

## Article

# Wine Tourism, Designations of Origin and Business Performance: An Analysis Applied to the Valencian Community Wine Industry

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**Abstract:** The aim of this research is to analyze the effect of wine routes and Designations of Origin (DOs) on the competitiveness of wineries belonging to the Valencian Community, given that, to the best of our knowledge, such relationships have not been analyzed in this wine region. To this end, information was obtained on the operating income, results for the year, equity, level of indebtedness and number of employees of the 90 wineries belonging to this wine-growing territory. Subsequently, a comparison of means was made, calculating Student's t-test for independent samples with the SPSS software, based on whether the wineries belonged to the wine routes and DOs existing in the Valencian Community. The results show the wineries that are members of a wine route and/or a DO have, on average, a higher operating income, higher equity and a higher number of employees, and these differences are statistically significant. This research may be useful for general managers who are considering the development of wine tourism activities, as well as for those who are thinking of joining DOs, since, as was empirically demonstrated, these actions can improve the economic performance of their wineries and, as a consequence, their competitiveness.

**Keywords:** wine tourism; quality labels; wine routes; DO; competitiveness; Spain



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## 1. Introduction

Wine routes and Designations of Origin (DOs) are two fundamental strategic elements for competing in the global wine industry. They help improve the positioning and reputation of wineries that adhere to both quality labels.

On the one hand, wine routes represent itineraries to enjoy the wine wealth of a given wine region. These are made up of both public (DOs, municipalities, associations, etc.) and private organizations (hotels, hostels, wine shops, etc.), with wineries being the fundamental axis around which the activity revolves [1]. Through these itineraries, synergies can be achieved between the different agents and an improvement in the recognition of the wine regions, which ultimately translates into an improvement in the competitive position of the wineries [2]. This synergistic effect and the improvement in the competitiveness of wineries derived from their adhesion to a wine route have received attention in the academic literature [3–5]. However, for the case of Spain, in general, and the Valencian Community, in particular, this link has been scarcely addressed. In fact, to the best of our knowledge, there are no previous studies that have addressed the effect of belonging to a wine route on the competitiveness of wineries in the wine context of the Community of Valencia. The present study aims to overcome this research gap by answering the following Research Question (RQ1): Does belonging to a wine route positively affect the competitiveness of wineries?

Wine tourism is an increasingly important activity in the global wine industry, given its recognized ability to increase winery sales and promote rural development. This has attracted the interest of academics from different disciplines, such as geography, economics, sociology and business management. The first research in the field of wine tourism dates back to the 1990s, focusing on the influence of wine tourism activity in rural areas and on

the behavior of wine tourists [6]. Thus, among the pioneering works on wine tourism, the books *Wine Tourism Around the World* [7] and *Explore Wine Tourism* [8] stand out for their relevance and disruptive character in the field, as well as the research carried out by Charters and Ali-Knigh [9], Carlsen [10], Getz and Brown [11] and Mitchell and Hall [12]. The authors of this study published several papers on this line of research, focusing their interest and efforts on analyzing the extent to which wine tourism contributes to environmental sustainability [12–15]. However, sustainability, in addition to the environmental dimension, is composed of social and economic ones [16]. This research aims to continue to deepen the link between wine tourism and sustainability through the analysis of the economic dimension since the study aims to determine to what extent those wineries that carry out wine tourism activities and are members of a wine route have a higher economic performance than those that are not.

On the other hand, DOs are quality labels that establish the conditions of production and elaboration of their wines, combining natural factors (soil and climate) and human factors (know-how) to ensure that the wines linked to their origin have the highest quality [17]. In this way, the wineries in a given wine-growing territory can benefit from both their own brand and the collective brand, i.e., their DO, which represents a group of wineries that make wine from certain grapes, in a given territory and with a given method [18]. As a consequence of the high atomization of the Spanish wine sector, the DO often represents an essential distinctive for wineries to transmit the quality and origin of the wine produced, especially for those wineries that lack financial resources and have difficulty accessing large distribution channels [19]. There are several studies that have addressed the effect of this quality label on the profitability and competitiveness of wineries in the Spanish wine context [20–22]. However, to the best of our knowledge, there are no previous studies that have focused their analysis specifically on addressing this relationship for wineries in the Valencian Community. In order to provide new knowledge through the study of this research gap, the research aims to answer the following Research Question (RQ2): Does belonging to a DO positively affect the competitiveness of wineries in the Valencian Community?

The study is structured as follows to answer the two research questions. First, after this brief introduction, Section 2 deals with the literature review, presenting the wine routes and DOs of the Valencian Community, as well as the research hypotheses to be tested. Section 3 presents the research methodology; Section 4 presents the results of the study and, finally, Section 5 provides the main conclusions, limitations and future lines of research.

## 2. Wine Tourism, Denomination of Origin and Business Performance

The theoretical framework of the research is presented below. The first subsection identifies the two existing wine routes in the Valencian Community, the second subsection deals with the DOs linked to the two wine routes in this community and, finally, subsection three formulates the research hypotheses to be tested in relation to the effect of belonging to a DO and a wine route on the competitiveness of the wineries.

### 2.1. The Utiel–Requena and Alicante Wine Routes

The Valencian Community has two wine routes recognized by the Spanish Association of Wine Cities (ACEVIN, for its acronym in Spanish), one in the province of Valencia, the Utiel–Requena wine route, and the other in the province of Alicante, the Alicante Wine Route.

On the one hand, the first is located in the western area of the community, in the region called Plana de Utiel. It runs through 10 localities and has an extension of vineyards of more than 40,000 hectares. This is a renowned wine route in the Spanish wine sector, in which the following wineries stand out: Dominio de la Vega, Bodegas Emilio Clemente, Pago de Tharsys, Bodegas Utielanas, Murviedro Bodega Histórica, Vera de Estenas, Bodegas Chozas Carrascal, Bodegas Neleman, Bodegas Nodus, Bodega Sierra Norte, Bodegas Coviñas, Finca Hoya de Cadenas, Bodega Cerrogallina and Viñedos y bodegas Vegalfaro [23].

The interest of this region in developing wine tourism arose at the end of the nineties of the last century, coinciding with the crisis of the sector and the uprooting of important

extensions of vineyards in favor of other more profitable activities. It was then that wine tourism began to be conceived as a mechanism to diversify the regional economy. It was in this context that the Utiel–Requena wine route was presented in 1994 as one of the first in Spain, with the support of the then Ministry of Industry, Tourism and Trade, culminating its launch in 2008, when the tourist product “Wine Routes of Spain” was born [24].

On the other hand, the Alicante wine route runs between the regions of Vinalopó and Marina. This product emerged as an alternative to the so-called “sun and beach” tourism, a modality that is widespread in the community and also aims to publicize the interior of the province through wine tourism and gastronomic offerings. Among the wineries that make up the route, it is worth pointing out: Bodegas Monóvar, Bodegas Enrique Mendoza, Bodegas y Viñedos El Sequé, Bodegas y Mistelas Riko, Bodegas Pinoso, Bodega Finca Collado, Bodegas Francisco Gómez, Bodegas Xalò, Bodega Vinos De Algueña, Bodegas Casa Cesilia and Bodega Sierra Salinas [25].

The wines of the province of Alicante are renowned for their prestige as a result of the effort and wisdom of the farmers and winemakers of this territory who obtain quality wines. This quality is also largely due to the Mediterranean climate that characterizes these lands, as well as to the combination of the historic legacy with the use of new technologies to carry out the elaboration of wine [26]. The Vinalopó river basin has a winemaking tradition characterized by the extension and quality of the vines, especially Monastrell, which is the most personal native variety. The most important wine in this wine region is Fondillón which, apart from being the one that gives the most personality to the wine-growing territory, is the traditional and exclusive wine of the area [27]. In this sense, as Guardiola [28], p. 19 points out, “among all the fortified wines that this Huerta produces, this one, which has its own name, is in first place: Fondillón, a sweet, aged wine from the Huerta de Alicante. The fame it enjoys is so great that when tasting it, the Princes have said: ‘but this is the very famous “wine of Alicante”, which is so renowned in several countries’”. Figure 1 shows the geographic location of both wine routes.

## 2.2. *The Utiel–Requena and Alicante Denomination of Origin*

The first regulation in Spain at the DO level dates back to 1932. Already since then, in the Decree of 8 September 1932, elevated to Law on 26 May 1933, in article 34 of the “Statute of Wine”, the DO Utiel–Requena is defined and recognized. In 1957, the regulations of the DO Utiel–Requena were approved, and it was in 1976, from the order of the Ministry of Agriculture of 19 May 1975, when the Control Board opened its first office [29].

Utiel–Requena’s winemaking tradition dates back 2700 years [29]. The archaeological sites found in this DO support the production of wine and its uninterrupted commercialization from Iberian times to the present day [30]. There were humans who, in response to the surrounding natural factors described above, made viticulture take root as a way of life in Utiel–Requena. The Bobal variety is the star of this appellation, occupying 74% of the total vineyard surface and adapting perfectly to its climate and territory [31]. The wines made with Bobal have an intense and characteristic color, with a full body and complex and fruity aromas. Furthermore, several scientific studies show that Bobal is one of the grape varieties with the highest resveratrol content, which is the heart-healthy and anticarcinogenic substance attributed to wine [32].

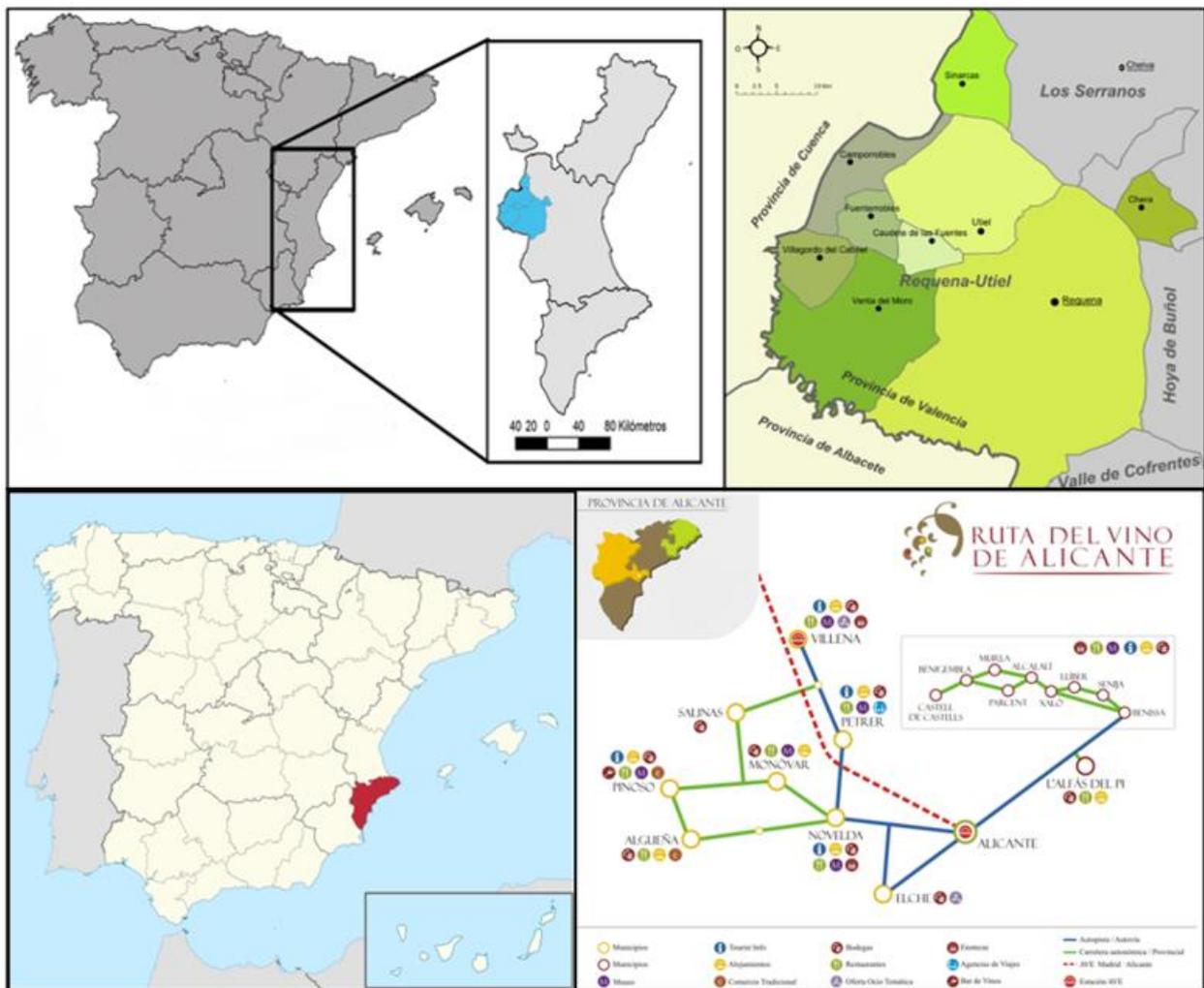


Figure 1. Wine Routes of the Valencian Community. Source: own elaboration.

The Utiel–Requena Denomination of Origin is located in the interior plateau of the province of Valencia (Spain), 70 km from the sea. It has a Mediterranean climate with continental features due to its 750 m of average altitude. The production area is made up of nine municipalities: Camporrobles, Caudete de las Fuentes, Fuenterrobles, Siete Aguas, Sinarcas, Utiel, Requena, Venta del Moro and Villargordo del Cabriel, containing the headquarters of the Regional Council in the city of Utiel. In particular, the headquarters are located in the emblematic building of the Bodega Redonda [33].

The Alicante DO is divided into two subzones: the Marina region, on the northern coast of Alicante, and the Vinalopó region, which extends to the borders with Castilla–La Mancha and the Region of Murcia. This appellation covers an area of 14,256 ha and has 50 registered wineries, obtaining the qualification of Denomination of Origin in 1932 [34], as did the Utiel–Requena DO, as mentioned above (see Figure 2).



**Figure 2.** Utiel–Requena and Alicante DO logos. Source: own elaboration.

The average altitude of the vineyards is 600 m. The soils are mainly limestone, healthy and with no organic matter. The climate is Mediterranean, tending to continental towards the interior with rainfall between 300 mm (Vinalopó Sub-zone) and 500 mm (La Marina Sub-zone). Old wines in Alicante, among which Fondillón stands out, are a minority production [26]. However, their cultural tradition, their wide range and their personal characteristics have made them more famous than even the majority of still red wines [35]. This is partly due to the weight of an oenological tradition that has been part of a gastronomic culture of Mediterranean essence for years. Together with almonds, honey and fresh and dried fruits, the wines with muscatell and monastrell grapes formed a perfect sample of varied, smallholder agriculture of Arab tradition, almost unalterable for centuries [36].

### 2.3. The Effect of DO and Wine Route Membership on Wineries' Competitiveness

The implementation of wine tourism activities allows wineries to increase their profitability while improving their differentiation [37,38]. This is because they can sell their products directly to consumers, acquiring the margin that distributors would keep, as well as being able to promote incremental and cross-selling with other products offered by the winery (such as oils and souvenirs). This activity is also capable of generating brand ambassadors, with the long-term benefits that this entails [39].

This type of tourism favors the territorial development of the region where the activity takes place since it promotes the gastronomy of the territory, protects the tangible and intangible heritage and generates economic wealth in the region as it favors the generation and retention of employment because the activity and its promotion require the hiring of qualified personnel [40].

Similarly, if a winery decides to join a wine route, it will enjoy benefits in addition to those of the wine tourism activity itself since by belonging to an organization made up of a multitude of public and private institutions, wineries can improve their communication and knowledge acquisition among the members of the route, benefit from the image, publicity and reputation associated with the wine route and can generate synergies with other members (such as restaurants, hostels and hotels) to improve their wine tourism product [41].

The use of collective brands has been one of the most widely implemented differentiation strategies in the agri-food industry in general and in the wine industry in particular [42–45]. In the Spanish case, the DOs have been widely used for the recognition of wine quality since they accredit compliance with a series of common requirements in terms of quality, geographical origin and production methods [46]. Thus, according to the latest data provided by the Spanish Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (MAPA, for its acronym in Spanish), there are currently 102 DOs.

In fact, DOs in the Spanish wine industry play a crucial role given that, as the sector is highly atomized, most of the individual brands registered by the wineries are hardly

known and recognized by the public, which leads the DOs to assume in many occasions the specific attributes and values of the wine brands [29]. Thus, these quality marks represent one of the most important factors in the consumer's choice of wine [17].

The DO is, therefore, a mechanism to reduce the asymmetry of information between the winery and the consumer, as well as a differentiating element that, if well managed, can translate into greater performance and growth for the wineries that make up the quality label. Therefore, given the capacity of both wine routes and DOs to favor the competitiveness of wineries, the following two research hypotheses are formulated:

H1. Wineries belonging to wine routes have, on average, a higher level of competitiveness than those that do not belong to a wine route.

H1.1. Wineries belonging to a wine route have, on average, higher operating income than those that do not belong to a wine route.

H1.2. Wineries belonging to a wine route have, on average, higher results for the year than those that do not belong to a wine route.

H1.3. Wineries belonging to a wine route have, on average, higher own funds than those that do not belong to a wine route.

H1.4. Wineries belonging to a wine route have, on average, lower levels of indebtedness than those that do not belong to a wine route.

H1.5. Wineries belonging to a wine route have, on average, a higher number of employees than those that do not belong to a wine route.

H2. Wineries adhering to a DO have, on average, a higher level of competitiveness than those that are not members of a DO.

H2.1. Wineries adhering to a DO have, on average, a higher operating income than those that are not members of a DO.

H2.2. Wineries adhering to a DO have, on average, higher results for the year than those that are not members of a DO.

H2.3. Wineries adhering to a DO have, on average, higher own funds than those that are not members of a DO.

H2.4. Wineries adhering to a DO have, on average, lower levels of indebtedness than those that are not members of a DO.

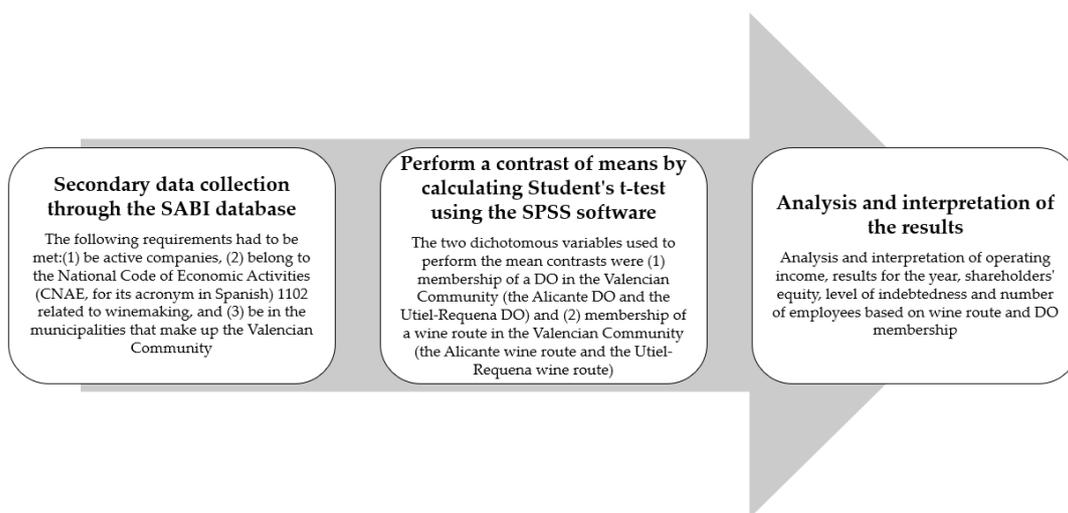
H2.5. Wineries adhering to a DO have, on average, a higher number of employees than those that are not members of a DO.

### 3. Methodology

The research follows a quantitative approach with an exploratory scope, given that, as mentioned in the previous section, to the best of our knowledge, there are no previous studies that have addressed the two research questions formulated. As regards data sources, secondary data derived from the Iberian Balance Sheet Analysis (SABI, for its acronym in Spanish) database were used. In particular, multiple criteria were followed for the collection of data on wineries, which had to: (1) be active companies, (2) belong to one of the 1102 National Code of Economic Activities (CNAE, for its acronym in Spanish) members related to winemaking and (3) be located in the municipalities that make up the Valencian Community. Once these criteria were established, a total of 90 wineries were obtained and, subsequently, the items that we wanted to know for these wineries were selected from the database, which were: operating income, results for the year, equity, level of indebtedness and number of employees. The average for the last three years (2019–2021) was calculated for each of the selected items to compensate for the shortcomings of cross-sectional research.

Once the data were collected, we proceeded to perform the contrast of means for tests of means by calculating the Student's t-test for independent samples through SPSS software version 29.0 (see Figure 3). It should be noted that this parametric test was selected because the requirements for it were met, given that the assumptions of normality in the distribution of the variables, homoscedasticity and independence of the observations were met [47]. In the Student's t-test, the contrast statistic used to test the null hypothesis (the means of the two groups are equal) is constructed according to the differences recorded between

the values of the study variable evaluated in each of the groups to be compared [48]. The two dichotomous variables used to perform the mean contrasts were (1) membership of a DO in the Valencian Community (the Alicante DO and the Utiel–Requena DO) and (2) membership of a wine route in the Valencian Community (the Alicante wine route and the Utiel–Requena wine route). In this way, the value 1 was taken if the winery adhered to a DO and 0 if it was not, following the same procedure for the wine routes. For their coding, both the DOs' websites and the websites of the wine routes were used since these offered the most up-to-date information on the wineries belonging to these associations.



**Figure 3.** Research procedure diagram. Source: own elaboration.

#### 4. Results

The results of the research are presented in two blocks. On the one hand, we present the results relating to the differences in means and their significance in relation to the wineries in the Valencian Community belonging to the wine routes. On the other hand, we present the results relating to the mean differences and the significance of the wineries belonging to the Community based on their membership of a DO.

With regard to the first block, Table 1 shows that 33 wineries belong to a wine route compared to the remaining 57, which are not members of such associations to promote wine tourism. Likewise, the results show that, in the wine-growing context of the Valencian Community, the wineries that are members of a wine route have, on average, a higher operating income, a higher profit for the year, higher equity, a lower level of debt and a higher number of employees. In particular, the differences in absolute value amount to EUR 291.14 million in terms of operating income, EUR 0.4 million in terms of profit for the year, EUR 210.88 million in terms of equity, EUR 126.85 million in terms of the level of indebtedness and nine employees. Therefore, the greatest differences in averages correspond to operating income and shareholders' equity, this difference being positive, as explained above, for wineries belonging to a wine route. However, not all the mean differences obtained are significant and, therefore, cannot be extrapolated to the population. Table 2 shows that only the differences relating to operating income, equity and the number of employees are statistically significant at a confidence level of 95%. Thus, although the wineries in the Valencian Community that belong to a wine route have a higher profit for the year and a lower level of indebtedness, these results cannot be inferred for the population.

**Table 1.** Difference in averages based on wine route membership.

	Wine Route	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
Operating	1.00	33	381.52	856.70
Income	0.00	57	90.38	338.62
Income for the	1.00	33	1.99	20.16
year	0.00	57	1.59	21.58
Equity	1.00	33	313.77	802.15
	0.00	57	102.89	316.66
Indebtedness	1.00	33	391.58	27848.98
	0.00	57	518.46	34223.54
Number of	1.00	33	13.57	17.80
employees	0.00	57	4.10	9.65

Note: all values are expressed in millions of EUR, except for the number of employees. Source: own elaboration based on SPSS.

**Table 2.** Levene's test for assessing significance.

Items to Evaluate		F	Sig
Operating Income	Equal variances are assumed	11.06	0.001
	Equal variances are not assumed		
Income for the year	Equal variances are assumed	0.21	0.645
	Equal variances are not assumed		
Equity	Equal variances are assumed	6.71	0.011
	Equal variances are not assumed		
Indebtedness	Equal variances are assumed	2.47	0.120
	Equal variances are not assumed		
Number of Employees	Equal variances are assumed	8.08	0.006
	Equal variances are not assumed		

Source: own elaboration based on SPSS.

With regard to the second block, Table 3 shows that 63 wineries belong to a DO compared to the remaining 27, which do not adhere to this quality label. The results also show that, in the context of the Valencian Community wine industry, the wineries that belong to a DO have, on average, a higher operating income, a higher profit for the year, higher equity, a lower level of indebtedness and a higher number of employees. In particular, the differences in absolute value amount to EUR 206.02 million in terms of operating income, EUR 2.31 million in terms of profit for the year, EUR 576.61 million in terms of equity, EUR 141.98 million in terms of the level of indebtedness and seven employees. Therefore, the greatest differences in averages correspond to shareholders' equity and operating income, this difference being positive, as already explained, for wineries adhering to a DO. However, not all the mean differences obtained are significant and, therefore, cannot be extrapolated to the population. Table 4 shows that only the differences relating to operating income, equity and the number of employees are statistically significant at a confidence level of 95%. Thus, although the wineries in the Valencian community that belong to a DOP have a higher profit for the year and a lower level of indebtedness, these results cannot be inferred from the population. Therefore, the sense of the differences analyzed and their significance coincide in the wineries of the Valencian Community that belong to a wine route and a DO.

**Table 3.** Difference in averages based on DO membership.

	DO	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
Operating	1.00	63	258.94	694.32
Income	0.00	27	52.92	194.87
Income for the	1.00	63	3.77	23.96
year	0.00	27	1.46	11.60
Equity	1.00	63	241.68	650.08
	0.00	27	36.80	73.47
Indebtedness	1.00	63	429.24	31619.20
	0.00	27	571.22	32802.18
Number of	1.00	63	9.76	15.60
employees	0.00	27	2.49	6.62

Note: all values are expressed in millions of EUR, except for the number of employees. Source: own elaboration based on SPSS.

**Table 4.** Levene's test for assessing significance.

Items to Evaluate		F	Sig.
Operating Income	Equal variances are assumed	5.412	0.02
	Equal variances are not assumed		
Income for the year	Equal variances are assumed	0.613	0.43
	Equal variances are not assumed		
Equity	Equal variances are assumed	7.018	0.01
	Equal variances are not assumed		
Indebtedness	Equal variances are assumed	0.049	0.83
	Equal variances are not assumed		
Number of Employees	Equal variances are assumed	10.383	0.002
	Equal variances are not assumed		

Source: own elaboration based on SPSS.

## 5. Discussion and Conclusions

The results of the study empirically show that those wineries in the Valencian Community that are members of a DO and/or a wine route have, on average, a higher operating income, a higher profit for the year, higher equity, a lower level of debt and a higher number of employees. Likewise, the differences in operating income, equity and the number of employees are also statistically significant.

Specifically, the wineries in the Valencian Community that belong to a wine route show differences in the absolute value of EUR 291.14 million in terms of operating income, EUR 0.4 million in terms of profit for the year, EUR 210.88 million in terms of equity, EUR 126.85 million in terms of debt levels and EUR 9 million in terms of the number of employees. With regard to their adherence to a DO, those wineries in the Valencian Community that adhered to this quality label present differences in absolute value amounting to EUR 206.02 million in terms of operating profit, EUR 2.31 million in terms of profit for the year, EUR 576.61 million in terms of shareholders' equity, EUR 141.98 million in terms of the level of indebtedness and seven in terms of the number of employees.

This allows us to accept sub-hypotheses H.1.1, H.1.3, H.1.5, H.2.1, H.2.3 and H.2.5 and reject hypotheses H.1.2, H.1.4, H.2.2 and H.2.4 since, except for the non-significance of the differences related to the level of indebtedness and the results for the year, the rest of the differences are positive and statistically significant. Thus, the results confirm the two main hypotheses proposed, given that belonging to a DO and/or a wine route makes it possible to increase competitiveness through improved operating income, improved equity and the generation of employment.

The results offered in the present research are in line with those reported by Andrade-Suárez and Caamaño-Franco [40], Pomarici et al. [17], Santos et al. [39] and Marco-Lajara et al. [29], who conceive DOs and wine routes as elements that allow increasing the performance of wineries since, on the one hand, the DO guarantees the quality and origin of the wine and, on the other hand, wine routes act as distribution channels for direct wine sales in

wineries, enabling the creation of brand ambassadors and a greater positioning of the wine offered by wineries in the market. In this regard, as far as the DO–business competitiveness linkage is concerned, the research by Sánchez-Hernández et al. [49], Aparicio et al. [50] and Sellers-Rubio and Más-Ruiz [51] are in line with the results obtained, given that they empirically demonstrate the positive effect of DOs on the profitability of Spanish wineries.

Thus, while DOs improve the competitiveness of wineries by enhancing the identification of the quality of the wines offered by them, wine routes favor the competitiveness of wineries by increasing direct sales of wine in the winery, building brand ambassadors and generating and retaining employment in the wine-growing areas where the activity is carried out. In this sense, as well as the results obtained in the present study, Trišić et al. [3], Festa et al. [52] and Fuentes-Fernández et al. [38] demonstrate the economic benefits of wine tourism activity for Serbian, Italian and Spanish wineries, respectively, given that it allows obtaining the distributor's margin, increases brand positioning, guarantees direct interaction with customers and allows creating brand ambassadors.

This research has a series of theoretical and practical implications. Regarding the theoretical implications, firstly, the research contributes to the generation of new knowledge in the literature on the link between wine tourism and quality labels and the competitiveness of wineries. Secondly, to the best of our knowledge, there are no previous studies that have analyzed the effect of wine routes and DOs on the competitiveness of wineries in the Valencian Community, which represents an opportunity to advance scientific knowledge. Thirdly, it allows us to demonstrate the positive and significant effect of wine routes and DOs on the competitiveness of wineries, contributing to the empirical demonstration of the benefits derived from membership in both wine associations (wine routes and DOs).

In terms of practical implications, the study can be useful for winemakers who are considering joining a DO and/or a wine route since the research demonstrates the economic benefits of belonging to these associations. On the one hand, the study can serve to raise awareness among winemakers of the importance of belonging to the DOs in which they operate since, in addition to benefiting from the winery's own brand, the winery can benefit from the collective brand associated with the DO, being able to link the quality of the wines of the territory to those offered by the winery. On the other hand, this research may lead the general managers to start considering the development of wine tourism activities or to promote them in case they are already developing them since this will allow the wineries to belong to the wine routes that exist in the territories where this type of tourism is carried out.

Despite the important contributions derived from the study, it should be noted that it suffers from certain limitations. In this regard, it should be pointed out that the data obtained for the analysis are entirely secondary, and, in addition, the relationships proposed are only contrasted for the wine context of the Valencian Community. To overcome these two shortcomings, as a future line of research, we propose to carry out a questionnaire to determine the effect of DOs and wine routes on the competitiveness of Spanish wineries so that primary information can be obtained and the geographical scope of the study can be extended to the Spanish state. In this way, it would be possible to know whether the results of the Valencian Community converge or diverge with respect to the Spanish wine industry. In addition, it should be noted that given the relevance and disruptive nature of the study, it is necessary to extend the analysis beyond the Spanish wine context. Therefore, once the analysis has been carried out in the Spanish wineries, the aim is to contrast the wine tourism–business competitiveness link in the Californian wine industry, being able to establish comparisons between the two wine regions subsequently. This analysis would allow us to begin a line of research linked to the similarities and differences between the wine-producing countries of the Old and New World.

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