

CAPITALIZATION OF THE RESOURCES FROM MURES VALLEY AREA THROUGH TASTING AGRITOURISM. PROPOSALS

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Abstract: *People are becoming more and more concerned about their vacation, tourism becoming one of the most common hobbies in the world. Along with the manifestation of the first tendencies to relax, to spend holidays in the middle of nature, more and more tourists wanted to spend their holidays in rural areas. The aim of this scientific paper is to clarify some relevant aspects related to agritourism and the peculiarities of tasting agritourism, identifying specific resources in the Mures Valley area that can be capitalized through agritourism activities through the creation of a tourist center, the product "Wine Road in Mures Valley" and of a web page for promotion.*

Key words: *tasting agritourism, Mures Valey area, resources, capitalization proposals*

INTRODUCTION

Agritourism is in the same time a result but also a premise of the rural economy’s development. Agritourism can be viewed from the following points of view [2,3,5,12]:

- of the tourist reception structure: as an element of capitalization of the surplus of the existing accommodation spaces from rural household, which is arranged and prepared for the reception of tourist as consumers/clients [14];
- of activities: as a set of goods and services offered by the rural household for consumption;
- of the local economy: as a source of achievement and increase of local incomes.

What makes the agritourism tasting to have such a great attraction at tourists, both from the country and abroad, is that in agritourism structures, tourists are offered food prepared from natural products, mostly from their own household or from locally authorized producers and the hosts deal directly with the reception of tourists and their program throughout their stay, which they spend at the agritourist guesthouse.

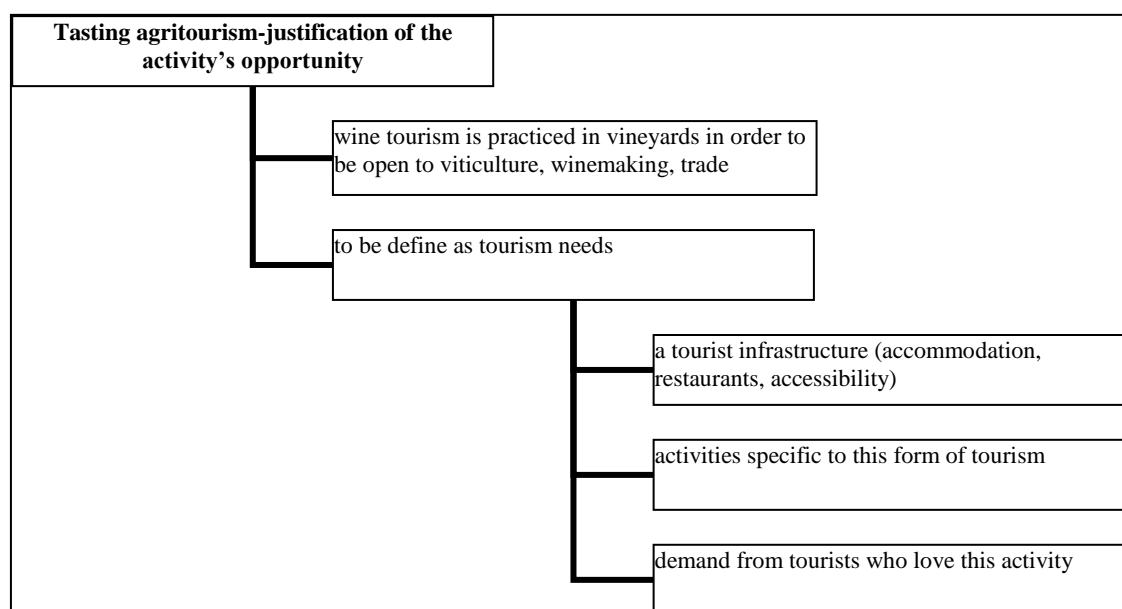


Figure 1. Tasting agritourism-justification of the activity’s opportunity

Beside the fact that is a clean activity and a viable alternative to other economic activities, tourism promotes [8,13,15] traditions preserved despite the passage of time, highlights historical, architectural or cultural objectives, requires the presence of adequate infrastructure, engages people and services, etc., aspects that become possible in the conditions of a natural or anthropic tourist potential. The final consequence of developing this type of activity is ensuring rural sustainable development, with multiple benefits[1,7,9,11].

In this sense, due to the complexity of the natural setting, the many historical events that have taken place over time, the cultural diversity required for the coexistence of inhabitants of different nationalities, the studied area has a varied tourist potential, with natural or anthropogenic objectives, which represents the premise for the development of tourism in each rural corner of the country. If we add to these natural elements the originality of the rural settlements and the charm of the traditions preserved in archaic village, we highlight the previous statement.

The main resource of the studied area is represented by the viticultural products, obviously to which are added natural resources with a unique character and the anthropic resources specific to the rural communities well anchored in the antiquity of history. Going on a future public-private partnership could remove the current existing problems related to poor promotion, the non-existence of a local brand, to which is obviously added the lack of adequate infrastructure to be able to support such a type of tourism. (figure 1)

In the case of the area under study, one of the products with a local emblem is wine. We consider that through our proposal to create a tourist center, with the possibility of supporting the agritourism for tasting wine products (vineyard) and not only, can it be a future opportunity for the area under study. This opportunity can obviously be extended and correlated with other activities, and in time can represent a chance for economic growth, in a sustainable way of the Mures Valley area, an area that also has a huge potential for such tourist activities.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The aim of this scientific paper is to clarify some relevant aspects related to agritourism and the peculiarities of tasting agritourism, identifying specific resources in the Mures Valley area that can be capitalized through agritourism activities through the creation of a tourist center, the product "Wine Road in Mures Valley" and of a web page for promotion. So in order to achieve the purpose of the paper we have used case study method as main method of study, the steps pursued in the paper being: describing rural communities from the area of the research, proposing the structure of a tourist center insisting on his role in supporting the future development of the wine-tourism activity, presenting some proposals for component elements of the product "The wine road in the Mures Valley" and in the final establishing and presenting some details regarding the product "The wine road in the Mures Valley".

RESEARCH RESULTS

Mures Valley area has a length of approximately 715 km on the Romanian territory, and during it has a different number of terraces.

Mures Valley area involves a fairly large area, but we took into account those communes from the immediate vicinity of the Arad vineyard area, due to the age of this area and due to the wine resources, which are found on the topic proposed by us. Obviously, the model can be extended to other communities in the future, and can be focused on other types of resources.

The combination of wine resources with rural resources is best represented in the following communities:

- *Pancota* area, an important center of vineyards and wine, is recognized nationally and internationally. As a representative tourist objective, we mention here the wine center for obtaining the local wine “Mustoasa of Maderat”. There is also a local event called "Wine Festival in the Vineyard", an event that brings together local producers of wine and other traditional local products, of real interest to tourists.

- *Siria* area can be proud of some cultural tourist resources, respectively: Feredeu Monastery; The ruins of the Citadel of Siria; Ioan Slavici Museum and Emil Montia Museum; Galsa Castle; wine cellars, and the vineyards of the locals. All these resources can represent various stops within the proposed circuit product.

- *Covasant* area has predominantly historical resources, discovering tools from the Stone Age, but also natural resources, which can be used for various routes in the nature specific to the mountainous area of the Zarand Mountains.

- *Ghioroc* area is one with an exceptional potential for rural tourist activities. The area has an antiquity and historical significance, with the creation of the first electric tram line in Eastern Europe. Also here we find objectives worthy of a tourist product type circuit: Minis Vineyards, Museum of Vine and Wine, Museum of Beekeeping, Ghioroc Lake.

- *Paulis* area also has some representative tourist objectives: a winery with tasting possibilities, the Mansion from Baratca, the Dendrological Park with some rare species.

Our country has a long history and tradition in the viticulture field, [10] which is a beneficial aspect, especially if we think about a possible promotion among foreign tourists. If to these products are added the architectural resources, with local specificity, the products like “brand of the place”, it can be considered that the Mures Valley area can be successful with such a product.

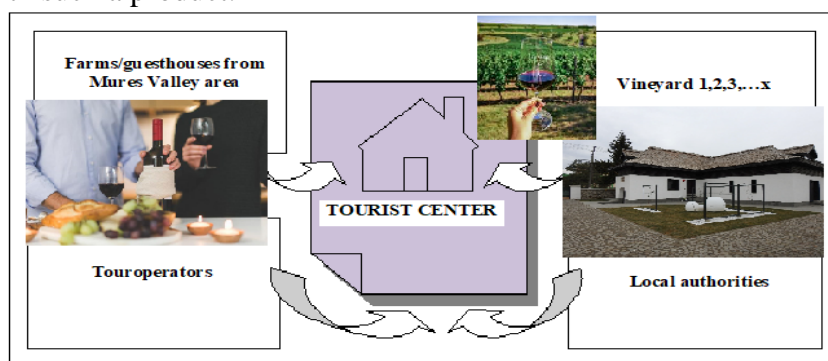


Figure 2. Proposal to create a tourist center-possible structure

Achieving this goal, in terms of our proposal, that of creating a tourist center for tasting wine and wine products, but also local ones, depends on the future structure of the center. A possible proposed structure, which would lead to future success, is highlighted in Figure 2. The role of the center can be very important in supporting the future development [4,6,10] of the wine-tourism activity, and involves (figure 3):

- looking for the offer and beautifying the “offer of the function according to the requirements of the tourists and the existing products;
- establishing the “local brand” products in order to be able to be capitalized through tourist activities, with the possibility of tasting;
- reuniting all the actors involved in the tasting agritourism activity, coordinating them and outlining the future directions of activity according to the wishes of the tourists;
- identifying those authorities and specialists in the field that can contribute to the proper functioning of the center and attracting them to be involved in the activity.

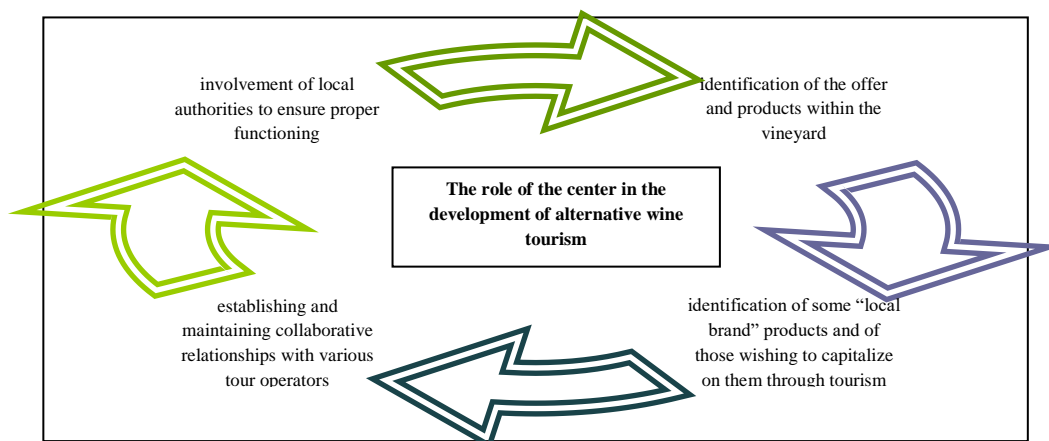


Figure 3. The role of the center in supporting the future development of the wine-tourism activity

We imagined through the product “The wine road in the Mures Valley” in fact a tourist product of route or circuit type, through it can be capitalized both the wine products, which are found in abundance in the studied area, and the gastronomic products or the natural and anthropic resources of the communities in this area. In our vision, the product “The wine road in the Mures Valley” includes several elements (figure 4):

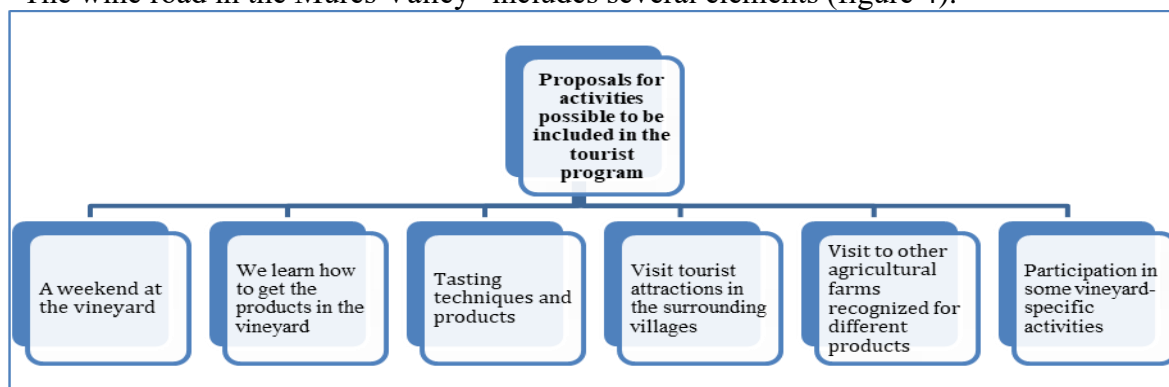


Figure 4. The component elements of the product “The wine road in the Mures Valley”—proposals

- a route with a theme focused on the culture of the vine-peculiarities, advantages and risks;

- emphasis on the processing of grapes caught in a story like "from grape to wine", including local values with ethno folkloric specificity;
- a proper tasting of local wines and local products with an emphasis on "secrets in their manufacture", or "secrets that make them unique";
- visiting some attractions from the local communities in this area;
- visit to the agricultural farms in the area, with the possibility of tasting specific products;
- either active or passive involvement in some local craft activities.

The product proposed by us involves a period of time of three days (see figure 5), different locations, obviously the tasting activity of wine products and other local products, the detailed program including:

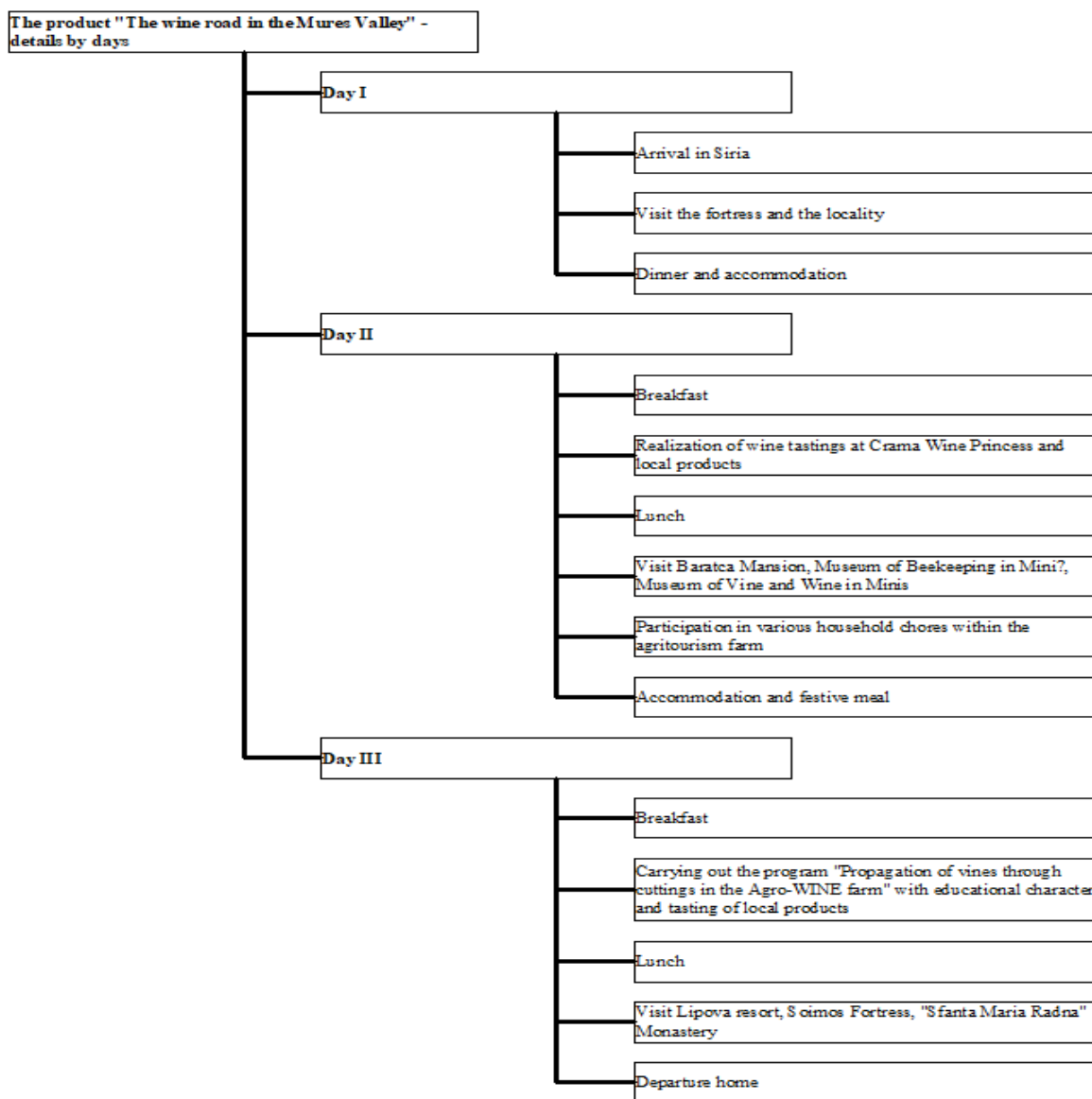


Figure 5. The product "The wine road in the Mures Valley" - details by days

For the food part of the proposed product we can consider a series of resources such as: homemade cakes, Slovak dumplings, returns made by housewives in the Sepreus area, assortments of cheeses, pasta, meat products, greens, homemade cakes, pickles,

honey and other local products, obviously sprinkled with brandy either from Aldesti, or from Grosii Noi or Chisindia, with wine from Minis, Pancota or Maderat.

We consider that the proposed product has great chances of success among tourists with a certain tourist culture, aspect supported by the special quality possible to be obtained by summing up several aspects: culture, rural activities, diversified gastronomic products, peace, fresh air, health in a word.

Because we have previously identified a minus related to the promotion activity, we come during this sub-item with a proposal to promote the product proposed for this area, meaning the design of a web page. We chose this way of promotion starting from the characteristic of the moment, namely that technology and the internet are the starting point in the search for and subsequently the purchase of a product. In the following we propose a schematic projection of a web page for promotion, respectively marketing of the product “Wine Road in the Mures Valley”, illustrated in figure 6.



Figure 6. Schematic projection of a web page for promotion the product “Wine Road in the Mures Valley”

The tourist has the opportunity to get information about the proposed product directly from the source and to receive real-time information, and why he does not have the opportunity to see the experience of other tourists related to this product. Local producers can also be attracted to come with other local products to be inserted in the tourist product. The costs of designing and maintaining the site may be directly proportional to the benefits it can bring.

CONCLUSIONS

The proposals made by us in the paper are made according to the resources and opportunities of the area, obviously at a simplistic level, but right on the realities specific to the place, obviously not being the only possibilities.

The proposal to create a tourist center, with the possibility of supporting tasting agritourism for wine products (vineyard) and not only, can be a future opportunity of the Mures Valley area, and in time can represent a chance for economic growth, why not in a

sustainable way of the area, capitalizing on tourist resources. The reason for proposing the creation of such a center derives from the multiple roles it can play, namely:

- looking for the offer and beautifying the “offer of the function according to the requirements of the tourists and the existing products;
- establishing the “local brand” products in order to be able to be capitalized through tourist activities, with the possibility of tasting;
- reuniting all the actors involved in the agritourism tasting activity, coordinating them and outlining the future directions of activity according to the wishes of the tourists;
- identifying those authorities and specialists in the field that can contribute to the proper functioning of the center and attracting them to be involved in the activity.

The second proposal made refers to the sketching of a tourist product, which we named "The wine road in the Mures Valley", the purpose of the proposal being in fact the capitalization of wine products, which are found in abundance in the studied area, as well as gastronomic products or natural and anthropic resources, specific to the communities in this area.

Obviously, our proposals, presented in this paper, are not the only possibilities for the development of the area. Broadly speaking, the area of the Mures Valley, analyzed by us, should be oriented towards:

- concrete identification of those communities with real perspectives and potential for rural tourism activities;
- supporting agricultural and craft activities, with a dual role: to encourage tourism activities and to support the economic viability of communities;
- development of the services sector offered to tourists.

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