

PDO CERTIFICATION: A BRAND IDENTITY FOR WINE TOURISM IN CATALONIA (SPAIN)

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Abstract: The aim of this study is to analyse how PDO certification (Protected Designation of Origin) is being used to develop oenological tourism in rural areas in the Autonomous Community of Catalonia (Spain). We will also consider how marketing technologies can be applied to increment the value of the wine landscape, society and economy in rural and inland areas. A search for bibliographic information and field work was carried out in four specific regions. The results obtained are: the confirmation of the increase in the creation of oenological routes in PDO regions; the diversification of places and monuments linked to the sector of the wine that originate new tourist products; the increase of the purchasing power of the inhabitants of the rural area to have income from other economic sectors; and, the value of the PDO brand to promote a product, a territory, a culture in an agrarian society.

Keywords: Terroir, wine tourism, brand identity, Protected Designation of Origin, Catalonia (Spain).

Resumen: El objetivo de este estudio es analizar cómo se utiliza la certificación DO (Denominación de Origen) para desarrollar el turismo enológico en las zonas rurales de la Comunidad Autónoma de Cataluña (España). También consideraremos cómo se pueden aplicar las tecnologías de comercialización para aumentar el valor del paisaje vitivinícola, la sociedad y la economía en las zonas rurales y del interior. Se ha realizado una búsqueda de información bibliográfica y trabajo de campo en 4 regiones específicas. Los resultados obtenidos son: la confirmación del aumento en la creación de rutas enológicas en las regiones DO; la diversificación de lugares y monumentos vinculados al sector del vino que originan nuevos productos turísticos; el aumento del poder adquisitivo de los habitantes del área rural para obtener ingresos de otros sectores económicos; y, el valor de la marca DO para promover un producto, un territorio, una cultura en una sociedad agraria.

Palabras clave: Terruño, enoturismo, marca identitaria, Denominación de Origen, Cataluña (España).

1. Introducción

The PDO certification (Protected Designation of Origin) guarantees the geographical origin and also the quality of a wine. The wine must be made from certain varieties and with previously established viticultural, oenological and ageing techniques. In this way, both the producer and the consumer gain security with regard to the final product that will be sold on the market. In a way, some agricultural regions are recognized nationally and internationally with the quality mark demarcated by a PDO, but in addition, in Spain, each of the PDOs has been specified with respect to the others to ensure that each one is unique (Esteban, 2017). This would be the case of the wine regions of the Autonomous Community of Castilla La Mancha with healthy, organic, quality wines specific to each PDO to satisfy consumer demand (Ruíz, 2013). Likewise, we have the case of Rueda, the first PDO in the Autonomous Community of Castilla y León, dating from 1980, with its distinctive features created by combining elements of the traditional industry with new winemaking techniques that have transformed the territory economically, socially and culturally (Fernández, 2017). There are therefore studies of both Spanish Autonomous Communities as a whole as well as the of wine regions included in a PDO that have analysed the use of this quality mark to boost economies in rural, inland or depopulated regions, some are as well-known as Jérez-Xerry-Sherry or Yecla-Jumilla. The fact is that the PDO becomes an identity mark of a product that differentiates it from others on the market. At present, the regions protected under a Protected Designation of Origin are using the recognition of this figure of quality to develop other economies, products, and businesses. For that reason, many tourist routes are framed in a region determined by a PDO, so that the tourist recognizes that place as the origin of a quality product (Fernández and Vidal, 2020). But in addition, that region can use that product to show other patrimonies, products or services –agricultural or not– to tourists who travel to the place.

An example of this would be the region of Priorat: with two wine PDOs (Priorat and Montsant), it is making other agricultural products known (Siurana olive oil is also recognized with a PDO although it is less known), its religious culture (the three monotheists: Judaism, Christianity and Islam), its protected natural landscape (Sierra de Montsant) among other aspects. In the case of tourism, the Priorat region was first recognised as a Priorat wine tourist route, and is now a landscape route where aspects such as gastronomy (restaurants), oenology (wineries and vineyards on terraces built on mountain slopes), religious and cultural heritage (sundials, Romanesque religious architecture in Siurana...) are valued. In addition, the festivities and folklore (local annual festivities of patron saints and saints who protect agricultural activities such as Saint Isidore, gastronomic fairs, pilgrimages...), literary and musical contributions (for example those of the singer Lluís Llach or those of the poet Miquel Martí i Pol) or the natural landscape of the Sierra del Montsant where sports and leisure activities can be carried out (climbing, hiking, cycling...), spiritual retreats or even astrological activities should also be mentioned.

Therefore, regions use cultural and historical aspects in order to promote themselves in different economic sectors. For this reason, it is important to know and understand the history of the region at the level of society, territory, economy and culture. This is what is discussed in the first part of this article, while in the second part, the wine sector is analysed in depth to introduce the third section in which marketing techniques that use the PDO brand to create tourism synergies will be analysed. As indicated by Nogué and San Eugenio Vela (2017), unique landscapes can be used, such as those in which quality wine is produced, to promote a territory, because at the end of the day, the emotions that the landscape itself transmits and that the tourist perceives have a great role to play in a territory. In this way, a gastronomic product can be valued when visiting the unique territory in which it has been produced and the landscape can be perceived when savouring this distinctive product. Current communication techniques seek to transmit experiences, sensations and emotions in order to market a product, a service or a territory, as is the case in the tourism sector.

2. Materials and Methodology

Catalonia has an important wine producing sector. Their grapevine surface and the altitudinal limits of its cultivation have varied markedly throughout history in response to physical and human causes. Actually, the sector has experienced a wine revolution that contributed to the development of the rural regions inside Catalonia. This wine revolution is due to different factors, from the modernisation of the agrarian sector to the creation of new industries in relation with wine production, like wine tourism. Wine regions have used marketing techniques to expand the commercialization of high value, quality products that are mostly protected by the brand and identity of PDO certification. In Catalonia there are as many as 12 PDO certifications. These wine sub-regions are based on geographical aspects, as the variety of soil, elevations, climate in such a small area means that the variations can create unique interpretations of the same grape varietal. For this reason, a first bibliographic review is required, analysing the statistical, tourist and geo-

graphical data of the wine regions. Other sources evaluated are the legislation of the wine sector at the different administrative levels that affect it (Catalonia, *Llei 15/2002*; Spain, *Ley 24/2003*; and Council Regulation, *No 1493/1999*, as the main regulation, but taking into account its later modifications such as Spain, *Ley 6/2015*, or Council Regulation, *No 1151/2012*). Also, the different European and worldwide charters and recommendations in the tourism sector, in agricultural or mountain territories and in cultural landscapes. And finally, the visit to tourist information offices (local, regional, provincial and autonomous community), as well as the consultation of leaflets, information brochures, guides and specialised magazines together with the display of tourist promotion campaigns and websites of tourist destinations, travel agencies or experience seekers.

PDO regions have been used over the last few years to create wine tourism routes which also include cultural and gastronomic activities. Various wine experiences are offered so that each visitor finds the most appropriate to their interests. Combined with its amazing history, and the fact you can ski or swim, go sightseeing or hike in such a small radius makes Catalonia a must visit for wine tourists. These issues are the main reasons why Catalan wine regions were selected as the geographical area of the study. It has done fieldwork in the last five years in four agricultural regions of the interior of Catalonia: the tourist experiences in the Priorat (personalised guided tour by car through different villages in the region, wine tasting in two wineries, traditional meal in a typical restaurant, visit to several monuments and interviews with people from the tourist sector); the wine and cava route of the Penedes (work was carried out in a very important cava cellar as a tourist guide and visits were made to the Wine Museum, to villages of the PDO, trekking through the vineyards was undertaken and enquiries were made at tourist information points); the activities carried out in Alella (a visit to one of the most innovative wineries and an interview at the tourist information point, visits to and conversation with the locals in several villages); and the evolution of the Cistercian Route (multi-day tourist package with visits to craft centres, monasteries, villages, hiking and traditional meals in the region). First information was sought on the activities carried out, assessing the various options, choosing to conduct a wine tourism experiences in order to know better the wine tourism sector based on PDO wine regions.

3. The origin of wine in Catalonia will be the origin of Catalan quality wine

The Mediterranean reveals an active consumption and commerce of agrarian products, especially those that are included in PDO certification. These quality products are promoting gourmet tourism of great added value in rural and inland areas which have a wealth of heritage, but are outside the most important economic circuits. The grapevine is a plant which is cultivated in specified areas in the world. The wine producing sector is one of the most interesting Mediterranean features because it shows the evolution of the rural landscape, the agrarian economy and the human culture of the Mediterranean region, like Catalonia. In fact, many wine regions have been recognized by UNESCO as cultural regions to be protected and disseminated as World Heritage Sites.

3.1. Impact of the physical and human factors on the vine cultivation in a Mediterranean region

While the physical factors are essential for growing vines, they are not determining factors. Llobet (1950) analysed all factors in detail in his studies and stressed that agriculture, or more accurately speaking, the land use, changed not so much as a result of natural causes but because of economic, religious and political circumstances. In Catalonia, the northern limit of the grapevines and wines has shifted throughout the region's history as a result of human factors, rather than physical factors (Figure 1).

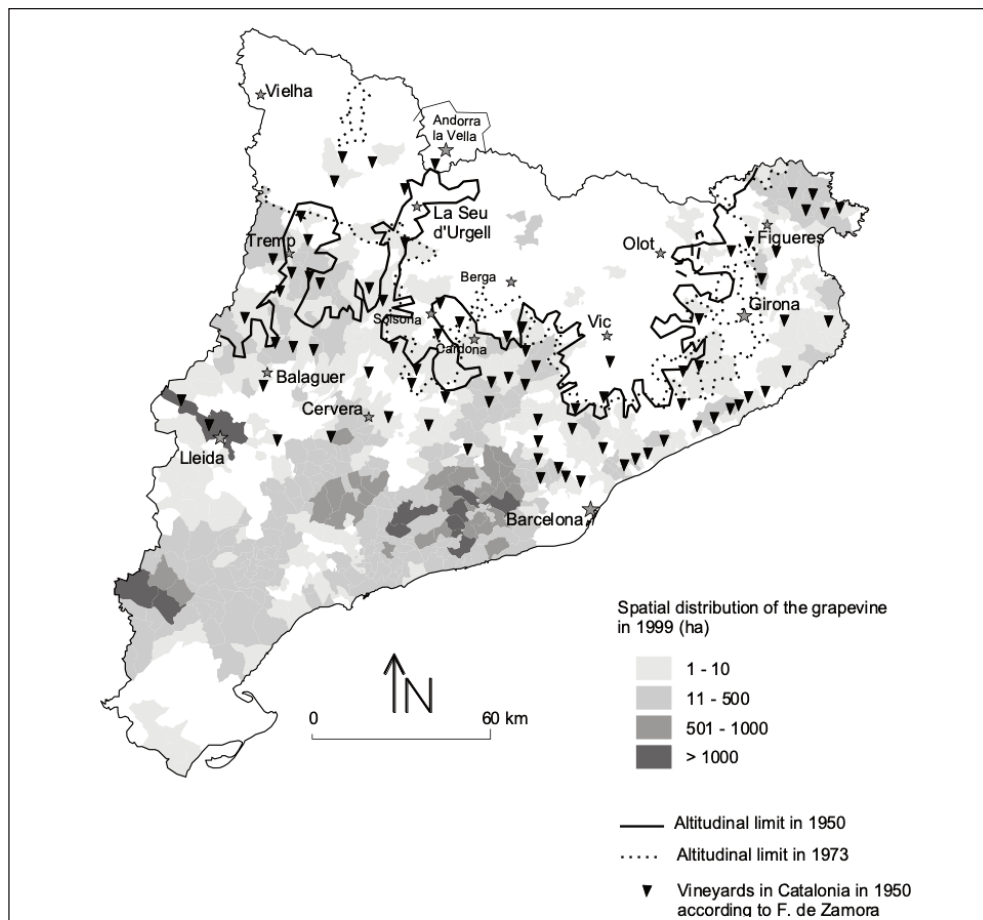


Figure 1. Spatial distribution of the grapevine and the altitudinal limits of its cultivation in different periods.

Source: Mollevi, 2005.

3.1.1. Physical factor is not a decisive factor

The climate, among other physical factors, has a strong effect on the grapevine crop. While the very existence of grape vines in certain places is conditioned by physical factors, the latter also ensure variation in wine production from one region to another and similarly from one year to the next. However, there is a further aspect to be borne in mind (Llobet, 1950). Today, grapevines can give very good results practically anywhere thanks to developments in viticulture and the latest oenological practices. A wine will never be the same as another produced in a different area, since the variation in any one factor –climate, terroir, grape variety– ensures that the wine produced will be different. What's more, the wine produced in one area in one particular year will also be different from the wine produced in this same area one year later as the conditions are bound to vary, however minimal the variation may be. This is perhaps what gives grape vines and wines their fascination.

3.1.2. The influence of the economic situation in the vineyard surface

The cultivation of the vine for wine production was first introduced in Catalonia by the Greeks in the 6th century BC (Huetz de Lempis, 2009). However, it was the Romans who did most to promote viticulture in the present lands of Catalonia for purposes of trade. Wine did not initially constitute a product of basic necessity, so if the farmers grew vines and produced wine it was because there was a fair number of wealthy consumers prepared to pay for its production costs. Furthermore, it should be remembered that at that time it was the only known stimulant, as coffee, tea, tobacco and chocolate were still unknown in Europe. In addition, wine often served as a substitute for water, since as it had undergone fermentation it transmitted neither infections nor diseases (Molleví, 2005). Grapes and wine are of low nutritional value, and they have a significant contribution to local diets, for example in winter. Thus, wine was used as a medicine. The vines could be planted in marginal lands and it is a factor for soil conservation because there are productions in semi-arid environments that could not have another use.

A good example of the fact that vines can be grown outside their optimum ecological conditions for economic reasons can be found at the end of the 19th century (Llobet, 1950). At a time when French vineyards were being attacked by the phylloxera plague, consumers of French wines ordered wines from Spain. In this way, the cultivation of vines spread throughout Catalonia, from the Pyrenees to the river Ebro, along the coast and inland (Figure 1). When phylloxera reached Catalonia, many of these vineyards were abandoned and the uncultivated terraces today bear witness to this.

3.1.3. Religion and its impacts on the production of wine and in the vine crop surface

The limits to the growth of the vines may also reflect religious factors. Wine, together with oil, has traditionally been considered as a purifying element and it was used in ritual offerings in ancient primitive religions. Similarly, the production and consumption of wine was granted to the social groups that wielded most power. The importance attached to wine was due to the very process of wine making: long, mysterious and laborious (Huetz de Lemps, 2009; Martínez, 1991). But, at the same time, some religions forbade the consumption of wine for its effects on personality. So, the cultivation of grapevines was tied to the religion of its population.

The arrival of the Moslems in Catalonia saw a decline in the region's viticulture, though grapevine was not eliminated altogether. For Moslems, the consumption of alcohol was forbidden, but they ate the fruit of the vines in the summer and for the winter months they dried the fruit and ate raisins. However, as Vilar (1988) points out a certain amount of respect did exist between the conquerors and the conquered. And although there was fighting between the Christians and the Moslems, there were also exchanges of various kinds. At last of Middle Ages, the advancing Christian forces founded monasteries in these conquered territories and with them they started cultivating vineyards to produce wine used to celebrate the Eucharistic (Martínez, 1991). Also, the expansion of vineyards during the 9th and 10th centuries AD was due to the eating habits and the demands of the urban areas and trade, as well as serving as a means of collecting feudal income (Garcia-Oliver, 2004). If the peasant farmers planted vines, they were given tax relief. Furthermore, as wine consumption was tolerated among the population, farmers were encouraged to plant vines to increase wine production. They often cultivated land that would otherwise have been unproductive, and, in this way, they managed to increase the area dedicated to farming.

3.1.4. The influence of local, national and European politics on vineyard cultivation

Government decisions can also have an impact on the area of land dedicated to viticulture. Spain's entry to the European Economic Community (EEC) in 1986 was to have major repercussions on the wine-producing sector at both the state level and in the individual autonomous communities. A series of measures were adopted aimed at reducing the area with vines and increasing the production of bottled wine, in an attempt at boosting quality and strengthening the PDO certification (Catalunya, 9 July 2002, España, 11 July 2003 and Council Regulation, 14 July 1999).

In the specific case of Catalonia, the measures had three effects: first, there was a reduction of the area with vines, whereby the 91,000 hectares recorded in 1986 had been reduced to 60,000 by 1999 (Molleví, 2014) and were recorded at being 53,000 in 2019 (Institut d'Estadística de Catalunya, 2019). A second repercussion was the concen-

tration of viticulture in those areas best suited to cultivating vines, above all in the Penedes area and in the south of Catalonia (Terra Alta, Montsant, Priorat, Conca de Barbera). A third and final effect was the increase recorded in the production of good quality wines, with an increase in the number of PDO certifications (Figure 2).

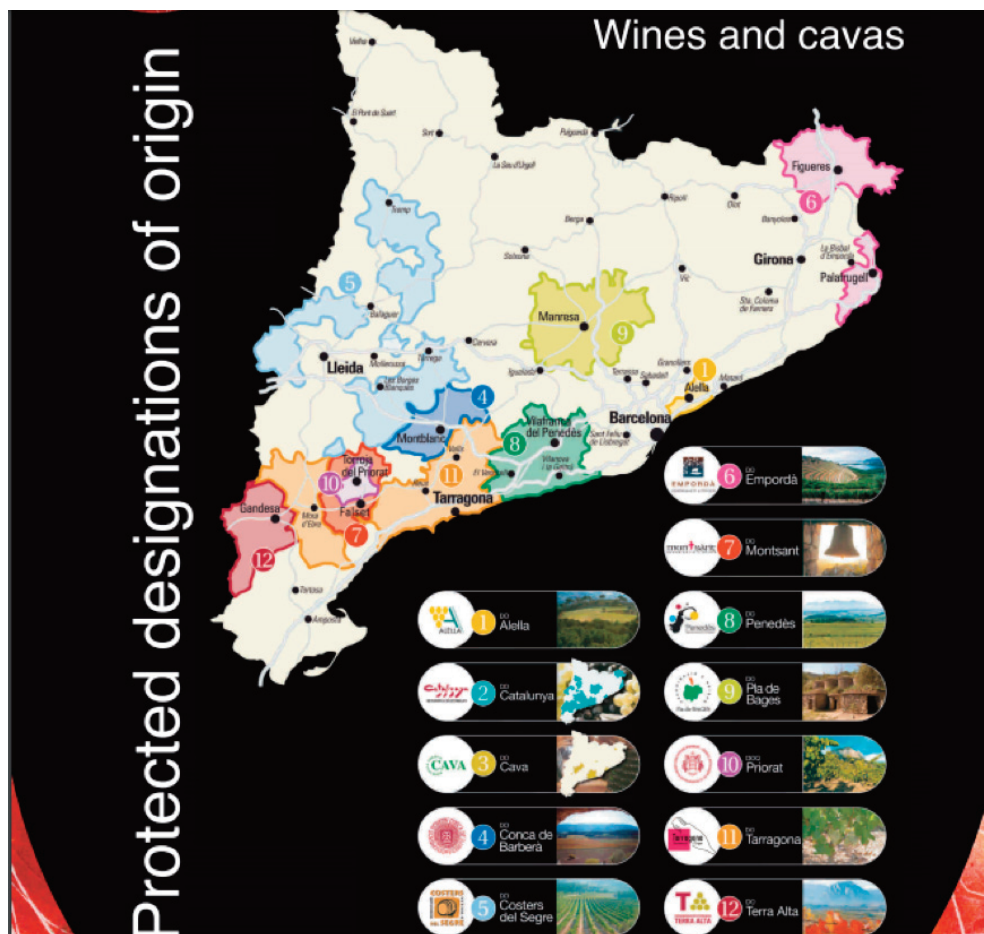


Figure 2. PDO certifications in Catalonia.

Source: http://incavi.gencat.cat/web/.content/or_organismes/or01_incavi/or01_02_denominacions_origen/documents/fitxers_estatics/mapaetiquetesdo_wines_cavas.pdf

When comparing Figures (1 and 2) it can be seen that the surface of the PDO certifications overlap the surface on which the vineyards had been established in different historical periods. In 1986, there were just five, while today in 2019 there are now

eleven, as well as the Cava PDO which operates at national level (Molleví, 2014), although 98% of cava production is in Catalonia.

In figure 2 you can see the value given to the logos of each of the Denominations of Origin, as you would do with a brand. This image is very commercial as it associates a landscape with a logo that is the emblem of that Denomination of Origin. Some of the logos are related to the vine (Bages, Penedès), others to wine (Costers del Segre), others to history (the Roman amphoras of the PDO Tarragona), the religious origin (Priorat was born with the location of the Monastery of Scala Dei) or with more identifying aspects (the four bars that symbolise the flag of Catalonia in the PDO of the same name and that associate the colour of the wine with that of the blood with which these lines were drawn on a golden shield according to legend – Gran Enciclopèdia Catalana).

4. The revolution in vine and wine sector in Catalonia

Wine is showing itself to be much more than just a simple agrarian or economic product while its social and cultural facets are opening up new and ever widening horizons. Wine allows regions hitherto considered marginal to develop. It is a dynamic sector and it offers many opportunities to the inland rural regions of Catalonia which are isolated from the rich urban zones. In 2019, the Institut d'Estadística de Catalunya (Institute of Statistics of Catalonia) provided the following data: the vineyard surface was 53,699 hectares, basically for wine production and especially in the Barcelona and Tarragona regions, in the southeast of Catalonia. With a production of 430,155 tons of grapes, the Catalonia wine production in 2019 was 3,249,197 hectolitres of wine (2,657,722 in wines of PDO). The wine PDO industry generated €285 million, with a consumer market share of 38.74% (Institut d'Estadística de Catalunya [Institute of Statistics of Catalonia], 2019).

“Wine culture” can be understood as all those aspects related to the world of the vineyards and wine, from the growing of grapes, and the production of different types of wine, to wine tasting, wine traditions, popular customs and even its associated advertising and finances. The very existence of wine gives rise to a distinctive life style, creating differences between social groups with higher or lower purchasing powers and even between groups in which consumption is permitted and those for whom drinking wine is prohibited.

Many manifestations of viticulture practices have disappeared; others have changed, while new ones are emerging. For example, wine is no longer considered a simple drink as it used to be, but rather it has become a product to be tasted. In Catalonia, cava remains the drink for family celebrations, but now it is also used to celebrate victories on the sport fields and in political elections. Wine continues to be used in religious and civil ceremonies, such as the launching of ships. The vine plant and wine continue to

be present in sculptures, paintings and works of architecture, but they also appear on stamps, lottery tickets, at fairs and in advertisements. Viticulture is developing and, at the same time, it is opening up whole new areas of activity for the regions in which it is practiced. Alongside it, other economic sectors are beginning to develop such as the food industries and tourism.

4.1. The new technologies applied in the agrarian sector

In the cultivation of the vines new technologies are being applied that allow profit margins to be increased and the impact of the variability in the grape harvests to be minimised. These new technologies included computerised management systems, control of plagues via satellite or aerial photography and laboratory analyses to determine the variety of vine that will give the best results in each soil type (Molleví and Miró, 2018). In bringing about this modernisation of the sector, a major capital investment has been essential together with the concentration of firms, since a single firm has to manage the whole process from selecting the type of vine to plant, to the advertising and sales in the national and international markets via Internet. These major investments, unimaginable just a few years ago in the primary sector, are aimed at the production of good quality wines and high added value and the entire process is controlled and subject to evaluation. The reduction in per capita wine consumption has been compensated by an increase in more expensive, good quality, bottled wines.

4.2. The physical resources as impetus for develop wine sector

Physical resources are essential for viticulture, although new developments in agrarian practices have reduced their influence. The specific character of a physical resource can be useful for producing a region's specific wines. This is the case of the Priorat region whose soils (*la licorella*) mean that the vines produce a small amount of grapes, but these grapes have a high sugar concentration. Thus, their wines are not great in volume, but they are intense in flavour and have a high level of alcohol. Similarly, Catalonia is a land of wines: it produces white wines, roses, reds, cava and sweet wines. Catalan wine is rich in quality and diversity and this is another factor that gives it character.

The existence of wide areas of vineyards has created a unique landscape which has only just recently come to be appreciated. Measures are now being taken to protect it, following the lead set by other European countries such as France and Portugal. The wine producing regions of Priorat and Penedes are drawing up a "Landscape Charter" (Molleví and Miró, 2018). An original idea, which has been adopted in other countries, is to obtain recognition for a wine-producing region as "The World Heritage" for their cultural and natural importance. The idea introduced by UNESCO offers international recognition: "Tokaj Wine Region Historic Cultural Landscape" in Hungary, "Alto Douro

Wine Region” in Portugal, “Jurisdiction of Saint-Emilion” in France, “Landscape of the Pico Island Vineyard Culture” in Portugal, “Wachau Cultural Landscape” in Austria and the recently “Lavaux, Vineyard Terraces” in Switzerland are some examples.

4.3. The human resources for the expansion of the wine sector

Human resources are today of great importance, since they are capable of innovating and being creative, of converting something into a resource or investing in the land. In an increasingly globalised world the characteristics of a region that can mark it out as being unique are acquiring more and more importance. Knowledge is equally important, which means that it is essential that the future entrepreneurs of the wine sector should have a good knowledge of agrarian practices, of oenology and even of business administration. The first oenologists have frequently had to train outside Catalonia, in the USA or France. Consequently, the development of an Oenology degree course in Tarragona was more than necessary. These new oenologists create their own wines, which have given rise to the concept of “oenologist’s wine”. These differ from the region’s wines as they have been designed by one person, who is responsible for the whole process of wine production with the aim of producing wines that carry the marks of their own identity.

4.4. The role played by the government

Trade fairs seek to bring a product to a wider audience and, although often aimed at professionals, others are open to the general public. Thus, it is not unusual to see a section dedicated exclusively to wine in the Tourism Fair. A pavilion featuring wines was also present at the Gastronomy Fair. A more specialised fair is the “Wines and Cavas of Catalonia Show”, in which all the wines of Catalonia are on show, and which is promoted by the administrative body with responsibility for Catalan wines, the INCAVI. The “Wine Cities” on a European scale is a body that seeks to defend the patrimony of wine production and to bring it to a wider audience. It organises tourist activities and gives talks that bring together those interested in the wine producing sector.

The various levels of government play an important role in the management and control of the wine market. Today, Catalonia has three levels of administration, one for each level of government (local, National and European administration): Council Regulation (EC) No 1493/1999 of 17 May 1999 for Member States of the European Union, Ley 24/2003 de 10/7/2003 for Spanish state and Llei 15/2002 de 27/6/2002 for the vineyard surface of Autonomous Community of Catalonia. The governments protect the wine producing sector because it helps preserve the landscape, maintains settlements in the most inhospitable zones and it improves the farmers’ quality of life. One of the tools they make use of is the DO, which provides the farmer, the wine producer and the consumer with certain guarantees.

4.5. The cultural and social innovations that affected the vine and wine sector

With growing levels of education and rising purchasing powers, interest in knowing more about wines and about the advantages of the moderate consumption of alcohol have increased. Wine tasting, meetings of connoisseurs, seminars and the collecting of objects related to the world of wine production have become popular.

Furthermore, wine has become linked to “Mediterranean culture”, the cultural elements shared by the people who live along the shores of the Mediterranean basin. A culture that has its own cuisine, the “Mediterranean diet”, defended by doctors and scientist communities, which recommend the daily consumption of a glass of red wine with meals (Fundación Dieta Mediterránea).

Viticulture is also present in the mass media – newspapers, magazines, radio and television. The media make documentaries describing the world of wine, the “culture of wine”, the strength of the sector and the tourist routes for exploring the wine producing regions.

The wine firms also run their own advertising campaigns sponsoring cultural and sports events, like “Castell de Perelada Show”, with concerts, operas and theatre plays and “Regata Freixenet”, sailing boats championship.

4.6. The new tourism of wine: the enotourism

Tourism in Catalonia is very important, as in 2019, 19.4 million international tourists were received making Catalonia the Spanish Autonomous Community with the largest number of visitors, 23.1% of the total number of international tourists to Spain (INE). The volume of foreign tourist expenditure was in excess of 20 million euros that came from the United Kingdom, Germany, France, the United States and Italy (INE). Catalonia offers different types of tourist activities: from sun and beach to cultural and urban tourism not forgetting summer and winter sports (Tolosa, 2018). Likewise, rural, agricultural and inland tourism is being promoted by public bodies as it allows the economic benefits of the tourism sector to be deseasonalised within the territory throughout the year and in different sectors, with ecotourism having a great weight due to its extensive presence in the Catalan territory. Then, the wine sector also has a big impact on the economy in general as it opens up avenues in many other sectors. One of the most obvious examples is tourism, and even “enotourism”, that is, tourism centred on wine (includes visiting vineyards and wineries, wine festivals and events, tasting and consumption of wine).

Enotourism is not a recent form of tourism. For decades, wineries have been visited and people have been interested in learning about the process of making different types of wine (white, red, rosé, sparkling and vintage), and many wineries have been presented at international conferences and exhibitions (Eliás, 2006). Wine tourism

or enotourism would be defined as a type of tourism within the framework of rural tourism (the scenic surroundings where it is located) and cultural tourism (elements resulting from human action) and an interest in the culture of wine (Eliás Pastor, 2006). Like any economic sector, it evolves and transforms: it began with simple visits to vineyards, wineries, buildings related to wine production such as monasteries and museums, but today it includes experiences such as the making of a wine by the tourist him or herself, music festivals in vineyards on summer nights or family celebrations on wine estates. Therefore, as indicated by Lignon-Darmaillac (2009), the wine routes that have been created are related, in the first place, to rural wine-growing regions within the framework of the protection of a seal of quality and, in the second place, because they are more cultural routes in which the cultivation of the vine and the production of a singular, identity-based wine different to that of other regions prevails, such as Bergerac, Jurançon and Bourdeaux in the case of France and which are related to the previous definition: rural, cultural and wine. In the case of Catalonia, and as Salvat (2018) indicates, there are wine routes of a PDO such as Alella, of a gastronomic and heritage region of historical origin such as the Cistercian Route based on the installation of monasteries of that order that promoted the production of wine for the celebration of their masses, or of a wine route based on its cultural and scenic surroundings aspects such as Priorat, but in which there would be two PDOs (Priorat and Montsant).

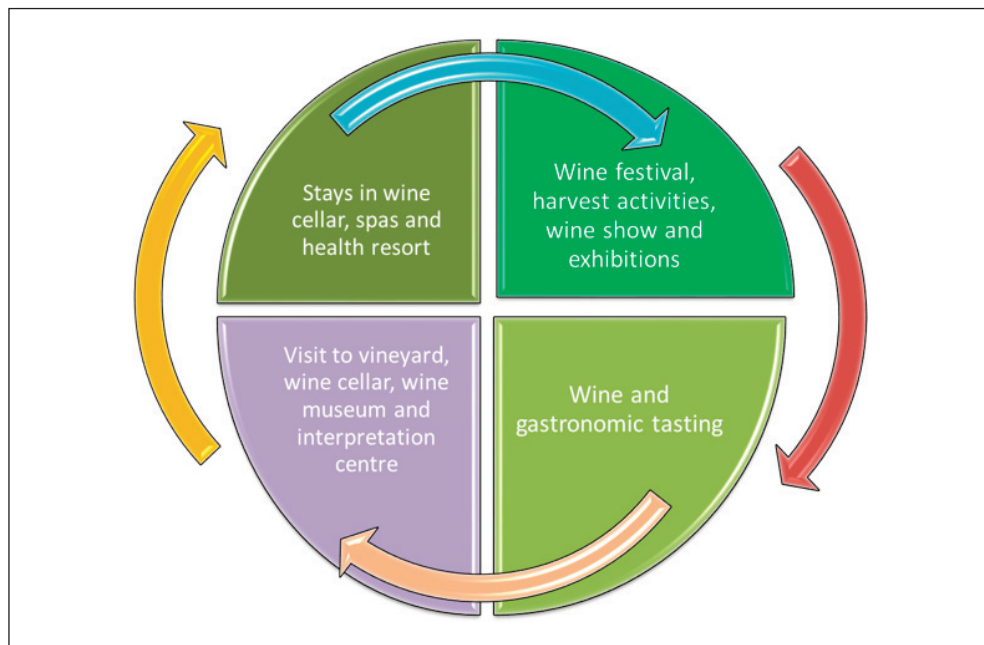


Figure 3. Enotourism cycle implications.

Source: Personal elaboration.

Today, and as can be appreciated on the webpages of the Catalan Tourist Board of the Generalitat de Catalunya, there are tourist routes that are solely centred on wine production, like “Penedès Wine and Cava Route” and “PDO Catalonia Route”, and others that are centred on aspects related to the sector, like “Conca de Barbera Modernist Cellars Route”, “Cistern Route” and “Catalonia Bus Touristic”. These routes, products and tourism resources are usually promoted at fairs and congresses both specialized for professionals in the tourism sector and popular for potential visitors at a national and international level and of which some have been visited by the authors of this article. There are also two Wine Museums which, though small and attracting very few visitors, show the traditional tools used in cultivating vines such as pruning shears, harvesting baskets and ancient wine presses. They also contain panels explaining the modern-day process of wine production and the differences between the twelve PDO certifications of Catalonia. As for rural tourism, it is centred on weekend breaks for families and groups of friends, seeking peace and quiet and contact with nature. Thus, a family or group of friends can stay on a vineyard, take part in the harvesting, make their own wine, walk among the vines and attend courses in wine tasting, as well as doing other outdoor activities such as adventure sports, horse riding and trekking (Lignon-Darmaillac, 2009; Tolosa, 2018).

5. PDO is an identity brand for wine tourism

In terms of marketing, the Catalan Tourist Board has been developing different actions to promote and commercialise both national and international tourism. In 2018, it was responsible for carrying out more than 500 activities, including communication campaigns, diffusion and digital marketing; broadcasting of promotional videos that have received different international awards, familiarisation trips with tour operators, media and influencers on social networks or presentations and attendance at fairs and congresses, among others (Tolosa, 2018). One of the markets that has been promoted the most abroad (France, Benelux), but also in the rest of Spain, has been the gastronomic tourist market.

As indicated by Armesto and Gómez (2005), PDO can be used to identify a product such as wine in a territory. It is a brand that gives a special value to a product by linking it to a society in a specific territory. If used well, it can develop economies in that territory: the creation of a tourist destination brand linked to an internationally known quality product, the development of new economies based on experiences and leisure, the use of marketing to create tourist destination brands and the use of new marketing technologies in the wine regions. As far as gastronomy is concerned, both authors point out that the identification of an agricultural product with a terroir (a concept that relates the territory with the human use it as been put to by means of an artisan action) has been used to create quality brands with the aim of promoting inland and mountain agricultural regions with new economic sectors, such as tourism.

Likewise, Salvat (2018) indicates that in Catalonia there has been an increase in the interest of winemakers and wine production companies in carrying out wine tourism activities. They perceive it as a way of increasing sales, building customer loyalty, entering a new niche market and positioning the brand. Furthermore, it should be taken into account that these wineries are located in rural areas, with an increase in depopulation and ageing of the resident population, or other times with urbanisations that are only occupied a few weeks a year and have problems due to a lack of municipal resources. The existence of this wine tourism allows us to get to know a unique territory, one of the most beautiful made by humankind, which changes with the seasons and allows many types of perceptions (Martínez and Molinero, 2019). It is not only a cultural but also a natural heritage, embellished by the characteristics of each wine region, with different architectural, monumental, mountainous, or sea-front structures. The wine-growing landscape is a diverse and unique cultural landscape, but at the same time, a natural landscape embellished by the surrounding environment defended by the European Landscape Convention (Martínez and Molinero, 2019) and by the different Landscape Charters and agricultural protection policies promoted by the European Union (Salvat, 2018). A territory with a strong, personalised identity that entrepreneurs and farmers will try to capture in the brand of their gastronomic products.

5.1. PDO certification regions as PDO wine tourist routes

The Spanish Association of Wine Cities (ACEVIN) created an enotourist network in 2008 known as “Rutas del Vino de España” (Wine Routes of Spain) which has been established in regions with consolidated PDOs. This network has been growing over the last ten years to reach the 31 current Spanish PDO wine routes (Fernández and Vidal, 2020). In the case of Catalonia, which has 12 PDO, there are only two routes ACEVIN: Enoturisme PENEDES which includes the PDO of Cava and Penedes present since the foundation of the network and Lleida-Costers del Segre which includes the PDO of the same name. It should also be pointed out that until 2017, there was a third Catalan PDO: Empordà-Costa Brava (ACEVIN, 2020). The importance of ACEVIN lies in the fact that it publishes annually, and has done so since its creation, data of all visits to wineries and wine museums as well as data of visits for each of the routes which gives a (partial, but valuable) vision of the situation of wine tourism in Spain. The total number of visitors to these Spanish oenological routes in 2019 was almost three million when in 2008, it did not reach one million which shows not only the importance of a tourist product that is usually found in sparsely populated areas, agricultural, and difficult to access and far from most tourist circuits, but also its positive progression in its ten years of operation (Salvat, 2018).

Up until 2016, Penedès Wine Tourism was the most visited Spanish route, but in 2019, it dropped to third with 370,556 tourists; the most visited route over the last three years has been Marco de Jérez; Ribera del Duero, for the first time, has become sec-

ond (ACEVIN, 2020). Together, the Spanish routes belonging to the association make an economic benefit valued at 85,5 million euros. The Catalan association's other route received 45.573 tourists, which means that Catalonia contributes 14,9% of the total number of Spanish wine tourism visitors with only two routes, being the fourth most visited Autonomous Community by wine tourists, followed by Andalusia (3 routes), Aragon (4 routes) and Castile and Leon (8 routes). However, the data provided are from the ACEVIN routes, but it should be taken into account that in Catalonia there are many other wine routes which are not included in the association (they have an annual cost and strict guidelines must be followed).

Molleví and Miró (2018) worked on the example of the Penedès wine region, which included three PDOs: Catalunya, Penedès and Cava. Enoturisme PENEDES first received the name of "Ruta del cava y del vino del Alt Penedes" (Cava and wine route of the Alt Penedes) because only the visits to wineries and vineyards of the region of Alt Penedes, dedicated both to the production of wine and cava, were contemplated. This is due to the fact that in this geographical area there were three family businesses that had expanded to new international territories at the end of the last century and, therefore, had known about the existence of the wine tourism sector. We are referring to Codorniu, Freixenet and Bodegas Torras, who set out to sell their products in California (USA) without experiencing setbacks or using intermediaries and who ended up producing other wines there and learning about the idea of not only selling wine, but also selling experiences in the vineyards for tourists, with the installation of gift shops and merchandising with the company's brand (t-shirts and sweaters, specialized books, wine decanters, sets of glasses and toys). However, a few years ago, it became necessary to extend the enotourist route to include wineries located in other areas of the Penedes PDO (Baix Penedès and Garraf). It was also used to increase the enotourist experience by adding other products and services of interest (using the wineries as a convention centre or for family celebrations such as weddings with catering services). In this case, in addition to being able to visit vineyards, cellars and cavas, other assets of tourist interest were added to the route such as buildings of heritage value (the headquarters of the Museum of Wine Cultures of Catalonia, popularly known as Vinseum, created in 1945 in Vilafranca del Penedès is the old Royal Palace of the Crown of Aragon which dates from the 12th – 13th centuries), protected natural spaces where sport activities may be carried out before or after visiting the wineries, other establishments of agricultural products such as chocolate and emblematic festive celebrations such as the Fiesta de la Filoxera.

Taking advantage of the fact that the route benefits from the presence of two railway stations with regular services with the city of Barcelona, there are several options of combined tickets to visit wineries, museums and establishments on round trips from Barcelona by train. Thus, it is an alternative for tourists who visit Barcelona, but can have a day to travel to the metropolitan wine region and learn about the culture of wine. There is also a tourist coach which leaves Barcelona in the mornings for this PDO of Penedés wine with a visit to three wineries.

Therefore, in this case, the PDO has permitted the existence of a network of tourist products and services that allow a quality product and the territory in which it is elaborated along with other relevant aspects of the community that produces it to be known.

5.2. The use of experiences and leisure tourism in PDO areas

The Alella PDO is one of the oldest wine regions in Spain, with a Greco-Roman origin (Molleví, 2005). The existence of the PDO has permitted it to survive, as it is a peri-urban area located north of the city of Barcelona. It has only 227 hectares of vineyards, making it one of the smallest PDOs and produces around 4,000 hectolitres of wine a year. There are almost 50 oenologists and nine wineries that produce wine, specifically white wine. Its landscape is a beautiful wine-growing territory, with vineyards forming green lines along the valley until it reaches the Mediterranean Sea. There has been great pressure on this rural land with attempts of urban expansion in recent decades, as it is cheap land and located near the capital of Catalonia (Molleví, 2019). The actions that have been taken to protect the land until now have been linked to local administrative management, to the social movement of the citizens of Alella, to the existence of the PDO and to the promotion of wine tourism, based especially on the creation of leisure and experience products and services (Tolosa, 2018).

The PDO Alella wine route stands out for the commitment and union of all those who make it up. All the organisations, winery owners, winegrowers, hoteliers and citizens come together to organise events throughout the year and to carry out many different activities for all types of public: gastronomy workshops (cheese, paella), wine tasting courses, activities for discovering vineyards, hiking, cycling, horse-riding, activities for children and families, weekends and private visits to hotels and wineries, wine therapy and relaxation activities, sporting activities, cultural experiences (theatre, music, concerts), parties and art exhibitions (Molleví, 2019; Tolosa, 2018).

In this way, wine producers can teach visitors what their work consists of, explain the value of the product they produce, highlight the quality of their product, in such a way that by making themselves known in an educational and recreational way, they transmit the need to conserve this wine-growing landscape and promote the conservation of this landscape and heritage.

5.3. The use of marketing linked to tourist destination brand

As previously mentioned, agri-food products have become a tourist resource (seeing how a cheese, wine or sweet is made) which has eventually led to a tourist experience (giving the tourist the possibility to make that cheese, wine or sweet) in rural,

inland or mountain regions far from the areas most populated by tourists, which in turn allows for the promotion of that agricultural product which can only be produced there (Armesto and Gómez, 2005; Lignon-Darmaillac, 2009). Moreover, the label on a bottle of quality oil, a qualified wine or another agricultural product with an authorised seal for its unique value can make a tourist feel a desire to get to know that agricultural region in order to taste those quality products in situ (Fernández, 2019).

In their article published in 2016, Molleví and Fusté discussed the example of the evolution of a tourism brand based on gastronomic, historical and cultural aspects that made it possible to promote a rural and inland tourism destination. La Ruta del Cister created in 1989, has been structured around three monasteries: Vallbona de les Monges, Poblet and Santes Creus and it quickly became a territorial tourist route that has made the three Catalan regions in which they are located known: Urgell, Conca de Barberà and Alt Camp, respectively. The three monasteries allow us to delve into the landscape, gastronomy and heritage of these destinations, not only into the agrarian landscapes, but also into the societies that have created them. La Ruta del Cister includes places of interest as varied as the towns of Les Borges Blanques (Theme Park of Oil), Montblanc (where it is believed that the events that gave rise to the Legend of Saint George, patron saint of Catalonia, took place during the Middle Ages) and Valls (nerve centre of the Gastronomic Festival of the “caçot” and of the Castellars, Intangible Heritage of Humanity since 2010, UNESCO).

When commemorating the 25th anniversary of the La Ruta del Cister, it was noted that since 1989 more than six and a half million people had visited the route, starting in 1989 with 268,967 people, a figure around which the annual tourist presence has been maintained (Molleví and Fusté, 2016). The activities carried out in the 30 years of operation have been gaining in diversity and importance, starting as cultural tourism to become a form of more complex tourism today which not only includes cultural, religious, gastronomic, sports and nature activities, but others provided by leisure service companies such as hotels and restaurants as well. It is noteworthy that for its 25th anniversary, the logo of La Ruta del Cister was changed substantially and instead of the names of the three monasteries appearing, the three Catalan regions in which each of them are located were highlighted, showing the figure of a triangle that is the resulting design of the three regions on a map. In other words, the cultural and religious character of the 1989 logo has been replaced by the territorial and tourist destination of 2015. The reason is clear: now, on the route, by highlighting the territory, all the factors that are located in the destination are encompassed: heritage, culture, society, nature. In this way, we can emphasize that for the three regions the key indicators are gastronomic, enotourist, cultural, natural, economic and social and that they are these that have allowed the territory to be revitalized, for tourism to be promoted and for the economic development of some regions of the agrarian interior, located in places far from the tourist attractions of the coast and cities to be encouraged. In this way, PDOs as representative as five wine products (Catalunya, Cava, Conca de Barbera, Costers de Segre and Tarragona) and three gastro-

conomic products (Calçot de Valls, Les Garrigues and Torró d'Agramunt) were also included, among other possible quality agricultural products such as cheeses, oils and sausages.

Finally, it should be indicated that this action to commemorate these 25 years organized by the public administration had the effect of increasing the number of visits to the monasteries (4%) as well as to the other establishments, services of information and tourist activities. It also allowed this La Ruta del Cister to be further promoted by encouraging an increase in enquiries and the sale of joint tickets that the Organising Body had launched, based on joint tickets to the three monasteries and other heritage establishments, as well as reductions in tourist activities such as visits to wineries, caves or museums.

5.4. The new technologies applied to the wine sector

In 2016, a programme was launched on Catalan Autonomous Television (TV3) with the aim of promoting the tourist potential of the Autonomous Community of Catalonia. The interesting thing about this format was that the country was made known through the eyes of foreign tourists (guests). Because what it sought was to encourage inland tourism, in other words, for the inhabitants of Catalonia to discover that they could do tourism at home. Its name was "Catalunya Experience" and they were episodes of 50 minutes.

As a result of this programme, which was on screen for two seasons, the Internet platform "Experience Catalunya" was launched, with the link "<https://experience.catalunya.com/>" and in five languages: Catalan, Spanish, English, German and French. Three areas can be accessed from this platform: destination according to tourist brands (for example, Barcelona, Costa Brava, Costa Daurada, etc.), activity type (Gastronomy and Oil Tourism, Wine Tourism, Adventure and Sport) and the time of year or date of interest. Once selected, there is a series of leisure activities and experiences to be carried out as a couple, with friends or family, among other options, and with different prices: from 0 Euros to more than 1,000 Euros. Gastronomic experiences, extra services including airport pick-up or private transport, gourmet activities or exclusive experiences are offered.

This platform, created and managed by the autonomous public body of the Catalan Tourist Board, offers tourist products and services provided by private companies that offer various tourist products and services, from guided tours, entrance tickets to museums, baptisms, to adventure activities such as climbing or scuba diving, private routes that combine visits to different PDO wineries and guided visits to cultural monuments or natural parks with accommodation and transport services included for two or three days.

Likewise, Catalunya Experience is "the concept under which the Catalan Agency of Tourism is presented in social networks. The aim is that it becomes a meeting point between Catalans, to share knowledge and become prescribers of the destination, and

visitors who can explain the experiences lived during their trips to Catalonia” (Agencia Catalana de Turismo). Since 2009, this online activity has been promoted by the public administration using Facebook channels (promotion, offers, discounts, etc.). In addition, there are a number of tools that can be used by tourists and businesspeople who use this medium to promote themselves: Twitter (using hashtags to give updated and instantaneous information about the tourist offer in Catalonia), Instagram (from which tourists can capture representative images of Catalonia, publish them and share them), YouTube (a tool for viewing and sharing experiences, feelings and activities in the Catalan territory) and Flickr (where the best snapshots taken are collected and classified by themes, value, impact, quality or artistic nature, among others).

Therefore, the new media are being used by both public bodies and private companies in a search for cooperation with the aim of promoting the territory and the economic sector in the case of regional public administrations and for sales and creation of products in the case of companies.

6. Conclusions

The wine producing sector in Catalonia is a very important economic sector because it has a great impact on the social and cultural spheres. Wine production has been present in Catalonia for centuries, but that its presence and value has diminished or increased due to religious (Christianity/Islam), political (entry into the EU), economic (low profitability) or social (cooperatives) issues. The wine producing sector is the third most important sector of the Catalan agro-alimentary industry. Catalonia produces only top quality wine and is the first Spanish quality wine producer (Molleví, 2014).

The interest of the administrations in the vine crop is due to the fact that grapevines are a culture that allows good yields, avoids desertification of the population on a territory and favours the survival of a characteristic landscape. The particular attention of the administration to the sector of wine is due to the fact that the wine production in Catalonia allows the creation of new industries and revitalises others such as tourism. Although the physical factors are very important to explain the location of the wine industry in Catalonia, other cultural and social factors explain the different historical periods of the culture of the wine sector in Catalonia.

The fact that quality products are protected in a PDO certification allows us to differentiate and highlight that product in the market. A product can be the catalyst for the promotion of a whole region in other economies such as tourism. In the moment in which the territory of a PDO is used as a mark of identity to create a tourist route, value is being given not only to the initial product, but also to the society that has created it and continues to produce it as well as promoting the entire environment in which

it is being produced. Other factors can be strengthened around a protected, quality product that favours a series of economic synergies that allow the areas outside the most dynamic economic areas of Catalonia to develop.

New realities of oenological tourism focused on the world of experiences and its export to other agricultural products such as olive oil, cheeses or sausages can be further explored in future research.

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