

Positioning Georgia as a Leading Wine Tourism Destination: Key Strategies and Practices

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Abstract. Despite Georgia's long-standing tradition and history of winemaking, which is inseparable from its cultural identity and economic development, significant challenges and gaps exist in effectively marketing this sector to both international and local visitors. Georgian wine culture, rooted in an 8,000-year-old tradition, features unique practices such as the use of Qvevri (clay vessels) for fermentation, and the diverse array of indigenous grape varieties like Saperavi and Rkatsiteli, reflecting the country's rich viticultural heritage. The research aims to identify and analyze marketing strategies that highlight these unique aspects to understand their effectiveness and explore potential improvements. This involves compiling surveys for both local and international tourists, and conducting interviews with wine tourism companies to gather insights and identify existing gaps. Key strategies include raising awareness through targeted campaigns aimed at average local and international tourists, and diversifying wineries by classifying them according to different regions of Georgia, each with distinct historical, cultural, and traditional as well as size and type attributes. Additionally, the integration of wine and food pairing into the broader gastronomic experience is essential, promoting the harmonious combination of Georgian wines with local cuisine to enhance the overall tourist experience. By addressing these strategies and gathering comprehensive insights from stakeholders, the research seeks to present practical recommendations that will help elevate Georgia as a premier wine tourism destination. This includes enhancing accessibility, diversifying wine tourism packages, and providing comprehensive information and practical experiences related to wine and food pairing. The strategic positioning of wine companies in the growing Georgian wine industry is crucial for business growth and ensuring long-term success. Ultimately, these efforts aim to contribute to the sustainable development of Georgia's wine tourism sector, fostering greater appreciation and engagement among both local and international visitors.

Key words: wine tourism destination, Georgia, marketing strategies and practices, ethno-culture, history, gastronomy and food pairing

Introduction

Wine tourism can be considered one of the fastest-growing segments of tourism. A country like Georgia must continuously strive for the development and diversification of this field, as the status of the "homeland of wine" offers more opportunities than we can imagine. This is complemented by the traditional method of making wine in Qvevri, which has no equivalent. The method of Georgian wine production is divided into several parts: Western (making wine in a jar) and Eastern (making wine in Qvevri). The pairing of regional cuisine and wine, origin-labeled wines, traditions and customs, ancient settlements, and the blending of nature and the table all contribute to the creation of a successful wine tourism industry and establish Georgia as one of the world's premier wine destinations.

It is interesting to examine the events and activities organized by both public and private institutions in Georgia to promote wine tourism and gastronomy. It is crucial to analyze these efforts and define the strategy, assessing whether the current approaches are appropriate and if they need to be revised and

refined. Furthermore, it is important to consider whether the ongoing advertising and promotional activities are capable of fostering the development and diversification of wine tourism.

Literature Review

Special attention is paid to attracting tourists through social media, driven by the growing role of marketing in the Georgian wine sector. N. Todua's (2019) study, "The Use of Social Media Marketing to Attract Foreign Tourists in Georgian Destinations," confirms the importance of the transformation of digital platforms. This study, along with E. Urotadze's (2020) and Taktakishvili and Sachaleli's (2023) research "The Impact of Social Media Marketing on Georgian Consumers' Attitudes Towards Travel Agencies," highlights the crucial role of digital engagement in shaping tourism trends.

The competitiveness of the wine business and the attractive environment of Georgia as a destination provide invaluable insights into the strategies that strengthen Georgia's wine tourism sector, emphasizing the country's strengths and increasing demand in the field.

Strategic approaches used by Georgian wine companies to achieve success have been studied, as presented in E. Chokheli's (2016) research "The Impact of Competitive Strategies on the Success of Wine Companies (The Case of Georgia)." This study is important for understanding the strategy of the Georgian wine business, creating competitive advantage, and promoting establishment and sustainability in both local and international markets.

A significant study is 'The Role of Wine in Tourism Development in the Kakheti Region' presented by P. Koghuashvili and M. Ososhvili (2022), which explores tourists' motivation and perception of Georgia as a wine tourism country, as well as the special significance of the Kakheti region for origin-labeled wines.

The work of N. Abesadze and N. Dokhturishvili emphasizes the challenges facing wine tourism, identifies problems, and proposes solutions. The main trends in the development of wine tourism in Kakheti have been studied, including visitor structure and expenditure analysis. Based on a selective survey of wine tourism consumers, conclusions and recommendations are presented.

B. Kalandadze's (2019) book "History of Georgian Wine" is a significant work that details the historical, cultural, and economic aspects of winemaking in Georgia. Through the study of historical evidence and ethno-culture, it offers valuable insights into Georgian viticulture and Qvevri wine as cultural heritage (Dinello, Charaia, 2024).

The wine culture, based on natural conditions, knowledge, and rituals passed down through generations, contributes to the formation of cultural identity and heritage. The work of M. Meladze and M. Rzetala (2022) explores the relationship between cultural systems, production, and the consumption of wine tourism products in the wine regions of two countries: Georgia and Poland. This article employs a multidisciplinary approach and shows how the combination of wine and culture can be used to introduce innovations and create new tourism experiences.

The article by L. Kadagidze and M. Piranashvili relates to the results of the 2019 International Visitor Survey in Georgia, which involves tourists interested in gastronomy and wine tourism. The gastronomic diversity of the country's different regions, combined with wine culture, represents Georgia's heritage, identity marker, and sustainable tourism development.

Wine tourism in Georgia is developing, with new wineries emerging, and the attitude of Georgian consumers towards wine is changing. Increasing numbers of foreign specialists, businessmen, and consumers are showing interest in Georgian wine. Particularly interesting for tourists are origin-labeled

wines and micro-zones. Currently, there are 25 such registered in Georgia. The article by M. Piranashvili, L. Kadagidze, and E. Ugrelidze addresses the role of small (family) wineries in wine tourism. Most importantly, attempts to position in the world market are well understood by small wine-producing companies, which individually strive for success. While this approach may be advisable from a competitive perspective, common goals and a strategic plan could be much more profitable for achieving large-scale triumph.

The development of viticulture and winemaking in Georgia has strategic importance. E. Kharaishvili's work 'Wine Market and Competitive Models for Diversification of Viticulture and Winemaking in Georgia' is based on a study conducted through in-depth interviews with selected respondents, assessing the actual state of the development of farming, wine products, and market diversification, identifying key tasks and barriers to development.

Showcasing Georgian Wine: Events, Tours, and International Exposure

In recent years, Georgian wine has gained remarkable international recognition, reinforced by strategic efforts from the Georgian National Wine Agency. In 2023 alone, Georgian wine was prominently featured in 14 exhibitions, 20 festivals, and 100 professional tastings across 15 countries, including major markets such as the United States, Japan, Germany, France, and the United Kingdom. These events not only showcase the quality and diversity of Georgian wines but also highlight Georgia's rich winemaking traditions. The participation of Georgian wine producers in global exhibitions like VinExpo Paris and Foodex Japan provides invaluable opportunities to introduce Georgian wines to international wine professionals, importers, and enthusiasts. Domestically, wine exhibitions and festivals, such as "New Small Wineries on the Big Stage" and the "New Wine Festival," have played a crucial role in cultivating a robust wine consumer culture and promoting tourism within Georgia. These events serve as a platform for both established and emerging wineries to display their products, thereby fostering an environment of innovation and growth within the Georgian wine industry.

National Initiatives and Marketing Efforts for Georgian Wine and Gastronomy

The concerted efforts of the Georgian National Tourism Administration have significantly enhanced the country's wine and gastronomic tourism. Notable initiatives include Georgia's prominent participation in international events such as The National Geographic Traveler Food Festival in London, where Georgian wine and cuisine were showcased through masterclasses and tastings. The collaboration with international figures like David Raphael Moskow, who is producing a segment on Georgia's wine and gastronomic heritage for the popular reality show *From Scratch*, further amplifies Georgia's appeal as a unique travel destination. The comprehensive marketing campaign extends to a new online portal, exhibitions.gnta.ge, which facilitates the participation of Georgian wineries in international exhibitions, thus expanding their global reach. Additionally, the publication of detailed articles on platforms like National Geographic and the presence of Georgian wine and cuisine at influential events like Madrid Fusion 2024 underscore Georgia's growing reputation as a premier destination for wine and culinary enthusiasts. These efforts are complemented by local projects such as "Gemo Fest," which promotes culinary tourism in various Georgian regions, thereby enhancing the overall tourist experience.

The Role of Private Enterprises and Marketing Campaigns in Promoting Georgian Wine Tourism

Private enterprises have been instrumental in advancing Georgian wine tourism. A prime example is "Chateau Mukhrani", which has hosted the Merano Wine Festival, an event that brings together high-quality wines from Georgia, Italy, and Turkey. This festival, held in Georgia for the past three years, not only highlights Georgian wines but also provides an interactive platform for attendees to engage with winemakers and participate in culinary and wine-related masterclasses. Another innovative event is the wine race organized by the "Avliani Brothers' Wine Cellar", which combines the excitement of sports with the pleasure of wine tasting. Such events, characterized by their creativity and originality, draw significant attention from both local and international visitors. The success of these events is reflected in the increasing number of international visits involving wine tasting and local cuisine, which rose from 78.1% in 2022 to 84.8% in 2023, and domestic tourism, where the interest in wine-related activities has also seen a substantial increase. Furthermore, the rise in the export value of Georgian wine, despite a decrease in volume, indicates a growing appreciation for the quality and unique attributes of Georgian wines in international markets.

Methodology

Research Design

The study employed a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis to gain a comprehensive understanding of the perceptions, motivations, and challenges associated with wine tourism in Georgia. The mixed-methods design allowed for a thorough exploration of the research topic, integrating the statistical rigor of survey data with the contextual depth of interview insights.

Participants

The survey involved over 200 participants, including local and international tourists. The interview was designed for wine tourism specialists and experts operating in Georgia. It was primarily conducted with representatives of several Georgian wineries and related businesses, including „Muzze“, „Tamazuri“, „Avaliani Brothers' Winery“, „Kalanda“, „Iago's Marani“, and „Shaloshvili's Wine Cellar“.

Data Collection

A structured survey was administered to the participants to gather quantitative data on their demographics, travel behavior, motivations for participating in wine tourism, experiences, and suggestions for improvement. The survey included multiple-choice and Likert-scale questions, allowing for both categorical and ordinal data analysis.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with a selected subset of participants, including industry professionals, to collect qualitative data. The interviews aimed to explore deeper insights into the participants' experiences, perceptions, and recommendations for the development of wine tourism in Georgia. The open-ended nature of the interview questions facilitated rich, narrative responses, providing context and elaboration on the survey findings.

Data Analysis

The survey data were analyzed using descriptive statistics to provide an overview of the participants' demographics, travel habits, and preferences. Percentages and frequencies were calculated for categorical variables, while means and standard deviations were determined for continuous variables. This analysis provided a statistical foundation for understanding general trends and patterns among the study's participants.

The interview data were transcribed and analyzed thematically. Key themes and patterns were identified through an iterative coding process, involving the categorization of responses based on recurrent ideas and concepts. This thematic analysis provided a deeper understanding of the underlying motivations, challenges, and opportunities in the wine tourism sector, as perceived by the participants.

The findings from the quantitative and qualitative data were integrated in the analysis phase to provide a comprehensive view of the research topic. The quantitative data offered a broad understanding of general trends, while the qualitative data provided nuanced insights into specific issues and experiences. This integration allowed for the triangulation of data, enhancing the validity and reliability of the study's findings.

The study adhered to ethical standards, ensuring voluntary participation, informed consent, and confidentiality. Participants were informed of the study's purpose, their right to withdraw at any time, and how their data would be used. Anonymity was maintained by using unique identifiers instead of personal information in the data analysis and reporting stages.

While the mixed-methods approach provided a comprehensive understanding of the topic, the study faced limitations, including a limited sample size and potential response bias. The predominantly Georgian sample may also limit the generalizability of the findings to a broader international context. Future research should aim to include a more diverse participant pool and explore longitudinal data to assess changes over time.

Findings

Survey results

Demographics and Travel Habits

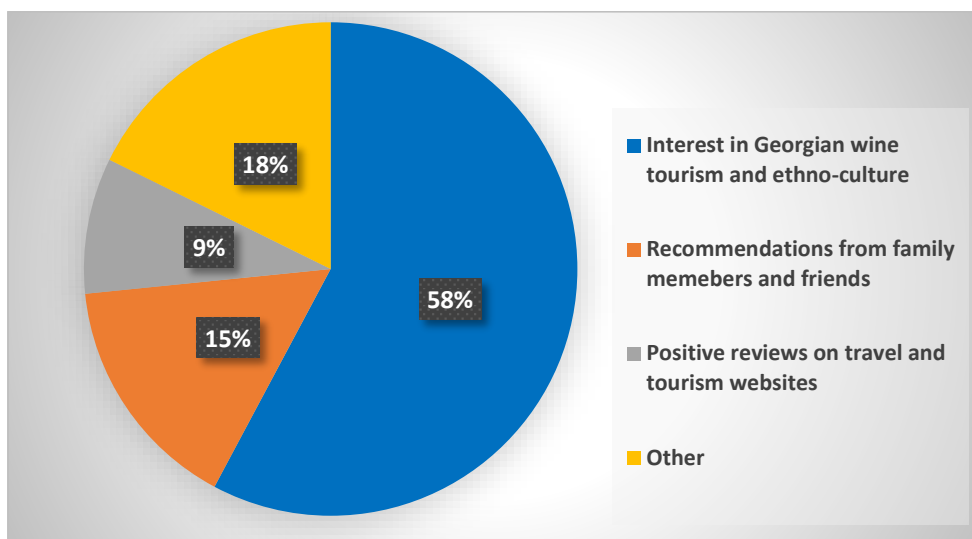
The survey included over 200 participants, both local and international tourists, with a diverse age range: 34.6% were 18-24 years old, 32.7% were 25-34, 17.3% were 35-44, 9.6% were 45-54, 3.8% were 55-64, and 1.9% were 65 and older. The gender distribution was 67.3% female and 32.7% male. The majority of respondents were Georgian (78.8%), followed by Polish (5.8%), German and Russian (both 3.8%), and smaller percentages from other nationalities, including Filipino, Ukrainian, Uzbek, and Azerbaijani.

In terms of travel frequency, 48.1% of respondents traveled occasionally, 23.1% rarely, 19.2% frequently, and 7.7% very frequently. A small percentage (1.9%) reported hardly ever traveling for leisure.

Participation in Wine Tours and Motivations

Regarding past participation in wine tours, 51.9% of participants had previously engaged in wine tours, while 48.1% had not. The primary motivation for participating in wine tours was an interest in Georgian wine history and ethno-culture (57.8%). Other motivations included recommendations from friends and family (15.6%) and positive reviews on travel and tourism websites (8.9%) (See Figure 1).

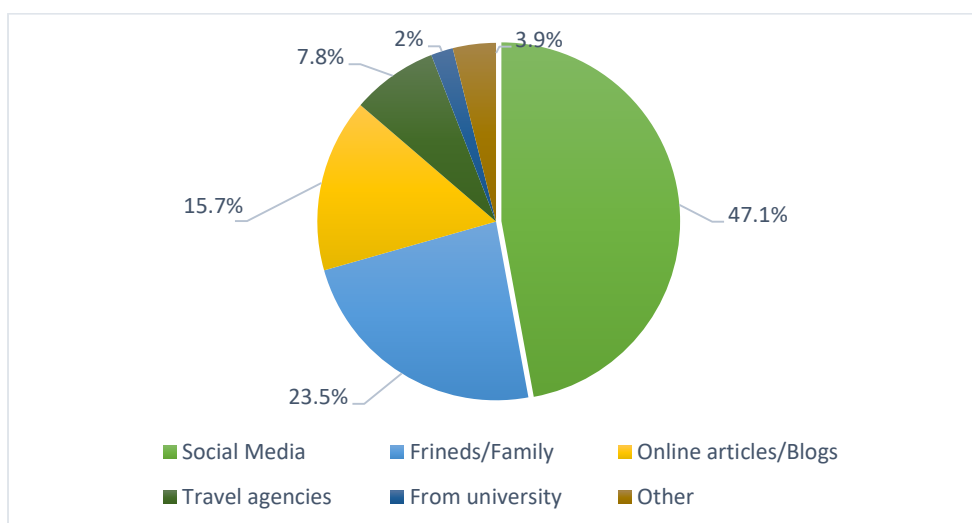
Figure 1. Motivations



Sources of Information and Interest in Wine Tourism

Social media emerged as the most common source of information about Georgian wine tourism (47.1%), followed by friends and family (23.5%), online articles and blogs (15.7%), and travel agencies (7.8%). Some respondents also heard about Georgian wine tourism through universities or had prior knowledge of Georgia's historical significance as a wine motherland (See Figure 2).

Figure 2. Information Sources



Interest in Georgian wine tourism was notably high, with 51.9% of respondents expressing strong interest, 36.5% interested, and only 11.5% neutral.

Attractions and Satisfaction

Participants were most attracted to vineyard and cellar tours (55.8%), followed closely by wine production methods and quality (53.8%), wine and food pairing (51.9%), wine tasting experiences (48.1%), and historical and cultural information (46.2%) (See Figure 3). Satisfaction with wine tourism experiences in Georgia was generally positive, with 40% satisfied and 42.2% very satisfied. A minority were neutral (13.3%) or dissatisfied (4.4%) (See Figure 4).

Figure 3. Attractions

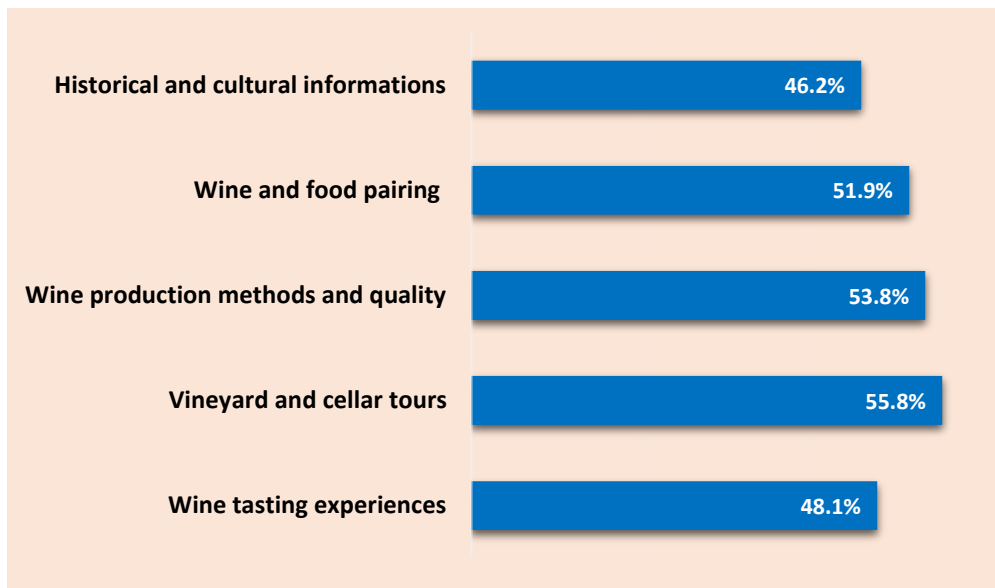
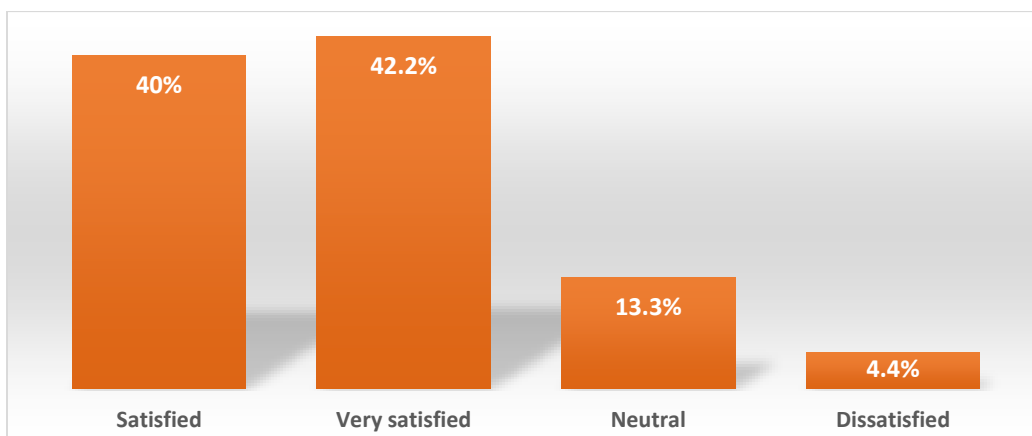


Figure 4. Satisfaction Level



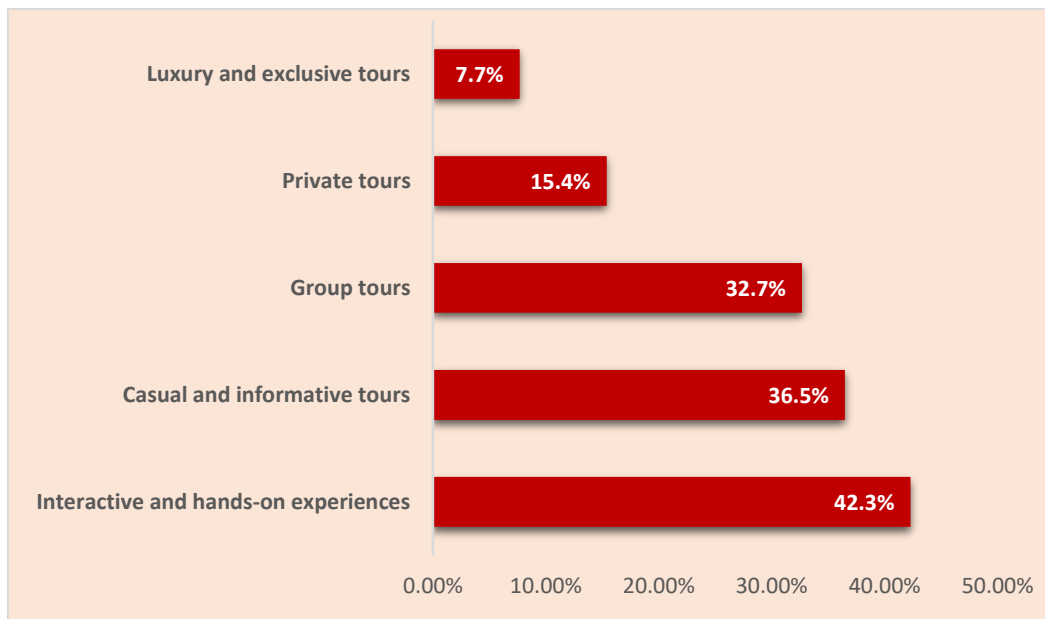
Preferred Wine Tourism Destinations and Experiences

Kakheti was the most popular region for wine tourism, chosen by 86.5% of respondents, followed by Racha (40.4%), Imereti (23.1%), and other regions with lower percentages. Among the known wineries,

Twins Wine House was recognized by 38.5% of participants, followed by Guramishvili Winery (30.8%) and Avaliani Brothers' winery (21.2%). A significant portion (21.2%) was not familiar with any wineries.

Participants showed a preference for interactive and hands-on experiences (42.3%), casual and informative tours (36.5%), group tours (32.7%), and private tours (15.4%) (See Figure 5).

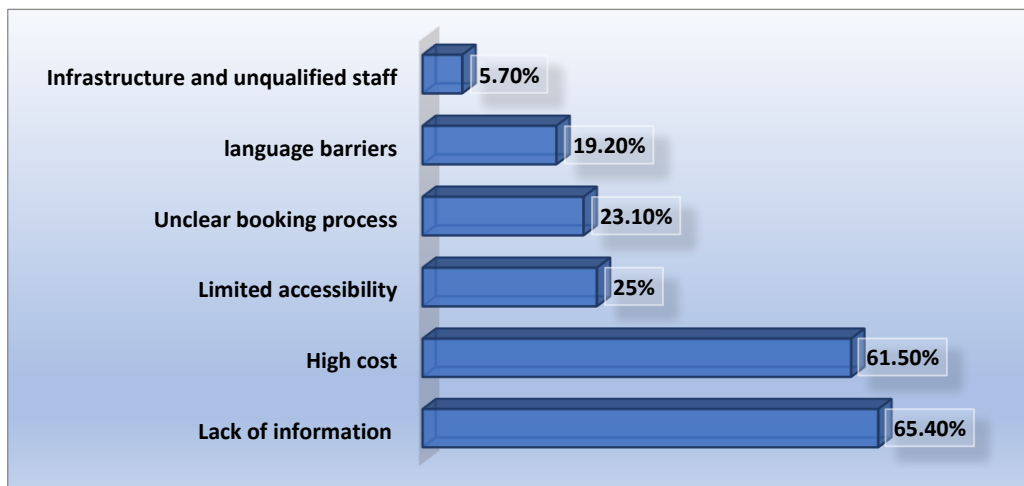
Figure 5. **Preferred Experiences**



Barriers and Suggestions for Improvement

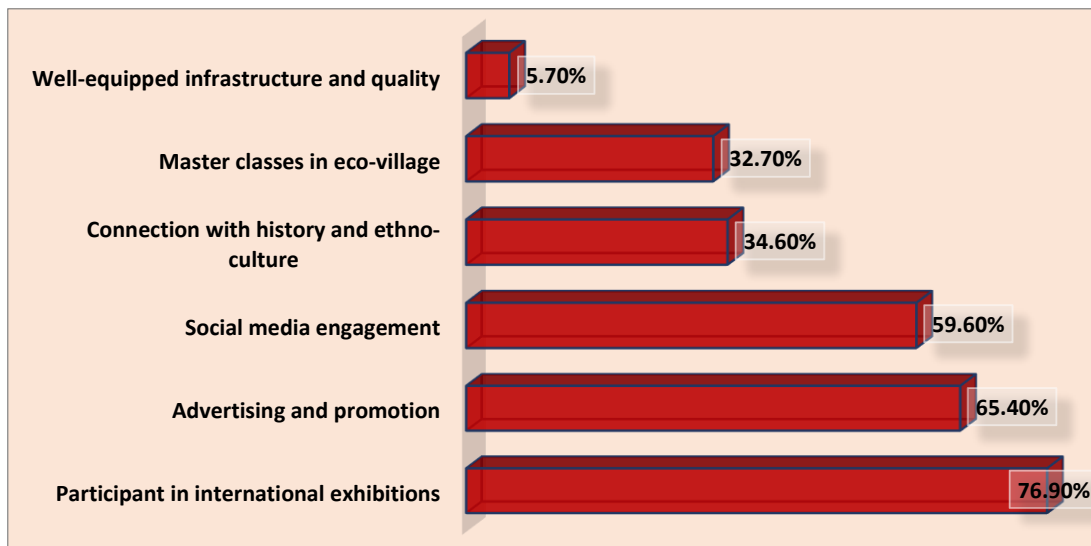
The main barriers to participating in wine tourism included a lack of information (65.4%), high costs (61.5%), limited accessibility (25%), an unclear booking process (23.1%), language barriers (19.2%), infrastructure issues (3.8%), and unqualified staff (1.9%) (See Figure 6).

Figure 6. **Barriers**



To enhance wine tourism development, respondents suggested increased participation in international exhibitions (76.9%), advertising and promotion (65.4%), and social media engagement (59.6%) (See Figure 7.). Additionally, connecting wine tourism with Georgia's history and ethno-culture (34.6%) and offering master classes in eco-villages (32.7%) were also recommended. Quality control and well-equipped infrastructure were also noted but with much lower emphasis (1.9% and 3.8%, respectively).

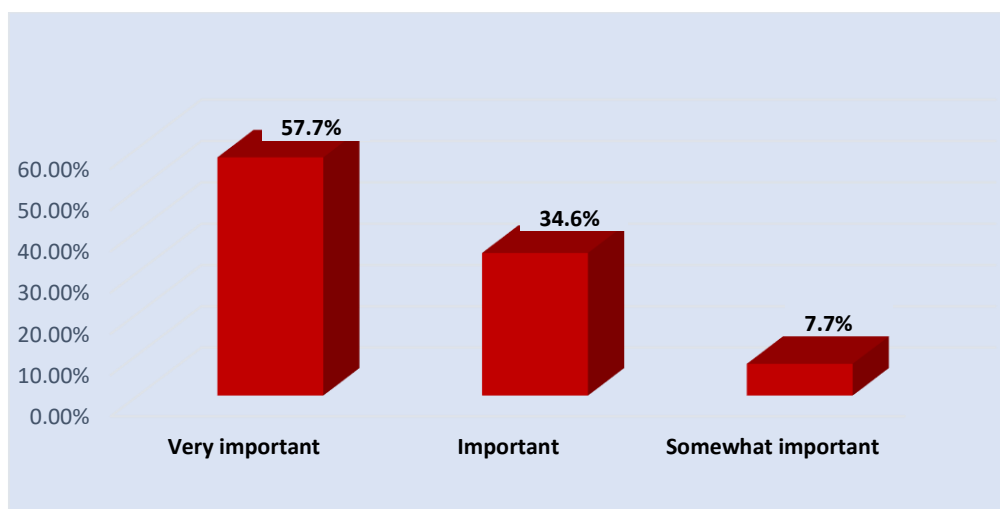
Figure 7. Suggestions



Importance of Food Pairing and Final Recommendations

The pairing of local food with wine tourism experiences was considered very important by 57.7% of respondents, important by 34.6%, and somewhat important by 7.7% (See Figure 8).

Figure 8. Importance



The open-ended responses emphasized the need for more advertising and marketing activities, including social media campaigns, international events, and wine festivals. Participants highlighted the importance of maintaining high-quality service and product standards, improving infrastructure, and increasing public awareness of Georgian wine heritage and history. Additionally, they suggested offering more interactive experiences, enhancing language accessibility, and ensuring affordable pricing to attract a broader audience.

Interview Insights

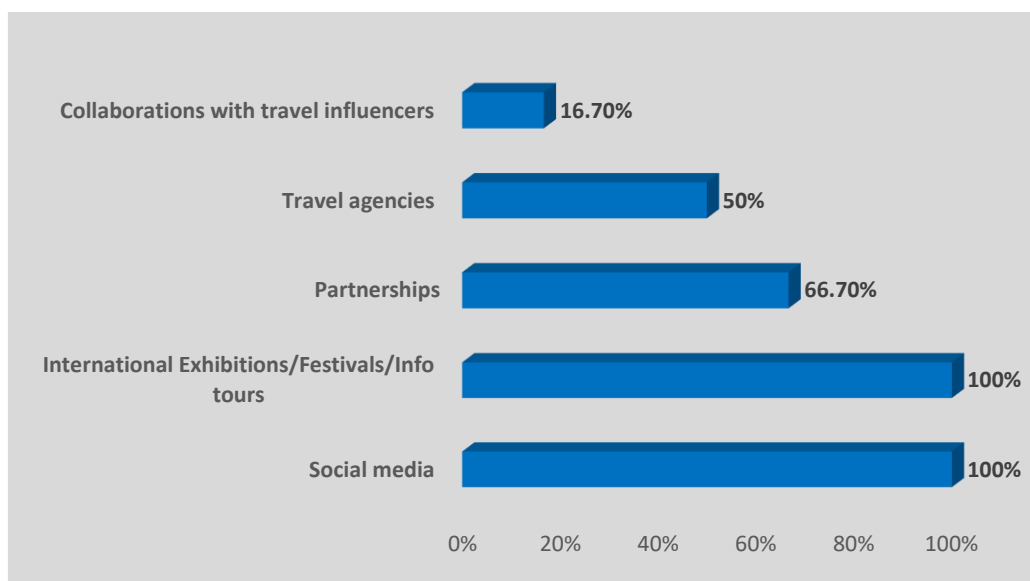
Introduction and Overview

The interviews provided insights from representatives of several Georgian wineries and related businesses, including "Muzze", "Tamazuri", "Avaliani Brothers' Winery", "Kalanda", "Iago's Marani", and "Shaloshvili's Wine Cellar". Each participant offered unique perspectives and experiences in the wine tourism sector (See Figure 9), showcasing a range of operations from small family-run cellars to larger enterprises with international recognition. The insights revealed common themes, challenges, and opportunities for growth and development in Georgia's wine tourism industry.

Differences in Preferences between Local and International Tourists

While some respondents did not observe significant differences in preferences between local and international tourists, others noted distinct preferences. Local tourists often gravitate towards traditional Georgian experiences, such as wines made using the qvevri method and traditional Georgian cuisine. They value the cultural and historical aspects of the tours. International tourists, however, tend to seek a more comprehensive and immersive experience. They are interested in both traditional and modern winemaking techniques, educational tastings, and additional cultural activities, such as visits to historical sites and culinary classes. This suggests that while both groups appreciate Georgian wine and culture, their expectations and interests vary, necessitating an adjusted approach to cater to different demographics.

Figure 9. Channels to Reach Potential Customers



Main Challenges in Marketing and Providing Wine Tourism Experiences

Several challenges were highlighted in the interviews:

1. **Competition and Differentiation:** The global wine market is highly competitive, and standing out among numerous wine-producing regions worldwide is challenging. Differentiating Georgian wine and highlighting its unique aspects, such as the qvevri method, is essential.
2. **Operational Challenges:** These include seasonality, cultural sensitivity, and ensuring a high-quality experience for all visitors. The seasonal nature of wine tourism can lead to fluctuations in visitor numbers, while accommodating diverse cultural norms requires careful consideration.
3. **Infrastructure and Accessibility:** The need for improved infrastructure, such as better transportation and accommodations, was emphasized. Enhancing these aspects can significantly improve the tourist experience.
4. **Financial Constraints:** The cost of participating in international exhibitions and festivals and maintaining high-quality standards can be prohibitive for smaller wineries.

Achievements and Successes

The interviews showcased several achievements:

1. **Quality and Innovation:** Many wineries have established themselves as producers of premium wines, receiving recognition and compliments. The commitment to sustainable practices and the blending of tradition with modernity were also noted.
2. **Wine Tourism Excellence:** Successful attraction of visitors, even within a short operational period, highlights the growing appeal of Georgian wine tourism.
3. **Brand Development and Recognition:** Effective branding that convey the unique qualities of Georgian wine has been a significant achievement, helping to differentiate these wineries in a crowded market.
4. **Community Engagement:** Building strong relationships with local communities and collaborating with local businesses have enhanced the wine tourism experience.

Collaboration with Other Wineries and Local Businesses

Collaboration plays a crucial role in enhancing the tourist experience. Joint wine tours, partnerships with local restaurants and hotels, and comprehensive tourism packages are common strategies. These collaborations enrich the tourist experience by offering a blend of wine tasting, culinary experiences, and cultural activities. Additionally, cooperation with travel agencies and participation in international festivals help to broaden the reach and attract a diverse audience.

Recommendations for Enhancing Wine Tourism in Georgia

The interviewees provided several recommendations for enhancing wine tourism:

1. **Infrastructure Development:** Improving transportation, accommodation, and visitor services can significantly enhance the tourist experience. This includes better road networks, more frequent public transport, clear indicators, and the establishment of visitor centers.
2. **Training and Education:** Offering training programs for winery staff and local hospitality workers in customer service, wine knowledge, and cultural sensitivity is essential.
3. **Marketing and Promotion:** A strong digital presence, including multilingual content, segmented advertising, and participation in international events, can raise awareness and attract a global audience. Social media was highlighted as a powerful tool for marketing.
4. **Sustainability and Eco-Tourism:** Promoting sustainable practices and eco-friendly tourism can attract environmentally conscious travelers and enhance the reputation of Georgian wine tourism.
5. **Government and Industry Support:** Increased support in the form of incentives, grants, and promotional efforts is necessary to help wineries invest in tourism infrastructure and services.

Regional Potential and Future Directions

Regions like Kakheti, Racha, and Adjara were highlighted for their potential in wine tourism enhancement. These areas offer diverse grape varieties and unique wine experiences. There is an opportunity to develop regional wine routes and collaborate with local businesses to offer comprehensive tourism packages. Furthermore, the development of themed tours and the promotion of Georgia's wine culture and history can enhance the appeal of these regions.

The insights from the interviews underline the richness and diversity of Georgian wine tourism. While there are challenges, the commitment to quality, innovation, and cultural preservation provides a strong foundation for growth. Strategic improvements in infrastructure, marketing, and collaboration can further enhance Georgia's position as a premier wine tourism destination. With targeted efforts, Georgian wineries can continue to attract a global audience, offering unique and memorable experiences that celebrate the country's rich winemaking heritage.

Discussion

The survey and interview data collected for this study reveal a strong alignment in several key areas, providing a holistic view of the current state and potential future of wine tourism in Georgia.

Both the survey and interview data indicate a high level of interest in Georgian wine tourism, particularly in the aspects related to wine history, ethno-culture, and the uniqueness of Georgian wine production methods. Survey respondents and interviewees consistently emphasized their curiosity about the historical and cultural elements of Georgian wine, which suggests a significant opportunity to leverage these aspects in promotional and educational efforts.

The survey results highlight that vineyard and cellar tours, wine production methods, and wine and food pairings are among the most attractive features for tourists. Similarly, interview insights pointed to the appeal of experiencing the authentic process of winemaking and participating in activities like master classes in traditional Georgian settings. This correlation highlights the importance of offering hands-on and immersive experiences that connect tourists with the rich heritage of Georgian wine culture.

Both data sources identified several barriers to participation in wine tourism, such as a lack of information, high costs, and language barriers. Interviewees echoed these concerns, particularly noting

the need for improved marketing and better infrastructure. This consistency underlines the critical areas that need attention to enhance the overall tourist experience and accessibility.

The preference for the Kakheti region, noted in both survey responses and interviews, aligns with its prominence as a key wine-producing area in Georgia. However, there is also an expressed interest in other regions, indicating a potential for diversifying the wine tourism offerings beyond the most well-known areas. Both data sets reveal a relatively low awareness of specific wineries, suggesting an opportunity for more targeted marketing and educational campaigns to raise the profile of lesser-known but high-quality wineries.

Survey respondents and interviewees alike suggested similar strategies for enhancing wine tourism in Georgia, such as increasing participation in international exhibitions, leveraging social media, and offering more interactive and educational experiences. The alignment in these recommendations suggests a consensus on effective ways to promote and develop the industry, highlighting the importance of strategic marketing and quality assurance.

The survey and interview data collectively underscore a strong interest in Georgian wine tourism, driven by the unique cultural and historical aspects of the industry. However, the identified barriers and areas for improvement, such as information accessibility and infrastructure, present challenges that need to be addressed. The consistent findings across both data sources provide a clear roadmap for enhancing the appeal and accessibility of wine tourism in Georgia, suggesting a focused approach to marketing, infrastructure development, and cultural promotion.

Implications

The findings of the study highlight the significant potential of wine tourism in Georgia, revealing a strong interest among tourists in the country's rich wine history, ethno-cultural aspects, and unique wine production methods. The data emphasize the need for targeted marketing strategies, improved infrastructure, and enhanced visitor experiences to fully capitalize on this interest. Moreover, the study suggests that promoting Georgia's wine tourism through international exhibitions and digital platforms can increase global awareness and attract more international tourists.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, it is recommended that stakeholders in Georgia's wine tourism industry focus on the following:

1. **Enhanced Marketing and Promotion:** Exploit social media and digital marketing campaigns to raise awareness about Georgian wine tourism, emphasizing unique selling points such as the Qvevri wine-making technique and the cultural heritage associated with wine production.
2. **Infrastructure Development:** Invest in improving transportation, signs, and facilities to make wine regions more accessible and comfortable for tourists.
3. **Quality Control and Standardization:** Ensure consistent quality in wine products and tourism services to build and maintain a positive reputation.
4. **Diverse Tour Offerings:** Develop a variety of tour options, including interactive, hands-on experiences and master classes in traditional wine-making techniques, to cater to different tourist preferences.

Limitations

Sample Size and Representation: The study may have a limited sample size, which might not fully represent the diversity of tourists visiting Georgia. This could lead to biased or incomplete insights into tourist preferences and behaviors.

Geographic Focus: The focus on specific regions or wineries might overlook other emerging areas or smaller wineries with unique offerings. This geographic limitation could result in an incomplete picture of the wine tourism landscape in Georgia.

Temporal Constraints: The study's findings might be influenced by the timing of data collection, potentially missing seasonal variations or changes in tourist behavior due to external factors such as economic conditions or global events.

Limited Stakeholder Perspectives: The study may not include a comprehensive range of stakeholder perspectives, such as those of local communities, government officials, or other businesses within the tourism sector, which could provide additional context and insights.

Future Research

Future research should consider expanding the participant pool to include a more diverse range of international tourists, allowing for a broader understanding of global perceptions of Georgian wine tourism. Additionally, longitudinal studies could track changes in tourist attitudes and preferences over time, providing valuable insights for strategic planning and development. Investigating the economic impact of wine tourism on local communities and exploring sustainable tourism practices within the industry are also recommended avenues for further research.

Conclusion

The comprehensive study of wine tourism marketing strategies in Georgia has emphasized the nation's rich natural conditions and diverse historical and ethno-cultural heritage as key attractions. The research revealed that both local and international tourists are drawn to Georgia's wine tourism not only for its quality offerings but also for its unique viticulture history and cultural narratives. This interest significantly motivates tourists, highlighting the need for these aspects to be more prominently featured in marketing efforts.

The synthesis of theoretical perspectives with real-world feedback provided a critical examination of current marketing strategies, revealing that they align well with tourist expectations but also pointing out areas for improvement. A notable finding is the influence of Georgia's wine history and culture, which should be more deeply integrated into promotional narratives. The research also underlined the importance of utilizing diverse information sources and a multi-channel marketing approach, particularly employing modern digital platforms.

High satisfaction levels among tourists indicate the appeal and quality of Georgia's wine tourism. However, the expressed desires for improvements in accessibility, innovation, and the diversity of wine tourism packages present opportunities for further enhancement. By addressing these areas and integrating a more comprehensive marketing strategy, Georgia has the potential to solidify its position as a leading destination in the global wine tourism market.

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Appendices:

Appendix 1:

Survey for Local and International Tourists about Georgian Wine Tourism

1. What is your age?

- a. Under 18
- b. 18 - 24
- c. 25 - 34
- d. 35 – 44
- e. 45 – 54
- f. 55 – 64
- g. 65 +

2. Indicate your gender.

- a. Male
- b. Female
- c. Non-binary
- d. Prefer not to say

3. What is your nationality?

4. How frequently do you travel for leisure?

- a. Rarely
- b. Occasionally
- c. Frequently
- d. Very frequently
- e. Hardly ever

5. Have you previously participated in any wine tour(s)?

- a. Yes
- b. No

6. What motivated your choice to participate in a wine tour in Georgia?

- a. Interest in Georgian wine history and ethno-culture
- b. Recommendations from friends and family members
- c. Positive reviews on travel and tourism websites
- d. Other (Please, specify)

7. How did you hear about Georgian wine tourism?

- a. Social Media
- b. Travel Agencies
- c. Friends/Family
- d. Online articles/Blogs

8. How interested are you in Georgian wine tourism?

- a. Very uninterested
- b. Uninterested
- c. Neutral

- d. Interested
- e. Very interested

9. Which aspects of wine tourism in Georgia are most attractive to you?

- a. Wine tasting experiences
- b. Vineyard and cellar tours
- c. Historical and cultural information
- d. Wine and food pairing
- e. Wine production methods and quality

10. How satisfied were you with your wine tourism experience in Georgia?

- a. Very dissatisfied
- b. Dissatisfied
- c. Neutral
- d. Satisfied
- e. Very Satisfied

11. Which Georgian regions would you choose for wine tourism?

- a. Kakheti
- b. Kartli
- c. Imereti
- d. Racha
- e. Samegrelo
- f. Guria
- g. Other

12. Which wineries do you know in Georgia?

- a. Twins wine house
- b. Shaloshvili winery
- c. Avaliani Brothers winery
- d. Guramishvili winery
- e. None of them

13. What type of wine tourism experience would you prefer?

- a. Luxury and exclusive tours
- b. Casual and informative tours
- c. Interactive and hands-on experiences
- d. Group tours
- e. Private tours

14. What sources of information did you rely on while planning your wine tour in Georgia?

- a. Travel and Tourism Websites
- b. Travel guides/Companies
- c. Social media/Forums
- d. Recommendations from friends/Family
- e. Recommendations from a course or a lecturer

15. What do you think the barriers to participate in wine tourism are?

- a. Lack of information
- b. High cost
- c. Limited accessibility

- d. Language barriers
- e. Unclear booking process
- f. No relevant infrastructure
- g. Unqualified staff

16. In your opinion what improvements could enhance wine tourism development in Georgia?

- a. Participation in international exhibitions
- b. Advertising and promotion
- c. Social media engagement
- d. Connection with history and ethno-culture
- e. Master classes in Eco-villages
- f. Well-equipped infrastructure and quality control

17. In your opinion how important is the pairing of local food with wine tourism experience in Georgia?

- a. Very Unimportant
- b. Unimportant
- c. Important
- d. Neutral
- e. Very important

18. What recommendations would you have for improving wine tourism in Georgia?

Appendix 2:

Interview for Wine Tourism Stakeholders of Georgia

- 1. Briefly introduce yourself / Your company.**
- 2. How long have you been operating in the wine tourism sector?**
- 3. How do you market your wine tourism experiences to both local and international tourists?**
- 4. What is the number of annual visitors utilizing your services?**
- 5. What are the target countries of your positioning?**
- 6. What channels do you use to reach potential customers?**
 - a. Social Media
 - b. Travel Agencies
 - c. Partnerships
 - d. International Exhibitions/ Festivals/ Info Tours
- 7. What do you think should be the focus of marketing strategies for wine tourism in Georgia and why?**
- 8. What aspects of your tours are most popular among tourists?**

9. Have you noticed any differences in preferences between local and international tourists?
10. What are the main challenges you face in marketing and providing wine tourism experiences?
11. Please, speak about your achievements!
12. How do you collaborate with other wineries or local businesses to foster the tourist experience?
13. In your opinion what improvements could strengthen the development of wine tourism in Georgia?
14. Which Georgian regions and wineries do you think has a potential for wine tourism enhancement?
15. What recommendations do you have for improving the marketing strategy for wine tourism in Georgia?

საქართველო - წამყვანი ღვინის ტურიზმის დესტინაცია:

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რეზიუმე. მიუხედავად იმისა, რომ საქართველოს გააჩნია მეღვინეობის მრავალწლიანი ტრადიცია და ისტორია, რომელიც განუყოფელია მისი კულტურული იდენტობისა და ეკონომიკური განვითარებისგან, არსებობს მნიშვნელოვანი გამოწვევები და ნაკლოვანებები ამ სექტორის ეფექტიანი შეთავაზების (მარკეტინგის) თვალსაზრისით, როგორც საერთაშორისო, ასევე ადგილობრივი ვიზიტორების ბაზრისთვის. 8 000 წლოვან ტრადიციაზე დაფუძნებული ქართული ღვინის კულტურა, იყენებს უნიკალურ მეთოდებს, როგორცაა მაგალითად, ქვევრის გამოყენება ფერმენტაციისთვის ან ძირძველი ვახის ჯიშების მრავალფეროვანი ასორტიმენტი (მაგ: საფერავი და რქაწითელი), რაც ჯამში ასახავს ქვეყნის მდიდარი მევენახეობის მემკვიდრეობას. მოცემული კვლევის მიზანია იმ მარკეტინგული სტრატეგიების იდენტიფიცირება და ანალიზი, რომელიც მკაფიოდ წარმოაჩენს ამ უნიკალურ ასპექტებს, რათა მოხდეს მათი ეფექტურობის დადგენა და გასაუმჯობესებელ საშუალებათა შესწავლა. ეს გულისხმობს კითხვარების შედგენას როგორც ადგილობრივი, ისე საერთაშორისო ტურისტებისთვის, ასევე მეღვინეებთან ინტერვიუების ჩატარებას ინფორმაციის შეგროვების და საჭიროებების გამოვლენის მიზნით. ძირითადი სტრატეგიები მოიცავს ცნობიერების ამაღლებას მიზნობრივი კამპანიების მეშვეობით, რომლებიც გათვლილია ადგილობრივ და საერთაშორისო ტურისტებზე და მარნების დივერსიფიკაციაზე მათი კლასიფიცირების გზით (იგულისხმება საქართველოს სხვადასხვა რეგიონი თავისი განსხვავებული ისტორიული, კულტურული და ტრადიციული, ასევე ზომისა და ტიპის ატრიბუტებით). გარდა ამისა, მნიშვნელოვანია ღვინისა და საკვების შერწყმის კომპონენტის შეტანა გასტრონომიულ პრაქტიკაში, რაც ხელს შეუწყობს ქართული ღვინოების ჰარმონიულ კომბინაციას ადგილობრივ სამზარეულოსთან საერთო ტურისტული გამოცდილების გასამდიდრებლად. აღნიშნული სტრატეგიების განხორციელების გამოცდილებასა და დაინტერესებულ მხარეთა შესახებ სრულყოფილი ინფორმაციის მოძიების საფუძველზე, კვლევა წარადგენს რეკომენდაციებს, რომლებიც დაეხმარება საქართველოს, როგორც წამყვანი ღვინის ტურიზმის მიმართულების ქვეყანას ადგილობრივ და საერთაშორისო ბაზარზე პოზიციონირებისთვის. ეს საჭიროებს ხელმისაწვდომობის გაუმჯობესებას; ღვინის ტურების დივერსიფიცირებას; ღვინოსა და საკვების შეხამების პრაქტიკულ გამოცდილებას და სრულყოფილი ინფორმაციის მიწოდებას. ღვინის კომპანიების სტრატეგიული პოზიციონირება მზარდი ქართული ღვინის ინდუსტრიაში, მნიშვნელოვანია ბიზნესის გაფართოებისა და გრძელვადიანი წარმატებისთვის.

საკვანძო სიტყვები: ღვინის ტურისტული მიმართულება, მარკეტინგული სტრატეგიები და პრაქტიკა, ეთნოკულტურა, ისტორია, გასტრონომია