

## THE POTENTIAL OF THE MUNICIPALITY OF TRSTENIK FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE WINE TOURISM<sup>1</sup>

ПОТЕНЦИЈАЛИ ОПШТИНЕ ТРСТЕНИК ЗА РАЗВОЈ ВИНСКОГ ТУРИЗМА

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**Abstract:** The Trstenik vineyard is located on the Zupa wine road and possesses many wineries which are open for visitors, many hectares of vineyards, two wine festivals and many culturally historical monuments in its immediate surroundings. The purpose of the research is to inquire into the opinions of tourists regarding the possibilities for the development of wine tourism in the Trstenik vineyard, with the hopes of intensifying the tourism development of this municipality. The survey method was used to collect the primary data in the research and they were processed using descriptive analysis within the framework of IBM SPSS 21. The survey was carried out during April and May, 2024. There were 163 participants in the survey. The results have shown that the municipality of Trstenik possesses the potentials for wine tourism development, but that they are not being adequately utilized. Tourists come to Trstenik, but not for the wine and wine tourism. The results of the research are significant as they can assist tourism organization as well as municipal officials to make up a strategy for the development of wine tourism which would secure a significant position on the Serbian wine tourism map for the Trstenik wine district.


**Keywords:** Wine tourism, Trstenik, Trstenik wine district, tourist destination.

**Сажетак:** Трстеничко виногорје се налази на Жупском винском путу и поседује винарије које су отворене за посетиоце, хектаре винограда, две винске манифестације и бројне културно-историјске споменике у свом непосредном окружењу. Циљ рада односи се на испитивање мишљења посетилаца у односу на могућност развоја винског туризма у Трстеничком виногорју, што би утицало на интензивирање туристичке понуде општине. Коришћен је метод упитника за прикупљање примарних података, а подаци су обрађени дескриптивном анализом у оквиру IBM SPSS 21. Испитивање је

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*спроведено током априла и маја 2024. Учествовало је 163 испитаника. Резултати су показали да Општина Трстеник поседује потенцијале за развој винског туризма, али да они нису адекватно искоришћени. Наиме, туристи долазе у Трстеник, али не због вина и винског туризма. Резултати истраживања су значајни, зато што могу помоћи туристичкој организацији и општинским званичницима да се направи стратегија развоја винског туризма, која би обезбедила значајно место Трстеничког виногорја на мапи винског туризма Србије.*

**Кључне речи:** Вински туризам, Трстеник, Трстеничко виногорје, туристичка дестинација.

**JEL Classification:** Z 30, Z 32.

## INTRODUCTION

The natural connections between grapevines, wine, vineyards, rural areas and hedonistic enjoyment are expanded and connected with wine tourism, hospitality and tourism in general, with such a connection not only considering activities such as wine tasting, pairing food and wine, etc. but all activities which enhance the overall tourist experience (Alonso et al., 2012, p. 643). Koteski et al., (2016, p. 9) consider “wine tourism a complex phenomenon: cultural since it creates authentic experiences at festivals dedicated to wine, influences the architecture of the place, educational, romantic, etc. Floreset et al., (2024, p. 1) state that “wine tourism has emerged as an economic diversification strategy for wine regions, seeking to valorize local products and attract investments”.

Although Serbia possesses all the potential for the development of wine tourism, this form of tourism does not fall under the category of tourist products of special significance (Jojić & Cvijanović, 2017, p. 90). Vojvodina, with its vineyard regions, where wine tourism perhaps shows the best examples in Serbia, is probably the most well-known among domestic and foreign tourists. The example set by the northern province is somewhat followed by other vineyard regions in the nation, more or less successfully.

Trstenik, formerly a place of great industrial manufacturing, falls under the category of municipalities which possess large vineyard expanses (Stojkovic, 2021). The tradition of wine cultivation in the Trstenik area hails from the Middle Ages, during the rule of Prince Lazar, when Krusevac served as the capital of the nation in the 14<sup>th</sup> century (Babić, 1978). The Ljubostinja Monastery, which is mentioned as a county with vineyards as far as the Middle Ages (Jakšić et al., 2015, p. 14) continued its wine tradition up until 2013. Grafting in the Trstenik area began to develop after the introduction of the

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Phylloxera near the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century (Popović, 1968), and for the next hundred years this area became known as the capital of Yugoslavian and Serbian grafting. Today, vineyard grafting has its own festival *Celebration of Grafting* which is held in the village of Velika Drenova near Trstenik, and along with the Festival *Days of Winegrowers and Wineries St. Tryphon*, presents one of the rare events of a traditional character which are dedicated to wine and winegrowing and held in central Serbia (Stojković & Milićević, 2020, p. 62). Furthermore, authors Čavić & Mandarić (2021, p. 90) find gastronomic products (in this case wine) crucial for representing the culture, tradition and history of a certain place or region. In addition to the long winegrowing and winery tradition, the aforementioned festivals, commercial wineries and a large number of village households which participate in the traditional manufacturing of wine and rakija, the Trstenik wine district belongs to the Zupa wine road, with a great advantage being the many culturally historical monuments in its immediate surroundings and Serbia's biggest tourist centers (Vrnjačka Banja and Kopaonik). All that was listed could contribute to the Trstenik municipality becoming a famous destination for wine tourism. However, the overall impression is that wine tourism is not sufficiently developed in the municipality, although by definition all conditions for the opposite merit are met. According to Milićević et al., (2020, p. 224) each area, and above all rural ones, possesses natural and anthropogenic qualities which can serve as a foundation for creating an attractive tourist product. It is only a matter of the decision of the destination management how such values are to be valorized. Similarly, Cvijanović & Mihajlović, (2016) consider that the planning and development of tourism in Serbia should begin with the resources of some rural areas. Some of the resources of the rural area would be the hospitable citizens, natural rarities, cultural and historical heritage, local authentic food, drinks, etc. (Cvijanović et al, 2016, p. 13). In the case of the Trstenik municipality it would be wine, grapes, vineyards, beautiful nature, medieval monasteries in the vicinity etc.

The aim of the research is to inquire into the opinions of tourists regarding the possibility for the development of wine tourism in the Trstenik wine district, with the goal of a more intense tourist development of this municipality. The additional contribution of this work can be seen in the possibility for the results of the research to be used for the making of the Strategy for development of wine tourism in the Trstenik vineyard. Part of that Strategy would be the marketing plan for the improvement of the position of this destination on the map of wine destinations in Serbia. The Trstenik

vineyard could be integrated into the tourist offer on the level of the winegrowing region *Tri Morave* in order to form a united product of the largest winegrowing region in Serbia.

## 1. LITERATURE REVIEW

For the authors Jovanović Tončev et al. (2016, p. 782), wine tourism is a phenomenon of the 21<sup>st</sup> century that has especially developed in the last twenty years, furthermore authors Trišić et al. (2020, p. 83) find it fast adaptive to the global tourism market. Wine tourism is mentioned as far as “the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century when the participants of the *Grand Tour* visited the vineyards and tasted the wines along their route” (Razović, 2015, p. 55). Tourism and wine come close to each other (Vujović & Pejin, 2020, p. 454) and authors Carlsen & Charters (2006) add a wide specter of factors to this relationship which the most important are the economic, technical, cultural, geographical, and expert. According to Gómez-Carmona et al. (2023) “wine tourism activities have emerged as an alternative and sustainable tourism that enhances the interaction of tourists with the environment and with cultural traditions such as wine production”.

Although there are several definitions of wine tourism, Figueroa & Rotarou (2018, p.1) consider wine tourism or wine tourism “a unique or alternative form of tourism”. One of the accepted definitions considers as part of wine tourism the visiting of vineyards, wineries, wine festivals and galleries, where the primary motive for visiting a wine region is the tasting of wine and/or experiencing the attractions of the visited area (Hall et al., 2000). Thus, tourists join this type of journey because they wish to taste the wines, acquire new knowledge regarding wine, learn how to combine food and wine, enjoy wine culture, enjoy rural areas, etc. (Milićević & Štetić, 2017). Šlezak (2010, p. 86) thinks that the entire manufacturing process, from the production of grapes to the cellar, the revealing of new sorts of grapes and types of wine, as well as acquaintance with the culture and tradition of the area in question, should be included in the tourist proposal of a wine cultivating area. Therefore, it would imply a total, complex experience of the visited wine district. Similar to that, Jahić (2016, p. 87) also thinks that wine regions aren't enough in and off themselves for developing wine tourism, but that other attributive elements of the environment must be present. Moreover, Grimsted (2011) sees wine tourism as a combination of wine consumption and attractive environmental landscapes. Levitskaia (2019) considers wine tourism a form of rural tourism,

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under which fall the cultivation of grapevines and vinification, the study of the history, culture and tradition of the region. The growing interest of tourists to spend time in rural environments is directly linked to their need to establish contact with nature and become acquainted with the culture and tradition of the place in which they stay (Lazović et al., 2024; Panić et al., 2024). Simeon & Sayeed (2011) point out that wine tourism is a part of the wine industry, which enhanced the interest in wine regions and wine brands across the world, with a view on the environment, eco-tourism, the culinary arts, relaxation and other tourist activities. Taylor & Shanka (2002) think that wine districts which are located on the outskirts of urban environments present a marvelous context for the development of wine tourism, namely wine festivals and events that are its integral part.

Many countries have, through the development of wine tourism, eyed a chance to renew the vineyards and revitalize the economy of their wine regions (Getz, 2000; Stein, 2010). Šlezak (2010) also considers this form of tourism as vital in the industrial development of an area, as it can be the main agent of development somewhere. Baird & Hall (2014) cite many advantages of wine tourism in terms of a single region or even a single wine district: Connecting the more successful and well-known wineries and manufacturers with the less known into associations. Wine tourism affects the differentiation of areas and wine districts especially through the profiling of local vineyards. Wine tourism can affect the extension of the length of stay for tourists at a single destination and enhance the reasons for visiting it.

Wine tourism can be very important for small wineries that are unable, due to their small production volume, to join the sales chain through the major distributors (Sevil & Yüncü, 2009), as it enables them to directly sell their wine in their wine cellars (Milićević & Štetić, 2017), that is, “on their doorsteps”, and gives them greater recognition on the tourist market. According to Mitchell & Hall (2006), wineries enable visitors to not only purchase wine, but also to get acquainted with the manufacturing process, the vineyards, overall ambient, etc.

## **2. WINE TOURISM AROUND THE WORLD**

The most attractive wine destinations in the world are located in France, California, Italy, Australia, Portugal, etc. (Milićević, Štetić, 2017). “France becomes a destination for wine tourism since the 1980s of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and its winemakers use two strategies for the development of wine infrastructure and attraction of tourists: investment to individual producers in tourist infrastructure (wine museums, research centers, art galleries, exhibition centers, wine routes, restaurants and accommodation), making the official network of affiliated societies and clubs, the example being a Great wine club in the Chateau Languedoc, whose teamwork contributes to the development of tourism and market entry” (Pivac, 2012, p. 158). The beginnings of wine tourism in Italy date back to the year 1993, when 100 of Tuscan wineries opened their doors for visitors, thus becoming a revolution of sorts that resulted in a great economic profit for Tuscany (Colombini, 2015, p. 29). In addition to Tuscany, the most visited wine region in Italy is the Piedmont region. Spain has numerous wine regions where the native varieties are most commonly grown. The most famous is Ribera del Duero i Rioja, followed by Navara region in the northern part of the country, etc. (Milić et al., 2018, p. 48). A dessert Porto wine originates from Portugal, which is also famous for wine tourism destinations, mostly in the Douro and Alentejo regions. In all vineyard regions, wine tourism is intertwined with rural tourism (<https://www.visitportugal.com/en/content/wine-tourism>).

In addition to these countries of the so-called Old World, it is important to mention countries that belong to the New World, and which lead to the results when it comes to this type of tourism. Australia shows great results in the development of wine tourism, primarily in financial results. Revenue of the Victoria region in 2004 was 185 million Australian dollars, 70% being wineries indirect sales (Wei, 2013, p. 4926). Same year, as much as 18% of foreign tourist who visited this country have visited wineries.

Wine tourism in Hungary began its development in the late 1990s and the year 1999 is declared a gastronomic and wine year, when the first wine routes were designed (Szivas, 1999, p.8). Today, Hungary even has 22 wine routes. The famous vineyard village in Vilanji, realized over 60,000 tourist nights in 2015, and the village alone has about 3500 residents (<https://www.vino.rs/aktuelno/reportaze/item/1915-vilanji-svetionik-vinskog->

*The potential of the municipality of Trstenik for the development of the wine tourism* turizma.html). Wine tourism in Hungary is a key tourist product together with health, i.e. spa, cultural, rural and business tourism.

Austria is also one of the countries that has developed wine tourism, especially in combination with gastronomic tourism. Wien is probably the one capital city in the world in which a great number of vineyards and wineries are located (<https://www.thetravelmagazine.net/exploring-austria-wine-routes.html>). The country which is considered to be the inventor of wine tourism is Germany. The first and most famous wine route, *German wine route* (Die Deutsche Weinstrasse) was created over 80 years ago, and has served as an example for other countries to create similar ones. It is 85 km long and it extends through Germany's second largest wine growing region (<https://www.deutscheweinstrasse.de/karte/touristikroute>).

Wine tourism is relatively a new type of tourism in China and is thought that its time to develop will come, especially given the rising standard of population and changes in its consumer habits (Wei, 2013, p. 4925). Turkey, even though mostly populated by Muslim inhabitants can also praise itself for the production of wine and the number of wineries. However, according to Sevil & Yüncü (2009, p. 478), its producers still cannot see the benefit from wine tourism, that is they are not exploiting all its possible potentials.

### **3. WINE TOURISM IN SERBIA**

Vineyards in Serbia cover an area of 22,149.97 hectares. There are three vineyard regions: Central Serbia, Vojvodina and Kosovo and Metohija. Within these three regions, there are 22 smaller regions with 77 wine districts and more vineyard oases. In total, there are 312 commercial wineries, from which more than half are of smaller production capacities (Jakšić et al., 2019). Observing the data from Wine Atlas (2015), in the year 2014, Serbia has produced 198,183,000 litres of wine. In the same year it has exported 11,941,522 litres of wine.

In the last 20 years, an average of 200 hectares of new grapevine plantations have been raised annually, and in the last three years there has been a particular growth in interest of these new grapevines. The most popular international wine varieties grown are: Italian Reising (Graševina), Merlot, Caberne Sauvignon, Chardonnay and Reising. The most represented regional and autochthonous varieties are: Prokupac, Smederevka, Vranac, Tamjanika and Slankamenka. Serbia, at the time of SFRY, was a major wine producer

primarily for its own and the markets of other Yugoslav republics. Today, the situation is different, Serbia is a big wine importer (Jakšić et al., 2019).

Although Serbia has excellent conditions for winemaking and viticulture (Radović & Milićević, 2020, p. 1106), when it comes to wine tourism, it lags behind countries that have similar climatic and natural conditions (Sekulić et al., 2016, p. 1239). Jovanović et al. (2015) believe that wineries are not sufficiently represented in the tourist offer, which would affect not only the development of wine tourism but also agricultural tourism. Authors Milić et al., (2018, p. 90) believe that Serbia has a great basis for the development of this type of tourism: good spatial characteristics, geographic-traffic connection, flora and fauna, but also the variety of folk customs, numerous wine festivals etc. Interestingly Serbia has 30 wine and wine festivals, but they are relatively unknown and are not explored enough (Jević et al., 2016, p. 1350). The same authors state as an example, one international festival Groždjenbal which is held in Vršac every September, and which attracts almost 15,000 Romanian tourists. This is completely logical considering the fact that Vršac is close to the border with Romania. The visitors of festival can also enjoy visiting wineries along the Vršac wine route, monasteries, churches, castles, museum etc. This could be a good example of wine tourism in Serbia.

In Strategy for tourism development of the Republic of Serbia for the period between 2016 and 2025 is stated that in the period between 2008 and 2013 certain tourist products have been upgraded considerably (mountain tourism, music manifestations, city holidays), but that progress has partially been achieved in certain products that are currently in the world market, those being wine-culinary and gastronomic routes (Tourism Development Strategy of the Republic of Serbia 2016-2020). The same document states that wine tourism or tourism with a similar name is almost nonexistent in the products of particular importance for the development of Serbian tourism. It may eventually be classified as “special interests”, although it does not specify exactly what interests or motives those would be. If wine tourism should be accepted as part of “special interests”, then this type of tourism, according to the strategy, should be continuously developed.

What is important to emphasize when discussing wine tourism and its development in Serbia is that the primary resources are the rural areas of the country, where vineyards and wine-growing regions are located, along with processing capacities and events dedicated to the grape harvest. If we add to this the wine festivals and events held in urban areas, whose number has



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significantly increased in recent years, it can be concluded that the overall product of this specific form of tourism is well-rounded. However, development and improvement are still approached in an unplanned manner, without clear strategic and organized steps, which affects Serbia's positioning in the market for this elite form of tourism.

The Trstenik wine district falls under the category of the largest wine districts in the region *Tri Morave* based on the area of vineyards (Ivanišević & Jakšić, 2014). The same authors say that is the wine district with the most vineyards in the region in question with a large number of small winemakers for personal use. According to the same authors, this vineyard is among the largest in the country where the most renowned international grape varieties are cultivated. The wine district possesses only 5 commercial wineries (Stojković & Milićević, 2020, p. 61). So far, there have been no major or organized efforts in terms of developing this type of tourism, even though the vineyard has significant resources and is surrounded by numerous cultural and historical monuments and the most famous tourist destinations in the country.

#### **4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND HYPOTHESIS**

The subject of this work includes the analysis of the Trstenik municipality as well as its potential for wine tourism growth. The research was carried out during April and May, 2024. The respondents answered all the questions in multiple ways, including by phone, filling out an online questionnaire and through face-to face interviews. For the requirements of the research an 11-part questionnaire was formed, which was divided into two parts. The first part referred to the socio-demographic profile of those questioned (sex, date of birth, education). The second part of the questionnaire referred to questions which reveal the perception of the questioned regarding the potentials for wine tourism development in Trstenik, as well as their opinions in regard to the recognition of the municipality on the wine tourism market in Serbia. There were 163 participants in the survey.

Descriptive statistical analysis was used for the operation. The initial hypotheses in the research are as follows:

H1: The Trstenik municipality possesses potential for wine tourism development but is not properly utilized.

H2: The Trstenik municipality is not known enough with regard to viticulture, winemaking and wine tourism among domestic tourists.

H3: Intensified marketing activity would affect a greater acknowledgment and better positioning for the Trstenik municipality in the wine tourism market.

The aim of the research is to examine the opinions of tourists in relation to the possibility for wine tourism development in the Trstenik wine district, with the goal of increasing tourism development in this municipality.

## 5. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A total of 163 people participated in the survey. There were 74 males and 89 females. In terms of the years of birth of those questioned, the majority was 30-40 years old (45,39%). Those between the ages of 40 and 50 (30,67%) followed. Observing the educational level of those surveyed, those with a high school education came first (38,65%), followed by those with a university degree (38,04%). The total results of the socio-demographic structures of those questioned can be observed in *Table 1*.

**Table 1. Socio-demographic characteristics of respondents**

		Frequency	Percent	Mean	Std. dev.
Gender	Male	74	45,39	1,64	,531
	Female	89	54,61		
Age	18-30	20	12,27	2,47	,891
	30-40	74	45,39		
	40-50	50	30,67		
	More than 50	19	11,65		
Level of education	Elementary school	2	1,23	3,1	1,020
	High school	63	38,65		
	College	27	16,56		
	University degree	62	38,04		
	Master/Magistar/PhD	9	5,52		
Have you ever visited Trstenik and the surrounding area touristically	Yes	102	62,57	1,38	,487
	No	61	37,43		

Source: Authors, based on research

The first question in the survey was *Have you ever visited Trstenik and the surrounding area touristically*. Of the total number, 102 (62,57%) gave a positive reply, while 61 (37,4%) gave a negative reply.

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The second question was *What is your first association when you hear of Trstenik*. The highest percentage (24,54%) said *Ljubostinja monastery*. The rest were: *the West Morava River (15,34%)*; *Grafting, wine, viticulture (11,04%)*; *Sports airport (3,68%)*; *Vrnjacka Banja (3,07%)*. The category “other” has a total of 17,79 in which the following are most prominent: *Gledic Mountains, roast in “Stopanja”* etc. A positive fact is the mentioning of the Ljubostinja monastery, a centuries-old manufacturer of wine, grapes and seedlings, which could be a great example of not only religious and excursion tourism, but of wine tourism as well.

The third question asked those who had already been to Trstenik, *about what they visited*. It can be observed in *Table 2* that the majority visited the Ljubostinja monastery (41,18%). As many as 17,65% mentioned restaurants, bars and other hospitality facilities. The fourth place in terms of number of replies came the Veluce monastery, the monks of which have been renewing the vineyards and making their own wine, which would also present an affirmative fact for the development of wine tourism in this area. The second-to-last place belongs to the reply of visiting wineries (5,88%).

**Table 2. What did You visit in Trstenik?**

Answers	Frequency	Percent
Monastery Ljubostinja	42	41,18
Restaurants, bars, other hospitality facilities	18	17,65
Gledić Mountains	17	16,67
Monastery Veluće	7	6,86
Museum, Art Gallery	7	6,86
Monument to Popina	5	4,90
Visit to wineries	6	5,88
Total	102	100

Source: Authors, based on the research

The fourth question was *Did you know that Trstenik and its surroundings are popular for grafting and viticulture*. 76,07% replied negatively, while 23,93% replied in a positive manner (*Table 3*). These results aren't encouraging as they show that the domestic tourists aren't aware of one of the greatest potentials of the municipality which could be used for wine tourism development.

**Table 3. Did you know that Trstenik and its surroundings are popular for grafting and viticulture?**

		Frequency	Percent	Mean	Std. dev.
Valid	Yes	39	23,93	1,23	,424
	No	124	76,07		
	Total	163	100,00		

Source: Authors, based on the research

A 155 (95%) of those questioned answered the fifth question *Are you aware of the fact that Trstenik belongs to the category of municipalities with the most area under vineyards in the nation*. Only 39 (25,2%) answered positively, while 116 (74,8%) answered negatively. Although this fact is unknown to the majority, it could still be used to devise a strategy for development of wine tourism in this area.

The same number answered the sixth question *Have you ever tried wine from Trstenik or its surroundings*, with 96 (61,9%) answering positively and 59 (38,1%) negatively.

With the seventh question, the examinees were given a choice between two answers: *Have they tried wines in registered wineries or have they tried wines from any of the village household (so-called domestic wine)*. Only 25,8% tried wine in registered wineries in Trstenik, while 74,2% tried wine from a village household.

The eighth question also had two possibilities: *Have they tasted wine in Trstenik or in a hospitality facility outside of Trstenik*. The percentage of people who tasted wine in Trstenik was 59,36%, while 40,63% tried wine in hospitality facilities outside of the aforementioned municipality. The higher number of those who drank wine in the Trstenik area is a good indicator, as it relates to wineries, restaurants, cafés and other hospitality facilities which fall under the domain of wine tourism of an area.

The answers to the ninth question *Do you consider Trstenik well known as a place of viticulture, winemaking, and wine tourism*, were as such: 15,95% answered positively, while 84,05% answered negatively (Table 4). A higher number of negative replies shows that the Trstenik area simply is not known enough among domestic tourists as a place where one would go for the wine alone, in spite of all the potential it has.

**Table 4. Do you consider Trstenik well known as a place of viticulture, winemaking and wine tourism?**

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		Frequency	Percent	Mean	Std. dev.
Valid	Yes	26	15,95	1,85	,361
	No	137	84,05		
	Total	163	100,00		

Source: Authors, based on research

The tenth question in the survey warranted a reply to the question *Have you ever seen any propaganda program related to winemaking in Trstenik, visiting Trstenik wineries or wine tourism in general on TV or on the internet.* A total of 154 (94,48%) replied, with 37 (24%) giving a positive reply and 117 (76) giving a negative answer. These replies lead to the conclusion that the Trstenik area is not adequately advertised as a destination for wine tourism.

The eleventh question was *Do you think that the Trstenik municipality has enough potential for wine tourism development.* 155 tourists replied, with 123 (79,35%) giving a positive reply, and 32 (20,64%) giving a negative reply.

The twelfth and final question from the survey regarded the suggestions of those questioned about *which activities should the municipality of Trstenik carry out in order to raise awareness on the tourist market of wine tourism.* 154 (94,48%) gave their answers, which can be observed in *Table 5.*

**Table 5. Which activities should the municipality of Trstenik carry out in order to raise awareness on the tourist market of wine tourism?**

Answers	Frequency	Percent
More aggressive marketing activity	70	45,45
More relevant events dedicated to wine	20	12,99
More frequent participation in relevant fairs	15	9,74
A larger number of commercial wineries	25	16,23
Better accommodations	8	5,19
Greater presence and promotion on social media which is followed by the younger audience	5	3,24
Other	10	6,49
Total	102	100

Source: Authors, based on the research

The majority of those questioned suggested marketing activities which would influence the development of wine tourism, followed by relevant manifestations dedicated to wine. An interesting fact is that there were as many as five suggestions about a greater presence and promotion of the wine district on social media which are followed by the younger audience.

## CONCLUSIONS

Three hypotheses were posed at the beginning. All three have been validated by use of descriptive statistics. Hypothesis H1 - *The Trstenik municipality possesses potential for wine tourism development, but it is not properly utilized* was affirmed with the replies of those surveyed to the question *Do you think that the Trstenik municipality has enough potential for wine tourism development*. As much as 79% answered positively. Moreover, the replies regarding the monasteries of Ljubostinja and Veluce can also be taken into consideration. The Ljubostinja monastery presents perhaps the most attractive potential of the wine district, as a place where wine has been produced for centuries, where the first seedlings after the Phylloxera were made near the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The sisterhood of the Veluce monastery has been renewing viticulture and winemaking in the past years. Within the same question, affirming this hypothesis, the answers regarding visitations to the Trstenik area wineries should also be considered.

Second hypothesis H2 - *The Trstenik municipality is not known enough with regard to viticulture, winemaking and wine tourism among domestic tourists* is affirmed through the replies of those surveyed to the question *Do you consider Trstenik well known as a place of viticulture, winemaking and wine tourism*. Only 15,95% answered positively, while 84,05% answered negatively. This hypothesis is also confirmed by the answers saying that Trstenik was not known for grafting and viticulture. Moreover, the tourists are mostly unaware of the fact that this area falls under the category of municipalities with the largest areas of vineyards. This reply can also be interpreted as an affirmation of the hypothesis, since it deals with an important fact, or potential, which is not adequately utilized and presented to domestic tourists.

Third hypothesis H3 - *Intensified marketing activity would affect a greater acknowledgment and better positioning for the Trstenik municipality in the wine tourism market* is affirmed by the answers to several questions. Above all, the hypothesis is confirmed through the answers of those surveyed to the twelfth question, where they had to suggest activities to improve the image of the Trstenik area as a destination for wine tourism. The majority suggested an aggressive marketing campaign. There are also answers which relate to the greater presence and promotion on social media followed by the younger population. Apart from that, those surveyed had seen propaganda or promotional material relating to winemaking, visiting wineries and wine tourism development on TV and the internet in a small percentage. All of the

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aforementioned points to the inadequate marketing campaign and promotion of the wine district in question.

The opinions of those surveyed would definitely assist the Trstenik municipality in utilizing all of its capacities, inventing new ones and becoming a respectable wine tourism destination. Wine tourism is a theme which is still theoretically unexamined in Serbia, and also not very present in practice, with a few successful exceptions. The lack of scientific papers regarding this theme in Serbia presents perhaps the greatest limit for all new researchers. Moreover, wine tourism in the Trstenik area is unknown to domestic tourists, which decreases the sample size of those surveyed which could have been relevant. Possible further investigations in the future should deal with the following questions: Integration of the Trstenik area into the wine tourism of the viticulture region Tri Morave; Revitalization of wine tourism in relation to Trstenik monasteries; Making of tourist programs which would attract wine tourists from abroad to the Trstenik area; “Story telling” about grafting and winemaking in Trstenik monasteries through the ages etc. The answers to these questions would contribute to the positioning of this municipality on the map of Serbian wine tourism.

**Conflict of interests**

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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