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# Between wine consumption and wine tourism: Consumer and spatial behavior of Israeli wine tourists

## Abstract

*The development of wine tourism worldwide has been accompanied by academic research on wine tourism and wine tourists. Wine tourists and wine enthusiasts have been found to share many socio-demographic similarities. It has been found that people visiting wineries consume wine on a regular basis, have an average to high level of knowledge about wine, and visit wineries and wine-producing regions a few times a year. Their involvement with wine is apparent both from their daily consumption and from their behavior as tourists. Research conducted among wine tourists shows that they share a number of lifestyle characteristics and tend to share the same values. In light of the development of the Israeli wine industry, and in Israeli wine tourism, the aim of this research is to provide an initial characterization of Israeli wine tourists, by looking at their specific characteristics and at wine tourism consumer behavior in relation to wine tourism.*

## Key words:

*wine tourism; consumer behavior, lifestyle, Golan Heights*

## Introduction

Wine tourism is a type of special interest tourism (SIT) which is conducted in wine districts – where vineyards and wineries abound. Participating in wine tourism activity in a district intimately connected to the product itself constitutes a part of the wine consumer's general lifestyle. At the same time it allows participants the opportunity to fulfill values, maintain overall lifestyle consistency, acquire knowledge and experience about wine as a personal special interest, interact socially with individuals adhering to similar lifestyles, and create long term relationships with the winery (Roberts, & Sparks, 2006; Yuan, Morrison, & Linton, 2005; Alant, & Bruwer, 2004; Mitchell, Hall, & McIntosh, 2000). Studies among tourists in general and especially wine tourists have found that the latter share certain lifestyle characteristics and tend to identify with similar values (Simpson, & Bretherton, 2004; McMillan, & McInnes, 2004; Tourism Queensland, 2002; Getz, 2000).

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Israel, like other wine's "new world" countries, is in the midst of a process of developing its wine industry. This development is visible in several ways: increasing numbers of wineries, especially boutique wineries, changing preferences and demand for different types of wine and, as a result, different varieties of grapes being planted, and the nascent Israeli wine culture that includes wine tourism. Wine is an industry with tremendous economic potential and wine tourism represents an entry into that world (Hall, Mitchell, & Sharples, 2002). It entails years of commitment and specialization with extensive financial outlays. However, unlike other wine's "new world" countries in which the development of a wine culture and wine tourism has been supported by academic studies, Israel has produced almost no studies of this sort to date, neither for the supply nor for the demand sides.

Therefore, the aim of this study is to understand the characteristics of Israeli wine tourists in terms of their socio-demographic and lifestyle attributes. In addition, the paper will also examine wine consumption among Israelis, in an attempt to examine the connection between the study participants' wine consumption and wine tourism related consumer and spatial behavior. Characterizing these ties will make it possible to adapt both the tourism product and the marketing approach to the preferences, needs and aspirations of local wine tourists and help ensure better utilization of the industry by the potential target populations.

## **Theoretical background**

### **LIFESTYLE, TOURISM AND WINE**

The term "lifestyle" refers to the many issues related to the way one lives and which create identifiable behavior (Goldman, 2000) and action patterns that distinguish between people (Chaney, 1996). Included are physical, social, cultural and economic aspects of the ways in which people live their daily lives (Goldman, 2000). The literature defines lifestyle as consumption patterns, leisure activities and cultural tastes. Entertainment and leisure patterns, tastes in clothing, music and reading, and vacation patterns are frequently mentioned as lifestyle characteristics (Katz-Gero, & Shavit, 1998).

Studies that have examined the relationship between lifestyle and consumer behavior in tourism have found that segmentation by lifestyle, using psychographic characteristics, contributes to an understanding and an ability to predict general and touristic consumer behaviors, including information seeking and choice of destinations, activities, accommodations etc. (Schul, & Crompton, 1983). An examination of how value systems influence the choice of activities during vacation has shown that although these activities are affected by demographic characteristics, an understanding of the value system underlying this choice facilitates a more accurate segmentation of the market and a better match between the tourist product and the needs that the target population seeks to fulfill (Madrigal, & Kahle, 1994).

The relationship between wine and tourism results from the nature of wine as a drink associated with tranquility, social gatherings, food consumption, new experiences and hospitality. In other words, wine in many cases is associated with the same types of ex-

periences that tourists seek (Bruwer, 2003). There is great overlap between gastronomic tourism and wine tourism, and together they represent a "lifestyle" in which wine and food are the tangible products. Both are also connected with agri-rural and with cultural tourism (Getz, 2000) and thus, for the consumer, purchasing and consuming wine constitutes the opportunity to obtain a new cultural identity or to enforce existing one (Ravenscroft, & Van Westering, 2001).

Wine consumers are portrayed as educated, mature and relatively high in terms of income (Getz, 2000). Studies contend that wine consumers can be similar in terms of demographic characteristics but substantially different in terms of subjective characteristics such as attitudes, consumer behaviors, lifestyle and others (Bruwer, & Reid, 2002). As an element representing a complete lifestyle, a love of wine usually encompasses additional behavioral patterns, such as membership in wine clubs, wine production (as a hobby), reading about wine and collecting preferred bottles of wine (often as part of a private wine cellar) (Getz, Carlsen, Brown, & Havitz, 2007).

A study examining the connection between wine and lifestyle found five main states connecting the two (tranquility, dining atmosphere, fun and entertainment, social aspirations, and tourism) and illustrating how well a food product, in this case wine, can help individuals to attain values by changing its manner of use and the situation in which the product is used (Thach, & Olsen, 2004). The Wine Related Lifestyle Model (WRLM) shows that the link between the product and fulfilling values does not have to be direct, and depends also on the context in which wine is consumed, the process in which the product is used, and others' recognition of the person's knowledge about the choice and use of wine. As wine is a product that can be consumed in many different contexts, the possibilities for fulfilling values by means of consuming wine are also varied and, as a result, a large number of wine-related lifestyles can be expected (Bruwer et al., 2002).

### **WINE TOURISM AND WINE TOURISTS**

"Wine tourism is special-interest travel based on the desire to visit wine producing regions, or in which travelers are induced to visit wine-producing regions, and wineries in particular, while traveling for other reasons" (Getz et al., 2007, p. 246). According to this definition, wine tourism activity can constitute part of a trip or of tourism activity with a different aim and does not have to comprise an exclusive aim (Getz et al., 2007).

Three different approaches to wine tourism can be discerned – that of wine producers, of tourism operators, and of consumers (Getz, 2000). Thus, wine tourism is at one and the same time a marketing opportunity for producers to teach about and sell their products directly to the consumer, a strategy for developing and marketing wine-related attractions, and a form of consumer behavior in which wine lovers or those interested in wine producing areas choose to tour preferred destinations (Getz, & Brown, 2006a; Charters, & Ali-Knight, 2002).

As in other types of "special interest tourism", the leading motivations for wine tourism are intellectual motivation and mastery of a skill, which lead to participation in the activities most identified with wine tourism – visiting wineries to experience wine tasting (Getz et al., 2007). Additional motivations are learning about wine, meeting wine producers, social gatherings, and spending a day out (Yuan, et al., 2005). The fact that the main motivations for wine tourism are directly connected with the product and the secondary motivations are somewhat connected to it, indicates that wine tourists are wine consumers seeking a product-dependent experience as part of a lifestyle, who navigate between fulfilling the needs of both tourists and wine consumers (Alant, & Bruwer, 2004).

Studies of wine tourism have shown that the profile of the wine tourist is similar to that of the wine consumer, and it is consistently found to be that of a middle aged person employed in a professional or managerial position, with higher than average education and income, who lives in the vicinity of the wine area. Families with children tend to visit wineries less, and visitors are usually couples without children or those whose children no longer live at home (Sparks, 2007; Getz, & Brown, 2006b; Carlsen, 2004; Mitchell et al., 2000; Getz, 2000). In terms of the life cycle, the presence of a spouse who is also a wine lover can encourage wine tourism, while the presence of little children discourages it. In terms of social reference group, belonging to a wine club or the presence of other wine consumers in one's social reference group can imbue wine tourism with greater value (Getz et al., 2007).

Several studies proposed typologies of wine tourists using various characteristics in an effort to segment them. An Australian study of two wineries proposed four segments of wine tourists based on self estimation of their competence and knowledge of wine. This study also referred to these tourists' travel motivation and their lifestyle. The study also detected characteristics that are common to all four segments. These were a positive attitude towards the spatial qualities of these wineries, to the staff, to their level of competence and knowledge of wine, and to knowledge acquisition on wine and wine tourism (Charters, & Ali-Knight, 2002). Another typology proposed by Johnson (1998) is based on "general wine tourists" vs. "specialized wine tourists". The latter take the visit in a winery much more seriously and as a result have different travel needs compared to the "general" ones.

Another study which interviewed 250 visitors to a New Zealand winery conducted its segmentation and typology of wine tourists based on lifestyle and the use of (List of Values) LOV methodology. It found that wine tourists tend to identify themselves with values reflecting on their extrovert and hedonistic lifestyle (Simpson, & Brether-ton, 2004). A more recent study by Alonso, Fraser, and Cohen (2007) looked at wine tourists through the prism of psychographic and hedonistic characteristics. It managed to substantiate the hypothesis that there is a correlation between visit in wineries and Plog's typology which defined the group of *Allocentric and Pleasure Seeking*. These are tourists who enjoy high level of self confidence, extrovert and share a large range of interests which are reflected in their wine travel behavior.

As can be seen from the definition of wine tourism, wine tourists are a highly varied population in terms of wine-related tourism behavior: from one passing through a wine district and stops to purchase wine at a winery, to a tourist from Britain who travels to Australia because that is where his or her favorite wines are produced (Alant, & Bruwer, 2004). Wine consumers as wine tourists seek an environment in which they can not only taste wine and enrich their personal knowledge about wine, but also fulfill romantic dreams and cultural aspirations (Getz, & Brown, 2006b). It appears that the combination of wine, food, art and tourism as the core components of the wine tourism product is what provides wine tourists with the "lifestyle package" experience sought by that type of tourist (Carlsen, 2004).

A study that dealt with the wine tourism experience from the wine consumer's point of view found that the experience is based on three main components: wine as the core product, essential destination characteristics, and a cultural experience (Getz, & Brown, 2006b). Another study also found three main components that interest the wine tourist: wine as the experiential core, the experience of the tourism destination, and personal development (Sparks, 2007). This corresponds with the findings of previous studies which recognized the importance of the educational aspect of wine tourism (see Charters, & Ali-Knight, 2002).

A survey of several previous studies that examined aspects of consumer behavior among wine tourists shows that usually, and unsurprisingly, visitors to wineries are people who consume wine regularly, have average to extensive knowledge about wine, and visit wineries and wine districts several times each year (Mitchell et al., 2000). It is expected that people for whom wine is a highly involved part of their lifestyle will participate in journeys to wine areas or include wine related attractions in trips with a general or other goal (Brown, & Getz, 2005). Among wine tourists there is a strong positive correlation between wine involvement, wine related purchases, and consumption and tourist behavior. Although this correlation is reflected most strongly in the daily behavior of wine lovers, it is discernible in their tourism behavior as well (Brown, Haviz, & Getz, 2005).

Wine is a hedonistic product by nature. It is directly influenced by its production space and is related to various lifestyles and lifestyle characteristics. Also, wine and tourism are interrelated since they often fulfill together the same lifestyle values. Thus, it is not surprising that wine consumers and wine tourists share similar socio-demographic profile, similar lifestyle characteristics, tend to identify themselves with similar values, and tend to have a wide knowledge in wine production and consumption. Moreover, wine tourists' travel motivations tend to center around wine experiences while on holidays and, hence, their spatial tourism behavior is determined by the location of wineries and vineyards. Therefore, understanding wine tourists' lifestyle characteristics, their wine consumption behavior, and wine tourism preferences, may improve their overall wine tourism experiences. This will also improve the marketability and profitability of this market segment for the benefit of wineries and all other tourism services in wine production areas.

## WINE IN ISRAEL

Grapes and especially wine grapes have a long history in the Land of Israel. The first commercial winery was initiated by the Baron de Rothschild in 1885, and in 1889 a winery was built in the village of Rishon Lezion. In 1892 the second Rothschild winery was erected in village of Zichron Yaacov. The wine industry in Israel has experienced many ups and downs because of geopolitics and economics (Sofer, 1967). Today, it is difficult to obtain accurate data about the Israeli wine industry because of a lack of coordination between the Israel Wine Board, the Ministry of Agriculture, the Export Institute and the Grape Growers Association. Nevertheless, the estimate is that about 36 million bottles of table wine are produced in Israel each year, reflecting an annual growth rate of 5%-10% during the past five years (Rogov, 2007).

According to Ministry of Agriculture data, the vineyard sector has undergone substantial changes since 1990. Vineyards have grown from about 4700 acres in 1990 to about 10,000 acres in 2007. Yield rose from 30,000 tons to about 55,000 tons in 2005, and is soon expected to reach about 60,000 tons. Spatially, planting has expanded in the cooler areas of the country – the Galilee, the Golan and the central hills. Increased vineyard area has also been accompanied by a greater ability among most of the large and mid-size wineries and in some of the smaller ones as well to handle more grapes (Harkabi, 2007, 2005; Raban, 2006).

The dramatic growth in vineyard acreage and in vineyard yields reflects the substantial change in Israel's wine market and wine culture in the past two decades. This change is reflected in different ways, not least among them the number of wineries in the country. When the state was established in 1948 there were 14 wineries, and in 1965 there were 19 (Sofer, 1967). In 1989 Israel had two boutique wineries – Meron and Margalit. The Carmel Mizrahi Wineries (Carmel Winery today) controlled the wine market then, taking in about 70% of the grape yield. In 2004, Israel had three especially large wineries – Carmel, Golan Heights and Barkan – and a total of 27 commercial wineries (wineries that produce more than 45,000 bottles per year), 10 of them producing more than 500,000 bottles annually. Today, the number of boutique wineries in Israel is estimated at more than 200. Many in this category are home wineries that produce only a few thousand bottles a year each, making it impossible to monitor the exact overall number (Israel Wines, 2008).

Another change can be seen in the varieties of grapes being planted, with an increasing presence of Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Shiraz and Chardonnay. In addition, quality varieties have also been introduced in Israel, such as Sangiovese, Pinot Noir, Viognier and many others (Harkavi, 2005, 2007; Raban, 2006). The changes in varieties requested by the wineries and the wines that are produced reflect the changes in the preferences of Israelis, who have moved from semi-dry to dry wines, from whites to reds, from simple to complex, and most importantly, to more quality wines (Rogov, 2007).

The expansion of the wine culture and its embrace by the Israeli population can be seen in other areas as well. Today, almost every restaurant offers a quality wine list that

includes Israeli and imported wines. In Israel wine courses on a variety of topics and at different levels are available in wine shops, wineries and even academic institutions. Today, Israel has its own dedicated wine magazine and many others have regular columns about wine. A number of Israeli web sites are dedicated to wine ("Israel Wines", "Bottle", "Sommelier" among others), and each year more books are published about wine in the Israeli context (Israel Wines, 2008).

Two studies have been conducted to date in Israel about wine tourism. A scientific study conducted by Jaffe, and Pasternak (2004) surveyed domestic tourists about previous visits to wine tourism sites and their intention to make additional visits, and incoming tourists about their intention to visit wine tourism sites in Israel. The researchers emphasize that in Israel, as in other small countries, wineries by themselves cannot serve as an attraction for large numbers of visitors and must be part of regional tourism development (Jaffe, & Pasternak, 2004). Another study, conducted at Ben-Gurion University, set out to identify important winery characteristics and wine district characteristics as perceived by potential Israeli visitors. It also aimed to identify segmentation bases which differed in terms of the level of importance attributed to winery characteristics and wine district characteristics. The study findings indicate substantial differences between study participants who visited wineries in the past and those who never visited wineries, between married and single participants, between those with children under age 18 and those without children in this age group, and between participants in different age ranges (Bin-Nun, & Cohen, 2008).

## Methodology

The study described in this paper examined whether a connection exists between socio-demographic characteristics, lifestyle characteristics and wine consumption characteristics on the one hand, and the consumer and spatial behavior of Israeli wine tourists and the nature of such a correlation, if it exists, on the other.

### STUDY AREA

The survey was carried out in wine tourism sites in areas identified with wine and wine tourism, between November 2007 and May 2008. The survey encompassed two different tourism seasons – winter and spring. This was done to allow a better representation of visitors and their characteristics. The survey was conducted in four wineries open to visitors, located in the Golan Heights and the Upper Galilee, in northern Israel: Golan Heights Winery, Bazelet HaGolan Winery, Odem Mountain Winery, and Galil Mountains Winery.

The wineries were chosen on the basis of size, years in existence, availability of touristic activities in the winery and a willingness to allow the survey to be carried out among visitors to the site. An effort was made to ensure that wineries with variety of characteristics were included. All of the wineries participating in the survey produce "Kosher" wine, and thus, they are not open to visitors on Saturdays and Jewish holidays.

## POPULATION DEFINITION

The sampled population was restricted to independent Israeli tourists (FITs). The decision to focus on independent visitors was based on the assumption that these visitors choose their destinations themselves and according to their socio-demographic status, interests and lifestyle, while visitors in groups often have no influence on the trip itinerary. International tourists were excluded from the sample due to being a very small component of the overall tourist flow to this region.

From preparatory interviews conducted with the winery operators, it emerged that independent visitors arrive as families or couples, many of them Israelis on vacation in the area. The winery operators agree that in general, the level of interest in wine is greater among independent visitors than among those on organized tours. Many of the latter are given a set itinerary and have no say in determining where they go. Independent visitors are also generally characterized as representing a relatively high socioeconomic cross-section (Dudi Reuveni, interview, January 1, 2008; Sarit Sachs, interview, February 22, 2008; Yishai Alfasi, interview, November 11, 2007; Yoav Levi, interview, November 11, 2008).

## DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURE, SAMPLING METHODS AND SURVEY INSTRUMENT

The study is based on a field survey carried out by means of structured self-administered questionnaires to elicit data on participants' socio-economic background, demographics and lifestyle. At the same time, information was collected about wine consumption, wine tourism consumption and the spatial behavior of the respondents. The number of questionnaires allotted to each winery was proportional to its size and its annual number of visitors. A random sample of visitors to the winery was selected during the survey period. All in all, the survey managed to obtain 254 questionnaires. The List of Values (LOV) methodology was used to obtain the perceived lifestyle values of each interviewee. The aim of this methodology is to evaluate fulfillment of values. It is based on an examination of only nine fixed values, in contrast to dozens or hundreds of questions and statements in other methods such as AIO or VALS (Urbonavičius, & Kasnauskienė, 2005). Of the nine fixed values, participants are required to select the two they consider most influential for them (Simpson, & Bretherton, 2004).

A main issue in tourism behavior is the motivations leading a person to take part in any tourist activity. The questionnaire contained questions regarding both "push" and "pull" factors. Push factors refer to tourists' motivation factors that shape their destination choice behavior. Pull factors refer to destination attributes that are appealing to tourists and make a destination more or less attractive.

Three main hypotheses were formulated for this study:

- a. A correlation exists between socio-demographic background and consumer and spatial behavior of wine tourists in Israel.
- b. A correlation exists between lifestyle characteristics and consumer and spatial behavior of wine tourists in Israel.

c. A correlation exists between wine related consumer behavior and the consumer and spatial behavior of wine tourists in Israel.

## Findings

Now that the framework for this study is set, the paper moves to report on the main findings and to their analysis.

### INTERVIEWEES' SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

Similar to other studies conducted around the world, this study also found that most visitors to wine tourism sites have a similar socio-demographic profile which is marked by high education and income levels, and employment in managerial positions, self employed and academia (see Table 1).

Table 1

#### SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

Characteristic	N	%	Characteristic	N	%
Gender			Monthly income in relation to average		
Men	132	52.8	Very high	83	32.7
Women	120	47.2	High	53	20.9
Total	254	100.0	Similar	50	19.7
Age distribution			Low	43	16.9
Up to 24	14	5.5	Very low	25	9.8
25-34	105	41.3	Total	254	100.0
35-44	69	27.2	Education level		
45-54	39	15.4	High school	21	8.3
55-64	23	9.1	Above high school	25	9.8
65 and older	4	1.6	Vocational	18	7.1
Total	254	100.0	Academic	190	74.8
Range 18-78	Median	35.50	Total	254	100.0
Mean 37.81	SD	11.174	Occupation		
Family status			Academic	58	22.8
Married	170	66.9	Free prof./ Technical	52	20.5
Not married	84	33.1	Management	50	19.7
Total	254	100.0	Clerical	18	7.1
Children under 18			Sales & services	30	11.8
Yes	115	45.3	Professional agriculture	4	1.6
No	139	54.7	Other professions	2	0.8
Total	254	100.0	Not professional	8	3.1
Area of residence			Soldier	8	3.1
Urban	199	78.3	Student	18	7.1
Rural	55	21.7	Other	6	2.4
Total	254	100.0	Total	254	100.0

\*Age groups and occupational categories were classified according to the Central Bureau of Statistics

From Table 1 it can be seen that most of the visitors are in the middle age groups (ages 25 to 44 constitute 68.5% of the sample), married with family (with children under age 18), living in urban areas. More than half of those surveyed responded that their income is high or very high in relation to the average, almost 75% have an academic education, and 63% of them are employed in academic, free self employed or managerial professions.

## LIFESTYLE CHARACTERISTICS

Respondents were given a list of nine leading lifestyle values from which they were asked to select the two main values applicable to them (see Table 2). It can be seen that the two values selected most often are "self fulfillment" and "fun and enjoyment in life." "Warm relations with others" is the third value in descending order and "feeling of achievement, accomplishment" is the fourth. These four values appear a total of 152 times (59.8% of the respondents) in pairs that include two of the four top values and another 93 times (36.3%) in pairs that include one of the other five values.

Table 2  
**LEADING LIFESTYLE VALUES**

Values	N	% of respondents	% of responses	Cumulative frequency
Self-fulfillment	160	63.0	31.5	31.5
Fun & enjoyment in life	154	60.6	30.3	61.8
Warm relations with others	43	16.9	8.5	70.3
Feeling of achievement, accomplishment	40	15.7	7.9	78.2
Security, protection	30	11.8	5.9	84.1
Excitement	23	9.1	4.5	88.6
Feeling of belonging	22	8.7	4.3	92.9
Self-respect	20	7.9	3.9	96.8
Respect from others	16	6.3	3.2	100
Total	504	200*	100	100

\*Each respondent was asked to choose two values

In leisure activities, a variety of leisure activities was examined as well as the frequency of participation in them (see Table 3). Aside from visiting or hosting family and friends, dining out is the most frequently performed leisure activity – 81.1% of the respondents reported they do so regularly or often. At the same time, hosting or visiting relatives and friends very often entails food and drink as well, so that the importance of culinary leisure activities receives additional support. Thus, dining at a restaurant often has an important social aspect. Other common activities are viewing a film at home and visiting a mall or shopping center. In other words, it seems that among the sampled interviewees there was a tendency to combine hedonism with social activities.

Table 3  
**PARTICIPATION IN LEISURE TIME ACTIVITIES**

Leisure activity	Regularly		Often		Sometimes		Not often / Never		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Visiting relatives or friends	95	37.4	126	49.6	30	11.8	3	1.2	254	100.0
Hosting relatives or friends	79	31.1	122	48.0	43	16.9	10	3.9	254	100.0
Dining at a restaurant	57	22.4	149	58.7	47	18.5	1	0.4	254	100.0
Viewing a film at home	55	21.7	55	21.7	121	47.6	23	9.1	254	100.0
Visiting a mall/ shopping center	23	9.1	84	33.1	100	39.4	47	18.5	254	100.0
Visiting the beach or pool	15	5.9	68	26.8	129	50.8	42	16.5	254	100.0
Viewing a film in the cinema	33	13.0	39	15.4	112	44.1	70	27.6	254	100.0

Table 3 CONTINUED

Leisure activity	Regularly		Often		Sometimes		Not often / Never		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Spending time in a bar/pub/club	27	10.6	55	21.7	84	33.1	88	34.6	254	100.0
Visiting a national park/nature reserve	4	1.6	41	16.1	127	50.0	82	32.3	254	100.0
Classical/modern dance performance	6	2.4	35	13.8	106	41.7	107	42.1	254	100.0
Theater	17	6.7	37	14.6	103	40.6	97	38.2	254	100.0
Outdoor picnic	6	2.4	27	10.6	131	51.6	90	35.4	254	100.0
Participating in workshop or club	20	7.9	33	13.0	94	37.0	107	42.1	254	100.0
Visiting a city park	5	2.0	26	10.2	110	43.3	113	44.5	254	100.0
Visiting a festival or theme event	2	0.8	15	5.9	127	50.0	110	43.3	254	100.0
Modern music concert	8	3.1	12	4.7	69	27.2	165	65.0	254	100.0
Visiting an amusement park	4	1.6	10	3.9	27	10.6	213	83.9	254	100.0
Classical music concert	7	2.8	4	1.6	34	13.4	209	82.3	254	100.0
Other	10	3.9	2	0.8					12	4.7

### WINE-RELATED CONSUMER BEHAVIOR

Included in this group are characteristics connected to the choice, purchase, appreciation and use of wine in daily life, not in the context of wine tourism. The most basic and important datum is the amount of wine consumed. The unit of measurement selected was glasses per week (see Table 4).

Table 4.

#### DISTRIBUTION OF WINE CONSUMPTION

Glasses per week	N	%	Cumulative frequency
0	18	7.1	7.1
1	65	25.6	32.7
2	36	23.6	56.3
3	36	14.2	70.5
4	29	11.4	81.9
5	14	5.5	87.4
6-10	29	11.4	98.8
11+	3	1.2	100.0
Total	254	100.0	100.0
Range	0-15	Median	2
Mean	2.83	S.D.	2.341

It appears that participants in the sample drink an average of 2.83 glasses of wine per week (120ml per glass), which translates into the consumption of 17.6 liters per year (23.55 bottles). This number is much higher than the annual average consumption of wine in Israel, which stands at 4-6 liters per person (Rogov, 2007).

In addition to quantity of wine, the various situations in which respondents consumed wine were also examined (see Table 5). It can be seen that the respondents consume wine at many opportunities – at home and outside. The lowest percentage of positive responses was recorded for work or business related situations, but it may be that not all of those surveyed encounter work or business circumstances that include wine consumption.

Table 5

**SITUATIONS IN WHICH WINE IS CONSUMED**

Situations	N	% of sample
Festive meals, with family or friends	234	93.6
Meals at restaurants, with family or friends	216	86.4
At family or special events	196	78.4
During trips in wine country	192	76.8
At home	168	67.2
During business/work meals at restaurants	93	37.2
At work/business events	78	31.2
Other	18	7.2

Two additional variables were examined: where the wine was purchased and the factors affecting the choice of wine. Regarding purchase site, respondents were asked to indicate where they usually purchase wine. The most salient fact is that almost half of those in the survey purchase wine in specialty shops (see Table 6).

Table 6

**PLACES WHERE WINE IS PURCHASED**

Place of purchase	N	% of sample	Cumulative frequency
Wine specialty shop	123	48.3	48.4
Supermarket, with other purchases	74	29.1	77.5
At the winery	25	9.8	87.3
From the importer, ordered by mail, internet or telephone	1	0.4	87.7
Direct from the winery, ordered by mail, internet or telephone	1	0.4	88.1
Other	5	2.0	90.1
I don't purchase wine	25	9.9	100
Total	254	100	100

In addition to objective factors, respondents were also asked for their subjective evaluation of several characteristics of wine related involvement: level of interest, level of knowledge, level of skill in wine tasting, handling and drinking, investment of time and investment of money. Responses were given on a 5-point Likert-type scale, where 1 indicated "low" and 5 indicated "high" (see Table 7).

Table 7

**DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONSES – SUBJECTIVE CHARACTERISTICS OF WINE INVOLVEMENT**

Characteristic	M	SD	Low		High		Not relevant			
			1, 2		3		4, 5			
			N	%	N	%	N	%		
Interest level	3.52	1.05	33	13.0	87	34.3	132	52.0	2	0.8
Knowledge level	2.78	0.97	88	34.6	107	42.1	57	22.4	2	0.8
Skill level	2.53	1.03	121	47.6	84	33.1	48	18.9	1	0.4
Time investment	2.62	1.00	108	42.5	92	36.2	51	20.1	3	1.2
Money investment	2.98	1.03	66	26.0	101	39.8	81	31.9	6	2.4

A Pearson correlation shows a moderate to strong positive correlation between interest and knowledge ( $r=0.637$ ,  $p<0.01$ ), a moderate positive correlation between interest and skill ( $r=0.553$ ,  $p<0.01$ ), and a strong positive correlation between skill and knowledge ( $r=0.778$ ,  $p<0.01$ ). At the same time, a t-test for paired samples shows that interest level is significantly higher than knowledge level ( $t=13.585$ ,  $p<0.01$ ) and than skill level ( $t=16.039$ ,  $p<0.01$ ), and that knowledge level is also higher than skill level ( $t=6.042$ ,  $p<0.01$ ). There is a moderate to strong positive correlation between investment of time spent and investment of money ( $r=0.681$ ,  $p<0.01$ ), and money investment level is significantly higher than time investment level ( $t=6.958$ ,  $p<0.01$ ). This might be interpreted as an initial stage where people prefer to spend time and money on drinking wine rather than on other related leisure type activities such as visiting wineries, learning about wine production, learning about the history and heritage involving wine etc.

### CONSUMER AND SPATIAL BEHAVIOR IN WINE TOURISM

This group included characteristics connected to the factors that encourage and attract wine tourism, as well as touring patterns and wine related tourism behavior. To examine the factors that encourage people to visit a wine tourism related site, respondents were presented with a variety of factors and were asked to indicate all those that were relevant to them (see Table 8).

Table 8  
**FACTORS ENCOURAGING WINE TOURISM (PUSH FACTORS)**

Factors	N	% of sample
To taste wines	206	81.4
To expand my knowledge about wine in general	157	62.1
To learn about the wine producing process	140	55.3
To get to know the area in which wine is produced	97	38.3
To meet people engaged in wine production	48	19.0
To learn how to taste and appreciate wine	37	14.6
To experience a new activity I have never done	37	14.6
To learn how to coordinate wine and food	27	10.7
To meet other people interested in wine	6	2.4
Other	20	7.9

The findings show that wine tasting is the main motivation for visiting wine tourism sites and especially wineries. The findings pertaining to subjective characteristics presented above, indicating that interest level is higher than knowledge level and skill level, can explain the other motivations that received high ratings – expanding knowledge about wine and learning about its production process.

Table 9

**FACTORS ATTRACTING WINE TOURISM (PULL FACTORS)**

Attraction factors	N	% of sample
Fits into the current trip itinerary	186	73.2
Desire to know the wines produced at the site	70	27.6
Previous familiarity with the wines produced at the site	60	23.6
Purchasing wines produced at the site	47	18.5
Recommendation by friends	46	18.1
Recommendation in newspaper / magazine / television / internet etc.	35	13.8
Tourist activities offered at the site	5	2.0
Other	12	4.7

It can be seen that trip itinerary considerations constitute the main component in the decision to visit a specific site. Other important factors are the desire to become familiar with the wines produced at the site or, alternatively, previous familiarity with those wines.

Examination of the respondents' wine tourism patterns included an examination of their history of visits to wine tourism sites in earlier visits to the same site and the consumer behavior characteristics connected to the present trip (see Table 10).

Table 10

**PREVIOUS VISITS TO WINE TOURISM SITES**

Response	N	% of sample
Previous visits to wine tourism sites		
I have visited wine-related tourism sites several times	118	46.5
I have visited a wine-related tourism site once before	58	22.8
I regularly visit wine-related tourism sites	15	5.9
This is my first visit to a wine-related tourism site	63	24.8
Total	254	100.0
Previous visits to the present site		
I have visited this site before	45	17.7
I have never visited this site before	146	57.5
Total	191	75.2
Participation in touristic activities at the site		
Sampling the winery's wines	223	88.1
Guided tour of the winery	190	75.1
Purchasing the winery's wines	130	51.4
Planning the trip and visit to the site		
Touring the area is the main reason and the visit to the site was planned in advance	127	50.0
Touring the area is the main reason and the visit to the site was not planned in advance	110	43.3
Visiting the site is the main reason for the trip and the rest of the trip was planned around it	17	6.7
Total	254	100.0

It can be seen that for about one quarter of the sample (24.8%) this is their first visit to a wine tourism site. 75.2% of the sample have visited wine tourism sites in the past, many have done so only once (46.5%) and a few do so regularly (5.9%), but less than one quarter of them (23.8%) have previously visited the site in which they completed the survey.

In keeping with the motivational factors for visiting wine tourism sites presented above, wine tasting is the most common activity engaged in by those surveyed. Second in popularity is the guided tour of the winery, an explanatory activity which also teaches participants about wine and how it is produced. More than half of those surveyed (51.4%) stated that they purchased wine as part of their visit to the winery. Four of those surveyed (1.6%) participated only in purchasing wine, in other words, their visit to the winery was specifically for this purpose.

Another interesting finding is that while about half of the respondents planned to visit the specific site, the entire area constitutes a main factor of attraction, and not necessarily the specific site. The wine site in which the survey was conducted constituted the determining factor in selecting the destination area for only 6.7% of the sample.

## Discussion

### THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC BACKGROUND AND THE CONSUMER AND SPATIAL BEHAVIOR OF WINE TOURISTS IN ISRAEL

Similar to other studies conducted around the world, this study also found that most visitors to wine tourism sites are people who share a similar socio-demographic profile, one that reflects high education and income as well as employment in managerial positions, the free professions and academia. At the same time, in matters pertaining to their consumer and spatial behavior during wine tourism activities, few differences were found among the visitor sample that can be explained by socio-demographic characteristics (see Table 11).

Table 11

**CORRELATION BETWEEN SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS AND WINE TOURISM RELATED CONSUMER AND SPATIAL BEHAVIOR**

Consumer & spatial behavior characteristics	Previous visits to wine tourism sites	Previous visits to the present site	Planning the trip & the visit to the site	Combining other tourism sites	Number of days of trip
Socio-demographic characteristics					
Income	r=0.277 p<0.001*	v=0.273 p<0.001*	v=0.144 p>0.05	v=0.155 p>0.05	v=0.126 p>0.05
Age group	r=0.229 p<0.001*	v=0.292 p<0.001*	v=0.164 p>0.05	v=0.141 p>0.05	v=0.164 p>0.05

Additional socio-demographic characteristics were also examined, such as education, age group and family status, but no significant relationships were found between them and the behavior characteristics detailed above. These findings correspond to the findings of Charters, and Pettigrew (2006) who noted that people manifesting high

involvement in their area of interest must have the free time and income needed to invest in that area.

The implication of the wine tourists' consumer and spatial behavior is that the first hypothesis of this study could not be substantiated. Although most of the visitors to the wineries can be characterized as having a high socio-demographic profile, a closer examination of the visitors themselves reveals that their profile exerts almost no influence on consumer and spatial behavior as part of their wine tourism activity.

### THE CORRELATION BETWEEN LIFESTYLE CHARACTERISTICS AND CONSUMER AND SPATIAL BEHAVIOR OF WINE TOURISTS IN ISRAEL

Lifestyle is a complex term and a central subject of study in and of itself. One of the aims of this study was to examine the lifestyle characteristics of wine tourists in Israel and their influence on wine tourism consumption and spatial behavior. A classification of values according to the LOV – List of Values indicated that the wine tourists surveyed have certain leading values, topped by the values "self-fulfillment" and "fun and enjoyment in life." This finding corresponds to the findings of previous studies according to which people choose leisure time activities that strengthen their value system (Simpson, & Bretherton, 2004).

In the present study, certain correlations were found between the leading values and wine tourism consumer behavior (see Table 12).

Table 12  
CORRELATIONS BETWEEN VALUES AND CONSUMER AND SPATIAL CHARACTERISTICS IN TOURISM

Consumer & spatial behavior characteristics	Previous visits to wine tourism sites	Planning the trip & the visit to the site	Combining other tourism sites	Number of days of trip
Socio-demographic characteristics				
Leading values	$r=0.108$ $p>0.05$	$v=0.175$ $p>0.005^*$	$v=0.078$ $p>0.05$	$v=0.164$ $p<0.05^*$

In terms of number of touring days, the salient fact is that of those who chose the two values "self-fulfillment" and "fun and enjoyment in life", 55.1% visited the winery as part of a two-day trip. As for planning the itinerary and visit to the winery, 58.2% of those who selected the two values "self-fulfillment" and "fun and enjoyment in life" and 55.6% of those who chose any two of the four leading values, planned the visit to the site in advance, while 50.5% of respondents whose chosen values included only one of the four leading values, did not plan their visit to the site in advance. Nevertheless, these correlations are not strong enough to imply that the leading values actually do affect the consumer and spatial behavior of wine tourists in Israel. Similarly, it was found that the attracting and encouraging factors as well as the touristic activities engaged in by visitors at the winery are not influenced by the visitors' leading values. An examination of the rating of motivations and attracting factors revealed that except for

a few isolated cases, these ratings among groups that chose different values were similar to the motivation and attracting factor ratings obtained from the sample as a whole.

Examination of the influences and correlations among the other lifestyle components – opinions and attitudes, areas of interest and leisure time activities – was limited because of how the issues were presented in the questionnaire. Nevertheless, the findings showed certain correlations between number of previous visits to wine tourism sites and the individual's view of others ( $r=0.270$ ,  $p<0.001$ ) and views about fashions and innovations ( $r=-0.340$ ,  $p<0.001$ ). Correlations were also found between number of previous visits and interest in fashion and design ( $r=-0.230$ ,  $p<0.001$ ) and in a healthy lifestyle ( $r=-0.167$ ,  $p<0.01$ ). As for leisure time activities, positive correlations were found between number of previous visits and frequency of participating in activities involving dining at a restaurant ( $r=0.220$ ,  $p<0.001$ ) and visits to nature sites (national parks and nature reserves) ( $r=0.209$ ,  $p<0.01$ ). As noted, various studies refer to wine as a product identified with fashion, innovation and a healthy lifestyle (Johansen, Friis, Skovenborg, & Grønbaek, 2006; Thach, & Olsen, 2004; Mitchell et al., 2000) but the results of this study did not find such a correlation.

The conclusion arising from analysis of correlations between these lifestyle characteristics and the consumer and spatial behavior characteristics of wine tourists is that the second research hypothesis was not supported. Correlations between lifestyle and wine related consumer and spatial behavior in Israel are evidently more complex and require further study.

#### **THE CORRELATION BETWEEN WINE-RELATED CONSUMER BEHAVIOR AND WINE TOURIST CONSUMER AND SPATIAL BEHAVIOR IN ISRAEL**

The fact that wine tourists are people who have an interest in wine in their daily lives is not surprising and corresponds to previous studies which found the wine tourists' profile to be similar to that of the wine lovers' profile (Sparkes, 2007; Getz, & Brown, 2006a; Carlsen, 2004; Mitchell et al., 2000; Getz, 2000; Dodd, 1995) and wine tourism to constitute a part of the wine related lifestyle (Brown et al., 2005; Brown & Getz, 2005; Mitchell et al., 2000). One of the aims of this study was to characterize the nature of the correlation between wine consumption and daily life involvement with wine, and wine tourism consumer and spatial behavior, based on the hypothesis that such a correlation does exist.

To facilitate an effective examination of the correlation between wine related consumer behavior and wine tourism consumer and spatial behavior, a measure was constructed that weighs most of the variables connected to wine related consumer behavior. The measure is calculated by computing the sum of the following variables for each respondent:

- a. Total number of situations in which the person consumes wine
- b. The number of glasses of wine the person consumes per week
- c. Relative frequency of wine consumption
- d. Average of the five wine-related self evaluative subjective characteristics (level of interest, knowledge, skill, investment in time and investment in money).

Based on this calculation, each respondent received a raw score for level of wine related involvement. Scores ranged from 2.0 to 28.2, with a mean of 14.02 and a standard deviation of 4.82. Based on the involvement score, respondents were divided into three groups reflecting their level of wine involvement – low, medium or high (see Table 13).

Table 13

**CHARACTERISTICS OF WINE INVOLVEMENT BY LEVEL OF INVOLVEMENT**

Variable	Level of involvement	N	%	Mean	SD	Minimum value	Maximum value
No. of wine consumption situations	Low	87	34.25	2.85	1.435	0	5
	Medium	96	37.80	4.91	1.362	1	7
	High	71	27.95	6.45	1.039	3	7
	Total	254	100.00	4.63	1.935	0	7
No. of glasses per week	Low	87	34.25	1.03	0.655	0	2
	Medium	96	37.80	2.45	1.045	0	5
	High	71	27.95	5.54	2.483	2	15
	Total	254	100	2.83	2.341	0	15
Frequency of wine consumption	Low	87	34.25	2.99	0.814	1	5
	Medium	96	37.80	3.79	0.679	3	5
	High	71	27.95	4.42	0.552	3	5
	Total	254	100.00	3.69	0.898	1	5
Mean of subjective characteristics	Low	87	34.25	2.18	0.773	0.00	4.20
	Medium	96	37.80	2.92	0.561	1.20	4.20
	High	71	27.95	3.63	0.522	2.00	4.60
	Total	254	100.00	2.87	0.850	0.00	4.60
Score for level of wine involvement	Low	87	34.25	9.06	2.55	2.00	11.80
	Medium	96	37.80	14.07	1.460	12.00	16.80
	High	71	27.95	20.04	2.368	17.00	28.20
	Total	254	100.00	14.02	4.817	2.00	28.20

From the table it can be seen that as wine involvement rises, there is an increase in the number of situations in which respondents consume wine, the amount of wine they consume, the frequency with which they consume wine and their self evaluation regarding subjective characteristics. Spearman coefficients reveal a significant moderately positive correlation ( $r=0.290$ ,  $p<0.001$ ) between level of wine involvement and number of previous visits to wine tourism sites.

Results of a  $\chi^2$  test show a significant dependence between level of wine related involvement and previous visits to the specific site ( $\chi^2_{(2)}=12.465$ ,  $p<0.01$ ). A Cramer contingency coefficient shows a moderate positive correlation ( $V=0.222$ ,  $p<0.01$ ) between level of wine related involvement and previous visits to the specific site. 66.2% of high wine involvement respondents and 56.3% of medium wine involvement respondents visited wine tourism sites more than once in the past. For 39.1% of those in the low involvement group, this was their first visit to a wine tourism site, as opposed to 5.6% among those in the high involvement group. Similarly, 31.0% of those in the high involvement group previously visited the site in which they completed the survey in contrast to 10.3% of those in the low involvement group.

These findings correspond to previous studies in which it was found that wine is highly involved in the lifestyles of those visiting wineries, (Brown, & Getz, 2005); they consume wine regularly, have average to high knowledge about wine, and visit wineries and wine districts several times a year (Mitchell et al., 2000). In contrast, the correlation found between wine involvement and repeated visits to wine tourism sites is not in consonance with the contention that wine tourists should not be expected to revisit the same destination, as they can purchase the wine produced at that destination in other places, and because they are innovative people by nature, they seek new venues to visit (Brown et al., 2005).

In contrast, no significant correlation was found between level of wine related involvement and spatial behavior variables in wine tourism – the distance between their community of residence and the site ( $v=0.096$ ,  $p>0.05$ ) and including other tourism sites in the trip ( $v=0.030$ ,  $p>0.05$ ). In terms of factors encouraging and attracting tourism, participation in touristic activities at the site was found to affect level of involvement. In this case, a simple examination of the percentage of positive responses to each question shows the differences between those of the various levels of involvement in terms of encouraging and attracting factors and of touristic activities in the winery.

Regarding factors encouraging wine tourism, wine tasting was ranked as the most important among those at all levels of expertise, but factors lower in the rankings differed by involvement level. While expanding knowledge about wine was ranked second for those of high and medium level involvement (72.5% and 66.7% respectively), it was ranked third among those of low involvement level (51.8%). In contrast, experiencing a new activity ranked fifth among those in the low involvement level group (25.3%) but eighth among those of medium and high levels of involvement (10.4% and 8.7% respectively).

In examining attracting factors, one factor – fitting into the current trip itinerary – ranked first at all levels of involvement (which corresponds to the findings about a lack of correlation between spatial behavior and level of wine related involvement). In contrast, while those with high level of involvement ranked previous familiarity with the wines produced at the site as the second most important attracting factor (40.0%), those with medium and low levels of involvement ranked the desire to become familiar with the wines produced at the site as the second most important factor (35.1%) as an attracting factor. Previous familiarity with the wines produced at the site was ranked by those of medium level of involvement in third place (24.5%) and in fifth place by those in the low involvement group (10.6%). This finding indicates that those with high wine involvement are most familiar with the area. Another important factor is the purchase of wines. This factor was ranked third in importance among those with high level of involvement (22.9%), in fourth place among those with a medium level of involvement (23.4%) and in sixth place among those with a low level of involvement (10.6%). This finding corresponds to the finding about different levels of participation in various winery activities among different levels of involvement. While only 38.4% of those with low level of involvement purchased wine as part of their visit to the winery, 71.8% of those with high level of involvement did so.

The measure created for wine involvement proved, first and foremost, that people of different levels of interest in wine participate in wine related touristic activity, in this case, visits to wineries. This corresponds to the findings of previous studies indicating a wide range of wine tourists (Alant, & Bruwer, 2004; Mitchell et al., 2000; Johnson, 1998).

Although the spatial behavior of those surveyed in the present study was not found to be affected by their level of wine related involvement, a correlation was definitely found between level of wine related involvement and wine tourism consumer behavior. This correlation can be seen on two different levels – quantitative and functional. Quantitatively, it was found that those with a higher level of wine involvement have a richer wine tourism history. Accordingly, it can be said that people who engage in more wine tourism activity are people who consume more wine, with greater frequency, and in a broader variety of situations. These people also hold a higher self estimation about the subjective characteristics level of interest, knowledge, skill, investment of time and investment of money. Functionally, differences were found between the factors encouraging and attracting wine tourism at the different levels of wine related involvement. These differences apparently result from the greater familiarity with the wine world manifested by those with a higher level of involvement and from their self estimation about subjective characteristics.

Finally, in light of the presence at the wineries of visitors with different levels of wine involvement, and the correlations found between level of involvement and quantitative and functional characteristics of consumer behavior in wine tourism, it is possible to partially accept the third research hypothesis, that a correlation exists between wine related consumer behavior and consumer and spatial behavior in wine tourism.

## Conclusions

In answer to the research question, no clear correlation was found between socio-demographic or lifestyle variables and the consumer behavior of wine tourists in Israel. On the other hand, it was found that wine tourist consumer behavior in the northern area of the country is apparently correlated mainly with wine related consumer behavior, both quantitatively and functionally. In terms of spatial behavior, a number of findings emerged to indicate that the choice of the north of the country as the respondents' tourist space is of great importance in this case. The distance of the study area from the areas of residence of most of the visitors to the wineries, and the fact that the visits are part of a two or three day vacation and not a day trip, indicate that this can be considered a specific pattern of tourism. It is quite possible that in other areas of the country a very different pattern of visits to wineries and to wine tourism attractions would be found. The conclusion to be drawn is that in the tourism pattern in the area under study, visiting a wine tourism attraction is part of the tourist experience which includes additional components, all of which taken together can satisfy the motivations and needs of visitors in this given regional framework. However, while it is evident that the wineries meet tourist expectations, it was not proved in this study that the visit to the winery constitutes significant wine tourism in which the winery is

the sole or central attraction of the entire trip. It may be that the choice of the Golan Heights and Galilee as a tourist space greatly influenced the study findings, making the findings and conclusions relevant to this area only. In order to draw conclusions for Israel as a whole, similar studies should be conducted in other important wine areas in Israel.

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**Interviews:**

Dudi Reuveni – Manager of visitor center, Golan-Heights Winery, interview, January 1, 2008.

Sarit Sachs – Manager of visitor center, Galil Mountain Winery, interview, February 22, 2008.

Yishai Alfasi – Owner and wine maker, Odem Mountain Winery, interview, November 11, 2007.

Yoav Levi – Owner and wine maker, Bazelet Ha'Golan Winery, interview, November 11, 2007.

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