

The Potential of Olive Oil For Creative Tourism Experiences in The Northern Region of Portugal

O Potencial do Azeite Para Experiências de Turismo Criativo na Região Norte de Portugal

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Abstract/ Resumo

In a context where constant demand for new tourism-related experiences supplies the emergence of a new offer, tourists encounter the 'rural world' looking for new and memorable tourism experiences (Murgado, 2013). Tourists' motivations and behaviours have changed over the years, and today, their expectations are enormous and diverse (Alonso & Krajsic, 2013), while increasingly looking for environmental, cultural and heritage-related experiences. In this context, rural-based regions stand out, given the opportunity to contact with nature and with the traditions of communities (Partidário, 2003), in particular with food and local gastronomic traditions (Stewart, Bramble & Ziraldo, 2008). This context links local products, food, gastronomy, and tourism, a perfect symbiosis, with the rural-based regions providing opportunities to the development of various creative activities and unique experiences, as it is the case of olive oil and tourism.

Based on a literature review, and on a content analysis of websites and social media (of olive oil tourism-related activities), this study aims to analyse the potential of olive oil to the development of new Creative Tourism experiences, while contributing to sustainable development of tourism in rural-based areas. The geographic context is the northern region of Portugal, where the olive oil production has economic and social importance and where the tourism in rural re-

Num contexto em que a constante procura por novas experiências turísticas contribui para o aparecimento de novas ofertas, os turistas procuram o "mundo rural" à procura de experiências diferentes e memoráveis. As motivações e comportamentos dos turistas têm vindo a alterar-se ao longo dos anos e atualmente, as expectativas são, cada vez mais, maiores e diversificadas, com destaque para a procura de experiências relacionadas com a Natureza, Cultura e Património. É neste contexto que as áreas rurais se destacam, dadas as oportunidades para que os turistas contatem com a Natureza e com as Tradições das comunidades locais, em particular, com as tradições gastronómicas. A relação entre os produtos locais, a gastronomia e turismo constitui uma simbiose perfeita em áreas rurais, considerando o seu potencial para o desenvolvimento de diferentes atividades e experiências, como é o caso do azeite e do olivoturismo.

Tendo por base a revisão da bibliografia e a análise de conteúdo de *websites* e de redes sociais (de atividades de olivoturismo), este estudo tem como principal objetivo analisar o potencial do azeite para o desenvolvimento de experiências turísticas criativas e para o desenvolvimento turístico sustentável de áreas rurais. O contexto geográfico deste estudo é o norte de Portugal. Nesta região, a produção do do azeite é, particularmente, importante em termos, económicos e sociais, e o turismo tem captado um crescente in-

gions has gained increasing interest and demand, creating an opportunity for the development of new creative experiences.

Keywords: Creative experiences, Olive Oil Tourism, North of Portugal

JEL codes: Z310, Z320, Z330

teresse e procura turística, o que constitui uma clara oportunidade para o desen-volvimento de novas experiências turísticas.

Palavras-chave: Experiências Criativas, Olivoturismo, Norte de Portugal

JEL codes: Z310, Z320, Z330

1. INTRODUCTION

The profile of tourists has changed over the years. Currently, tourists travel more, prefer short trips, are increasingly demanding, have different expectations (Alonso & Krajsic, 2013), and seek new experiences and new destinations (Murgado, 2013). It is also worth highlighting the appreciation of memories that result from these experiences (Faizan et al., 2016), the growing interest in culture (Tussyadiah & Fesenmaier, 2009), traditions and customs, nature, the rural environment, (Partidário, 2003; Alonso & Krajsic, 2013), in particular for traditional cuisine based on local products (Stewart, Bramble & Ziraldo, 2008). Gastronomy reflects a heritage, a social, cultural and landscape history of a people (Brunori & Rossi, 2001), so, more and more, local gastronomy and agricultural products are seen as an attraction and motivation for tourists to visit regions and/or localities (Stewart et al., 2008), particularly in rural areas.

The search for experiences in rural areas (Alonso, 2010; Millán et al., 2014; López-Guzmán et al., 2016) and supply of activities and products/services around local products have been particularly crucial for the dynamisation and sustainability of rural areas, characterized by desertification, unemployment rates and demographic imbalances (Campón-Cerro et al., 2017). For example, wine tourism that contributes to the economy, diversification, and sustainability of rural areas, to the promotion of agriculture and local products, and to the permanence of people in rural areas (Hall, 2004; Byrd et al., 2016). Another more recent example is Olive Oil Tourism, based on olive oil, a product of strong traditions, deeply rooted in the culture of different countries, such as Portugal, Italy (De Salvo, 2013) and Spain (López-Guzmán, 2011), and strongly associated with gastronomy. Olive Oil Tourism is already recognized

as a tourist product (Millán-Vázquez de la Torre, Arjona-Fuentes, & Amador-Hidalgo 2017), with a high potential to complement the activity of production and commercialization of olive oil, to create new employment opportunities, to preserve the traditions associated with olive oil, and to the existence of new companies, products and experiences (Alonso & Northcote, 2010; Campón-Cerro et al., 2017).

The olive tree and the olive oil can also be analysed in the context of Creative Tourism. As acknowledged the literature, Creative Tourism gives visitors the opportunity to have meaningful experiences (Binkhorst, 2007), to learn more about the local skills and traditions (Richards & Wilson, 2006), and to engage with local people and local culture (UNESCO, 2006:3; Hull & Sassenberg, 2012:92; Richards & Wilson, 2006:1218; Richards, 2011). Thus, and once the olive tree and oil allows visitors to learn about different folk traditions linked to the cultivation of olive trees, for example, and to participate in gastronomic activities featuring olive oil as the main attraction (Millán-Vázquez de la Torre et al. 2017); one can argue that Olive Oil Tourism also represents opportunities for the development and promotion of creative tourism experiences in rural areas.

However, in spite of this recognition, Olive Oil Tourism is still underdeveloped in some regions with a strong tradition in the cultivation of the olive tree and olive oil (Vlontzos & Duquenne, 2007; Orgaz et al, 2017), in particular concerning the supply of experiences, as in the northern region of Portugal.

Give the above context; this study aims to analyse the potential of olive oil for the development of new tourist experiences in the field of Creative Tourism and the sustainable development of tourism in rural-based areas. The geographical context of the study in Portugal, in particular, the northern region of the country.

A literature review and a content analysis were conducted on Olive Oil Tourism, and Olive Oil tourism supply, in particular in websites and social networking platforms, Facebook and Instagram, in national and international contexts. The analysis was made to companies and entities with responsibility for promoting olive oil and its related activities, which appeared in the first three pages of the search engine Google.

The structure of the paper is as follows. Section 2 outlines the theoretical background of the research, which addresses experiences, Creative Tourism, the Olive tree and olive oil, its millenary tradition and its role in different contexts (e.g., religious, agricultural, gastronomy). Also in this section, the experiences related to olive oil are analysed, with a particular emphasis on Olive Oil Tourism concept and activities; Section 3 presents and explains the methodology adopted to meet the aim of the study; Section 4 presents the main results and discussion. Finally, Section 5 presents the main conclusions and the implications of the study.

2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

2.1. Experiences and Creative Tourism

Experiences are increasingly valued in the tourism industry (Neuhofer et al., 2014) and have become essential elements for current tourism research and management (Tung & Ritchie, 2011), as well as for practitioners, and consumers. In the last decades, consumers have been increasingly searching for experiences (Pine & Gilmore, 1999) and more and more, experiences influence tourists' choice to visit a destination (Quan & Wang, 2004). Tourists are looking for rewarding and often novel experiences in which their interaction with the combination of food, culture, and terroir helps create and reinforce their groups and identities, facilitate personal development (through learning, for example), and gives them a great story to talk about later (Getz et al., 2014). Also, today's tourists are empowered by digital media communications, which have a significant impact on their overall experience (Kempiak et al., 2016). More and more, tourists use social media to share their tourism experiences online and this substantial amount of user-generated content on social media influences their decisions (Liu, Norman & Pennington-Gray, 2013).

As consumers become more knowledgeable and demanding, leisure and tourism markets have become more competitive, forcing suppliers to innovate and develop new service concepts (OECD, 2012), making experiences critical to businesses' and destinations' differentiation and competitiveness (Mossberg, 2007; Stamboulis & Skayannis, 2003; Morgan et al., 2008). Experiences that allow tourists to have an interactive and participative role (Binkhorst, 2007), connect with those who reside in a particular place, to learn more about the local skills, traditions, arts, heritage, and unique qualities of the places they visit, contribute to an engaged and authentic experience, are related to what is considered as Creative Tourism (Richards & Wilson, 2006; UNESCO, 2006). Creative tourism gives visitors the opportunity to have meaningful experience (UNESCO, 2006:3; Creative Tourism New Zealand, 2007; Binkhorst, 2007:128), to develop creative potential and develop skills (Richards & Raymond, 2000; Briggs, 2005; UNESCO, 2006), by being actively involved in the creative processes (Richards & Raymond, 2000; Binkhorst, 2007:128; UNESCO, 2006), by exchanging and engaging with local people and local culture UNESCO, 2006:3; Hull & Sassenberg, 2012:92; Richards & Wilson, 2006:1218; Richards, 2011), while being part of the process of co-creation together with people in local community (Richards & Raymond, 2000; Binkhorst, 2007:128), and learning experiences which are the characteristic of the destination where they are undertaken" (Richards & Raymond, 2000:18).

The interest in Creative Tourism has been growing in the last decades (Richards & Wilson 2006, 2007; Wurzbürger et al., 2008; Richards, 2011; Hull & Sassenberg, 2012; Tan et al., 2013). The growth of creative tourism can be related to the need to meet the desire of tourists for more fulfilling, interactive and meaningful experiences (Gilbert, 1989; Poon, 1989; Prentice, 2001, 2005; Smith 2006; Richards & Marques, 2012:2), active engagement with the culture and contact with people in the visited communities (Richards, 2008), and the need for destinations to innovate their products (Richards & Wilson, 2006), and resources, as it is the case with traditional heritage sites (Smith, 2005), in an increasingly competitive environment (Richards & Wilson, 2007).

Although creative tourism is therefore often seen as a development of cultural tourism and

as an alternative to mass cultural tourism (Richards, 2011), it is not just based on cultural heritage, but also on the knowledge generated by contemporary creativity by both producers and consumers (OECD, 2014). Creative tourism is centred on contemporary creativity, innovation and, intangible content (OECD, 2014) and therefore, a creative tourism approach provides the potential for the development of new narratives and meanings for destinations, and places distinctiveness (Richards, 2011), to develop new products/experiences and expand markets (OECD, 2014), with the activities offered to tourists having a critical role in the production and consumption of creative tourism (Tan et al., 2013). Creative tourism development can help to attract visitors, increase and diversify demand, reach new target groups and stimulate growth (OECD, 2014), and be an option for destinations seeking to avoid problems of serial reproduction of culture (Richards & Wilson, 2006).

Although the development of creative tourism might be very appealing to businesses and regions, given its potential benefits, it is also challenging (Smith, 2005; Richards & Wilson, 2007) for several reasons. Creative Tourism is not limited to a single actor, whether they are businesses, or the tourists themselves. Instead, Creative Tourism and creative tourism activities involve different actors, namely, producers, consumers, policymakers and landscapes (Richards, 2011). Also, creative tourism involves collaboration between the different actors, leading to dispersed value networks, rather than linear value chains (OECD, 2014). The development of creative tourism should also be underpinned by a closer relationship between the tourism and cultural sectors, as “cultural managers often have essential creative skills which can be used to innovate the tourism experience, while tourism managers can bring the economic and marketing skills that are essential to make the product viable”, (Richards & Wilson, 2006:1221). Besides, active policy approaches are needed to capture the opportunities of creative tourism effectively and to bring producers, consumers, and places together to generate and co-create value (OECD, 2014). Moreover, the development of creative activities may happen in peripheral located areas, or even in economically disadvantaged areas. Finally, the development of creative tourism requires skills, implies investment and attracting as well as reaching

target audiences, which are often widely dispersed (Richards & Wilson, 2007).

Despite the challenges, and in order to develop creative activities and creative tourism, industry practitioners must identify the activities which are closely linked to their region (Richards, 2005), which are the aspects give tourists a specific motivation to visit the region (Richard, 2011), and which are the key success factors that can differentiate their businesses (Tan et al., 2013). Also, managers need to engage more actively concerning product innovation and in recognising the creative potential of tourists (Richards & Wilson, 2006). Tourism organisations should also assume a more significant role in creative tourism content production and distribution (OECD, 2014). For example, specific local skills can be taken into account for developing and offering creative tourism-related activities, such as local crafts, that can lead to the development of creative craft-based creative experiences for tourists (Richards, 2011). Another example is design-related skills, in particular in Italy, which is worldwide renowned, that has led to the development of design-induced tourism (and also fashion-induced tourism) (OECD, 2014). Moreover, gastronomy and cookery in Barcelona, Catalonia, is another example, one of the most preferred in the context of creative tourism. Based on gastronomy, an element strongly associated to cultural uniqueness of the destination, different activities are offered to tourists, with an emphasises on the active involvement and learning experiences of participants (Richards & Wilson, 2006).

In this context, rural-based regions allow the contact with nature and with the traditions of communities (Partidário, 2003), in particular with food and local gastronomic traditions (Stewart, Bramble & Ziraldo, 2008). This context links local products, food, gastronomy, and tourism, a perfect symbiosis, with the rural-based regions providing opportunities to the development of various creative activities and unique experiences, as it is the case of olive oil and tourism (Millán et al., 2015).

2.2. Olive Tree and Olive Oil, a millenary tradition.

The olive tree, with a sturdy trunk and strong symbolism, appears related to the Greek mythology, the Old Testament, the Bible and the

Koran. Consequently, it can be said that the olive tree, the olive and olive oil are all deeply rooted in Mediterranean culture, in art, religion and in its food (Paquete, 2013), with the juice of its fruit, *az-zait*, being a part of the trilogy of Mediterranean food: bread, wine and olive oil (Paquete, 2013).

The earliest traces of the culture of the olive tree and olive oil date back to the Neolithic times, possibly in Mesopotamia, then on to Egypt, the islands of Asia Minor, Continental Greece, Assyria and spreading through the Mediterranean basin from the 6th century BC (Böhm, 2013), where, even today, most of the world's olive oil is produced (International Olive Council, 2017). The production of olive oil is well documented, and five thousand years ago, its cultivation was already practised in Phoenicia, Syria, and Palestine, and it is of great importance for the Phoenicians, Greeks, Romans, and Arabs, who have yielded to the benefits of olive oil (Paquete, 2013). One of the oldest books known, from the 2nd century BC "*De Agri Cultura*" of Cato de Elder, has an entire chapter dedicated to planting, harvesting, and pressing olives and continuously refers to the olive oil from Hispania (Caldas, 1998), demonstrating its importance in their diet at that time. Olive oil is also referred to in other contexts and other uses, for example, as fuel, as a remedy to cure the ailments of the body, as a beauty cosmetic, as a sacred oil used in religion and, as a source of light and ointment, a symbol of purity and peace (Paquete, 2013).

Throughout history, olive oil became used essentially for culinary purposes, and food has played an essential role (Paquete, 2013), the cuisine has acquired new functions associated with social, cultural, health-related and pleasure needs (Murgado, 2013).

In the Iberian Peninsula, the olive tree or *Olea Europaea* arrived with the Phoenicians around 900 BC (Paquete, 2013). The crops spread, focusing their location on the right bank of the Tagus River, towards the South of Portugal. The olive groves emerged around the settlements, and the mills were built next to the nearby streams (Caldas, 1998). In the specific context of Portugal, olive oil also had some uses and was deeply rooted within the Portuguese culture, used not only in food, benefiting one's health but also for lighting purposes and the lubrication of machinery (Paquete, 2013). Olive trees began to be seen as a source of economic income, for they supplied olives, olive oil and

wood for fuel (Böhm, 2013). The predominant self-subsistence economy drew extensive patches of irregular, scattered and peri-urban olive grove areas throughout the country (Böhm, 2013).

Although the olive tree became widespread throughout the country, currently in Portugal, the most important olive groves are located mainly in Alentejo and Trás-os-Montes and are associated with annual crops, namely cereals and vegetables, and perennial crops, such as vines, figs and almond trees (Böhm, 2013). According to Böhm (2013) in other areas of the country, an inheritance of faded olive groves often remains, surviving olive trees that are still standing today as ornamental trees for gardens, signalling withered rurality, they are forgotten trees on lands which have not yet surrendered to urbanisation. Accordingly, many of the mills have disappeared, places filled with cultural heritage, they have either disappeared or suffered changes becoming more mechanised responding to the market's need for greater and faster production.

In recent years, there has been an increase in the production of olive oil, in the dynamics associated with innovation and rural development, above all, a result of the policy instruments for investment support in specific sectors of agriculture. In 2015, Portugal achieved the largest olive oil production of the last decades; reaching 106 thousand tons (INE, 2015), only going back to 1961 can we find similar levels of production (Nunes, 2012).

Another important element for the valorisation of olive oil in Portugal has been the international recognition, since Portuguese olive oils have recently obtained international awards in several categories and important competitions, such as Mario Solinas Quality Award, Olive Japan, Olive Oil China, NYIOOC - New York Competition, Terra Olivo Israel (Olive Oil Times, 2017). In May 2017, the Olive Oil Times, a well-known international press, published an article titled "Portugal's Skyrocketing Olive Oil Industry" (Olive Oil Times, 2017), highlighting how Portugal became the seventh largest olive oil producer in the world and fourth largest exporter of this product.

2.3. Olive Oil, Tourism and Experiences: Olive Oil Tourism

Olive oil has played a key role in different areas, such as the economy, agriculture,

cosmetics, and gastronomy. More recently, olive oil has also attracted interest in other contexts, particularly in Tourism, through the development and offer of new products/services and experiences, which has been called Olive Oil Tourism (Murgado, 2013; Millán-Vázquez de la Torre et al., 2017). Tourism, in turn, due to its economic, social and environmental importance, is an important pillar for the development and sustainability of the countries and the regions (UNWTO, 2017) with a strong rural nature (Campón-Cerro *et al.*, 2014).

Although the study of Olive Oil Tourism is recent, it is an area of research, which has seized the interest of several authors in recent years, which has, in turn, contributed to the existence of several studies, with an emphasis on the cases of Australia (Alonso, 2010), Italy (De Salvo, 2013) and Spain (López-Guzmán, 2011). In the literature on Olive Oil Tourism, several different themes can be highlighted: definition and concept (Alonso, 2010); demand (Murgado, 2013), as for example, the motivation that leads the tourist to look for Olive Tourism, of the rural world and the world of olive oil (Alonso & Northcote, 2010); supply (Murgado, 2013), also highlighting the importance of the articulation of this product with other existing trails, mainly the gastronomic trails (Alonso, 2010; Alonso & Northcote, 2010; Northcote & Alonso, 2011).

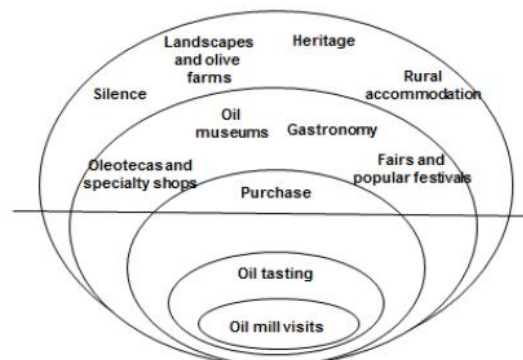
Olive Oil Tourism, from a demand perspective, focuses on tourists and on what they are looking for. Tourists seeking Olive Oil Tourism are people who wish to deepen their knowledge about the cultivation of the olive tree and olive oil (Murgado, 2013). On the other hand, "olive

oil tourists" also search for new experiences (Alonso & Northcote, 2010) and those that "escape" an urban environment, associating tranquillity, harmony, and leisure to the rural environment. Tourists seek activities that permit direct contact with the region and its traditions, such as visiting and getting to know the different trails, visiting olive groves, olive oil mills, museums and interpretive centres (Alonso, 2010). This is an integrative vision that responds to what is referenced as Partidário (2003:115-126), in particular, that the rural areas are characterised "in general, by having an interest in natural and cultural resources that offer multiple opportunities for use."

From the supply perspective, Olive Oil Tourism is characterised by being strongly related to gastronomy and different popular traditions linked to the cultivation of the olive tree (Murgado, 2013). In particular, Olive Oil Tourism includes various activities such as: olive oil tastings; the participation in gastronomic festivals; the participation in thematic dinners in which olive oil has a major role; visits to farms and the contemplation of the landscape, the olive groves, visits to the locations where olive oil is produced, the participation in events related to the production of olive oil; taking part in routes; visits to different contexts in order to obtain knowledge about features of other industries related to olives and olive oil, as for example, cosmetics, preserves, wooden handicrafts, table olives.

According to Murgado (2011), Olive Oil Tourism implies diverse experiences in the rural world and represents them as follows:

Figure 1. Components of na olive oil tourist experience



Source: Murgado et al., 2011. p.202.

Millán-Vázquez de la Torre et al. (2017) in their recent study state that olive oil is being

discovered as a tourism product and is this new type of tourism. Their study profiles the olive-

oil tourists as someone that dedicates holiday time to a place in order to study more deeply the culture underlying the olive and its oil and taking part in some of the following activities: Visits to olive presses; to old olive mills; to old farm manors (cortijos); to oleotecas (shops); olive oil museums; visits to olive groves and the aesthetic contemplation of olive grove landscapes; participation in olive oil festivals; knowledge about different folk traditions linked to the cultivation of olive trees; participation in gastronomic activities featuring olive oil as the main attraction; tour routes linked to olive oil; attendance at trade shows related to the production of olive oil; learning about the characteristics of other industries related to olives and olive oil (cosmetics, canning, wood crafts, marinated olives, etc.)

Experiences constitute the essence of the tourism industry (Neuhofer et al., 2014:340-350). In this context, Schmitt (1999:53-67) refers to experiences as private events that occur in response to a few stimuli (for example, as provided by marketing efforts before and after the purchase), and which often result from direct observation and/or participation in events whether they are real or not, dreamlike, or virtual. However, the experience is also analysed more from an individual perspective, and it is described as a subjective mental state felt by tourists (Faizan et al., 2016). It further deepens, the growing demand for new experiences in tourism, including in rural areas, makes the sector increasingly complex, making the constant renewal and supply of new products/services necessary (Murgado, 2013). Just like viticulture, which served as a motto for the creation of Wine trails and a strong tourism product - Wine tourism, olive-growing is taking its first steps towards the expansion of Olive Oil Tourism. The growing popularity of Wine Tourism in recent decades demonstrates how activities in the 'rural world' can contribute to the development of tourism in rural locations (Hall et al., 2000; Alonso, 2010; Alonso & Northcote, 2010; De Salvo et al., 2013). Wine and wineries can provide the wine tourist with culinary and educational experiences. Therefore, Wine Trails can help emphasise gastronomic experiences in rural areas, and those who visit wineries can appreciate not only a wine product but also other

culinary experiences (Hashimoto & Telfer, 2003). Vargo and Lusch (2004) state that creating value provides opportunities for innovation, thus making a product or a destination more attractive. This is the primary challenge of Olive Oil Tourism, namely, to create attractive products based on olive oil to capture tourism demand (Alonso, 2010). This supply could include a relationship between olive oil producers, the hotel sector, local entities and promoters, to the local community (Murgado, 2013). Alonso and Northcote (2010), for example, in their study on the development of Olive Tourism in Australia, an industry considered to be emerging, developed a study based on surveys to producers, to be able to present, on the one hand, strategies to attract tourists with a particular interest and their associated aspects, and on the other, marketing opportunities for its products.

As to Olive Oil Tourism supply, Spain is one of the countries that stand out, being the largest producer of olive oil in the world, with strong traditions in its production, counting on thirty-two PDO - Olive Oil Designations of Origin (Millán-Vázquez de la Torre et al., 2014, 2017). Undoubtedly, olive oil is a highly recognized product in Spain, not only because of its importance from an economic point of view (Millán-Vázquez de la Torre et al., 2014), but also for the image associated with its gastronomy, and also for its significant contribution in the diversification of rural areas, as far as it has created new offers, allowing companies to have additional revenues, besides their agricultural activity (Millán-Vázquez de la Torre et al., 2014). In this context, it is possible to find routes and products associated with olive oil in Spain, such as Jaen, Cordoba, Seville, Cadiz, Granada, Aragon, Extremadura and Catalonia (Murgado, 2013).

The region of Andalusia, that represents 70 to 75% of Spanish olive oil production (Ministerio de Agricultura, Alimentación y Medio Ambiente España, 2017) is characterised by being a region with outstanding natural and patrimonial resources, with a strong stake in the supply of routes, such as Jaen and Córdoba, and various activities and experiences associated with Olive Oil Tourism (Table 1).

Table 1. Main Olive Oil Tourism Experiences in Spain

• Visitable oil mills;
• Speciality shops;
• Museums (e.g., Museo de la Cultura del Olivo, Museo de Artes y Costumbres Populares, Museo del Alto Guadalquivir de Cazorla; Museo de Jodar);
• Visits to Olive Grooves and centenary olive trees;
• Festivities and Fairs (e.g., Fiesta de la aceituna, Feria Internacional del Aceite de Oliva e Industrias Afines EXPO-LIVA, Feria Internacional del Olivar Ecológico ECOLIVA);
• The Oil Train (Montilla);
• Workshops on olive oil and heritage;
• Olive oil thematic restaurants;
• Tourism products (The route of the olive tree and the olive oil greenway route);
• Oil thematic park;
• Thematic rural accommodation in rebuilt mills and farms.

Source: Adapted from Murgado (2013)

Still, in Europe, Greece, and Italy are also strong olive oil producers and Olive Oil Tourism begins to gain some prominence, mainly through the supply of museums linked to olive oil and its production (Alonso, 2010). Outside of Europe, Australia (rural area of Gingin) and South Africa (Cape Town), countries recognized for their Wine Tourism and Wine Trails and Routes, are also countries that highlight Olive Oil Tourism, offering a variety of activities and experiences: visits to farms producing olive oil, olive oil and other related products, as well as visits to the different existing routes. The next section will focus on Olive Oil Tourism in Portugal.

2.4. Olive Oil Tourism in Portugal

If Olive Oil Tourism is internationally accepted as a structured and growing supply, at a national level, the panorama is different. As a product, the potential of olive oil is enormous, especially for the catalytic role it may have for other activities that can benefit from it, such as Tourism. In this context, and despite there being already initiatives around olive oil (in particular in Alentejo and Trás-os-Montes), that already show some recognition toward olive oil opportunities for Tourism and Gastronomy, the truth is that in Portugal, Olive Oil Tourism is at an early stage.

In Portugal, the term Olive Oil Tourism, as a product, does not appear in the National Strategic Plan for Tourism in Portugal - Tourism

2020. However, as in the plan, there are references to Wine and Gastronomy, it may be thought that there is an opportunity here to fit Olive Oil, associated with gastronomy. On the other hand, the Plan mentions the use of authentic Portuguese products as communication anchors, in which there is a reference to olive oil, in addition to wines, cork, and footwear. Table 2 presents a more specific content analysis on Olive Oil Tourism in Portugal, a synthesis of the analysis of supply and communication at a national level, from different national entities.

According to Table 2, there are already some references to Olive Oil Tourism. However, there is also a significant gap, especially concerning visitor information, and in particular, the experiences that can be realised when visiting a particular region. Nevertheless, it is noticed that the supply of Olive Oil Tourism in Portugal is based, mainly, on visits to Museums and Mills.

Also, Table 2 presents the region of Alentejo, as a region with many references to Olive Oil Tourism. The Alentejo is, moreover, one of the pioneer regions of the country to have a stake in Olive Oil Tourism, and where some activities and experiences can be found around olive oil. In 2012, the Municipalities of the Alentejo Region and the Alentejo Tourism launched Olive Oil Tourism as the new tourist product for the Alentejo (Turismo do Alentejo, 2014). This commitment resulted from the recognition by the region's entities of the strong potential between Olive Oil and Tourism, as

Table 2. Synthesis of the analysis of the communication of Olive Oil Tourism and olive oil by national entities

<p>Turismo do Alentejo http://www.visitalentejo.pt</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A link that leads to a section entitled Olive Oil Tourism, which presents a Google map of the country, without any information regarding olive oil and associated offers
<p>Turismo de Portugal - Visit Portugal https://www.visitportugal.com</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Olive Oil Tourism appears as an autonomous product/offer; • Information is scarce; • It highlights olive oil as a product of national excellence and the six Protected Denomination of Origin regions in the production of olive oil: Trás-os-Montes, Beira Interior, Ribatejo, Moura, Alentejo Interior and North Alentejo; • Suggestions for visiting: agricultural cooperatives in the PDO regions where olive oil is produced and can be tasted; routes organised by producers and municipalities; Tasting of the "Tiborna" (hot bread soaked in olive oil usually given on visits to olive oil routes); • The indication of Museums (e.g., Museu do Azeite; •Museu do Azeite em Belmonte, Lagar de Varas do Fojo em Campo Maior, Museu do Palácio Visconde d'Olivã; Núcleo Museológico do Azeite - Complexo de Lagares de - Proença-a-Velha); • Mills (e.g., Lagar das Varas); • Links to locations are not displayed.
<p>Centro de Estudos e Promoção Azeite do Alentejo http://www.azeitedoalentejo.pt/inicio.html</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Varied information on Alentejo's olive oil, events, awards; • Reference that the Alentejo Olive Route will be created; • e-mail address for more information.
<p>Confraria do Azeite http://www.confrariadoazeite.pt</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detailed information about olive oil and the surrounding world, as well as the national gastronomy; • Reference to the route Rota dos Lagares, an initiative of Confraria do Azeite, which aims to reward the signalling of Mills that respect the best practices in the processing of Olive Oil and extraction of the best Extra Virgin Olive Oil; • Lack of information on or to do these routes; • The indication of specific places to visit.
<p>Casa do Azeite http://www.casadoazeite.pt</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presents information on olive oil and its members; • Also presents recipes with olive oil.

Source: authors

well as the growing demand for accommodation in areas with activities associated with olive oil.

At the time, and in some of the region's municipalities, there was also an effort to recover mills, turning them into museums, creating activities and spaces for promotion and education on olive oil, and organising and promoting reference events with this product. Also, some municipalities also reaffirmed, together with restaurants, the importance of olive oil in gastronomy, making it more visible in the global tourist experience. Moreover, being a determinant aspect for the organisation and commercialisation of the supply, it was verified the interest of the tourist promoters in hotel projects, due to the growing interest in Olive Oil Tourism, and also the willingness of the mills to receive visitors.

However, although these are fundamental aspects for the appearance of Olive Oil Tourism in the Alentejo, there was also in the region the recognition that Portugal and the Alentejo do

not benefit from a strong recognition and association of olive oil, as a differentiating product for the territory. It was also missing a vision and a joint project to align desires and strategies, whether of the producers, of the municipalities or the tourism agents themselves, both public and private. In this context, the Regional Tourism Authority of Alentejo launched an Agenda for the Development of Olive Oil Tourism in Alentejo (2014), with seven intervention axes, which sought to answer the main problems and questions for structuring this product: 1) Branding and marketing; 2) Structuring of the Supply; 3) Training of Agents; 4) Creation of itineraries and the product Olive Oil Tourism; 5) Structuring Networking in various locations in the Alentejo; 6) Promotion and Image; and 7) Internationalization and the connection to tourism.

However, since this challenge has been launched five years have passed. At the time of

publication of this study, no response was received to understand the impact that the Agenda and the planned actions had on the development of Olive Oil Tourism in this region.

Still, in Alentejo, the Strategic Plan for Tourism in the Alentejo 2014-2020 includes Olive Oil Tourism as a tourism product for the future, mentioning the requalification and creation of new tourism products, and integrating the Olive Oil Tourism agenda into the product Gastronomy and Wines. It also refers to the need to modernise and qualify the tourist accommodation supply, focusing on the design and remodelling of projects that incorporate clearly

differentiated aspects in terms of contemporary design/architecture; with a focus on new hotel concepts, linked to the strategic assets of the territory (wine, olive oil, cork); and adapt to market preferences (families, seniors, traveller multiculturalism).

Based on the previous analysis, places and activities were identified where visitors would enjoy Olive Oil Tourism. Next, follows the analysis of the places and experiences that are available. Of the 26 items analysed, only 10 had sites with information about visits. Table 3 presents a more detailed analysis of this supply:

Table 3: National Olive Oil Experiences identified online

<p>Museu do Azeite em Belmonte</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • http://cm-belmonte.com • Câmara Municipal de Belmonte 	<p>Primary objective: to show the visitor the techniques of the production of Olive Oil and the importance it had in the local economy. The Museum has an outdoor area with a leisure area and the preservation of an olive grove and where most of the information is located, with the following themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Olive Tree and Civilization; • The Olive tree in Portugal; • Olive groves of Cova da Beira; • The ecological importance of the olive grove; • The annual cycle of olive growing and olive oil production; • Introduction to Belmonte's Mill technology; • Explanation of the Local Production Process; • Types of Olive Oil; • The Future of Olive Oil - Valuation Experiences.
<p>Complexo de Lagares de Proença-a-Velha – Núcleo do Azeite</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • http://roteiromuseus.ccdrc.pt • Câmara Municipal de Idanha-a-Nova 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two Mills; • It presents an exhibition of the synthesis of the problem of olive oil in Portugal; • It features a modern olive oil extraction unit; • Contains area for workshops and also available for schools; • Exhibitions to promote local traditions and products (Olive Oil Festivals, Smoked Sausages, and Soups).
<p>Lagar - Museu do Palácio Visconde D'Olivã</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • http://cm-campo.maior.pt • Tutela da Câmara Municipal de Campo Maior 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aim: to present the whole process that goes from taking care of the olive grove and the harvesting, until its final transformation in olive oil; • Dedicated to olive growing; • Rebuilding an oil mill and all its functioning; • Multimedia room, ethnography area, and temporary exhibitions; • The guided tour includes: Visit the Lagar-Museu; Permanent Exhibition; Visualization of a film on the theme of olive cultivation; Visit the Ethnography Room; Olive Oil tasting from the Municipality of Campo Maior; Olive tasting from the Municipality of Campo Maior.
<p>Lagares d'El Rei em Tomar</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • http://www.cm-tomar.pt • Câmara Municipal de Tomar 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Currently, the Levada de Tomar is in the process of valorisation and musealisation, intending to its asset activation and public enjoyment; • Buildings can be visited once the equipment is in an open space.
<p>Lagar do Marmelo – Oliveira da Serra.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • http://www.oliveiradaserra.pt • Grupo Sovena • Ferreira do Alentejo 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visits accompanied by a guide that explains all the stages of olive oil production Oliveira da Serra, from the reception of the olive to intensive and superintensive olive grove systems, where the visitor can get a sense of the extension of the olive grove; • Stop at the Marmelo Dam, an infrastructure integrated into the Alqueva project; • Olive oil tasting, where the aim is to distinguish the main differences between the Oliveira da Serra's olive oils.
<p>Melara Picado Nunes - Lagar Museu (Centro de Interpretação do Azeite)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • http://www.mn.pt • Aldeia de Galegos em Marvão 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aim: to provide a journey through the roots of Alentejo's knowledge, including the history of the family, the mill, and Marvão's olive oil, addressing technical topics about olive groves and known methods of extraction; • Possibility to visit the olive grove, the present mill, explanation of the process of extraction of olive oil;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visits to the old mill, journey through the milling process of the old mill, with visualisation of interactive videos; • Olive oil tasting accompanied with products from the region; • Workshops, product presentation, wine tasting, thematic dinners, small cinema auditorium; • Two-day programs with accommodation in the village, olive harvest, milling and olive oil tasting at dawn; • Study visits with a special program for children; • Reception of university students to develop studies on the Galician olive; • Visits for people with reduced mobility.
<p>Núcleo Museológico do Lagar de Azeite de Lavandeira</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • http://www.museudamemoriarural.com/lagarazeite • Bragança, Carrazeda de Ansiães, Lavandeira 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Old mill rebuilt that has as aims to serve as a didactic and exhibition space of traditional techniques related to the manufacture of olive oil; • The visitor can witness how the oil was produced in an old mill; • The organisation of the themes "Mill Conversations" and "Memories of the Mill"; • Study visits with a special program for children.
<p>Núcleo Museológico do Azeite Solar dos Cortiços</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://www.cm-macedodecavaleiros.pt • Bragança, Macedo de Cavaleiros, Cortiços 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Belongs to the Family Sá Miranda Patrício and is part of the Trás-os-Montes Olive Oil Route. The building is an old mill, in shale and granite, which stopped working in 1953 and was recovered in 2005. Here the visitor gets in touch with the world of olive oil and the history of the old village of Cortiços and Cernadela.
<p>Lagar de Varas do Fojo/Jardim das Oliveiras</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://www.mouraturismo.pt • Beja, Moura, Santo Agostinho 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A museum, where storage and old techniques of olive oil production can be observed, traditional from this region when production had not yet resorted to machines. This mill is one of the rare examples of Iberian mills presses and its typology comes from the Roman mills; • Prior booking: Advisable for groups; • Observations: It is classified as a Public Interest Monument; • Available services: Restaurant and Shop.
<p>Museu do Azeite - Azeite Fátima</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • http://www.azeitefatima.pt • Leiria, Fátima 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A project of the olive oil producers Cooperativa de Olivicultores from the region of Fatima, the Museum was inaugurated in March of 2014. Installed in the first mill of the region, original headquarters of the Cooperativa de Olivicultores; • The recovery of this old mill had as aim building a room for olive oil tourism where events can be held and promote the "Fátima Olive Oil", with locals, tourists, and professionals of the sector.

Source: authors

According to analysis to Table 4, Olive Oil Tourism supply provided by private entities consists on thematic accommodation, with emphasis on the olive tree and the final product, olive oil, with the possibility of tasting and buying this product, as well as other products of the region, e.g., the wine. Once again, the presence of the Olive oil Tourism supply in the south of the country stands out, which also shows an enormous potential of development and diversification, in particular, for the northern region of the country.

3. METHODOLOGY

This is an exploratory study in Portugal focusing on Olive Oil Tourism, an area where little is known, in particular about the experiences that are being put into place and promoted by different organisations.

A content analysis was conducted systematically and objectively to examine what is being

communicated through texts or images (Bardin 1979; Neuendorf 2002; Smith 2017), in the specific context of olive Oil Tourism. The primary purpose of this technique in this study was to identify and analyse the Olive Oil Tourism supply (activities and experiences) in both, public and private organisations. The analysed organisations were first identified on an initial search on Google using specific keywords of olive oil, and olive oil tourism. The results that appeared in the first three pages of the search engine were analysed. After this initial search, a specific and directed search was conducted on the official websites and Social Media of private organisations and also of the Portuguese National and Regional Tourism Organisations.

Moreover, and in the particular context of the Northern region, a more detailed search on Google search engine was always done including the same keywords, namely olive oil and olive oil tourism. The obtained results included a vast list of results regarding prizes obtained by

some of the olive oil brands, which were not considered for analysis, and also, activities related to olive oil, such exhibitions, fairs, museums, olive mills, restaurants and other hospitality-related enterprises. These activities were then selected for further analysis with a two-fold purpose: to identify which and how many olive oil-related activities are being promoted in the region, and visitors can experience that, and to analyse the potential for the development of new Creative Tourism experiences, while contributing to a sustainable development of tourism in rural-based areas. Overall, the period of analysis ranged from May 2017 to May 2018.

With the objective to complement the content analysis of the online information, national and regional tourism organisations, along with private organisations, were contacted by email to participate in the study. Despite the several attempts, and except for one of the private organisations, it was not possible to obtain additional information regarding the existing and/or future supply of Olive Oil tourism in Portugal.

4. OLIVE OIL AND OLIVE OIL TOURISM EXPERIENCES IN THE NORTHERN REGION OF PORTUGAL

The northern region of Portugal (NUTS II) (Fig.1) is the most populous region in Portugal and the third most extensive area, 21,278 km². The region has 3,689,173 inhabitants according to the 2011 census, representing 35 per cent of the national resident population (INE - Instituto Nacional de Estatística, 2013). It includes eight sub-regions (NUTS 3): Minho-Lima, Cávado, Ave, Grande Porto, Tâmega, Entre Douro e Vouga, Douro, and Alto Trás-os-Montes and is divided into 86 municipalities (municípios), which in turn are subdivided into 1,426 civil parishes (freguesias). The northern region is the Portuguese region with the most significant border area with the Spanish Autonomous Communities of Galicia and Castile-Leon and a total of 144 kilometres of Atlantic coast. Also, four cultural assets, classified by UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization World Heritage Sites), with tourism potential are part of the northern region: i) Alto Douro Wine Region (Douro river); ii) Historic Centre of Guimarães (Guimarães city); iii) Historic Centre of Oporto, Luiz I Bridge and Monastery of Serra do Pilar, and iv) Prehistoric Rock

Art Sites in the Cõa Valley and Siega Verde (Douro river).

Northern Portugal is often referred to as the 'green' region of Portugal, due to the dominant colour of its natural scenery of mountainous terrain that meets with the Atlantic coast (Sampaio, 1991). This region is a symbiosis between the new and the old, the past and the present. Modern cities such as Porto, Braga, Guimarães blend with a very present traditional rural way of life. The north is rich in heritage, landscapes, traditions, wine, and gastronomy and rich in opportunities for tourism (Sampaio, 1991).

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It is hard work for a destination to attract investors, entrepreneurs, talented and creative people and also tourists (Kotler et al., 1999; Florida, 2002; Anholt, 2007). To ensure the sustainable development of regional tourism potential, TPNP - Tourism of Porto and the North of Portugal is in charge of enhancing tourism as a strategic sector of the economy of Porto city and the northern region as a whole. The promotion of tourism in the North, according to TPNP Marketing Strategic Guidelines for 2015-2020 is based on the following strategic products: i) nature tourism; ii) touring and cultural landscape; iii) health and wellness tourism; iv) city and short breaks; v) religious tourism; vi) gastronomy and wine; and vii) business tourism.

Along with these strategic products arise new opportunities for a growing number of certified products with a designation of origin. The northern region is an exhibition of authenticity with products such as wine, smoked sausages, maize bread, honey, olive oil, and other agro-food products, as well as handicraft products, embroidery, filigree, and others. These products along with the region's cultural and landscape heritage have led to the creation of specific promotional instruments, such as the wines routes Vinhos Verdes and the Port Wine Route and the Olive Oil Route in the region Trás-os-Montes (CCDRN, 2013).

Portugal, as over 345 000 hectares of olive groves and according to INE (2016) 469 olive mills, produced 94 000 tons of olive oil in 2017. The region of Alentejo represents 62% of the production followed by Trás-os-Montes with 17%, Ribatejo e Oeste with 6%, Beira Interior with 6%, Beira Litoral 6%, Algarve 2% and Entre Douro e Minho with 1%. The northern region of Portugal due to the sub-regions of Trás-os-Montes and Alto Douro is the second

national region, after Alentejo, with the most significant production of olive oil. Olive oil is, without doubt, a strategic product that has been growing side by side with tourism (Orgaz, 2017).

Based on the previous analysis, places and activities were identified where visitors would enjoy Olive Oil Tourism experiences in the northern region of Portugal (Table 5).

Figure 2. Map of the Northern Region of Portugal



Source: Turismo Porto e Norte de Portugal (2015)

Table 5: Olive Oil Tourism and Experiences identified in the northern region of Portugal

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mills: Lagar de Azeite Tradicional - Vieira do Minho (Traditional olive mill) • Shops: Oliva & Co (Porto) (Specialised shop on olive oils) • Museums: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lagar de Azeite de Fafião - Montalegre (Olive mill) - Museu de Azeite da Espinhosa - São João da Pesqueira (Olive oil museum) - Núcleo Museológico do Lagar de Azeite de Lavandeira - Museu da Memória Rural – Bragança (Olive oil museum) - Núcleo Museológico do Azeite Solar dos Cortiços - Bragança - Macedo de Cavaleiros – Cortiços (Olive oil museum) - Museu Lagar de Azeite – Vinhais (Olive oil and mill museum) - Museu da Oliveira e do Azeite – Mirandela (Olive tree and olive oil museum) • Festivities and Fairs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Feira Nacional de Olivicultura – Valpaços (National fair dedicated to olive production) - Mercado Magriço – Penedono (A fair dedicated to regional products) - Feira da Castanha – Valpaços (A fair dedicated to regional products, in highlight the chestnut) - Feira Franca - Valpaços (A fair dedicated to regional products) - Festa das Vindimas 2017 – Tabuaço (The grape harvest festivity) - Feira do Folar de Valpaços (A fair dedicated to regional products, in highlight the traditional sweat bread “folar”) - Feira do Azeite, Vinho e Produtos Regionais Murça. (A fair dedicated to regional products, in highlight olive oils and wines)

<ul style="list-style-type: none">- XXII Feira da Maçã, do Vinho e Azeite - Carrazeda Ansiães. (A fair dedicated to regional products, in highlight the apple, wine and olive oil) <p>. Thematic exhibitions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Exposição - "Da Azeitona ao Azeite" Centro Interpretação do Mundo Rural Mogadouro (exhibition with the theme the olive and olive oil) <p>. Routes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Caminhos do Contrabando – Chaves (ancient routes used for smuggling goods such as olive oil, wine, coffee, tobacco and others that were cheaper in Spain)- Rota Terra Quente (thematic routes dedicated to the region of Trás-os-Montes) <p>. Thematic Restaurants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Fins-de-semana gastronómicos (Gastronomic Weekends) <p>. Rural accommodation in rebuilt mills and farms:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Casa de Santo António de Britiande - Lamego- Hotel Rural Casa dos Viscondes da Várzea - Lamego- Casa do Sardão - Alfândega da Fé- Casal de Tralhariz - Carrazeda de Ansiães- Quinta das Herédias- Tabuaço- Quinta do Lamego - Santa Marta de Penaguião- Casa de Cochêca - Baião- Casa do Rio Vez - Arcos de Valdevez- Casa das Pipas - Quinta do Portal- Sabrosa- Quinta dos Espinheiros - Casa de Turismo - Sabrosa- Casa da Torre - Baião- Casal Agrícola de Cever - Santa Marta de Penaguião- Casa dos Becos - Marco de Canaveses

5. CONCLUSIONS

Experiences are increasingly valued in the tourism industry, and the search for experiences in rural areas and supply of activities and products/services around local products have been particularly crucial for the dynamisation and sustainability of rural areas.

Olive Oil Tourism, based on olive oil, a product of strong traditions, deeply rooted in the culture of different countries, is already recognised as a tourist with a high potential to complement the activity of production and commercialization of olive oil, to create new employment opportunities, to preserve the traditions associated with olive oil, and to the existence of new companies, products and experiences. Also, by allowing visitors to have meaningful experiences, to learn more about the local skills and traditions, and to engage with local people and local culture, one could argue that Olive oil Tourism represents opportunities to the development and promotion of creative tourism experiences in rural areas. This paper, based in Portugal and the northern region of the country in particular. Attempted to address this issue by analysing the potential of olive oil to the

development of new Creative Tourism experiences, while contributing to sustainable development of tourism in rural-based areas.

Olive Oil Tourism as an international tourism product is already well structured and promoted, as analysed in the case of Spain and the region of Andalusia. At a national level, although the region of Alentejo already presents some examples of Olive Oil Tourism activities and communication, in Portugal, it can be said that Olive Oil Tourism still presents a high potential for growth and development. At a strategic level, there is a lack of guidance from the national and regional organisations through a structured plan for this product. The development of Olive Oil Tourism could be coordinated and networked by national and regional tourism organisations, municipalities, tourism stakeholders, and the entire chain of olive oil operators that can contribute to the structuring of the Olive Oil Tourism product.

Besides, Olive Oil Tourism can enrich regions' offer and help to maximise other products; such as the proximity and even the overlapping of visitors' motivations with the cultural, nature-based or gastronomic Tourism. This study shows there is still a need to understand the best way to integrate Olive Oil

Tourism, which is done in complementarity with other offers, as in a multiproduct logic (articulation with wine route and other local products).

Considering the aim of this study, one can conclude that there is potential for olive oil experiences in Portugal, more specifically in the northern region. On the one hand, there are several activities and complementary services (e.g. restaurants, accommodations, specialised shops) linked to the thematic already being offered. On the other hand, there are also several events related to olive oil (e.g. festivities, markets), providing opportunities to integrate these elements in a more organised and structured olive oil tourism offer. Also, important to highlight are the characteristics of the northern region for the olive oil production, as also the existing traditions (e.g. traditional harvest, olive oil products, local gastronomy) that allow the design and implementation of creative experiences related to olive oil. Nevertheless, to extend olive oil-related experiences to creative tourism, visitors need to have the opportunity to interact more with the local host community, to have more active participation in these activities, while developing their creative potential offering them memorable and engaging experiences.

This study provides several managerial implications. Its results can help different organisations related to olive oil. On the one hand, it can help stakeholders to understand better the importance of and opportunities in the existing in developing olive oil tourism experiences. On the other hand, this study identifies the different activities offered and who offers them.

This study contains several limitations that lead to opportunities for further research. Although a content analysis is an important technique to have a view of the offered experiences by different organisations, future studies could consider, not only, a more extensive analysis, but also an understanding of the perceptions of the different stakeholders, complementing the study with a qualitative approach. Qualitative studies could help understanding more about the interest, opportunities and challenges/constraints in developing olive oil tourism in association with creative experiences. In order to complement a qualitative approach, quantitative studies based on surveys could also be developed to understand the demand preferences, expectations and experiences related to olive oil and creative tourism. This information shall be significant not only to extend knowledge on the topic, but also to help businesses to develop and / or improve and diversify their offer and communication.

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