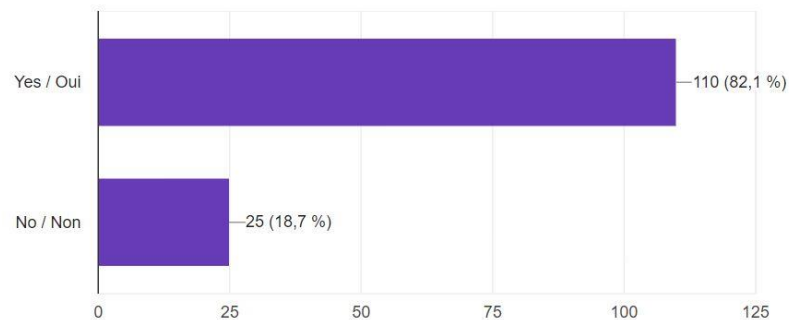


Figure 14 : Knowledge of Sauternes wine

Figure 15 shows how many respondents have already consumed a Sauternes wine. But before the question was answered, a brief explanation of Sauternes wine was given, so that all participants could understand the context. The majority at 85.1% have already consumed a Sauternes wine, against 14.9% who have never consumed one.

Have you ever consumed a Sauternes wine ? Avez-vous déjà consommé un vin de Sauternes ?

134 réponses

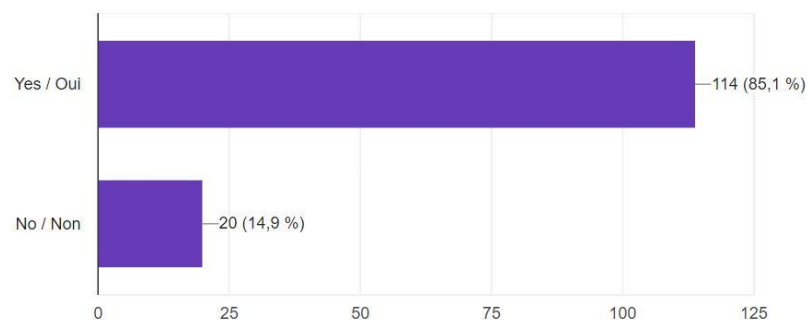


Figure 15 : Experience in Sauternes wine

The quantity of sugar contained in the wine is specific to this product, this question allows to see how the main characteristic of Sauternes is perceived. Almost half of respondents or 49.3% think that the wine is moderately sweet. 38.1% of respondents think that wine is very sweet, with 10.4% who think it is too sweet.

About the sugar content in Sauternes? A propos de la quantité de sucre dans le Sauternes en général?

134 réponses

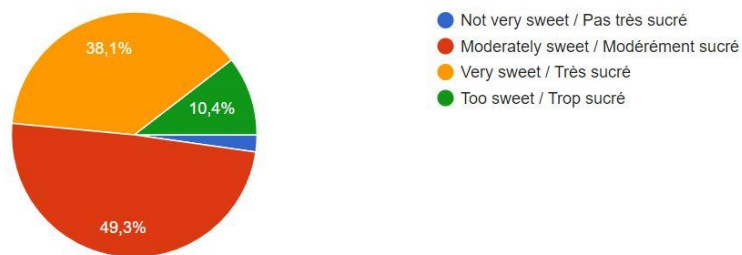


Figure 16 : Perception of Sugar

In figure 17, price bands for a bottle of Sauternes are offered to respondents. The majority of them 55.2% or 74 people would be ready to put between 6 and 20 € in a bottle of Sauternes. The yellow color shows that 33.6% of them would be ready to put between € 21 and € 50. 6.7% would put less than € 5, 4.5% would put between € 51 and € 100 and 0% would put a price above € 100.

Which price would you like to spent for a bottle of Sauternes wine ? Quel prix seriez-vous prêt à mettre dans une bouteille de Sauternes ?

134 réponses

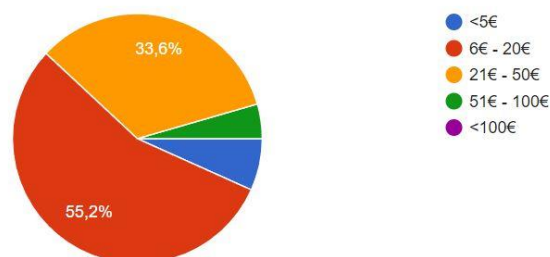


Figure 17 : Desired price of a bottle

The next question asks respondents to give word to their associations with Sauternes wines. In appendix 1, one will find the table that shows the words that were given and the time they are used. The ten most used words are : « sweet » 36 times, « wine » 21 times, « white » 19 times, « foie gras » 16 times, « Bordeaux » 14 times, « France » 12 times, « unknown » 10 times, « sugar » 10 times, « party » 9 times, and « christmas » 7 times.



How often do you consume Sauternes? A quelle fréquence consommez-vous du Sauternes ?



Figure 19 highlights the main reasons for respondents to come to practice a wine tourism activity. The biggest group, in yellow, 36.6%, mentions that they do this type of activity to learn about the world of wine. 17.9% practice wine tourism to taste. 15.7% to do an original activity.

134 réponses



Figure 20 shows the context in which respondents would like to take part in this type of activity. The vast majority in blue, i.e. 54.5%, say they want to do this type of activity during their vacation. 31.3% would be ready to visit during the weekends and 9% in a professional context for a seminar.

In which context would you like to do a wine tourism activity? Dans quel contexte voudriez-vous faire une activité oenotouristique?

134 réponses

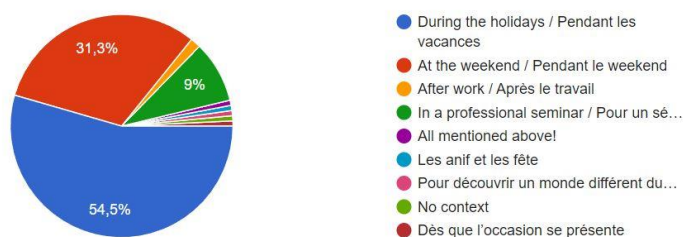


Figure 20 : Context for taking part in wine tourism activity

In the following graph, respondents are asked to choose what type of wine-related visit is best for them. In red 29.9% are interested in a tour of the property, with 22.4% more likely for an original visit. The food and wine pairing and simple tasting tours were both chosen by the same number of people, which represents 17.2% of respondents each. Finally, in a minority quantity, the oenological workshop convinced 13.4% of people.

What type of activity are you interested in? Par quel type d'activité êtes-vous intéressé?

134 réponses

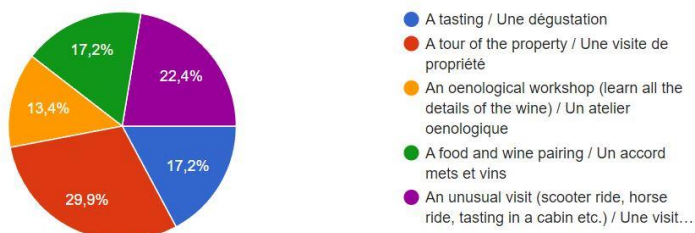


Figure 21 : Type of wine tourism activity

The last question asked, allows to know the different methods of booking activities of the people questioned. In blue, 39.6% of them reserve directly by calling the company offering the activity. 27.6% make their reservations through sites specializing in this area. 15.7% would go through a tourist office, with 13.4% who would use gift vouchers or gift boxes. 3 people added that they had never booked for this type of activity before, 1 person mention going through the website of the winery, and another person going through google reviews before booking.

How do you book a wine tourism activity? Comment réservez-vous une activité oenotouristique?

134 réponses

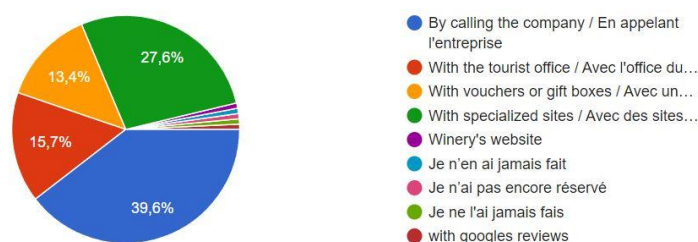


Figure 22 : Way of booking a wine tourism activity

### 3.4. How is wine tourism a beneficial activity for a wine Sauternes company ?

As said in the material and method section for this question, 4 professionals from Sauternes were questioned. Following are the reports of interviews with the tourist office first, followed by Château Guiraud, then Château Sigalas-Rabaud and Château Lafaurie-Peyraguey.

#### Interview with the tourist office of South Gironde

For the case of the tourist office, the interview was adapted, because this type of business is not specific to the term of wine tourism.

##### 1. Presentation of the interviewee :

Name : Marjorie DOUMERC

Gender : Female

Level of education : 2 years of university of applied science HBO in tourism and Bachelor HBO in guide-lecturer (In a museum or during a tour in a foreign country, the guide-lecturer shares his vast knowledge with a group of tourists. He is able to express himself in several languages and generally works freelance).

Length of service in the company : Since 2006

##### 2. Presentation of the company in which the person works :

Company name : « Office du Tourisme Sud Gironde » Tourist office South Gironde

Number of employees : 4 permanent employees with 3 seasonal workers

Services area : Tourism

Turnover : Not specified

Area : In the South Gironde sector, 4 tourist offices are open to cover 37 municipalities.

### **3. Presentation of the wine tourism center :**

Number of people : Ms. Doumerc, is required to participate more regularly in activities related to wine tourism. But everyone in the company can work on this theme.

Types of tourism activities : Heritage, nature, cycle tourism, hiking, wine route.

Method of communication in general : Old partnerships, word of mouth, membership campaign for non-partner winery castles, tourist card, tourist guide for all types of activity.

### **4. The key number for wine tourism in the company :**

Number of visitors per year : In 2019 25,462 visitors, against 22,077 visitors in 2020.

Percentage of foreigners on the year : 30% of attendance over a year excluding covid.

Partners in Sauternes : 270

### **5. The advantages and disadvantages of wine tourism in Sauternes :**

3 Advantages : -Sauternes is an exceptional product

-Passionate work (sharing experience)

-Renewal (type of activity and tourists)

3 Disadvantages : -Divergence of ideas on the Sauternes and its image

-Territorial division (management of tourist offices)

-Budget management (management of tourist offices)

### **6. The links between Sauternes promotion and wine tourism :**

You have to bring in tourists to be able to communicate about wine tourism because they are the main players in this environment. To maintain a good image you have to welcome people, moreover, Sauternes wines represent a niche market. Foreigners are sensitive to the culture of wine. However, wine tourism is not the right term, they are just tourists who want to discover something other than what they are used to seeing, or because it is typical of the region.

## **Interview with Château Guiraud**

### **1. Presentation of the interviewee :**

Name : Clémence Planty

Gender : Female

Level of education : MBA Hotel management and sommelier diploma.

Length of service in the company : 7 years in public relations and reception manager.

### **2. Presentation of the company in which the person works :**

Company name : Château Guiraud

Number of employees : 39 person

Services area : Production of wine, tourism, restaurants

Turnover : Not specified

Annual production : 350 000 bottles per year.

### **3. Presentation of the wine tourism center :**

Number of people : 5 persons

Types of activities : Discovery tour at € 22 per person, The aromatic journey at € 30 per person, bicycle tour at € 50 per person, food and wine pairing at € 59 per person.

Method of communication in general : Setting up of events 4 per year such as the Christmas market organized by the chateau, or open days organized by the appellation, digital communication, press relations, and BtoB events.

#### **4. The key number for wine tourism in the company :**

Number of tourists per year : 10,000 tourists per year on average excluding covid

Percentage of foreigners on the year: 20% of foreigners during the Covid period, compared to 70% before the arrival of the virus.

Average customer basket : 80 € / person on average (may include the price of the visit, purchase of wine, tips or souvenir).

Most requested visit : The discovery tour represents 60% of visits.

#### **5. Developments related to wine tourism :**

Percentage of turnover for wine tourism part : 15%

Customer loyalty : Events are organized to receive customers, invitations to early sales are sent, shipping costs are offered, or even the establishment of a sponsorship system, wine club, Brand ambassador abroad.

#### **6. The advantages and disadvantages of wine tourism in Sauternes :**

3 Advantages : - The reputation of the company ((wine tourism brings positive communication from customers and Best of Wine tourism)

- Branding (It completes the brand image of the winery)
- Customer loyalty (customers come back consumed)

3 Disadvantages : - Economic model (the covid crisis)

- Niche Market (for Sauternes wines)
- Job market (difficulties in recruiting qualified staff with staggered schedules).

#### **7. The links between wine promotion and wine tourism :**

Wine tourism promotes French gastronomy and the country's art of living. It is therefore the role of wine companies to communicate on this type of product to attract the curiosity of foreigners, and thus market the wines correctly.

## **Interview with Château Sigalas-Rabaud**

### **1. Presentation of the interviewee :**

Name : Laure de Lambert Compeyrot

Gender : Female

Level of education : 4 years in agronomy school in Montpellier, the university degree in aptitude for tasting, a master's degree in property management, after having been an art historian.

Length of service in the company : In the company since 2006, starting as a cellar worker, to be today the chief executive. It is a family property, inherited from the previous generation.

### **2. Presentation of the company in which the person works :**

Company name : Château Sigalas-Rabaud

Number of employees : 4 full-time with 6,000 hours of seasonal workers

Services area : Production of wine, wine tourism, guest house.

Turnover : Not specified

Annual production : The production of sweet wine is 15 hectoliters per hectare, against 30 hectoliters per hectare for dry whites. Depending on the year, it can vary between 25,000 bottles or even 40,000 bottles per year. There is a desire to produce more dry white for economic and taste reasons.

### **3. Presentation of the wine tourism center :**

Number of people : The wine tourism pole is run by several people, you have to be versatile. The whole family can lead a visit, there can be an intern or the manager.

Types of activities : Sigalas discovery at € 10 per person, the secrets of Sigalas at € 14 per person, gourmet Sigalas at € 49 per person, historic Sigalas at € 20 per person, dinner in Sigalas at € 65 per person, or the terrace to eat and the guest rooms.

Method of communication in general : Word of mouth works tremendously for this business. The Bordeaux wine trip digital portal attracts a few people, such as the appellation's open days, the wine route, google reviews, or even the 5+ fund. This case is made up of 5 bottles from five châteaux, all in the town of Bommes in the Sauternes appellation, all 1er crus Classé 1855. Lafaurie Peyraguey, La Tour Blanche, Rabaud Promis, Rayne Vigneau, and Sigalas Rabaud, with a sixth bottle which is a blend of 5 wines in equal proportion.

### **4. The key number for wine tourism in the company :**

Number of tourists per year : 2000 to 3000 people per year.

Percentage of foreigners on the year: Not specified

Average customer basket : Around 100 € / person on average (may include the price of the visit, purchase of wine, tips or souvenir).

Most requested visit : Sigalas discovery at € 10 which allows you to visit the property accompanied by a tasting.

### **5. Developments related to wine tourism :**

Percentage of turnover for wine tourism part : 25%

Customer loyalty : An offer per year in general for Christmas is organized, with invitations for customers during fairs.

### **6. The advantages and disadvantages of wine tourism in Sauternes :**

3 Advantages :  
- Consume Sauternes differently  
- Meet with clients to understand what they like  
- Improve the presentation of the wine to consumers.

3 Disadvantages :  
- Ensure continuous details during the visits  
- Follow the networks to ensure the image of the company  
- The rising wage bill

### **7. The links between wine promotion and wine tourism :**

It has a boomerang effect, if you put it in place people come back to buy and talk about it. For example, a Canadian couple who come to visit during their holidays and who appreciate the wine, were led to find the wine in their country and to consume it because they appreciated it. Customers become attached to the family and create bonds that they feel privileged.

## **Interview with Château Lafaurie Peyraguey**

### **1. Presentation of the interviewee :**

Name : Iris Cottrau-Lejeune

Gender : Female

Level of education : Master 2 in wine

Length of service in the company : 2 years wine tourism & Wine shop Manager

### **2. Presentation of the company in which the person works :**

Company name : Hotel & Restaurant LALIQUÉ Château Lafaurie-Peyraguey

Number of employees : 20

Services area : Hospitality, Oenotourism

Turnover : Not available

Annual production : 65 000 bottles

### **3. Presentation of the wine tourism center :**

Number of people : 3

Types of activities : Visits, tastings, shop

Method of communication in general : Social network, press relations

### **4. The key number for wine tourism in the company :**

Number of tourists per year : 6 000 visitors before Covid (data not available during Covid)

Percentage of foreigners on the year : 60% of foreigners (non-french before Covid)



Average customer basket : 120€ / person on average (may include the price of the visit, purchase of wine, tips or souvenir).

Most requested visit : Visit with simple tasting and vertical tasting of 4 vintages of our 1<sup>ST</sup> Grand Cru Classé wine

#### **5. Developments related to wine tourism :**

Percentage of turnover for wine tourism part : Not available

Customer loyalty : High - Lots of people are coming for a second visit with their family or friends and the word-to-mouth works very well.

#### **6. The advantages and disadvantages of wine tourism in Sauternes :**

3 Advantages :  
- Learn about the wine process and the regions  
- Transmit the heritage of a savoir faire  
- Unusual activity to discover

3 Disadvantages :  
- The need to have your own car  
- Grand Cru Classés have more ressources to create tailor-made visits  
- Too many offers for 1 château sometimes

#### **7. The links between wine promotion and wine tourism :**

Wine tourism helps attract new people through word of mouth, which works well. In addition, the Château's wines are associated with the renowned Lalique brand, because the CEO is the owner of both companies. This brand, which offers all kinds of crystal pieces (jewelry, works of art, glasses, etc.), and which runs two Michelin-starred restaurants, attracts a wealthier clientele in addition to traditional wine tourists. The link with another brand makes it possible to attract new people to the château while promoting the wines.

### **3.5. Statistical analysis : is there a significant connection between ever done wine tourism and ever consumed a Sauternes wine ?**

In order to find out if there is a dependence between having already done wine tourism and having consumed or not a Sauternes wine, the data collected for the questionnaire were gathered and put in the following table in order to applied a Chi2 test. For this type of statistical test, it is first necessary to formulate a null hypothesis which assumes that the variables are not dependent. Then we have to formulate an alternative hypothesis which indicates that the variables are dependent. Once the test is applied, the null hypothesis is rejected or accepted. The two variables studied are "having already done wine tourism" and "having already consumed a Sauternes wine".

The variable "having already done wine tourism" is divided in two group :

- Respondents who have already done wine tourism.
- Respondents who have never done wine tourism.



The first group corresponds to respondents who have already done wine tourism at least once in their life, knowing that a definition was given before so that everyone can understand the context. The second group is made up of people who have never done wine tourism in their life.

The variable " having already consumed a Sauternes wine" is divided in two group :

- Respondents who have already consumed a Sauternes wine.
- Respondents who have never consumed a Sauternes wine.

		Having already consumed a Sauternes wine		
		Yes	No	
Having already done wine tourism	Yes	77	5	82
	No	38	14	52
		115	19	134

Figure 23 : Table 1 : Observation of the variables « having already done wine tourism » and having already consumed a Sauternes wine » based on the questionnaire

The previous table highlights the two variables studied for this Chi<sup>2</sup> test. The results of the questionnaire used in the previous parties will be used as data to be able to apply this test. 134 respondents answered two questions on whether or not they had already done wine tourism and whether or not they had already drunk Sauternes wine. The left column represents the data for the tourism part and the first row represents the data for the consumption of Sauternes. The bottom line represents the total of respondents who have already drunk Sauternes, 115 have already consumed it against 19 who have never drunk it. These two figures added together give 134 which corresponds to the total number of respondents.

The last column on the right provides information on the tourism part, in total 82 of the correspondents have already done wine tourism, against 52 who have never done so. In the same way as the previous variable, the box at the bottom right of the table represents the total number of respondents which corresponds to the addition of the numbers cited.

To apply the chi<sup>2</sup> test, a formula must be applied to each data obtained belonging to a group, to create a new table. Applying the calculations, the following table is obtained.

		Having already consumed a Sauternes wine		
		Yes	No	
Having already done wine tourism	Yes	70	12	82
	No	45	7	52
		115	19	134

Figure 24 : Table 2 : Observation of the variables « having already done wine tourism » and having already consumed a Sauternes wine » based on the formula of the Chi<sup>2</sup> test

Here is the formula applied to obtain this table : Total amount of people that have already done wine tourism / total amount of respondents \* total amount of people that have already consumed a sauternes wine.

- $115 / 134 * 82 = 70$
- $115 / 134 * 52 = 45$
- $19 / 134 * 82 = 12$
- $19 / 134 * 52 = 7$

For the rest of the test it is necessary to calculate the  $\chi^2$  with the next formula :

$$\chi^2 = \sum \frac{(O - E)^2}{E}$$

$\chi^2$  = the test statistic     $\sum$  = the sum of  
O = Observed frequencies    E = Expected frequencies

$$\chi^2 = ((77-70)^2/70) + ((38-45)^2/45) + ((5-12)^2/12) + ((14-7)^2/7) = 12,9$$

The alpha is 0,05, because it is the usual number and the degrees of freedom is the number of categories minus 1 so 1. The  $\chi^2$  threshold was given by a table and correspond of 3,841.

As has been stated in chapter 2, the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ), was that there is no relationship between having already done wine tourism and having already consumed a Sauternes wine. The alternative hypothesis to the test ( $H_1$ ) is that the fact of having already done wine tourism has a link with the fact of having already consumed a Sauternes wine.

Because the  $\chi^2$  threshold is smaller than  $\chi^2$  calculated ( $12,9 > 3,84$ ), there is a statistically significant difference between the two variable. That means  $H_0$  is rejected and  $H_1$  is accepted. Having already done wine tourism gives more chance to consume Sauternes wine.

## 4. Discussion of results

The objectives of this research were to find solutions to promote a wine that is losing market share : Sauternes, through wine tourism which is an activity that is taking more and more place in the wine world. For that, it was necessary to find which is the wine tourism method which attracts the most, and what is the most appreciated thing in this type of wine. In this chapter, the methodology, the sub-questions and the analytical test will be discussed.

### 4.1. Discussion of the research execution and methodology

The questionnaire was published in early December, on Facebook groups about wine, and on linkedIn. The number of people answering the questionnaire increased very little at the beginning, it had to be republished. The questionnaire was closed on December 25th. To get more response, it would have been necessary to publish it on even more groups and differentiate the interests to have people more new to this environment.

Regarding the interviews of professionals, the Châteaux that took part are only 1er Crus. It would have been interesting to discuss with Châteaux classified as 2nd Crus to see if the fact of having a difference in classification has an impact on the establishment of wine tourism, and which have no classification to see what they offer without this classification of 1855.

The fact of having conducted some of the interviews before the Christmas period cut short some interviews. It is an intensive period of work, for example the Château Guiraud was in the middle of the Christmas market.

The Covid has also impacted certain data on the number of tourists per year. The various confinements were not conducive to tourism, and the closure of the border totally changed the proportion of non-French people coming to visit the Sauternes appellation.

### 4.2. Discussion of the type of respondent, how the Sauternes is perceived, and motivation for wine tourism (sub-questions 1 to 3)

The majority of respondents are French at 59%, the Dutch represent 12.7%, and 9.7% for the Germans. The French mostly responded because the the profile used on the social network LinkedIn is mainly made up of French people. They have also been taken into account, since they may participate in the purchase of Sauternes outside France. It would be interesting to redo a questionnaire of this type with exclusively non-French people living abroad to have figures that are even more representative of reality.

58.2% of the respondents were between 18 and 29 years old, which also corresponds to the network associated with the account which was used to distribute the questionnaire. 20.1% are between 30 and 39 years old, with 11.2% of people between 40 and 49 years old and 9.7%

of people over 50 years old. One should also know that the social network LinkedIn is mainly used by people aged 25 to 34 who are in the course of a professional career (Digimind 2021). The 35-49 age group is the age group that consumes the most wine occasionally, closely followed by the 25-34 year olds. However, the 25-34 in France are those where the number of non-consumers is greater than in the other age categories (Vinotrip 2015). It would be interesting to have information on the world population, related to the export of Sauternes.

The majority of men responded at 53% against 47% for women. This can be explained by the fact that the LinkedIn network contains more male members than female members (Digimind 2021). 58% of men drink wine at least once a week, compared to 41% of women (Ipsos 2003). 15% of women never consume wine against 6% of men, the other reason that will explain that there are more men than women would therefore be the fact that they consume more of this type of product.

A large part of the respondents had the highest qualification obtained a Bachelor at 44.8%, 30.6% have a Masters and 18.7% stopped their studies after high school. The average person who submitted the questionnaire is 22 years old and has a Bachelor degree. Most of the connections on the network belong to the same age group and are studying for a Master's degree, or are just starting in working life following the bachelor's degree obtained.

The following question provides information on knowledge of the term wine tourism, 81.3% of respondents know this term against 18.7% who do not know it. Still in connection with the LinkedIn social network, the network attached to the profile that shared the questionnaire mainly works in the wine sector and is therefore informed on this subject. It is also easy to understand this term which is defined by the words tourism and wine, the definition of which is easy to imagine.

However, just because respondents are familiar with the term does not mean they take part in this type of activity. 60.4% of the same people surveyed say they have already done wine tourism, compared to 39.6% who have never done so. This means that 20% of respondents know the term wine tourism but have never done so.

Sauternes wines are known by 82.1% of respondents, 18.7% of them have never heard of it. While the following question on the consumption of Sauternes, 85.1% of respondents have already consumed it at least once compared to 14.9% who have never consumed it. A small percentage of those surveyed were therefore not able to remember Sauternes wines before explaining what it is, so that they associate it with something they have already tasted.

Sauternes is mainly perceived as a moderately sweet or even very sweet wine. The word sweet is one of the most common words when asked what people think about this type of wine. Sweetness is the main known characteristic of Sauternes. Respondents associate other characteristics of this wine with a pairing known as foie gras it was mentioned 16 times as said in the part results . It is also associated with its places of production in Bordeaux and in France, and when it can be consumed in the evening or for Christmas. Professionals can apply these known characteristics to promote the current image, or come up with new aspects to give a more modern image to the wine.

55.2% of respondents would be ready to pay between € 6 and € 20 for a bottle of Sauternes, 33.6% would be ready to put between € 21 and € 50, 6.7% would put less than € 5, 4.5 % will spend between € 51 and € 100, and no one will be willing to put more than € 100. However, prices around this type of wine are often between € 50 and € 100, and can sometimes exceed € 1,000 for renowned Châteaux in exceptional vintages (Château'Yquem 1921 at € 1,550) (Idealwine 2021).

The main reasons to push respondents to participate in a wine tourism activity are to learn about the world of wine at 36.6%, then to taste at 17.9% and to do an original activity at 15.7%. These are mainly activities that are already set up by companies, but rarer responses emerge. As the fact that some people do not drink for example, it would then be necessary to find an alternative solution to attract these people.

The majority of people at 54.5% would do these activities during their vacation, 31.3% during their weekend and 9% in professional seminars. One can therefore see that this type of activity would be accepted in the context of relaxation.

The types of activities offered are quite varied and can suit different people. The results showed that the original tours and property tours are the most attractive.

Finally, the majority of respondents call the company offering this type of activity directly to take part, or go to specialized sites. Two types of profiles can then be imagined, one with connoisseurs who know which company to contact, or people lacking ideas who choose between several companies. One must therefore distinguish oneself from the competition to have a better chance of receiving tourists.

#### 4.3. Discussion of benefits of implementing wine tourism (sub-question 4)

The main benefit pooled in a different way by the 4 interviewees is the link created between consumers coming to do wine tourism and the winegrowers or companies who promote their products. This link makes it possible to maintain a brand image and to communicate on a rare product and on the French way of life.

All respondents are women with a minimum of 2 years University of applied science education, which goes up to Masters for 3 of them.

The 3 main advantages of wine tourism in Sauternes according to the professionals are : wine tourism is environment of passion, wine tourism plays a role on the reputation of the company, and improve the relationship with customers. Madame Dourmec evokes this passionate environment with the fact that wine connoisseurs are the most numerous to visit the Sauternes appellation. These people are very useful in communicating about Sauternes wines by talking about their visits to their relatives, they attract other people who will come to visit the wine estates. With Madame Planty, this is represented by another means with the loyalty of consumers who buy new wines or return to the Château. Consumer loyalty helps maintain wine sales, and brings back regulars who will surely come back and buy products they know for special events or just for enjoy. For Madame De Lambert Compeyrot, this would translate into two ways. On the one hand, by the time invested by all members of the family. And on the other hand, by the fact that customers feel close and privileged when they meet the owners. The reputation is also evoked, whether it is for the fact that Sauternes is an exceptional product, whether it is for the image of the company, or whether it is in the smallest details thought out during the visits. Consumers are proud to be able to show off a unique find like a Sauternes wine, and to transmit what they have learned when they come. Without knowing it, they participate in the communication about these wines and make it possible to make the people around them curious. Connections with consumers are also very important, to understand what they like and improve the offers, to retain customers so that they come back, or simply to attract new people by communicating. With Madame Cottrau-Lejeune, the advantage of wine tourism in Sauterne is transmission. The transmission of know-how to tourists, but also to share the entire manufacturing process behind this product. The transmission between professionals and consumers, improves the fact of appreciate the product by understanding all the work done to make this wine. But also to understand how it can be consumed, creating an unforgettable moment that the tourist will remember and create a special bond with the wine and the places visited.

Some disadvantages, already mentioned in the first chapter, have been mentioned by professionals. The fact that Sauternes wines can have two images, one more traditional which does not help the market to renew itself and the other which advocates a more modern and offbeat image which does not appeal to lovers of tradition. Sauternes is a niche market, which is also why it is difficult to find more consumers, you have to find different ways of consuming in order to be able to attract different consumers. The third disadvantage that professionals can meet is about the job market. It is quite complicated to find people trained and willing to work at a sustained pace, and this brings additional costs to companies. The Sauternes region is quite far from public transport, tourists must have their own car. This can put a stop to the coming of wine tourists, who will then move to easier-to-access appellations such as the Pessac-Léognan appellation accessible by Tramway 5 minutes from Bordeaux city center.

#### 4.4. Discussion of statistical analysis

The statistical test showed that there was a link between having wine tourism and having consumed Sauternes. The calculated  $X^2$  was much greater than the  $X^2$  threshold, the alternative hypothesis was accepted.

## 5. Conclusions and recommendations

### 5.1. Conclusion

France was the first global destination to attract the most tourists in the world before the Covid-19 period. In the wine industry, a new form of tourism has developed over the past ten years with wine tourism. This new activity has enabled wineries to find additional income while diversifying agricultural activities. The French way of living, the most famous wine regions and the most prestigious Châteaux have made foreigners curious about this sector and made them come and discover this universe. One of the best-known wine regions in France, the Bordeaux region with a small appellation called Sauternes. Sauternes wines are unique, due to the climate of the appellation, the grape varieties, the winemaking process and its taste characteristics. In recent years these wines have been in decline, due to a traditional image, with too much sugar for consumers and prices which keep increasing. It is for this reason that this thesis must answer the following question : How wine tourism can promote Sauternes wines on foreign market ? To answer this, the research was able to provide information on the profiles of wine tourists, on how Sauternes wines are perceived, why people come to visit wineries, and how wine tourism is beneficial for a Sauternes winery.

The different information collected was collected through an online questionnaire for 3 of them, and interviews with professionals for the last. The first sub-question : What is the profile of wine tourists in Sauternes ? has shown that all types of people, whether male, female, more or less young, know wine tourism and Sauternes. The second sub-question : How is Sauternes wine perceived? shows that 82.1% know Sauternes wines compared to 18.8% who have never heard of them. These types of wines are generally associated with sweetness, food and wine pairing, and the region where they are produced. However, the average prices of Sauternes in force are not in line with the price that the respondents want to pay for a bottle. The third sub-question : Why do wine tourists come to visit wine companies ? shows that people do this type of activity to discover a world they may know, in their free time on vacation or on weekends. The traditional visits to the wineries or the atypical visits are the ones that attract the most. The fourth sub-question : How is wine tourism a beneficial activity for a wine Sauternes company ? shows that this universe attracts people who are passionate about visits but also on a professional level. In addition, wine tourism contributes to the good image of the Château, which is beneficial for the product, but also for customer relations. However, the Covid-related crisis has not been beneficial for wine tourism, people must be free to travel to be able to participate in this type of activity.



The main question was able to obtain initial answers thanks to the elements mentioned above. It was completed by a  $\chi^2$  test with two variables "Have already done wine tourism" and "Have already consumed a Sauternes wine". The null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ), was that there is no relationship between having already done wine tourism and having already consumed a Sauternes wine. The alternative hypothesis to the test ( $H_1$ ) is that the fact of having already done wine tourism has a link with the fact of having already consumed a Sauternes wine. Because the  $\chi^2_{\text{threshold}}$  is smaller than  $\chi^2$  calculated, there is a statistically significant difference between the two variables. That means  $H_0$  is rejected and  $H_1$  is accepted. Having already done wine tourism give more chance to consume Sauternes wine.

To conclude, wine tourism is a good way to promote Sauternes wines on the foreign market, because it helps to build consumer loyalty and improve the image of the wineries that use wine tourism.

## 5.2. Recommendations

After answering the questions, recommendations for the short term and then for the long term are given drawn in the following two paragraphs.

Sauternes wines are mainly consumed once a year according to the questionnaire. The words associated with it are generally sweetness, evening, foie gras and noel. In order to have this type of wine consumed outside the end-of-year celebrations, it would be interesting to suggest new ways of consuming it during visits. For example, Château Lafaurie-Peyraguey has set up a cocktail called Sweet made from Sauternes and orange which allows this wine to be enjoyed as a cocktail. Some sommeliers offer more original food and wine pairings such as Sauternes with Asian food, or with roast chicken. These are meals that can be taken throughout the year and which would make it possible to remove a part of seasonality, via the communication of these visiting agreements.

The average price of a bottle of Sauternes does not correspond to the budget of the majority of consumers. A bottle of Sauternes is very expensive to produce, it would be interesting to educate visitors on production costs. With personal experience as a wine tourism guide, visitors are better able to understand the price of the final product, when explained to them all the stages of production.

In the long term, the proposals mentioned above may increase demand for Sauternes. It will then be necessary to consider buying back the agricultural land which is in the process of being sold in order to be able to produce more bottles. In addition, the increase in the agricultural surface will maybe make it possible to reduce the production costs per bottle and therefore to readjust the sales prices. This will help attract new consumers.

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## Appendix 1 : Questionnaire in English (also used in French)

Hello !

I am a Bachelor student in Agribusiness at Aeres University of applied sciences in Dronten (NL). To finish my thesis, I am working on my final research. The following questionnaire will help me get the missing information and that's why I need your help ! It will take you 5 minutes.

Thank you so much !

Laura

1) What is your nationality ?

French / English / Dutch / German / Spanish / Italian / Belgian / American / Chinese / Other

2) What is your age ?

<18 / 28-29 / 30-39 / 40-49 / 50+

3) What is your gender ?

Male / Female / Other

4) What is your highest level of education ?

Without diploma / Primary school / High school / Bachelor's Degree / Master Degree / PhD

5) What is your salary per month ?

<1 190€/ 1191€-2499€/ 2500€-4999€/ 5000€-10000€/ <10000€/ Do not wish to communicate

6) Do you know the term wine tourism ?

Yes / No

7) Wine tourism : Wine tourism, is a form of tourism based on the discovery of wine regions and their productions ; it is a form of rural tourism and agritourism.

8) Have you ever done wine tourism ?

Yes / No

9) Do you know the wines of Sauternes ?

Yes / No

10) Sauternes wines : Sauternes is a French sweet wine, with a controlled designation of origin. It is a wine made from white grape varieties produced in the Bordeaux vineyards in Sauternes appellation (South West of France).

11) Have you ever consumed a Sauternes wine ?

Yes / No

12) About the sugar content in Sauternes ?

Not very sweet / Moderately sweet / Very sweet / Too sweet

13) Which price would you like to spent for a bottle of Sauternes wine ?

<5€ / 6€-20€ / 21€-50€ / 51€-100€ / <100€

14) Which words come to your mind when you think of Sauternes wines ?

Short answer free

15) How often do you consume Sauternes ?

Once a week / Once a month / Once every 3 months / Once a year / Never / I don't know

16) What is the main reason for you to participate in wine tourism activity ?

To taste wine / To buy wine / To learn about the wine world / To improve my tasting skills /  
To meet professionals in the wine world / To do an original activity / Other

17) In which context would you like to do a wine tourism activity ?

During the holidays / At the weekend / After work / In a professional seminar / Other

18) What type of activity are you interested in ?

A tasting / A tour of the property / An oenological workshop (learn all the details of the wine)  
/ A food and wine pairing / An unusual visit (scooter ride, horse ride, tasting in a cabin etc.)

19) How do you book a wine tourism activity ?

By calling the company / With the tourist office / With vouchers or gift boxes / With specialized  
sites (Winalist, Rue des vigneron, etc.) / Other

## Appendix 2 : Table of words given by respondents

Words	Number of times used
Christmas	7
Unknown	10
Sugar	10
Rot	3
Comforting	2
Luxury	3
Fois gras	16
Botrytis	4
Golden color	1
Sweet	36
Stone fruits	1
Yquem	5
Guiraud	1
Sigalas rabaud	1
Party	9
Pleasure	2
Offer	1
Sharing	2
France	12
Bordeaux	14
Alcohol	2
Diabetes	1
Prestige	1
White	19
Happiness	1
Sauvignon	1
Complex	1
Honeyed	4
Wine	21
Saturn	1
Freshness	2
Delicate	4
Typical	1
Passionate	1
Authenticity	1
Cru classé	1
Fancy	1
Aperitif	6
Dessert	3
Risotto	1
To save	1
Yellow	1
Gold	1

Too sweet	3
I dont drink	2
French quality	3
Nice	1
Graves	1
Great wine	2
Fruity	3
Small quantity	4
Cloud	1
River	1
Semillon	1
White flower	1
Acacia	1
Grape	1
Autumn	1
Jurançon	1
Sea food	2
Restaurant	1
Friends	2
Familly	2
End of the year	1