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## POSSIBILITY OF DEVELOPMENT WINE TOURISM IN SERBIA

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### Abstract

*Viticulture and Enology as an inseparable companion of this production are of great importance from the point of rational exploitation of land, employment of the population, the possibility of achieving a satisfactory income, realization on the domestic and foreign markets, the development of tourism and the like. Wine route or wine tourism is a specific form of tourism, which combines wine tasting of a particular wine-growing region with natural beauty, customs, and cultural - historical monuments of the area. The development of wine tourism could bring many benefits, to both caterers and wine producers, and could contribute to the improvement of the wine quality in Serbia. It can also provide creative and quick revival and improvement of the tourist offer.*

*Wine tourism could soon become one of the Serbian brands. Opening the „wine routes“ through Serbia is a very serious and responsible work that exceeds the capabilities of an individual. The state is prepared to subsidize this form of tourism, and tourism organizations are preparing „wine maps“ that will help guests to get acquainted with the eight regions in Serbia where the highest quality wine is produced. These are the wine routes of Palić, Fruška Gora, Vršac, Smederevo, Topola, Negotin, Knjaževac and Župa.*

**Key words:** wine, wine route, tourism, Serbia

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## Introduction

Wine is a beverage that has always represented a symbol of joy and happiness. As soon as the man became aware of the values of wine, as soon as he tasted its charms, he sought for a way to produce it (Radovanović, 1986). It is not known the exact time the man drank the first glass of wine, but one thing is for sure, he always thought of it as a gift of God.

That wine is actually a beverage and that, besides of its purpose to cheer and treat, it also connects people; proves the fact that the root of the word "wine" comes from the Sanskrit language, i.e. it is derived from the word "vein", which means "to be loved". It is ascertained that wine has very positive effects on human health, on the life-span and the vital processes in the human body, such as digestion. If it is consumed in moderate amounts during a meal, wine has a great nutrition, hygienic and healing value.

## Wine tourism

The history of the Serbian wine production is more than 1000 years old - from the founding of Serbia in the 8th and the 9th century, especially during the reign of dynasty Nemanjić, which lasted from the 11th to the 14th century. Serbian rulers especially nurtured the culture of growing vines. At the time Emperor Dušan passed a law applying to wine production and its quality, as evidenced by the inscription from the "Charter of Stevan Prvovenčani". Emperor Dušan owned large vineyards and the royal wine cellar near Prizren ([www.serbiatouristguide.com](http://www.serbiatouristguide.com)).

Wine rout or wine tourism is a specific form of tourism, which combines wine tasting of a particular wine-growing region with natural beauty, customs, and cultural - historical monuments of the area.

Science that deals with research and production of wine is called "Oenology" and this type of tourism is often called "enological tourism" ([www.discoverserbia.org](http://www.discoverserbia.org)).

According to data from the Association of growers and winemakers of Serbia, there are about 50 small wineries in this country that have investment opportunities for construction of rooms, suites and a reception hall. Unfortunately, for now there are only three wine cellars - one located in Hajdukovo near Subotica, the second one in Tršac in Župa, and the third one in Gudurica near Vršac, which offer accomodation and food for those who want to taste some quality wine and stay for a couple of days ([www.kombeg.org.rs](http://www.kombeg.org.rs)).

Opening the "wine routes" through Serbia represents very serious and responsible work that exceeds the capabilities of an individual or travel agencies. They will have a role in this later, however, for starters, it is necessary for the state to establish standards with the help of the expert committees or the relevant institutions to deal with the problem seriously. The criteria must be set and regions and producers who will be drawn in the "Wine Routes of Serbia" must be determined. These criteria

in countries with developed tourism of this type are very strict, as it ensures that visitors will receive the highest quality service. For that reason, we have to reach the level of those countries, such as France, Italy, Slovenia and Croatia. Wine routes through Serbia will surely bring us closer to Europe ([www.poljoprivreda.info](http://www.poljoprivreda.info)).

### **The definition of wine tourism**

When we refer to wine tourism, we refer to visits to vineyards, wineries, wine festivals and exhibitions which are being undertaken for the purpose of recreation. Wine tourism also introduces the concept and the product which is still undergoing significant changes. This term applies to two industries, and both have a significant impact on the regional economy, environment and lifestyle, and for that reason they are connected. However, the need to establish formal links between tourism and the wine and viticulture has been only recently recognized. There is still mistrust, and perhaps even more misunderstanding, in what way can wine tourism contribute to mutual development, and not only throughout the region in which they coexist.

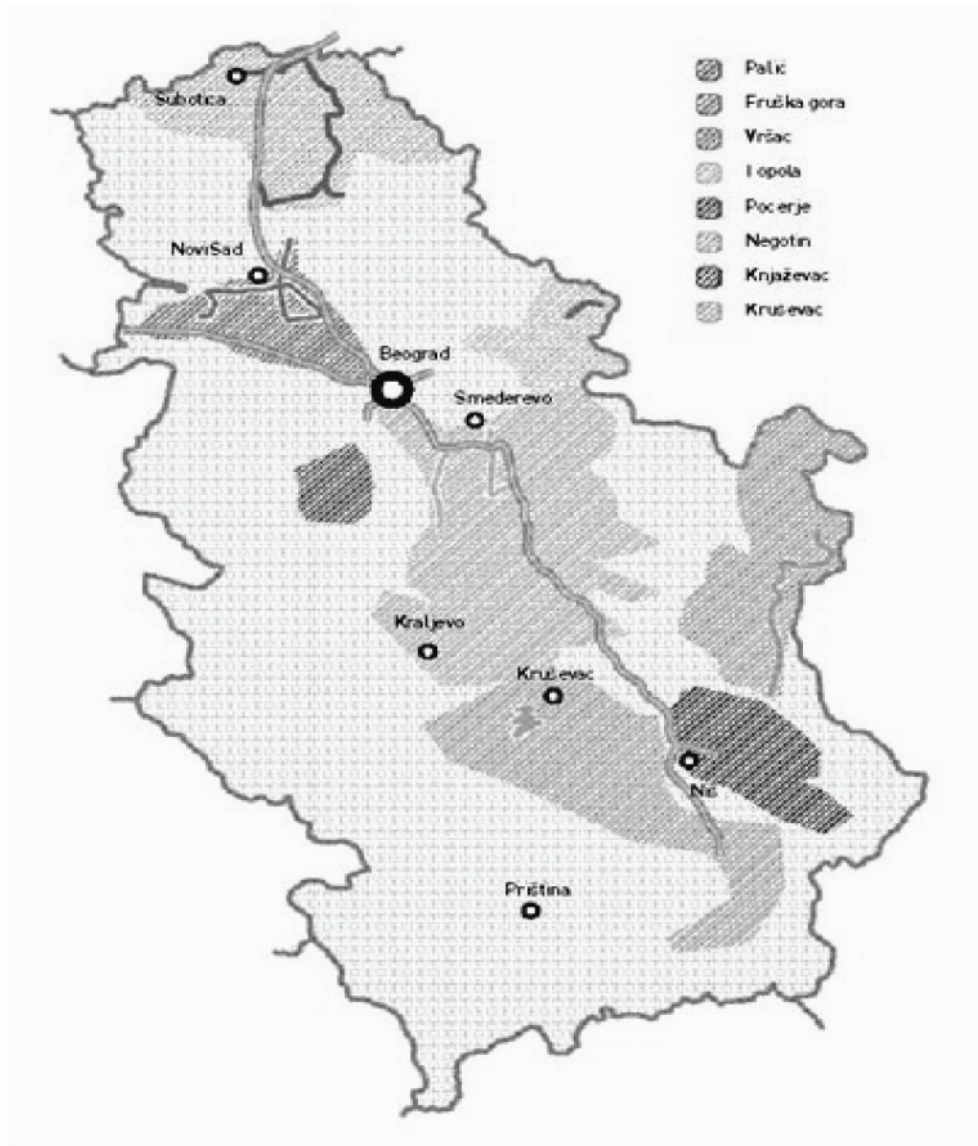
Wine tourism has to be seen from the point of at least three main participants - wine producers, travel agencies and tourists.

For this reason wine tourism at the same time represents: a type of customer behavior, a strategy by which destinations develop and sell on the market, style and attractions associated with wine, market opportunity for wineries to educate consumers and directly sell them their products.

### **Serbian routes of wine**

Wine route is a special form of sale of wine, catering, tourism and agricultural products of a winemaking region. It consists of natural beauty, the specifications of the environment through which the road leads, cultural and historical heritage, traditions and special wine-growing area. When we mention the term “viticultural area”, we are thinking of a large number of wine producers, as well as those engaged in viticulture, wine production and the production of other specialties of the region ([www.poljoprivreda.info](http://www.poljoprivreda.info)).

The diversity of Serbia is reflected in the kinds and types of wine. The largest number of vineyards are located along the three rivers - the South, West and the Great Morava River, in central Serbia and along the river Sava, Tisa and Danube in Vojvodina. Regions Palić, Fruška Gora, Vršac, Smederevo, Topola, Negotin, Knjaževac and Župa have a great chance to become a meeting place of wine lovers (cartogram1).

*Cartogram 1. Wine Routes of Serbia*

### **Wine route of Palić**

This whole region lies on a sandy soil which was formed after the disappearance of the prehistoric Pannonian Sea. That is why the wine of this area is popularly known as “wine from the sand”. Sandy fields, temperate continental climate and quality of its grapevine cultivars produce very drinkable wines. Wine tradition of Subotica-Horgoš sands is over 2000 years long.

Viticulture in Bačka progressed after the penetration of phylloxera into Europe. Then at the three localities (Palić, Čoka and Biserno Ostrvo near Novi Bečej), three wine cellars were established, which are the backbone of development of viticulture in this area today. Recommended white varieties of wine in this area are: Italian Riesling, Župljanka, White Burgundy, Ezerjo, in Čoka there are: Muscat Otonel, Semijon, and Muskat Krokani with the Biserno Ostrvo, and black varieties are: Merlot, Frankovka, Red Burgundy and Cabernet.

### **Wine route of Fruška Gora**

Fruška Gora is the area of Italian Riesling, and by some, it is considered its original homeland. Under the above mentioned varieties is more than half of the vineyards of this beautiful mountain. The most popular wines of this region are Fruškogorski Riesling, Italian Riesling, Rajnski Riesling, Župljanka, Traminac, Bouvier, Frankovka, Plemenka, Silvanac green, Portugizer and specific aromatic Bermet.

### **Wine route of Smederevo**

This area borders on one side with the river Danube, on the other side with Velika Morava, which, together with the relief, the climate and the soil, makes it ideal for growing grapes. The climate is characterized by regular temperature fluctuations. Grapes are produced on an area of 500 hectares.

Along with the Smederevka, other quality wines are present, which are obtained from the varieties of Italian Riesling, Sauvignon, Semijon, Traminac. When it comes to varieties of quality red wine, red varietal wine the Game is common, as well as wines of type Ružica from the variety of Prokupac.

### **Wine route of Župa**

Župa is now known for its vineyards and hard-working grape growers who disseminate the glory of this region, as the geographical, climatic and pedological conditions for the cultivation of grape vines are certainly among the best in Serbia. Aleksandrovac with its geographical position, masters the hills and reveals a view of the vineyards Župa and the slopes of Kopaonik. Župa vineyards are located in the western part of Serbia, in the West Morava River Basin and its tributaries.

Aleksandrovac and its surroundings grow Tamjanika and Prokupac, the oldest authentic varieties of grapes in Serbia. Prokupac, also known as the variety rskavac, which is about 1000 years old, and Tamjanika, muscat variety originated from France, which has been grown in Serbia for over 500 years. Župski bojadiser Smederevka, Sauvignon, Semijon, Zupljanka, Neoplanta, Chardonnay and Italian Riesling are also grown in this area.

## **Wine route of Vršac**

The climate of this region is typically continental. From the indigenous and old varieties, Župljanka, Smederevka, Sasla white, Rkaciteli, Kreaca are still grown here. Kreaca is an ancient white grape variety, which is native in Vršac. It has been grown all over Banat. In vineyards of Vršac, white wine varieties dominate over the black ones. Among the many top quality wines from this wine region, Muscat otonel, Chardonnay, Pinot bianco, Rajnski and Italian Riesling are noted, and a very popular table wine is Banat Riesling from varieties of Italian Riesling, Smederevka, Župljanka and Kreaca.

## **Wine route of Negotin**

Negotinska Kraina is located in a valley surrounded by mountains Miroč, Crni vrh and Deli Jovan, on one side with the Danube and Timok on the other side, it causes a very specific climate of the area which is very continental and is characterized by hot summers and cold winters. From autochthonous and old varieties fostered here are Bagrina, Začinak, Prokupac, Vranac and Smederevka.

Among the Krajina wines, a great reputation have red wines obtained from Prokupac, Burgundy black and Game. Wines have intense red color, pleasant taste and flavour. Bagrina, Semijon, Italian Riesling, Sauvignon and Smederevka are types of white wine which are well known here.

## **Conclusions**

Wine route or wine tourism is a specific form of rest, which combines a wine tasting a particular wine-growing region with natural beauty, customs, and cultural - historical monuments of the area. The development of wine tourism could bring many benefits, as caterers, and wine producers, and could contribute to the improvement quality wine in Serbia. It can also provide creative and quick revival and improvement of the tourist offer.

According to the Association of winegrowers and winemakers of Serbia, in Serbia there are about 50 small wineries that are able to invest in the construction of rooms, suites and reception rooms for tourists. However, for now there is only three wine cellars - Hajdukovo in Subotica, Tršac in the Župa and Gudurica near Vršac, which offer accommodation and food for those who want to taste good wine and keep a couple of days.

Opening wine routes of Serbia could be an excellent sort of stimulation for the development of our viticulture and enology. Foreign tourists would be allowed to spend time in a quiet rural area and enjoy the beauties of Serbia which our vineyards have to offer. Furthermore, tourists would be given the opportunity to visit some of the various events related to wine and grape harvest.

Wine tourism could soon become one of the Serbian brands. Opening the „wine

routes“ through Serbia is a very serious and responsible work that exceeds the capabilities of the individual. The state is prepared to encourage lending this form of tourism, and tourism organizations are preparing „wine map“ that will help guests to get to know eight regions where the highest quality products Serbian wine. These are the wine routes Palić, Fruška Gora, Vršac, Smederevo, Topola, Negotin, Knjaževac and Župa.

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