

VINEYARD COTTAGE, A NEW MARKET PRODUCT ON THE FARM

Nataša Zgonc¹; Marija Turnšek Mikačič²

Abstract

Vineyard cottages, have up to now presented an unexploited tourist capital. In this paper, which is composed of a theoretical and an empirical research part, we have focused on a tourist vineyard cottage as a new market product in the countryside. In the theoretical part, we used Slovene and foreign literature to describe different topics, as follows: Tourist vineyard cottage as a new market product in the countryside, Tourist potential of the vineyard cottages in the countryside, and Economy of vineyard cottage development. Based on the theoretical treatment of five research questions, we prepared a survey and used systematic acquisition and collection to process the obtained information. To obtain information on the needs and wishes of guests and increase market demand, we used a survey, which was processed by a qualitative method. For study of the economics of the project of introducing a vineyard cottage into own production, we used the method of economic analysis.

Key Words: *vineyard cottage, tourism, tourist offer, tourist product, business plan, competition, economy*

JEL classification: *O18*

Introduction

The cultural diversity and variety of the vineyard world in a small area represents tourism in vineyard cottages as a product of additional profit on a farm. The unique characteristic of the Dolenjska, Bela Krajina and Posavje regions is the vineyard landscape, planted with vineyard cottages and wine chambers, which represent a key opportunity for development of

¹Nataša Zgonc, Diploma in Landscape Governance, Landscape Governance College GRM, Novo mesto, Sevno 13, Slovenia, 00 386 41 438 829, e-mail: romanzgonc@gmail.com

²Marija Turnšek Mikačič, PhD, Assist. Prof., Faculty of Organisation Studies Novo mesto, Ulica talcev 3, 8000 Novo mesto, Slovenia, 00 386 41 622 548, e-mail: mikacic2007@gmail.com

tourism. Vineyard cottages represent the guarantee of sustainable development and a number of tourism types. They contribute to the better development of urban areas, coherent regional development, preservation of cultural heritage, designing other tourism products and creating healthy competition. Vineyard cottages focus on raising the level of stationary tourism in Slovenia.

This research observes and analyses a vineyard cottage in the process of developing a new market product on a farm; it focuses on the history of such activity, the tourist offer and demand, defining the vineyard cottage as a tourist product, and marketing communication. The analysis of offer in the area of vineyard cottages in the market was conducted and the questionnaire analysis introduced the extent of demand for such a type of tourism, as well as the number of people who are undertaking this activity or plan on developing it.

Purpose and goal of research

The aim of this article is to demonstrate the key issues owners of vineyard cottages are dealing with when marketing them as a farm product and, in connection to that, to develop good suggestions for their improvement. The objective of this article is to locate further possibilities for improving tourism of vineyard cottages, to assess how the vineyard cottage is positioned as a tourist product in the offer market and at the same time meets planned goals.

Description of research question

The Strategy of Vineyard Cottage Tourism Development (2007), drafted by the Ministry of Economy, offers an insight into the idea of vineyard cottage tourism. It determines that vineyard cottage tourism can be understood as temporary accommodation with rich wine and cultural heritage. We cannot claim that Slovenia has used up all its tourist potential, despite being recognised as a country with a well-developed tourism economy. We have a number of natural and cultural goods, still unexploited. The vineyard cottages have up to now been marked as unexploited tourist capital and, pursuant to the 2007–2011 Development of Slovenian Tourism Strategy (*Strategija razvoja slovenskega turizma*), the vineyard cottages were considered for rental purposes, but could be offered to tourists as a tourist product. Vineyard cottage tourism leads to the wholesome advertising of cultural and natural heritage as well as

gastronomy, hiking and wellness tourism (Občina Mirna Peč, 2009, pp. 9–11). In the framework of tourist offers, vineyard cottages can become an important tourist product via advertising. To satisfy even the most demanding guest, we must create an offer of tourist needs and wishes by thorough research. Vineyard cottages offer everything that tourists need, but the offer of vineyard cottages can only be upgraded by using suitable advertising instruments (Veljković et al., 2007, p. 44). "The vineyard cottages tourism is a voyage and temporary accommodation in the Slovenian space, where the winemaking and wine culture have a rich and diverse heritage, with the objective of enjoying the special features of the environment; and it is that experience that guarantees staying in vineyard cottages" (Veljković et al., 2007, p. 7).

The cultural diversity and variety of the vineyard world in a small area offers tourism in vineyard cottages as a product. The key opportunity for the development of tourism in the Bela Krajina, Posavje and Dolenjska regions is the fact that this vineyard landscape is dotted with vineyard cottages and wine chambers. Focusing on raising quality stationary tourism, the vineyard cottages create healthy competition (accommodations, motels, hotels, etc.) (Občina Mirna Peč, 2009, p. 9).

Many owners of smaller winemaking surfaces and vineyard cottages, which are older, end up selling them due to maintenance costs, and they become permanent residences of new owners. The owners should be given a greater alternative to rent out their property for tourist activity or its original activity. The vineyard cottages could establish the boosting of tourism and balance among economic usefulness, additional tourist offers in the countryside and the preservation of vineyard cottages as regional heritage (Občina Mirna Peč, 2009, p. 9).

Mănilă (2012, pp. 54–60) states that wine tourism is a form of vineyard cottage tourism, including the characteristics of oenology, applying to wine glasses, wine and tastings as well as activities arising from tourism. The successful wine tourism implementation requires tourist infrastructure (accommodation, restaurant, availability) and the special activities of this type of tourism to satisfy the needs of tourists interested in this activity. Wine tourism must include the wine-related activities besides the tourism perspectives. For this reason, this form of tourism is usually implemented in vineyards to connect the tourists with winemaking and wine selling. Wine tourism grows and the offer changes, encouraging the creation of new types of this kind of tourism (Koščak, 2016, pp. 185–193).

The beginnings of populations in the vineyard areas in Slovenia, have been recorded since the 13th century, though we can only really discuss the first larger wine hill population from the beginning of the 16th century, when farmers, in order to survive and avoid the high fees of forced labour, settled in the wine chambers. The only option for easier survival was found in settling in the wine chambers. They were one-room buildings with stone foundations and trampled clay on the floors. Built mostly from wood logs and roofed with hay as typical roofing at the time, they were originally used for storing tools and during harvest they were quite useful; and later they served as residences (Kuljaj, 2003, p. 53).

Wooden chambers were replaced by vineyard cottages in 1825, which were wine chambers built with brick. The original purpose of a vineyard cottage still arises from winemaking, and it was used for housing. The upper floor was used for the preservation of winemaking equipment and tools. The vineyard cottages also housed cellars where farmers stored wine, potatoes and other food (Veljković et al., 2007, str. 12). Kuljaj (2003, p. 96–97) states that the urban vineyard cottages were typical for the 19th century, mostly in the areas of Trška Gora pri Novem Mestu. These vineyard cottages housed cellars constructed from two parts; one part was used for storing tools, and the other for temporary stays or as a social area to meet during holidays and harvests.

During WWII, the vineyard cottages served as safehouses for residents with destroyed and burned down homes. The period after WWII was very important for the development of winemaking in the Dolenjska region. The vineyards became free to use after legislation was altered, and it was then that the vineyard cottages became permanent residences. The Strategy of Vineyard Cottage Tourism Development (2007), drafted by the Ministry of Economy, revealed that the invention of the automotive industry and improvement of old roads, as well as building new ones, influenced greatly by the accelerated construction of holiday homes. There are different reasons for the construction of a vineyard cottage (Veljković et al., 2007, p. 13):

- **Psychological** – inclusion in the prestige and modern trends.
- **Social** – desire for recreation in people encourages lifestyles in urban settlements.
- **Cultural** – raising general cultural conscience and education.
- **Economic** – such investments enable people to step up their standard of life.

Vineyard cottages today, compared with the past, represent some sort of status symbol. They are mostly spaces for relaxing, socialising, learning about the drinking culture and cuisine. People constructed the vineyard cottages for different purposes. In 2003 the Tourist Association of Slovenia classified the vineyard cottages in three types (Veljković et al., 2007, p. 14):

- Older, smaller objects, constructed by combining wood and stone; intended mostly for outbuilding function, without quality residential areas.
- Modern, large vineyard cottages, directed into professional winemaking of quality and premium wines, with bottling plants, tasting rooms and quality residential areas.
- Vineyard cottages as smaller or larger holiday homes of amateur winemakers with comfortable residential areas, easily accessible and with parking space.

Smaller settlements came to life with new populations coming in and the infrastructure of the region improved, as well as greater accessibility and the more lifestyle changes (Zupanič in Kuljaj, 2003). The fact remains that the vineyard cottages remained a potential due to them not being defined in the legislation, still considered as unexploited. The owners and also the entire population will yield financial benefits if we include them in tourism offers, yet this requires suitable organisation and changes to the legislation (Act Amending the Hospitality Industry Act – *Zakon o spremembah Zakona o gostinstvu* (ZGos-C) (2007) (Veljković et al., 2007, pp. 16–17).

Zupanič (in Kuljaj, 2003, p. 188) discussed the fact that, by changing the vineyard cottages in residential space, the owners created a situation, enabling them to offer them for tourist purposes:

- accommodation offer in vineyard cottages with food and beverage,
- offer of renting the vineyard cottages as rooms is a starting point for various hikes, trips, cycling trips and other activities,
- welcoming and catering excursion groups, organisation of various events,
- seasonal wine shop (*osmica*) or winery,
- selling bottled wine by the tourist wine road.

To conduct business and registration of the vineyard cottages as tourism objects, you must consider certain conditions (Veljković et al., 2007, p. 28):

- document of lease or ownership,

- operating licence for the object,
- vineyard cottage is located by one of the wine roads,
- safety at work,
- guaranteeing safety of food, and health and safety at work,
- positive opinions by experts on installed equipment and communal equipment.

To include vineyard cottages in tourism offers, one must acquire an operating licence. Vineyard cottages are classified as outbuildings (simple objects), and the owners of a vineyard cottage must attach the operative licence to the project of executed work (PID), geodetic screening and statement of reliability. Many vineyard cottages are half-legal, representing quite an issue (they have the construction licence, yet they are not built pursuant to it). One of the issues are the projecting roofs set up by the owners in front of the entrances. Administration units demand removing these roofs and the costs of acquiring the PID are high (even up to €5,000) (Pavlin, 2012 in Štefanič, 2012, p. 11).

The Hospitality Industry Act (Official Gazette of The Republic of Slovenia 4/2006 – UPB1) defined the person renting out a room as a "natural person, who offers their guests accommodation with breakfast or without, in their own or rental apartment or holiday home". The implementation itself can be acquired solely by attaching the operating licence in pursuant to legislation, and most lack this document. Certain developed winemaking regions are considering similar forms of development and follow their directions. There are several websites available for potential visitors to view the offer of vineyard cottage tourism, while agencies aim to design a unified website with the complete vineyard cottages tourism offer (Štefanič, 2012, p. 11).

Vineyard cottage tourism is a new product in the field of tourism and the objective is to develop a fresh identity and become a recognisable segment within tourism offers. The objective is to design a more developed, attractive and recognisable tourist offer and infuse this with the diversity of tourism offers. Vineyard cottage tourism as a product represents the option of the sustainable development of various forms of tourism, the development of the countryside, the preservation of cultural heritage, coherent regional development, the creation of healthy competition, and a focus on increasing the numbers of stationary tourism (Občina Mirna Peč, 2009, p. 11).

Vineyard cottage tourism was initially developed mostly in the direction of eliminating any legal issues, and the owners of the vineyard cottages who wish to join the tourist offer acquire the licence. The next step was directed to improving the offer by supplementing it with additional content (saunas, jacuzzi, painting workshops, apitherapy, etc.) For the complete development of the tourist product of vineyard cottage tourism, it was necessary to design a unified website featuring the complete offer of tourist vineyard cottages (Veljković et al., 2007, pp. 42–43).

Our attitude towards heritage is nowadays still limited by stereotypes, which is a product of not recognising the complete issue. Heritage is not merely an object or a way of life preserved in certain areas of past periods. It must be understood as present, which is lived and enriched with past. In the present, heritage is adapted to our desires and needs in a different way, including our own conviction and we also select it in a particular way. The book *Hundred Encounters with Heritage (Sto srečanj z dediščino)* from Bogataj (1992) defines the four attitudes toward heritage in modern times – and they are intertwined. The four attitudes towards heritage are:

- **Nostalgic and romantic** attitude. It was as far back as the Age of Enlightenment that the interests of folklore surfaced, where the inclination was not to accept and preserve the heritage in its basic form, but to adapt it to their interests.
- **Economic or marketing** attitude. The only and basic motif of this attitude is making money with heritage, despite being closely connected to the nostalgic and romantic attitude. From a historical perspective, the heritage market has a really abundant history. The legislation of preserving the cultural heritage anticipates evidence from those traders who trade in heritage. Traders must keep records of sales and procurement and other business arising from heritage. The intention of this drive is to guarantee the traceability of selling heritage.
- **Negative** attitude. This mostly envelops the destruction and rejection of heritage (e.g. history of wars and raids; in the former Yugoslavia they destroyed the urban heritage after 1945).
- **Professional** attitude. We handle heritage in a professional manner, while discovering it and exploring it, protecting and documenting it and, finally, presenting it in a professional manner as well as including it in everyday life. It includes the attitudes of museum and memorial professions and other professions such as archaeology, the history of art, ethnology, history and other fields.

One of the main reasons is the heritage, which pushes us to travel and has a lot more in common with tourism than it seems. To understand heritage better, as well as appreciating and include it in tourism, we must first know and recognise it. This is how we will find the balance between its protection and openness for tourism, to generally satisfy all of us (Bogataj, 1992, p. 12).

Recreation does not include amateur or professional sports. Recreation is an important factor of health prevention, it acts anti-stress and increases immunity. The modern world holds many life challenges, affecting people's physical and psychological abilities, but recreation renews and strengthens our capabilities (Strojin, 1999). Any leisure activity that is free of charge can be defined as recreation. In order to rest and expand your cultural horizons, entertain and improve your knowledge, develop your personality and increase social meaning, we need to completely focus on recreation (Planina & Mihalič, 2002, p. 53). In short, we need entertainment and rest for easy refreshment, both physically and psychologically (sports, entertainment, culture).

We classify recreation as (Strojin, 1999; Planina & Mihalič, 2002, p. 53):

- dynamic; taking place outside of a permanent residence (tourism),
- passive; relaxing physically and not psychologically (concert, museum, cinema, etc.),
- active; physically active, relaxing psychologically and renewing physically (walking, swimming, running, dancing, etc.),
- static; taking place in a permanent residence.

Voyaging or staying in a different place and changing the environment can, on its own, include various recreational elements. Tourism is included among the most important elements and means of recreation. When taking part in recreation in the countryside, it is recommended to consider the following (Strojin, 1999; Planina & Mihalič, 2002, p. 53):

- principles of naturalness,
- principles of sustainability,
- establishing the balance between environmental protection and economic development and social progress (we cannot inherit nature from our ancestors, yet we can steal it from our grandchildren),
- activities should be friendlier to nature and natural laws should be respected, i.e. nature should be copied.

Once it is decided which types of recreation we will offer our guests, we must first check the legal conditions and demands. And we must not forget to present the options of recreation from local providers in the information folder (Strojin, 1999; Planina & Mihalič, 2002, p. 53).

Vineyard cottage tourism represents three different options (Občina Mirna Peč, 2009, p. 15):

- **Old wine chambers and vineyard cottages** (intended for visiting, cultural heritage). Tourism in Vineyard Cottages (*Turizem v zidanica*) is the main initiator of preserving cultural heritage. There are less and less old vineyard cottages in the wine-growing regions of Dolenjska and Bela Krajina left to represent the abundance of the winemaking heritage. Vineyard cottages with years of tradition and representation of life from other periods are very rare; some are renewed with respect of the original architecture and are open to visits.
- **Wineries** (restaurant/bar offer). They are very desired and necessary for regeneration of the winemaking surroundings.
- **Renting out rooms** is a unique service of the vineyard cottage tourism and yields the highest added value to an unexploited capital. This is mostly renting out one part of a vineyard cottage as an apartment. The Tourism in Vineyard Cottages is a Slovenian speciality of such offer (see Schedule B).

Numerous forms of tourism are defined by sustainable development as well as development of the countryside as coherent regional development and preserving cultural heritage in vineyard cottages. Vineyard cottages have a basis for designing different tourist products and creating healthy competition, focused on raising the quality of stationary tourism. They are a part of Slovenia becoming recognisable and an important tourist destination (Občina Mirna Peč, 2009, p. 9). One can notice the increasing demand for contemporary tourist trends via offers founded on authenticity and connection with self-image. The vineyard cottages are a subject of interest for tourists, mostly for their architecture or outer appearance and activity location. The diversity of the tourist offer will enrich the vineyard cottage tourism and, thus, make Slovenia an even more developed, attractive and recognisable tourist destination. The trend of locating special experiences and returning to nature contributes to the development of the brand that is vineyard cottage tourism, mostly due to the lifestyle (Veljković et al., 2007, p. 31).

Business economics analyses of a vineyard cottage

The data analysis from the following essay discussing the drafting of a business plan for a company: "Business plan of additional and supplement activity of the Zgonc Tourist Vineyard Cottage activity" (Zgonc, 2018). The following elements of a business plan were discussed from the abovementioned business plan:

- sales plan according to assortments for the period of 2020–2029,
- sales price,
- general costs,
- depreciation,
- calculations per unit of product and production year,
- profit for the period of 2020–2024,
- balance sheet for the period of 2020–2024,
- profit and loss account for the period of 2020–2024,
- success indicators for the period of 2020–2024,
- project profitability, as a summary of the whole project,
- internal rate of profitability.

Table 1: *Project profitability 2020–2024*

	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Net profit on sales	111,150	115,057	119,101	123,288	127,621
Sales on local market	111,150	115,057	119,101	123,288	127,621
Gross revenue from business	111,150	115,057	119,101	123,288	127,621
Material and goods costs	48,769	50,232	51,739	53,292	54,890
Work expenses	50,000	51,500	53,045	54,636	56,275
Salaries	50,000	51,500	53,045	54,636	56,275
Other work expenses (transportation, nutrition and other)					
Depreciation	343	678	1,012	1,351	1,688
Other business costs (interests)	1,112	1,151	1,191	1,233	1,276
Annuity	4,023	4,144	4,268	4,396	3,552
Costs total	104,248	107,705	111,256	114,909	117,682
Profit	6,902	7,352	7,845	8,379	9,939
Income tax (25%)	1,726	1,838	1,961	2,095	2,485
Net profit	5,177	5,514	5,884	6,284	7,455

Source: *Adapted from Zgonc, N. (2018). Poslovni načrt. Dodatne in dopolnilne dejavnosti. Turistična zidanica Zgonc [turistični proizvod v okviru projekta: Odprta akademija za inovativni turizem]. Novo mesto: Nataša Zgonc. (p. 23).*

Table 1 is as a summary of the Zgonc Tourist Vineyard Cottage activity. The analysed elements of the business plan of Zgonc Tourist Vineyard Cottage activity reveal the project profitability. During the period of 2020 to 2024, vineyard cottage tourism will create €30,314 of profit, the annuities will return €20,383, the deprecation will need €5,072 and for salaries we will create €265,456. We can guarantee employment for 2 to 3 persons for the period of 5 years.

Method

This research comprises theoretical and empirical research and focuses on the tourist vineyard cottage as a new tourist product in the countryside. The theoretical part describes the different sections based on Slovenian and foreign literature: tourist vineyard cottages as a new market product in the countryside, and the tourist potential of vineyard cottages in the countryside and the economics of vineyard cottage development. Based on the theoretical treatment of five research questions, we prepared a survey and used systematic acquisition and collection to process the obtained information. To obtain information on the needs and wishes of guests and increase market demand, we used a survey, which was processed by a qualitative method. For study of the economics of the project of introducing a vineyard cottage into own production, we used the method of economic analysis ("Business plan of additional and supplement activity of the Zgonc Tourist Vineyard Cottage activity" (Zgonc, 2018).

According to the theoretical starting points, we designed the following research questions:

RQ1: Are citizens and visitors to the area not familiar with the vineyard cottage tourist offer?

RQ2: Is the number of tourists in an area with vineyard cottage tourism increasing?

RQ3: Can we supplement and improve the tourist offer of a municipality and redirect it to green tourism, originality and various experiences, with the offer of the vineyard cottage?

RQ4: Does the offer of vineyard cottage increase the promotion of the area and its offer?

RQ5: Does the vineyard cottage tourism creates an opportunity to increase profit?

The survey included 76 respondents. The data collection took place from 28 October 2019 to 4 November 2019. The survey was forwarded via the survey website <https://www.1ka.si/admin/survey>.

Results

Qualitative analysis of survey questionnaire on the meaning of vineyard cottage tourism for the area

Q1: Are you familiar with the offer of vineyard cottage tourism in your surroundings? Respondents answered: 45% (34 respondents) are familiar with the offer of vineyard cottage tourism in their surroundings; 49% (37 respondents) believe they are not; and 7% (5 respondents) do not know.

Q2: Do you think the promotion of vineyard cottage tourism is sufficient? Respondents answered: 78% (59 respondents) are not adequately familiar with the promotion of vineyard cottage tourism; 9% (7 respondents) are; and 13% (10 respondents) do not know if the promotion of vineyard cottage tourism is sufficient.

Q3: Are you familiar with any vineyard cottages in your surroundings that offer a special experience? Respondents answered: 43% (33 respondents) are familiar with a vineyard cottage in their surroundings that offer a special experience. 33% (18 respondents) replied that there is no such vineyard cottage in their surroundings; 24% (18 respondents) do not know if there are any such vineyard cottages in their surroundings.

Q4: Do you think the vineyard cottage tourism is important for the development of your area? Respondents answered: 75% (57 respondents) believe the vineyard cottage tourism is important for the development of their area; for 16% (12 respondents) it is not important; 9% (7 respondents) do not know if vineyard cottage tourism is important for the development of their area.

Q5: Do you expect good promotion of the area because of the vineyard cottage tourism? Respondents answered: 71% (54 respondents) expect good promotion of the area because of the vineyard cottage tourism; 9% (7 respondents) do not; 20% (15 respondents) do not know if they expect a good promotion of the area.

Q6: Do you believe vineyard cottage tourism is a good market gap, yet unexploited? Respondents answered: for 92% (70 respondents) believe vineyard cottage tourism is a good market gap, yet unexploited. 3% (2 respondents) do not agree with that; and 5% (4 respondents) do not know if vineyard cottage tourism is a good market gap, yet unexploited.

Q7: Do you feel like there are not enough tourists in your area? Respondents answered: 58% (44 respondents) feel like there are not enough tourists in their area; 32% (24 respondents) do not feel that way; 11% (8 respondents) do not know if there are not enough tourists in their area.

Q8: Would the promotion of tourism in vineyard cottages increase the number of tourists? Respondents answered: 79% (60 respondents) the promotion of tourism in vineyard cottages would increase the number of tourists, 4% (3 respondents) do not think this way; and 17% (13 respondents) do not know if the promotion of tourism in vineyard cottages would increase the number of tourists.

Q9: Do you believe the increase of tourist numbers would increase interest in the vineyard cottage tourism? Respondents answered: 83% (63 respondents) believe the increase of tourist numbers would increase interest in the vineyard cottage tourism, 1% (1 respondent) did not think this way; and 16% (12 respondents) do not know if the increase of tourist numbers would increase interest in vineyard cottage tourism.

Q10: Would an increased number of tourist events in the surroundings have a positive influence on the community? Respondents answered: 74% (57 respondents) believe the increased number of tourist events in the surroundings have a positive influence on the community; 4% (3 respondents) do not share that opinion; and 22% (16 respondents) do not know how it would influence the community.

Q11: Should the offer of vineyard cottages be expanded? Respondents answered: 59% (46 respondents) believe the offer of vineyard cottages should be expanded; 23% (17 respondents) do not; 18% (13 respondents) do not know if the offer in vineyard cottages should be expanded.

Q12: Do you think you can provide a good vineyard cottage offer in your area? Respondents answered: 53% (42 respondents) believe they can provide a good vineyard cottage offer in their area; 27% (20 respondents) do not; 19% (14 respondents) do not know what can they offer in their area.

Q13: In your area, do you have people who would be willing and capable to improve the tourist offer? Respondents answered: 66% (50 respondents) believe their area has people who would be willing and capable to improve the tourist offer; 5% (4 respondents) believe there is no such people in their area; and 28% (21 respondents) do not know if they have anyone capable in their area.

Q14: In your opinion, could you offer an excellent and special experience to the visitors in your area? Respondents answered: 82% (63 respondents) believe they could offer an excellent and special experience to the visitors in their area; 8% (6 respondents) do not share that opinion; and 9% (7 respondents) do not know what kind of experience their area could offer.

Q15: How do you evaluate the tourist offer in your area? Please use the school grading system from 1 to 5, where 1 means insufficient and 5 excellent; you can also opt for 96, which stands for nothing of the given. The respondents graded the tourist offer in their area in the following ratio: 12% (9 respondents) graded the offer with 1 (insufficient), grade 2 was provided by 24% (18 respondents), and 36% (28 respondents) opted for grade 3, while 26% (19 respondents) gave the offer grade 4, and the grade 5 (excellent) was given by only one respondent (1%); only one respondent (1%) decided for grade 96 – none of the above.

Q16: Do you believe tourist vineyard cottages in your area represent a good potential for the development of tourism? Respondents answered: 68% (52 respondents) believe tourist vineyard cottages in their area represent a good potential for the development of tourism; 9% (7 respondents) do not share this opinion; 23% (17 respondents) do not know.

Q17: In your opinion, does your area have enough tourism offers for the different tastes of tourists and different pockets? Respondents answered: 33% (25 respondents) believe their area has enough tourism offers for different tastes of tourists and different pockets; 51% (39 respondents) do not share this opinion and 16% (12 respondents) do not know if their area has enough of a tourism offer.

Q18: Have you noticed in media, brochures, catalogues, websites or anywhere else in public areas any type of promotion regarding vineyard cottage tourism? Respondents answered: 57% (44 respondents) did notice in media, brochures, catalogues, websites or anywhere else in public areas any type of promotion regarding vineyard cottage tourism; 34% (25 respondents) did not notice any promotion, and 9% (7 respondents) do not know if they noticed any promotion regarding vineyard cottage tourism.

Q19: Do you believe your area would get more recognition with more promotion of vineyard cottage tourism? Respondents answered: 77% (59 respondents) believe the promotion of the vineyard cottage tourism would get more recognition for their area, 13% (10 respondents) do not think this way; and 9% (7 respondents) do not know if the promotion of tourism in vineyard cottages would increase recognition of their area.

Q20: Would you be interested in renting out your vineyard cottage for tourism purposes? Respondents answered: 43% (33 respondents) are interested in renting out their vineyard cottage for tourism purposes; 32% (24 respondents) would not and 25% (19 respondents) are not sure about renting out their vineyard cottage for tourism purposes.

Q21: Would you be prepared to furnish your property for the purpose of vineyard cottage tourism (apartment, winery, rooms, closed events, etc.), if you were offered assistance, e.g. co-financing the renovation, construction

legalisation, consultation etc.? Respondents answered: 58% (45 respondents) are prepared to furnish their property for the purpose of vineyard cottage tourism if offered assistance; 20% (15 respondents) would not be prepared to do that, and 22% (16 respondents) do not know if they would be prepared to furnish their object if offered assistance.

Q22: Do you think the owners of vineyard cottages would be prepared to provide the possibility of offering a meeting place for smaller group of people, approx. 10–15 persons (e.g. business meetings, team-building programs)? Respondents answered: 67% (51 respondents) believe the owners of vineyard cottages would be prepared to offer the possibility of a meeting place for smaller group of people; 3% (2 respondents) do not agree and 31% (23 respondents) do not know if owners would be prepared to offer that option.

Q23: Would a unique experience in the countryside meet the expectations of new-age guests? Respondents answered: 72% (55 respondents) believe a unique experience in the countryside would meet the expectations of new-age guests; 7% (5 respondents) do not; 21% (16 respondents) do not know if a unique experience in the countryside would meet the expectations of new-age guests.

Q24: Do you feel there are enough pastime offers for tourists in the surroundings? Respondents answered: 55% (43 respondents) feel there are enough pastime offers for tourists in the surroundings; 34% (25 respondents) feels the offer is insufficient; and 11% (8 respondents) do not know how vast the offer in the surroundings is.

Q25: Would the increase of tourist offers in your area contribute to better financial status of the locals? Respondents answered: 70% (54 respondents) think the increase of tourist offers in their area would contribute to a better financial status of the locals; 14% (10 respondents) do not share that opinion and 16% (12 respondents) do not know if the increase of tourist offers in their area would contribute to a better financial status of the locals.

Q26: Have you every stayed in the vineyard cottage? 22% (16 respondents) have stayed in a vineyard cottage, 75% (58 respondents) have never and 3% (2 respondents) are not interested in such accommodation.

Q27: Do you think the vineyard cottage offer of an additional or supplemental activity on a farm could mean a good business opportunity for the countryside? Respondents answered: 92% (70 respondents) believe the vineyard cottage offer of an additional or supplemental activity on a farm could mean a good business opportunity for the countryside; 1% or one respondent does not think this is a good business opportunity, 7% (5 respondents) opted for not knowing.

Q28: Do you think the vineyard cottage tourism has a good future in the Dolenjska region? Respondents answered: 68% (52 respondents) believes the vineyard cottage tourism has a good future in the Dolenjska region, 5% (4 respondents) do not think this way; and 27% (20 respondents) do not know.

Q29: In your opinion, are there many more improvements necessary in the field of culture and tourism in the Dolenjska region? Respondents answered: 84% (64 respondents) believe there many more improvements necessary in the field of culture and tourism in the Dolenjska region; 5% (4 respondents) do not share this opinion and 11% (8 respondents) do not know.

Q30: The vineyard cottage tourism is unique; do you think an owner of a vineyard cottage could make a decent income with a good offer and regular occupancy? Respondents answered: 81% (62 respondents) think vineyard cottage tourism is well on its way to making good income with good offers and regular occupancy; 9% (9 respondents) do not share this opinion 9% (9 respondents) do not know if an owner of a vineyard cottage could make decent income with good offers and regular occupancy.

Conclusion

Based on the level of development of Slovene tourism and the existing development potential, tourism may become one of the leading markets in the following years. Many natural and cultural goods are still unexploited. Vineyard cottages, for example, have up to now presented an unexploited tourist capital. The strategy to develop Slovene tourism has led to the idea of renting vineyard cottages to tourists in a form of a tourist product.

The purpose of this paper is empirical, with the attained information intended for the development of vineyard cottage tourist offers in Dolenjska and its surroundings. By analysing the survey, we have determined the number of people familiar with vineyard cottage tourism and the number of those who have already used such services. We were interested in the quantity of people that are already working in this branch and will continue to do so in the future. The main aim of this paper is to study the potential of vineyard cottage tourism and the possibility for a greater recognisability of this branch. The next aim is to analyse the needs and wishes of potential guests that would be willing to take such offers. Based on this, we have tried to determine the possibility of increased market demand and the possibilities of an increased income.

In this paper, which is composed of a theoretical and an empirical research part, we have focused on a tourist vineyard cottage as a new market product in the countryside. In the theoretical part, we used Slovene and foreign literature to describe different topics, as follows: Tourist vineyard cottage as a new market product in the countryside, Tourist potential of the vineyard cottages in the countryside, and Economy of vineyard cottage development. Based on the theoretical treatment of the five research questions, we prepared a survey and used systematic acquisition and collection to process the obtained information.

To gain information on the needs and wishes of guests and increases to market demand and profit, we used a survey that we processed using the qualitative method and the method of economic analysis. The 2007–2011 Development of Slovenian Strategy incited thinking about renting the vineyard cottages as a tourist product to entice tourists.

The research revealed the following: the residents and the visitors to the area are not well acquainted with such tourist offers; the number of tourists is increasing; the tourist offer of the municipality is supplemented and improved, as well as redirected to green tourism, originality and various experiences; the promotion and the offers of the area are incredibly important; offer better options for additional income. This research is founded upon the originality of offering the vineyard cottage tourism. The survey revealed the directions that could be taken in the development of vineyard cottage tourism, as well as how to emphasise stories, tradition and uniqueness.

References

1. Bogataj, J. (1992). *Sto srečanj z dediščino na Slovenskem*, Prešernova družba, Ljubljana.
2. Koščak, M. (2016). Izzivi vključevanja sonaravnega in trajnostnega vinogradništva v turistično ponudbo vinskega turizma: primeri doma in v tujini. *Izzivi trajnostnega vinogradništva na Dolenjskem*, 44. teden cvička, *Trebnje* 185–193.
3. Kuljaj, I. (2003). *Zidanice, vinske kleti in hrami na Slovenskem*. Magnolija, Ljubljana.

4. Mănilă, M. (2012). Wine tourism – a great tourism offer face to new challenges. *Journal of tourism*, (13), 54–60. <http://www.revistadeturism.ro/rdt/article/view/13/9> (07 May 2018).
5. Strategy of Vineyard Cottage Tourism Development (Strategija razvoja zidaniškega turizma), (2007), [elaborat, študija]. Ljubljana: Republika Slovenija, Ministrstvo za gospodarstvo. http://www.zuzemberk.si/data/economy/Strategija_ZT_koncna.pdf, (20 May 2019).
6. Občina Mirna Peč, (2009), *Priročnik – turizem v zidanicah*. Novo mesto:https://las-dbk.si/site/assets/files/1039/mirna_pec_brosura_turizem_v_zidanicah.pdf, (06 March 2018).
7. Planina, J., Mihalič, T. (2002). *Ekonomika turizma*. Ekonomska fakulteta, Ljubljana.
8. Strojin, T. (1999). *Gornišтво*, Založba TUMA, Ljubljana.
9. Štefanič, M. (2012). *Trženjski splet na primeru turizma v zidanicah: zaključna strokovna naloga visoke poslovne šole – doctoral thesis*, Faculty of Economics, Ljubljana.
10. Veljković, B., Usenik, J., Plenković, M., Kučič, V., Volčanjek, J., Polovič, M., ... Vidiček, M. (2007). *Strategija razvoja zidaniškega turizma*. Ministrstvo za gospodarstvo. Ljubljana Republika Slovenija. http://www.zuzemberk.si/data/economy/Strategija_ZT_koncna.pdf, (15 December 2018).
11. Zakon o spremembah in dopolnitvah Zakona o gostinstvu – ZGos-C (Uradni list RS, št. 60/07 z dne 6 July 2007).
12. Zgonc, N. (2018). *Poslovni načrt. Dodatne in dopolnilne dejavnosti. Turistična zidanica Zgonc* [turistični proizvod v okviru projekta: Odprta akademija za inovativni turizem], Nataša Zgonc, Novo mesto.