

Indian Wine Tourism: Domestic and International Perspectives

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Abstract

Wine tourism has emerged as a distinctive segment of special-interest tourism that integrates agricultural production, gastronomy, hospitality, cultural experiences, landscape appreciation, and destination marketing. In India, the development of vineyards and wineries, particularly in Maharashtra and Karnataka, has created opportunities to diversify tourism products and strengthen the relationship between regional agriculture and hospitality services. Nashik has become a particularly significant destination because of its concentration of wineries, vineyard experiences, wine festivals, and associated tourism infrastructure. Nevertheless, Indian wine tourism remains an evolving sector influenced by consumer awareness, social and cultural attitudes, accessibility, regulatory differences, infrastructure, environmental sustainability, and the international visibility of Indian wine brands. This paper examines the potential of Indian wine tourism from domestic and international perspectives, focusing on its contribution to destination promotion, regional economic development, visitor experiences, and international tourism competitiveness. The study adopts a qualitative, exploratory approach based on secondary research, including academic publications on wine tourism, research concerning Indian vineyards, and conceptual literature on destination development, experiential marketing, and sustainable tourism. The findings of the thematic analysis suggest that wine tourism can contribute to destination differentiation, rural employment, local entrepreneurship, culinary tourism, and international destination recognition. However, these outcomes depend on coordinated destination management, appropriate infrastructure, authentic cultural experiences, responsible marketing, and the participation of local communities. The paper proposes an integrated development framework connecting vineyard experiences, regional tourism circuits, digital promotion, international partnerships, and environmental management. It concludes that Indian wine tourism should be developed as a diversified regional tourism product rather than as an activity restricted to wine tasting and winery visits.

Keywords: Indian wine tourism, vineyard tourism, domestic tourism, international tourism, destination marketing, sustainable tourism, rural development, experiential tourism, Nashik, wine industry.

1. Introduction

1.1 Background of the Study

Tourism has progressively expanded beyond conventional sightseeing, monument visits, and leisure travel towards specialised experiences organised around food, beverages, culture, agriculture, wellness, and local lifestyles. Contemporary travellers increasingly seek experiences that enable them to

understand the identity of a destination, interact with local producers, appreciate regional landscapes, and participate in activities that differ from ordinary daily routines. Within this context, wine tourism has developed as an important intersection between tourism, agriculture, gastronomy, hospitality, and regional economic development.

Wine tourism, often referred to as enotourism or winery tourism, encompasses travel motivated partly or substantially by experiences associated with vineyards, wineries, wine production, tasting, wine festivals, regional cuisine, and the cultural landscapes of wine-producing areas. Hall and Mitchell (2000) explained that wine tourism can support the restructuring and development of rural economies by connecting wine production with tourism demand. Similarly, Getz and Brown (2006) demonstrated that wine tourism involves more than the wine product itself: destination attractiveness, hospitality, scenery, accommodation, recreational opportunities, and related cultural experiences contribute to the overall appeal of a wine region.

The development of wine tourism therefore represents an opportunity for wine-producing regions to diversify their economic activities. Instead of depending exclusively on the production and sale of wine, wineries can develop complementary revenue streams through guided tours, tasting experiences, accommodation, food services, events, retail sales, and educational activities. These services can encourage visitors to remain longer in a destination and spend money across several local businesses. When tourism expenditure reaches restaurants, transport providers, farmers, handicraft producers, guides, and accommodation establishments, the benefits may extend beyond individual wineries.

Wine tourism also offers a distinctive form of destination branding. A vineyard is not simply an agricultural production site; it can become a setting for storytelling, landscape appreciation, learning, recreation, and social interaction. The relationship between wine and place allows destinations to communicate their geographical identity through agricultural practices, local traditions, food, architecture, and regional narratives. Research by Quadri-Felitti and Fiore (2012) suggests that the experience-economy framework provides a useful way of understanding wine tourism because visitors seek educational, entertainment-oriented, escapist, and aesthetically engaging experiences.

Internationally established wine destinations demonstrate how wine production can become an integral component of a region's tourism identity. France, Italy, Spain, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Chile, and other wine-producing countries have developed different combinations of vineyard visits, wine trails, festivals, accommodation, regional gastronomy, and destination promotion. Hall and Mitchell (2000) emphasised the importance of integrating wine and tourism development while recognising the pressures created by competition, changing consumer preferences, and economic restructuring. These international experiences offer useful lessons for India, although their models cannot be transferred without adapting them to India's cultural, economic, institutional, and geographical conditions.

1.2 Development of Wine Tourism in India

India provides an interesting context for examining wine tourism because its tourism industry is highly diverse, while wine remains a comparatively specialised product within the broader beverage and hospitality market. Indian tourism is associated with historical monuments, religious destinations, beaches, wildlife, mountain landscapes, festivals, traditional cuisines, and rural experiences. Wine tourism can complement these established attractions by introducing an additional reason to visit particular agricultural regions.

The Indian wine industry has developed particularly around Maharashtra and Karnataka. Nashik, Pune, Sangli, and surrounding areas of Maharashtra have attracted attention for vineyard cultivation and winery development, while Karnataka has developed wine production and wine-related tourism opportunities in areas including Nandi Hills and the Bengaluru hinterland. These regions offer different combinations of agricultural landscapes, winery operations, hospitality facilities, and accessibility to urban markets.

Nashik is especially relevant to the study of Indian wine tourism. The region's wine-producing identity, winery visits, tasting facilities, and wine-related events have helped establish a recognisable connection between wine and place. Kaddi (2015) examined the development of wine tourism circuits in Maharashtra and identified the creation of coordinated wine trails as an important next step in the development of the region's tourism product. Such circuits can connect multiple wineries with accommodation, restaurants, transport services, cultural attractions, and other regional experiences.

Research specific to India has also begun examining the motivations and behaviours of wine tourists. Singh et al. (2021) investigated revisit intentions among 141 vineyard tourists in Nashik. Their findings identified escapism, countryside lifestyle, and the influence of international travel experiences as relevant factors in understanding wine tourism motivations. Their study also indicated that environmental concerns could act as a barrier to revisit intentions. These findings suggest that Indian wine tourism is shaped not only by the quality of the wine or the availability of tasting facilities but also by visitors' expectations concerning relaxation, lifestyle, experience, and environmental responsibility.

Singh (2023) further explored the influence of international travel on Indian wine tourism and discussed the interaction between global tourism expectations and locally adapted experiences. This perspective is important because visitors familiar with wine destinations abroad may compare Indian wineries with experiences encountered in established international markets. At the same time, Indian wine tourism has the opportunity to distinguish itself through regional cuisines, hospitality practices, agricultural landscapes, local festivals, and distinctive cultural narratives.

The growth of wine tourism should not, however, be interpreted as uniform across India. Wine-producing areas differ in their infrastructure, winery capacity, accessibility, accommodation, visitor services, regulatory environments, and marketing capabilities. Some wineries may be positioned as premium leisure destinations, while others may primarily concentrate on production and retail. Consequently, the development of wine tourism requires destination-specific planning rather than a single model applied to every wine-producing region.

1.3 Domestic Tourism Perspective

Domestic tourism constitutes an important potential market for Indian wine tourism. India's large population, expanding urban centres, improving transport networks, and diversity of leisure preferences create opportunities for short breaks and experience-oriented travel. Residents of metropolitan areas may visit vineyards for weekend recreation, celebrations, educational activities, food experiences, photography, and relaxation.

Domestic wine tourism does not necessarily depend on visitors having extensive prior knowledge of wine. For many potential visitors, the attraction may lie in the vineyard landscape, guided production tours, opportunities to learn about grape cultivation, restaurants, accommodation, outdoor activities, and social experiences. This is consistent with the broader understanding of wine tourism as a multidimensional experience rather than a narrowly defined activity based on wine consumption (Getz & Brown, 2006; Quadri-Felitti & Fiore, 2012).

The domestic market also contains different visitor segments. These may include experienced wine consumers, couples seeking leisure experiences, families interested in agricultural education, students studying tourism or hospitality, corporate groups, culinary enthusiasts, and visitors combining vineyard visits with other regional attractions. Each group may require a different product design. Educational tours may emphasise production processes, while leisure packages may place greater emphasis on accommodation, food, scenery, and recreation.

Nevertheless, domestic wine tourism faces several challenges. Awareness of vineyard tourism may be concentrated among particular urban and higher-income groups. Travel costs, limited public transport, accommodation availability, the distance between wineries, and the perception that vineyards are exclusively premium destinations may constrain wider participation. Social attitudes towards alcohol can also influence demand and the acceptability of wine-related promotion in different communities.

These constraints indicate that domestic wine tourism should be promoted through inclusive experience design, transparent pricing, responsible communication, and non-consumption-oriented activities. Vineyard walks, agricultural interpretation, grape cultivation demonstrations, local food experiences, landscape appreciation, and educational visits can attract visitors who are interested in the destination without wishing to consume alcohol.

1.4 International Tourism Perspective

International tourism provides a second dimension of opportunity. Foreign visitors may be attracted to Indian vineyards as part of broader journeys involving cultural heritage, gastronomy, urban tourism, nature, and regional exploration. International visitors already familiar with vineyard tourism may be interested in learning how wine is produced in a tropical or subtropical agricultural environment and how local producers adapt cultivation and production to regional conditions.

International wine tourism also has potential for strengthening the visibility of Indian wine brands. Visitors who encounter Indian wine in a destination setting may develop a stronger understanding of its production context, regional identity, and associated food traditions. Brown and Getz (2005) demonstrated that preferences for wines associated with particular geographical origins can influence wine-related travel preferences. This relationship suggests that place-based storytelling and wine destination branding can reinforce one another.

However, India should not assume that foreign visitors will automatically select wineries as independent destinations. Wine tourism must compete with other attractions for visitors' time and expenditure. Getz and Brown (2006) found that highly motivated wine tourists value a combination of wine-related features and broader destination attractions. Thus, international visitors may be more likely to include Indian wineries in itineraries that also provide comfortable accommodation, reliable transport, regional gastronomy, cultural experiences, and clear travel information.

International competitiveness also depends on service quality and communication. Visitors may expect online booking, multilingual information where appropriate, transparent tour schedules, knowledgeable guides, clear visitor policies, hygiene, safety, and reliable hospitality services. Inadequate information or uncertainty concerning accessibility can reduce the attractiveness of a destination even when the underlying vineyard experience is appealing.

A successful international strategy must therefore position Indian wine tourism as a distinctive cultural and agricultural experience rather than simply as a substitute for European or other established wine destinations. India's comparative advantage may lie in the combination of vineyards with local cuisine, cultural heritage, hospitality, regional festivals, and agricultural diversity.

1.5 Statement of the Research Problem

Although wine tourism has received growing scholarly attention internationally, its development in India remains uneven and requires further investigation. Indian wineries may possess considerable tourism potential, but the conversion of agricultural and production assets into a coherent regional tourism product requires more than individual promotional initiatives.

Several interconnected issues require attention. First, the relationship between wine tourism and destination development needs to be understood in the context of India's domestic and international visitor markets. Second, the importance of infrastructure, visitor experience, destination image, and digital visibility requires systematic examination. Third, the economic benefits of wine tourism need to be considered alongside environmental pressures and the distribution of benefits among local stakeholders. Fourth, the sector requires strategies that acknowledge differences between domestic visitors, international travellers, experienced wine consumers, and visitors primarily interested in landscapes or cultural experiences.

Previous Indian research has examined wine tourism circuits, tourism infrastructure, wine tourist motivations, and international influences. Kaddi (2015), for example, focused on wine tourism circuit development, while Singh et al. (2021) investigated motivations and revisit intentions among Nashik visitors. Singh (2023) considered international spillovers and the localisation of wine tourism experiences. These contributions provide an important foundation, but an integrated perspective connecting domestic and international tourism promotion, regional development, destination competitiveness, and sustainability remains valuable.

The present study addresses this issue through a thematic synthesis of wine tourism literature and research concerning India. It seeks to identify the opportunities and constraints influencing the contribution of the Indian wine industry to tourism promotion.

1.6 Significance of the Study

The study has theoretical, managerial, economic, social, and policy significance. From a theoretical perspective, it connects wine tourism with experiential tourism, destination branding, rural development, and sustainability. It extends the discussion beyond the consumption of wine to consider the wider visitor experience and the destination ecosystem. From a managerial perspective, the study may assist wineries, tour operators, hotels, destination marketing organisations, and tourism entrepreneurs in identifying the components of a competitive wine tourism product. From an economic perspective, the study considers the possibility of diversifying rural income, generating employment, encouraging local entrepreneurship, and increasing visitor expenditure across related sectors. From a policy perspective, it highlights the need for coordination among tourism authorities, local governments, winery associations, transport providers, and community organisations. Finally, the study has social and environmental significance because the long-term development of wine tourism depends on local participation, responsible visitor management, and the protection of agricultural landscapes and natural resources.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Concept and Scope of Wine Tourism

Wine tourism has developed as a specialised field within tourism research because it combines an agricultural product with a wider range of experiential and destination-related activities. Although wine tasting and winery visits are prominent components, wine tourism can also include vineyard walks,

production demonstrations, wine festivals, wine-related museums, accommodation, gastronomy, educational tours, and interactions with producers.

Hall and Mitchell (2000) approached wine tourism as an activity with implications for regional restructuring and development. Their analysis highlighted the relationship between the wine industry and tourism businesses and demonstrated that wine regions must consider both production and visitor demand. Wine tourism can provide additional income opportunities, but its success depends on the integration of tourism services with the underlying agricultural and commercial activities.

Getz and Brown (2006) developed a demand-oriented perspective on the critical success factors of wine tourism regions. Their research indicated that wine-related attractions are important but are accompanied by broader destination attributes, including scenery, accommodation, information, recreational opportunities, and cultural attractions. This implies that visitors evaluate the overall destination rather than making decisions exclusively on the basis of wine availability.

Carlsen (2004) reviewed the relationship between wine tourism and the wine industry, drawing attention to the commercial and research implications of wine-related travel. Wine tourism can help wineries build direct relationships with consumers, promote products, and develop additional business opportunities. Nevertheless, tourism activities also require staffing, hospitality capabilities, visitor management, and investment that may differ considerably from the requirements of wine production.

For India, this broader definition is particularly useful. Vineyard tourism can be developed around agricultural landscapes, food, hospitality, and educational experiences, allowing destinations to appeal to visitors with different levels of wine knowledge and interest.

2.2 Wine Tourism and Destination Development

Destination development involves the coordination of attractions, accessibility, accommodation, amenities, information, and supporting services. A wine-producing region may possess an attractive landscape and a number of wineries, but these assets do not automatically form a successful tourism destination.

Hall and Mitchell (2000) argued that the integration of wine and tourism can contribute to regional development while exposing wine producers to changing market conditions and competitive pressures. Their work suggests that tourism planning must consider the wider economic and institutional environment rather than focusing solely on individual winery operations.

Getz and Brown (2006) similarly identified the importance of destination appeal in the development of wine tourism regions. Their demand analysis showed that visitors may prefer wine destinations offering a wider range of cultural and outdoor activities. Such findings support the development of integrated tourism circuits rather than isolated winery attractions.

In the Indian context, Kaddi (2015) examined the creation and development of wine tourism circuits in Maharashtra. The study highlighted the importance of moving beyond individual vineyard visits towards coordinated regional itineraries. A wine tourism circuit can connect wineries with accommodation, restaurants, transport facilities, cultural attractions, and other tourism services.

Such integration can improve the visitor experience in several ways. It may reduce uncertainty concerning transport and scheduling, increase the number of attractions available during a visit, encourage longer stays, and provide opportunities for smaller tourism businesses to participate. A coordinated circuit can also strengthen the destination's identity by presenting a collection of related experiences under a common regional brand.

Nevertheless, circuit development requires attention to distances, road conditions, opening schedules, visitor capacity, accessibility, and the commercial interests of participating businesses. Without coordination, a wine trail may exist mainly as a promotional label rather than as a convenient and reliable tourism product.

2.3 Wine Tourism and the Experience Economy

The experience economy provides a useful framework for understanding why visitors travel to vineyards. Pine and Gilmore (1999) argued that businesses can differentiate themselves by staging memorable experiences rather than competing solely through products and services. In wine tourism, the vineyard landscape, production process, interaction with guides, food, architecture, and atmosphere can become integral components of the visitor experience.

Quadri-Felitti and Fiore (2012) applied experience-economy constructs to wine tourism and discussed educational, entertainment, escapist, and aesthetic dimensions. Visitors may learn about grape cultivation and wine production, enjoy festivals and social activities, temporarily escape urban routines, or appreciate the scenery and architecture of vineyards.

These dimensions are relevant to India because visitors may not possess extensive wine knowledge. A tour that combines agricultural interpretation, regional cuisine, scenic views, and hospitality may be attractive even to those who do not identify themselves as wine enthusiasts.

Thanh and Kirova (2018), through their study of online representations of wine tourism experiences, demonstrated the usefulness of considering the visitor experience holistically. Their research also illustrates how visitor-generated content can provide insights into the dimensions of wine tourism that people find memorable and worth sharing.

The practical implication is that Indian wineries should not measure visitor experience only by tasting satisfaction or product purchases. Relevant indicators also include perceived authenticity, educational value, hospitality, landscape appreciation, accessibility, emotional engagement, and willingness to recommend the destination.

2.4 Consumer Motivation and Revisit Intention

Understanding tourist motivation is essential for developing appropriate products and marketing strategies. Visitors may travel to wine regions because of their interest in wine, curiosity about production, desire for relaxation, appreciation of rural landscapes, interest in food, or wish to participate in special events.

Getz and Brown (2006) examined wine tourism demand and found that destination characteristics and cultural attractions contribute to wine-related travel decisions. Their research suggests that the core wine product should be understood in relation to the wider travel experience.

Brown and Getz (2005) investigated links between wine preferences and the choice of wine tourism destinations. Their findings indicated that geographical associations can influence travel preferences, although distance and other considerations also affect destination choice. This supports the view that destination branding and product reputation can reinforce one another.

Indian research offers more direct evidence. Singh et al. (2021) examined 141 vineyard tourists in Nashik and analysed factors associated with revisit intentions. Their findings identified escapism, countryside lifestyle, and influences from international travel as important considerations. The study also indicated that entertainment did not necessarily have a significant direct relationship with revisit intention, although its influence could be affected by escapism. Environmental concerns were identified as a negative factor.

These findings are significant because they challenge the assumption that entertainment or wine tasting alone is sufficient to encourage repeat visits. Visitors may place greater importance on the overall atmosphere, the opportunity to disconnect from daily routines, the perceived quality of the countryside experience, and the consistency of service.

The results should be interpreted in the context of the study's sample and geographical setting rather than generalised automatically to every Indian wine region. Nevertheless, they provide a valuable starting point for understanding visitor behaviour in India.

2.5 Domestic Wine Tourism in India

Domestic wine tourism is influenced by travel motivations, disposable income, destination accessibility, awareness, social attitudes, and the availability of complementary attractions. India's domestic tourism market offers potential for short-duration leisure travel, weekend trips, educational excursions, corporate events, and food-oriented tourism.

The domestic visitor market should not be treated as homogeneous. Some visitors may be interested primarily in wine knowledge and tasting, whereas others may value landscape photography, regional food, accommodation, outdoor recreation, or social events. Families and educational groups may prefer agricultural interpretation and grape cultivation demonstrations rather than activities centred on alcohol consumption.

Getz and Brown (2006) demonstrated that destination attributes beyond wine itself can influence wine tourism demand. Applied to India, this suggests that wineries can widen their appeal by integrating regional attractions and offering multiple experience formats.

The development of domestic tourism also depends on affordability and convenience. Transparent prices, convenient booking, reliable opening hours, accessible information, and transport options can help reduce barriers to participation. Destinations may also develop half-day visits, full-day itineraries, and overnight packages to accommodate different travel budgets and time constraints.

However, the potential size of the domestic market should not be confused with demonstrated demand. Reliable conclusions about visitor numbers, willingness to pay, and repeat visitation require updated regional data. These questions remain suitable areas for primary research.

2.6 International Wine Tourism and Destination Competitiveness

International wine tourism offers opportunities to position Indian wine-producing regions within broader global tourism networks. International visitors may compare Indian wineries with destinations in Europe, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, and other regions where wine tourism is established.

Getz and Brown (2006) emphasised that successful wine destinations combine wine-related attractions with broader tourism amenities. For India, this implies that international promotion should communicate not only the availability of wineries but also how vineyard visits can fit into a larger travel itinerary.

Brown and Getz (2005) showed that the geographical origins associated with wine preferences can influence destination choice. Indian producers and tourism organisations can therefore explore the relationship between regional identity, product storytelling, and destination promotion.

Singh (2023) examined international spillovers in Indian wine tourism and highlighted the influence of global travel experiences alongside locally adapted tourism offerings. This suggests that international exposure can shape visitor expectations while providing opportunities for Indian wineries to develop experiences appropriate to their own social and cultural environments.

International competitiveness does not require Indian wineries to imitate foreign destinations. Instead, they can develop distinctive offerings that combine vineyard landscapes, Indian cuisine, regional hospitality, local festivals, and explanations of wine production under Indian climatic conditions.

Practical considerations remain important. International visitors may need clear information about transportation, opening times, tour languages, accessibility, accommodation, payment options, and visitor policies. These services should be designed around the needs of the target market and evaluated through visitor feedback rather than assumptions about international preferences.

2.7 Wine Tourism Circuits and Regional Integration

Tourism circuits can connect dispersed attractions into a coordinated travel experience. In wine tourism, circuits may link multiple wineries with restaurants, hotels, heritage attractions, agricultural sites, local markets, and cultural events.

Kaddi (2015) identified wine tourism circuit development as an important area for Maharashtra. A coordinated circuit can improve the visibility of smaller attractions and encourage cooperation among businesses that might otherwise promote themselves independently.

The value of regional integration extends beyond the visitor. Transport providers, guides, accommodation operators, restaurants, farmers, and local retailers can participate in the tourism value chain. If local suppliers are included in procurement and destination planning, the economic benefits may be distributed more widely.

However, circuit development also introduces coordination challenges. Different businesses may have different opening schedules, service standards, pricing systems, and commercial objectives. A successful circuit requires clear responsibilities, reliable information, agreed quality standards, and mechanisms for resolving operational problems.

The creation of a wine trail should therefore be accompanied by destination management rather than treated solely as a branding exercise.

2.8 Wine Tourism, Rural Development, and Local Entrepreneurship

Wine tourism can provide additional economic opportunities in agricultural regions. Visitors may spend money on accommodation, food, transportation, local products, guided tours, events, and retail purchases. These activities can create opportunities for entrepreneurs and provide additional markets for local suppliers.

Hall and Mitchell (2000) associated wine tourism with regional restructuring and development, while Carlsen (2004) discussed its relevance to the wine industry and its commercial performance. Together, these perspectives indicate that tourism can complement wine production when the activities are planned to support one another.

The development of tourism may also encourage improvements in roads, signage, hospitality skills, digital communication, sanitation, and visitor facilities. These improvements can benefit residents as well as visitors, provided that investment responds to local needs.

However, economic benefits should not be assumed to be automatic or equally distributed. Large wineries may be better positioned than small producers to invest in accommodation, restaurants, marketing, and visitor facilities. Without deliberate support for smaller enterprises, the tourism economy may become concentrated among a limited number of businesses.

Local participation, skills development, transparent business partnerships, and access to destination marketing can help broaden the distribution of benefits. These issues require empirical investigation

because the economic impact of wine tourism varies according to ownership, scale, location, and local institutional conditions.

2.9 Wine Tourism and Sustainable Development

Sustainability has become a central consideration in tourism research because visitor growth can generate both economic opportunities and environmental pressures. Wine tourism depends on agricultural landscapes, water availability, land management, biodiversity, waste management, transport, and energy use.

Montella (2017) reviewed the relationship between wine tourism and sustainability and highlighted the importance of integrating environmental concerns with business development and regional planning. Sustainable wine tourism requires attention not only to the visitor experience but also to the resources on which the experience depends.

Environmental considerations are particularly relevant to vineyard destinations because agriculture and hospitality can place demands on water, energy, and land. Visitors may also generate additional waste and transport emissions. If tourism expansion is poorly managed, it may place pressure on local infrastructure or conflict with other land uses.

Singh et al. (2021) identified environmental concerns as a potential barrier to revisit intentions among their sample of Nashik vineyard tourists. This finding reinforces the importance of understanding sustainability from the visitor's perspective while recognising that perceptions must be examined alongside objective environmental indicators.

Sustainable practices may include water-efficient irrigation, wastewater treatment, energy efficiency, waste reduction, responsible transport planning, biodiversity protection, and transparent communication about environmental performance. Their adoption should be assessed through measurable indicators rather than promotional claims alone.

Sustainability also has a social dimension. Local communities should have opportunities to participate in planning, employment, procurement, and decision-making. Wine tourism should respect local customs and community priorities while ensuring that tourism development does not displace existing livelihoods or create disproportionate environmental costs.

2.10 Digital Marketing and Wine Tourism Promotion

Digital platforms have become important channels for tourism discovery, information gathering, itinerary planning, and post-visit communication. Websites, online booking systems, social media, review platforms, and travel content can help wineries reach domestic and international audiences.

Thanh and Kirova (2018) demonstrated the analytical value of online representations of wine tourism experiences. Visitor-generated content can reveal which elements of an experience are memorable and how visitors communicate their perceptions to prospective travellers.

Digital promotion can help Indian wine tourism in several ways. Visual storytelling can communicate vineyard landscapes, production processes, regional food, events, and hospitality. Online booking can reduce uncertainty, while visitor reviews can provide feedback about service quality. Regional destination pages can also connect winery information with accommodation, transport, and other attractions.

Nevertheless, digital visibility is not equivalent to actual visitor demand. Online engagement, booking conversions, visitor satisfaction, and repeat visits are distinct measures. Tourism organisations should therefore evaluate digital campaigns using transparent indicators and avoid interpreting social media attention as proof of economic impact.

Digital communication should also provide accurate information about tour availability, prices, accessibility, visitor policies, and transport. Inaccurate or incomplete information can damage destination credibility.

2.11 Research Gap

The literature establishes that wine tourism is a multidimensional activity influenced by wine-related motivations, destination attractiveness, visitor experiences, regional integration, and sustainability. International studies provide frameworks for understanding demand, experience design, and regional competitiveness (Getz & Brown, 2006; Hall & Mitchell, 2000; Quadri-Felitti & Fiore, 2012).

Indian studies have contributed important evidence concerning tourism circuits, infrastructure, visitor motivations, and international influences (Kaddi, 2015; Singh, 2023; Singh et al., 2021). However, further integrated research is needed to understand how domestic and international tourism promotion can be developed together while accounting for regional differences and sustainability.

Three gaps are particularly relevant.

First, the relationship between domestic visitor preferences and international visitor expectations requires further comparative research across Indian wine regions.

Second, the economic benefits of wine tourism need to be examined alongside the distribution of benefits among wineries, small producers, local communities, and related businesses.

Third, the effectiveness of wine tourism promotion requires measurement through indicators such as visitor numbers, length of stay, local expenditure, satisfaction, recommendations, repeat visits, and environmental performance.

The present paper addresses these gaps conceptually through a secondary-data-based synthesis and proposes a framework for future empirical testing.

3. Objectives of the Study

The main objective is to examine the role of the Indian wine industry in promoting domestic and international tourism.

The specific objectives are:

1. To examine the development and characteristics of wine tourism in India.
2. To analyse the potential contribution of wine tourism to domestic tourism promotion.
3. To evaluate opportunities for positioning Indian wine-producing regions in international tourism markets.
4. To identify the roles of destination branding, visitor experience, digital marketing, and wine tourism circuits in destination development.
5. To examine the potential economic and social contributions of wine tourism to rural communities and local businesses.
6. To identify the infrastructure, cultural, regulatory, marketing, and environmental challenges affecting the sector.
7. To recommend strategies for developing competitive, inclusive, and sustainable wine tourism destinations in India.

4. Research Questions

The study is guided by the following research questions:

1. How can the Indian wine industry contribute to the promotion of domestic tourism?

2. What opportunities exist for integrating Indian wine tourism into international travel itineraries?
3. Which destination attributes are likely to influence visitor satisfaction and revisit intentions?
4. How can wine tourism circuits strengthen regional tourism development?
5. What environmental and social considerations should guide the future development of Indian wine tourism?

5. Research Hypotheses

Because this paper is based on secondary research rather than an original visitor survey, the following hypotheses are proposed for future empirical testing. They are not presented as statistically confirmed findings.

H1: The perceived quality of vineyard experiences is positively associated with tourists' satisfaction and revisit intentions.

H2: The availability of supporting tourism infrastructure is positively associated with the attractiveness of Indian wine tourism destinations.

H3: Destination branding and digital marketing are positively associated with awareness of Indian wine tourism among domestic and international tourists.

H4: The integration of wineries with regional food, cultural, and recreational attractions is positively associated with the attractiveness of wine tourism circuits.

H5: Community participation and local business integration are positively associated with the perceived regional development benefits of wine tourism.

H6: Perceived environmental responsibility is positively associated with tourists' evaluations of wine tourism destinations.

H7: Differences in prior wine tourism experience and travel background are associated with differences in visitor expectations and preferred wine tourism activities.

These hypotheses can be tested through surveys of domestic and international visitors, interviews with winery managers, and analysis of destination-level tourism indicators.

6. Research Methodology

6.1 Research Design

The study adopts a qualitative, exploratory research design based on secondary sources. This design is appropriate for developing an integrated understanding of Indian wine tourism, identifying recurring themes in existing research, and formulating propositions for future empirical investigation.

The research does not claim to measure the causal impact of wine tourism on tourism arrivals, employment, or income through original statistical analysis. Instead, it synthesises published evidence and interprets the implications for destination development and promotion.

6.2 Sources of Data

The study draws on academic journal articles, published research on Indian wine tourism, conceptual studies of destination competitiveness, and literature concerning wine tourism experiences and sustainability.

Particular attention is given to research by Hall and Mitchell (2000), Getz and Brown (2006), Kaddi (2015), Montella (2017), Singh et al. (2021), and Singh (2023). These publications address different but complementary dimensions of wine tourism, including regional development, visitor demand, tourism circuits, sustainability, and Indian visitor behaviour.

The sources were considered for their relevance to the research objectives and their contribution to understanding the Indian context.

6.3 Data Collection Procedure

The secondary research process was organised around the following themes:

1. Definitions and conceptual development of wine tourism.
2. Domestic and international visitor motivations.
3. Destination attractiveness and tourism infrastructure.
4. Wine tourism circuits and regional integration.
5. Experiential marketing and destination branding.
6. Local economic development and community participation.
7. Environmental sustainability and responsible tourism.
8. Digital marketing and international destination promotion.

Relevant publications were examined to identify their research focus, principal findings, implications, and relevance to India.

This procedure represents a thematic synthesis of selected literature. It should not be interpreted as a fully exhaustive systematic review because a complete database-by-database search, formal screening process, and reproducible review protocol have not been documented.

7. Results and Analysis

7.1 Overview of the Thematic Findings

The thematic synthesis identifies six principal areas through which Indian wine tourism may contribute to destination promotion:

1. Diversification of domestic tourism products.
2. International destination positioning.
3. Enhancement of visitor experiences.
4. Integration of regional tourism businesses.
5. Economic opportunities for local communities.
6. Sustainable destination management.

These findings are interpretive conclusions drawn from the selected literature rather than the results of a new statistical survey.

7.2 Wine Tourism as a Tool for Domestic Tourism Diversification

The literature suggests that vineyard tourism can complement India's established tourism products by creating new reasons to visit agricultural regions. The combination of landscapes, food, education, hospitality, and recreation offers opportunities to attract visitors who might not otherwise consider a wine-producing area as a leisure destination.

Getz and Brown (2006) showed that wine tourism demand is shaped by both wine-related features and wider destination appeal. Quadri-Felitti and Fiore (2012) similarly emphasised the experiential dimensions of wine tourism.

Applied to India, these perspectives suggest that domestic wine tourism should be designed around multiple visitor motivations. A visitor may be interested in learning about production, enjoying a weekend break, participating in a festival, or experiencing regional cuisine. These motivations can be accommodated through differentiated tour packages.

For example, a vineyard destination could offer an educational tour explaining grape cultivation and production processes, a food-oriented itinerary highlighting regional cuisine, or a leisure package combining accommodation, landscape appreciation, and guided visits.

Such diversification could expand the potential market beyond experienced wine consumers. However, the actual size of each visitor segment and its willingness to pay would need to be established through primary research.

7.3 Nashik and the Development of Wine Tourism Circuits

Nashik provides a useful case for examining the relationship between wineries and regional destination development. The region has been discussed in Indian wine tourism research as a significant location for vineyard visits and wine-related experiences.

Kaddi (2015) identified wine tourism circuits as a relevant strategy for Maharashtra. The underlying principle is that several attractions can be combined to create a more complete visitor experience than any single winery may provide independently.

The potential benefits include improved itinerary planning, increased visitor choice, more opportunities for local businesses, and stronger destination branding. A circuit can also connect winery visits with restaurants, accommodation, cultural attractions, and other local experiences.

However, the success of a circuit depends on operational coordination. Visitors need reliable information about distances, opening hours, booking requirements, transportation, and the duration of each activity. A poorly coordinated itinerary can reduce satisfaction even when individual wineries provide good experiences.

The analysis therefore indicates that wine tourism circuits should be understood as managed destination products rather than simply collections of wineries.

7.4 The Importance of Experience Quality

The literature consistently supports the importance of the visitor experience in wine tourism. Getz and Brown (2006) identify visitor-friendly wineries and broader destination attributes as important considerations, while Quadri-Felitti and Fiore (2012) highlight the educational, aesthetic, entertainment, and escapist dimensions of the experience.

The Indian evidence is consistent with this perspective. Singh et al. (2021) found that escapism and countryside lifestyle were important in understanding revisit intentions among the Nashik visitors they studied.

This suggests that experience quality should be assessed through several dimensions:

- Quality and clarity of guided tours.
- Knowledge and hospitality of staff.
- Opportunities to learn about grape cultivation and production.
- Comfort, cleanliness, and safety.
- Quality of food and complementary activities.
- Appreciation of vineyard landscapes.
- Ease of booking and access to information.
- Overall value for money.

These dimensions are relevant to domestic and international tourists, although their relative importance may vary between visitor groups.

A practical implication is that wineries should collect visitor feedback and use it to improve service design. They should also recognise that a memorable experience does not necessarily require expensive

facilities. Knowledgeable guides, meaningful interpretation, authentic interaction, and well-managed visitor services can contribute substantially to perceived value.

7.5 International Destination Positioning

The analysis indicates that Indian wine tourism can benefit from international promotion when its distinctive regional identity is clearly communicated.

Brown and Getz (2005) found that wine origin preferences can influence wine-related travel choices. Singh (2023) discussed the influence of international travel experiences on the development of Indian wine tourism. Together, these studies support the importance of linking regional wine identity with destination marketing.

India's wine tourism offering can be differentiated through its combination of vineyard landscapes, local cuisines, cultural experiences, hospitality, and production under Indian climatic conditions. Rather than presenting Indian wineries as imitations of European destinations, marketing can emphasise their own geographical and cultural characteristics.

International positioning also requires practical readiness. Foreign visitors need accurate information about tours, booking, transport, opening hours, accommodation, and relevant visitor policies. Where international markets are specifically targeted, information may need to be available in additional languages.

International promotion should be evaluated against actual outcomes, such as qualified enquiries, bookings, visitor origin, satisfaction, and recommendations. Online impressions alone are insufficient to demonstrate international tourism growth.

7.6 Infrastructure and Accessibility

Infrastructure is a critical link between tourism potential and actual visitor experience. Attractive vineyards may fail to attract visitors if access is difficult, booking information is unclear, transport is unreliable, or visitor facilities are inadequate.

Kaddi and Suklabaidya's research on tourism infrastructure in Maharashtra examined the importance of infrastructure from wine tourists' perspectives. Their work highlights the relevance of assessing facilities according to visitors' expectations and perceptions rather than assuming that the existence of an attraction is sufficient.

For Indian wine tourism, relevant infrastructure includes road access, signage, parking, sanitation, visitor centres, accommodation, food services, digital connectivity, and clear booking arrangements. Accessibility for visitors with disabilities and older travellers should also be considered.

Infrastructure investment should be prioritised through destination-level assessments. Not every winery requires the same facilities, and investment should reflect visitor demand, site characteristics, environmental constraints, and the needs of local communities.

7.7 Local Economic Opportunities

Wine tourism may support regional economic diversification by creating demand for services associated with travel. These may include transport, food, accommodation, guiding, events, local retail, agricultural interpretation, and other visitor services.

Hall and Mitchell (2000) discussed wine tourism as a potential instrument of regional restructuring, while Carlsen (2004) examined the relationship between tourism and wine-industry development.

The analysis suggests that the economic value of wine tourism should be measured at the destination level rather than only through winery revenue. Visitor spending may reach multiple businesses, while local employment and procurement may contribute to broader economic benefits.

Nevertheless, these outcomes depend on how tourism is organised. If external suppliers dominate procurement or benefits remain concentrated among large establishments, local economic gains may be limited.

A destination strategy should therefore encourage participation by local businesses, provide training opportunities, facilitate transparent supplier relationships, and monitor the distribution of tourism expenditure.

No numerical estimate of employment or income generation is offered here because the study does not include original regional economic data.

7.8 Sustainability and Environmental Constraints

The analysis identifies sustainability as both a responsibility and a potential component of destination competitiveness.

Montella (2017) highlighted the importance of incorporating environmental considerations into wine tourism development. Singh et al. (2021) also identified environmental concerns as a factor relevant to revisit intentions among their study participants.

Wine tourism depends on landscapes and agricultural systems that may be affected by water stress, waste, land-use changes, transport, and increasing visitor pressure. Tourism development must therefore be assessed alongside the environmental needs of vineyard production and surrounding communities.

Potential measures include water-use monitoring, efficient irrigation, wastewater treatment, energy conservation, waste reduction, biodiversity protection, and appropriate limits on visitor numbers where necessary.

Sustainability claims should be supported by evidence. Wineries and tourism organisations can publish information on water use, waste management, local procurement, and other measurable indicators. Such transparency can strengthen accountability and provide a basis for future evaluation.

The analysis also indicates that environmental responsibility should be integrated into destination management rather than treated as a separate promotional activity.

7.9 Digital Promotion and Visitor Information

Digital communication can improve the visibility of Indian wine tourism destinations and reduce the information barriers that discourage potential visitors.

The literature on online wine tourism experiences highlights the importance of visitor perceptions and experience-related content (Thanh & Kirova, 2018). Digital platforms can help wineries communicate their products, explain tour formats, provide booking information, and respond to visitor feedback.

For India, a coordinated digital strategy could connect wineries with regional destination pages, transport information, accommodation, food experiences, and cultural attractions. This would help visitors understand how vineyard visits fit into a wider itinerary.

However, the effectiveness of digital marketing should be assessed through measurable outcomes. Useful indicators include website enquiries, booking conversion, cancellation rates, visitor satisfaction, review patterns, and repeat visitation.

Digital marketing can support destination development, but it cannot compensate for poor service quality, inadequate infrastructure, or unreliable visitor information.

7.10 Summary of the Thematic Analysis

Table 1: Summary of the Thematic Analysis

Theme	Main interpretation	Implication for India
Domestic	Vineyard experiences can diversify leisure	Develop accessible, differentiated

tourism	and food tourism	visitor packages
International tourism	Distinctive regional identity can support destination positioning	Connect wine tourism with broader Indian travel itineraries
Visitor experience	Learning, scenery, hospitality, and relaxation matter alongside wine	Improve service quality and experiential design
Tourism circuits	Coordinated attractions can increase visitor choice	Develop managed regional wine trails
Local development	Visitor expenditure can support related businesses	Strengthen local procurement and entrepreneurship
Sustainability	Environmental quality is integral to long-term attractiveness	Monitor resources, waste, and community impacts
Digital promotion	Clear information can improve awareness and booking access	Integrate destination information and evaluate conversion

The table summarises the study's interpretation of the literature. It does not represent a numerical ranking of factors or a statistical comparison of their effects.

7.11 Evaluation of the Research Hypotheses

Because no original dataset has been collected, the hypotheses cannot be accepted or rejected statistically.

Table 2: Evaluation of the Research Hypotheses

Hypothesis	Evidence from the literature	Status in this study
H1: Experience quality is associated with satisfaction and revisit intentions	Supported conceptually by experience and visitor-motivation studies	Requires empirical testing in India
H2: Supporting infrastructure is associated with destination attractiveness	Relevant to research on Maharashtra's wine tourism infrastructure	Requires comparative measurement
H3: Branding and digital marketing are associated with destination awareness	Consistent with destination-marketing literature	Requires visitor and campaign data
H4: Integrated attractions improve circuit attractiveness	Consistent with demand and circuit-development research	Requires itinerary and visitor evaluation
H5: Community participation is associated with regional benefits	Consistent with regional-development perspectives	Requires community and economic data
H6: Environmental responsibility influences destination evaluations	Relevant to sustainability literature and Nashik visitor research	Requires further testing across regions
H7: Visitor backgrounds are associated with different preferences	Consistent with consumer segmentation research	Requires domestic–international comparison

The table demonstrates the distinction between a theoretically plausible relationship and an empirically verified result. Future research should test these propositions using clearly defined variables, suitable samples, and transparent statistical procedures.

8. Suggestions and Recommendations

8.1 Develop Integrated Wine Tourism Circuits

Indian wine tourism should move from isolated winery promotion towards coordinated regional circuits. These circuits should connect participating wineries with restaurants, accommodation, local attractions, transport providers, and cultural experiences.

Destination management organisations and winery associations can coordinate opening schedules, visitor information, booking arrangements, route planning, and quality standards. Kaddi (2015) provides a relevant foundation for considering circuit development in Maharashtra.

Circuits should be designed around realistic travel times and visitor preferences. Short visits, full-day itineraries, and overnight packages may be offered according to local capacity and demand.

8.2 Strengthen Domestic Market Awareness

Domestic wine tourism promotion should target a range of visitor segments rather than assuming that all potential visitors are wine enthusiasts.

Promotional material can highlight agricultural education, vineyard landscapes, regional cuisine, hospitality, cultural attractions, and recreational activities. These offerings can broaden participation among visitors who are interested in the destination without wishing to consume alcohol.

Marketing should communicate prices, booking requirements, transportation, accessibility, and visitor policies clearly. Market research should be used to understand the motivations and constraints of different domestic visitor groups.

8.3 Build a Distinctive International Brand

Indian wine tourism should develop a clear international identity based on regional landscapes, Indian cuisine, hospitality, and the distinctive conditions under which Indian wine is produced.

Rather than copying established foreign wine destinations, Indian regions should explain what makes their own experiences distinctive. Partnerships with tour operators, travel media, tourism organisations, and hospitality businesses may help connect vineyard visits with broader itineraries.

International campaigns should be selected according to the suitability of the target market and evaluated using actual booking and visitor data.

8.4 Improve Infrastructure and Visitor Services

Destination authorities and tourism businesses should assess transport access, signage, parking, sanitation, visitor centres, accommodation, and food services.

Investment should be guided by documented visitor needs and environmental conditions. Small wineries may benefit from shared facilities, common booking platforms, coordinated transport, and collective visitor information.

Visitor service standards should cover hospitality, cleanliness, safety, tour information, accessibility, and complaint resolution.

9. Conclusion

Indian wine tourism represents a potentially valuable opportunity to connect agriculture, hospitality, gastronomy, destination marketing, and regional development. The development of vineyards and wineries, particularly in Maharashtra and Karnataka, provides a foundation for creating specialised tourism experiences that complement India's established tourism products. The literature reviewed in this paper indicates that wine tourism should be understood as a multidimensional experience. Visitors may be motivated by wine, but destination attractiveness also depends on scenery, hospitality, learning

opportunities, accommodation, food, accessibility, and the availability of complementary attractions. Research on wine tourism demand and experience design supports the importance of these wider attributes (Getz & Brown, 2006; Quadri-Felitti & Fiore, 2012). Indian research provides useful evidence concerning visitor motivation, wine tourism circuits, and international influences. Kaddi (2015) highlighted the importance of coordinated wine tourism circuits in Maharashtra, while Singh et al. (2021) identified escapism and countryside lifestyle as relevant factors in Nashik visitors' revisit intentions. Singh (2023) further demonstrated the relevance of international travel influences and locally adapted experiences to Indian wine tourism. From a domestic tourism perspective, wine tourism can diversify leisure travel, encourage regional exploration, and create opportunities for food-oriented, educational, and experiential tourism. Its appeal can be widened by offering activities that do not depend on wine consumption, improving access to information, and designing packages for different visitor segments.

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