

Comparative Study on Spanish Wine and Korean Wine

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ABSTRACT

Objectives Spain and Korea are two completely different countries historically and culturally, but they have something in common that they have enjoyed drinking for a long time. Especially, Spanish wine has a great reputation internationally and Spain is a major producer and exporter of wine. Korean wine market has also been gradually developing recently.

Methods First, this study examined the history and characteristics of Spanish and Korean wines. Next, this paper looked at the differences in perception of wine in the two countries. Finally, we looked at the difference between Spanish wine culture and Korean wine culture in recent years.

Conclusions Wine has been a part of Spanish culture for centuries. And even a passion for wine has led to the development of the wine-based tourism industry beyond the production and sale of wine. This type of tourism can be enjoyed by anyone regardless of age or gender. On the other hand, the first kind of wine developed in Korea was not wine, but a liquor called Makgeolli. It was not until the 1970s that the Korean government began to foster the wine business, and the Korean wine market began to form when wine imports were fully opened ahead of the 1988 Seoul Olympics. Wine in Korea tended to be considered as a luxury, and red wine is being promoted as good for health. Spain continues to seek new international trends to develop its own solid growth potential wine market while boosting wine consumption. Korean wine market is also expected to grow more and more in the future.

Keywords Wine, Spain Wine, Korean Wine, Alcohol, Nuruk, Makgeolli

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1. Introduction

Spain and South Korea are 2 different countries. Culturally speaking Spain was and is the land of hot summers, good football, paella, tortilla de patata, flamenco and extremely noisy people. Because of the history, this country has been elaborating, producing and exporting wines since many centuries ago. In fact, this beverage arrives to Gadis (Cádiz, Spain Spain) in 1100 a.C. by the hand of the Phoenicians, which is gradually expanded by Greeks and Romans all over the peninsula (Galicia, called Gallaecia by the Romans).

Contrarily, South Korea, has extremely different weather in summer and winter, and it is located in the limit of the parallel 38 (last parallel to cultivate wine in good conditions). This country needs more time to bring this exquisite beverage to its territory. Wine arrives to this country in the Joseon Dynasty (14th century), in this case, imported by Western missionaries.

Therefore, with 200 years difference and with all these conversely characteristics,

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I, somehow, found the perfect harmony to promote wine exportation. According to Global Compass 2020 published by Wine Intelligence in August 2020, South Korea is now the second most attractive wine market in the world, after being at number ten the previous year (Wine Australia, 2020).

Korean wine market is definitely marked by its consumers. Korean consumers are highly concerned about their health, they also pay attention to international food trends, including food-wine pairing. Consumer taste continue to evolve in order to generate demand for a more diversified importation of products. As a result, consumption of alcoholic beverages with less alcohol content is increasing. In addition, health benefits of drinking red wine are highly publicized in the market (Oh, 2019).

Other factors that we can mention are the gradual development of wine market in Korea. Considering the size of overall alcohol beverage consumption in the market, wine has solid growth potential. Also, local Korean wine producers present little competition to imported products. On the other hand, Korea imports a significant volume of bulk wine for local blending and bottling uses (Oh, 2019).

2. Spanish Wine

The wine sector is evolving in an increasingly competitive international scene characterised by the emergence of new wine-producing countries using innovative production and marketing strategies to capture a growing share of trade.

Spanish wine history dates back to 1100 BC when Phoenicians founded the trading point of Cádiz in southwestern Spain, though many archaeologists believe that grapes were first cultivated between 4000 and 3000 BC, much before the wine-growing culture of the Phoenicians. The Phoenicians were followed by the Carthaginians, a people from Ancient Carthage in modern-day Tunisia, who brought new and advanced ideas for cultivating wines. Then they were followed by the Romans after several wars that lead to the Roman conquest of the Spanish mainland, known as Hispania (Morais, 2018).

One of the things that makes Spanish wine special is that many Spanish wineries

age the wine personally for you, in oak barrels and in the bottle. This means you get a chance to taste cellared wines that have aged to the point of tasting their best without investing in storage space at home. When you check a Spanish wine bottle and see the terms Joven, Crianza, Reserva, or Gran Reserva, they're telling you about how long the aging was. Gran Reservas, for instance, is the kind of wine that has been cellared the longest. Oppositely, 'Joven' is the kind of wine that didn't spend much time cellared.

Regarding the taste we can divide them mainly in white and red wines. White wines would have variation of taste depending on the region they grow and the weather (essential factor of future taste). White Spanish wines are described as fresh, salty, rich and textured, which can be translated in lemon and cantaloupe flavours with a crisp minerality and very aromatic.

On the other hand, red wines have a bigger variety in grapes and much more types of lands for cultivation. From the north to the south red wines are cultivated with extremely opposite kinds of weather. While north is colder, huge presence of Atlantic Ocean and a very particular terroir, south is hot and has an intense weather, which gives the grapes a higher percentage of alcohol due to the strong sunlight. Taste is represented in full-bodied wines, with aromas of ripe, juicy red fruit, pepper, meat and, depending on the kind of grape, a distinct herbal aroma.

Now that we have established the physical aspect of wine, what about the culture? Wine has been part of Spain's culture since a lot of centuries ago, even Spaniards have translated the passion for wine into a type of tourism that is called enotourism. According to IGI Global, enotourism is defined as the kind of tourism of (or including) tasting, consumption, or purchase of wine, developed in a specific wine area. This kind of tourism can involve visits to wineries, taste wines, vineyard walks, or participating in the harvest.

In Spain 17 regions produce wine, however regarding enotourism we can highlight specific areas like La Rioja, Penedes, Galicia, Navarra, Jerez de la Frontera, Málaga, Ribera del Duero, Somontado, Murcia, Castilla La Mancha, Bierzo, Cataluña, Castilla y León and El Bierzo. Me, particularly, as a Galician person, I strongly prefer Rias Baixas

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or Ribeira Sacra rather than any other place. From boat trips along the banks of the Miño or Sil river with wine tasting included, to accommodation and self-wine production. In addition, this type of tourism can cover many ranges of ages, genders and gastronomic preferences.

3. Korean Wine

The first kind of wine developed in South Korea, was not the grape wine, but the rice wine called Makgeolli. The history of makgeolli goes back 2,000 years. The first documented mention is written in a book from the Goryeo Dynasty (918-1392), titled *Jewangun-gi* (The Poetic Records of Emperors and Kings), where it is referred to during the reign of King Dongmyeong. During this time, it was called *ihwa-ju* (pear blossom alcohol), as the drink was made at the specific time of year when this tree bloomed. Analogous to European low-alcohol beer, makgeolli was the drink of farmers, peasants and the working classes —it was also known by another name, *nonju* (“farmer’s liquor”). Historically, this means that makgeolli and soju have been a key factor in the division of social classes. It is made with 3 simple ingredients — rice, water and the traditional fermenting agent *Nuruk*.¹ This is allowed to settle, and the top clear liquid separated. The resultant alcohol is *cheonju*, which was the drink of the *Yangban* (Korean aristocracy), and which can be distilled to make *soju* (as the eagle-eyed may have spotted, *-ju* in Korean means “alcohol”). The remaining settled sediment, also known as *takju*, is diluted with water, and roughly strained (but not filtered), to make makgeolli (Taylor, 2018).

With the same base and with the same age we can find *Soju*, considered as the “National Drink”. It was brought in by Mongol invaders in the early 13th century during the Goryeo Dynasty. *Soju* was spread through war, as it was originally made in Arabia

¹ Nuruk is a dry cake comprised of bacteria, wild yeasts and koji mould spores. Added to cooked sweet rice and water, this is left for around a week, and the nuruk acts to break down starch in the rice into sugar and then alcohol, producing a strong (15-19% ABV), sweet mixture called *wonju*.

known as “araq” and passed through the Mongols before arriving in Korea. According to history sources Genghis Kahn introduced the Arabian araq to Mongolia and then his grandson Kublai Khan, first emperor of the Yuan Dynasty brought it to Korea. Traditional Soju’s main ingredients are rice and wheat and goes through a distilment process and gives its high alcoholic content. But there was a time when that was not the case. During the Post-Liberation Period in 1965 the government banned the use of rice to brew alcohol, thus replacing it with diluted Soju. Before the ban on rice was lifted, South Korea started using sweet potatoes or tapioca to make alcohol, which opened way to many popular Soju brands like Chamisul (참이슬), Chum Churum (처음처럼), Good Day (좋은데이) today, however, many of them still use the distillation method for their production process (Melissa, 2021).

Regarding grapes cultivation, it started in the Joseon times (1392-1910), imported by Western missionaries. However, the modern cultivation and manufacturing of wine grapes, made possible by domestic techniques and human resources, didn’t officially begin until 1977. The first brand was Majuang, meaning, “you enjoy it while looking face-to-face.” Before the creation of the domestic wine market, the alcohol industry used to be dominated by drinks made with fermented rice. Realizing that the total amount of rice harvested in the nation is never enough to feed the people, the government decided to import Riesling grapes, a high-quality white grape variety, to make alcohol (Seung-ah, 2015). Just in early 1970s Korean wine started with the establishment of vineyards by alcoholic beverage companies when the Korean government adopted an aggressive policy to nurture the wine industry (Bang & K.S, 2001). The imported wine market began forming in 1990 by agreeing to fully open up wine imports by quotas ahead of the 1988 Seoul Olympics (Y.K & W.H, 2006).

Regarding the taste, Korean grape wine is sweet due to its wild grapes and the flavour of this fruit is very pronounced. Korean wines are improving their taste and quality through the development of new grape varieties and by conducting research into farming techniques. Grapes are one of the most common summertime fruits on the Korean Peninsula, and most of the grapes grown in Korea are sweet and are eaten raw and fresh immediately after harvesting. Wine grapes, however, commonly grown

in Europe and South America, are rarely grown in Korea due to the weather, with a wet, humid summer, and dry cold winter. To overcome the peninsula's weather patterns and to help make better domestic wines, Korean wineries, agronomists and researchers joined forces to develop new varieties of grape that are both suitable for making wine and which can also grow here. They also invested time into studying wine-making techniques that use the sweet Korean grape varieties (Lou-chung, 2015).

Last but not least, what about the wine culture in the country? After preparing my thesis in the country and make some market research I found out that wine is perceived as a luxury good. Results clearly indicated that the majority of wine consumers are women between the age of 21-30 years old (international age) that have previously tasted the 3 types of wine. Also, this kind of consuming is developed in social occasions. The increasing of wine consumption is other affirmation we can make, and the pandemic also boosted this consumption. Pricing is a determinant factor when buying wine. Surveys show that people born and raised in Korea (inbound population) spend more than 21.000 KRW (more than 17€) in a bottle of wine, while people living in South Korea but raised in other countries (outbound population) spend an average of 3 - 10€ (5,000 - 10,000 KRW) in a bottle of wine.

These differences are perfectly differentiated due to the tradition of wine consuming in European countries and the high volume of production and competition. Oppositely, South Korea is not a wine producer (at least as big as European countries), for that reason, wine is seen as luxury good, not as a daily good.

Other point that we should highlight is the difference in health knowledge regarding wine health benefits. While the outbound population in South Korea were fully aware of the health benefits that wine has, inbound were not.

Nowadays, after COVID hitting the whole entire world, self-wine consumption raised sharply and it will continue growing, with an estimation in the Global Wine Market of 686,38 billion € by 2030.

4. Conclusion

The wine sector is evolving in an increasingly competitive international scene, characterised by the emergence of new wine-producing countries using innovative production and marketing strategies to capture a growing share of trade.

Spain's winemakers are leaders in terms of global sales volume. This country rank first in terms of wine export volume and third worldwide in terms of export value, trailing France and Italy with a strong presence in the main markets around the world, which further boosts its image. In parallel, Korean wine market is increasing and it is definitely marked by its consumers. They are currently highly concerned about their health and pay special attention to international trends, which are definitely connected with the social media expansion.

To sum up, I arrived to a conclusion. Combining the "demand" with the "need" will create a perfect and profitable market opportunity. Besides, both countries share the essential factor: the passion for wine.

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스페인 와인(Wine)과 한국 와인의 비교 연구

마르타 도나페트리

ISCTE 비즈니스 스쿨 석사과정

한국어 요약

연구 목적 스페인과 한국은 역사적으로나 문화적으로 완전히 다른 두 나라이다. 그러나 오래전부터 ‘주류(술)’을 즐겼다는 공통점이 있다. 특히 스페인 와인은 세계적으로 큰 명성을 가지고 있으며 스페인은 와인의 주요 생산국이자 수출국이다. 한국의 와인 시장 역시 최근 지속적으로 발전하고 있다.

연구 방법 먼저 스페인 와인과 한국 와인의 역사와 특징 등을 살펴보았다. 다음으로 두 나라에서 와인에 대한 인식이 어떠한 차이를 보이고 있는지를 알아보았다. 마지막으로 스페인 와인 문화와 한국 와인 문화가 현재 어떠한 차이점을 보이고 있는지에 대해서 비교 분석하였다.

결론 수 세기 전부터 와인은 스페인 문화의 일부였다. 심지어 와인에 대한 열정으로 와인 생산 및 판매를 넘어 와인이 목적인 관광 산업을 발전시키게 되었다. 이로 인하여 나이, 성별에 상관없이 누구나 즐길 수 있게 되었다. 반면에 한국에서 개발된 첫 번째 종류의 와인은 포도주가 아니라 ‘막걸리’였다. 1970년대에 이르러서야 한국 정부가 와인 산업을 육성하기 시작했고, 1988년 서울 올림픽을 앞두고 와인 수입을 전면 개방하면서 한국의 와인 시장이 형성되기 시작하였다. 한국에서 와인은 사치품으로 여겨지는 경향이 있었고, 레드 와인은 건강에 좋다고 홍보되고 있었다. 스페인은 와인 소비량을 끌어올리면서 독자적이고 탄탄한 성장 잠재력이 있는 와인 시장을 개발하기 위해 새로운 국제 트렌드를 지속적으로 모색하고 있다. 앞으로 한국의 와인 시장 또한 점점 더 성장할 것으로 보인다.

핵심어 와인, 스페인 와인, 한국 와인, 술, 누룩, 막걸리

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