The Wine Economist
Wine Tourism for Sustainable Development: Opportunities, Strategies, Pitfalls

Mike Veseth
Editor, The Wine Economist
Professor Emeritus, University of Puget Sound
A Tale of Two Wine Tourist Destinations
Wine Tourism in The Cradle of Wine

Alaverdi Monastery
Republic of Georgia
Wine Tourism’s Great Potential

Alaverdi Monastery
Republic of Georgia

Rural Development Focus

Winegrowing vs Wine Tourism Development Impacts

Reinforcing (Not Undermining) Religion, Culture, Crafts, Cuisine

Respect for Environment

Wine tourist industry still young, but potential is clear

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A Golden Opportunity

WELCOME to this world famous 
wine growing region

NAPA VALLEY

BERINGER
LOUIS M. MARTINI
INGLENOOK
FREEMARK ABBEY
BEAULIEU VINEYARD
NAPA COOPERATIVE VINEYARD
VIN-MONT WINES
THE CHRISTIAN BROTHERS
C. MONDAVI & SONS
Napa Valley by the Numbers

Napa Valley is a small wine region
- 45,000 vineyard acres
- 4% of California vineyards
- 1/8th the size of Bordeaux
- About 400 wineries (over 4000 in California)

Napa Valley is a young wine region
- Charles Krug 1861
- Robert Mondavi 1966
A Wine Tourism Machine

Economic Impact of Napa Valley Tourism 2016

$1.9 billion total visitor spending
3.5 million visitors
13,000 tourism-related jobs

Source: Destination Analysts report for Visit Napa Valley
On an Typical Day in Napa Valley ...

Almost 17,000 visitors
They spend $5.26 million
On peak days ... it’s crazy!

The vast majority of these visitors are drawn to Napa Valley by wine-related interests and activities

Source: Destination Analysts report for Visit Napa Valley
Case study: The Napa Wine Train

100,000+ visitors/year

6 Hour Rail Tour of Napa Valley

Tastings at 3 Wineries

4-Course Napa style meal

Average cost $300+/person
Unwelcome Guests?

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Pitfalls: Trouble in Paradise

“Tourism is a devil’s bargain,” he said. That, he believes, is one of the challenges that Napa Vision 2050 is trying to address.

Napa Vision 2050 holds packed town hall meeting in St. Helena

The wine train was opposed from day one

Wine tourism in Napa today is hotly contested and strictly regulated

Napa wine tourism + sustainable development

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The 3P Theory of Sustainability

**People**
Social & Cultural Sustainability

**Profit**
Economic Sustainability

**Planet**
Environmental Sustainability

Not Just a Wish List ...
Sustainability: Complex Interdependence

**People**
depend on planet & profit

**Profit**
depends on people & planet

**Planet**
depends on people & profit

Ignore any one and sustainable development fails

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Wanted: Framework for Sustainability

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Beyond 3P Sustainability

Principles
The Why (and For Whom) not just The What

Purpose
Strategic thinking & action

Politics
Who benefits? Who bears costs?

Partnerships
Stakeholder participation

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Napa Valley was a wine tourism “first mover” economic success

Lack of attention to sustainability threatens economic viability

Late lessons: Principles, Purpose, Politics, and Partnerships

Other wine regions should learn from both Napa’s success and its struggles

Role of the UNWTO

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2nd UNWTO Global Conference on Wine Tourism
Mendoza, Argentina, 29-30 September, 2017

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