

Article

Wine Tourism, Cultural Landscapes and Heritage in Macaronesian Islands: A Comparative Analysis of the Canary Islands (Spain) and Fogo (Cabo Verde) Through the Tourism Area Life Cycle (TALC)

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Abstract

Wine tourism has emerged as a potential strategy for diversifying tourism activity and enhancing the value of agricultural landscapes, local production, and cultural heritage, particularly in island destinations. This study comparatively analyses the development, sustainability, and strategic role of wine tourism in the Canary Islands and Fogo (Cabo Verde), two Atlantic island contexts with contrasting tourism trajectories. The study was conducted between April and September 2026. A comparative case-study design based on scientific literature, institutional and technical documentation, and secondary data was applied, using Butler's Tourism Area Life Cycle (TALC) as an interpretative framework. The results reveal two differentiated trajectories. In the Canary Islands, wine tourism operates within a mature international tourism destination but remains a developing-to-consolidating product, contributing to diversification and potential qualitative rejuvenation through volcanic wine landscapes, heritage, gastronomy, and local production. In Fogo, wine tourism remains emerging and is closely connected to Chã das Caldeiras, community-based structures, local wine production, and the volcanic landscape, potentially contributing to the structuring of small-scale local tourism development. The findings suggest that destination maturity and tourism-product development do not necessarily evolve simultaneously. Wine tourism may therefore perform different strategic functions according to the evolutionary context of the destination, reinforcing the importance of territorially adapted approaches to sustainable tourism development.



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Keywords: wine tourism; Tourism Area Life Cycle; island destinations; volcanic wine landscapes; La Geria; cordón trenzado; sustainable tourism; Canary Islands; Fogo; Cabo Verde

1. Introduction

The tourism industry has undergone substantial growth and diversification in recent decades, driven both by changing patterns of demand and by the need for destinations to respond to emerging economic, social, and environmental challenges. These pressures are particularly evident in destinations traditionally associated with mass tourism, where debates increasingly concern the balance between tourism growth and sustainability, destination competitiveness, overcrowding, residents' attitudes towards tourism, the objectives of the 2030 Agenda, and the renewal and diversification of established tourism products. Within this context, wine tourism has emerged as a complementary form of tourism capable of extending the visitor experience beyond the conventional drivers of sun-and-beach destinations while fostering innovation, territorial differentiation, and more sustainable forms of tourism development (Dorta & Quintela, 2024; Martínez-Falcó et al., 2026).

Wine tourism can generate economic, social, cultural, and environmental benefits for destination areas, particularly in rural and island territories where viticulture forms part of their historical, cultural, and landscape heritage (Hall et al., 2000; Getz, 2000; Charters & Ali-Knight, 2002). Its relevance therefore extends beyond winery visits and wine consumption, as it can strengthen connections between tourism, agriculture, gastronomy, cultural heritage, and local communities. The landscape dimension has also received increasing attention, particularly in wine-growing areas where agricultural practices have created distinctive cultural landscapes. In this regard, wine tourism can contribute to the tourism valorization of internationally recognized wine landscapes, including UNESCO-listed cultural landscapes such as the Alto Douro Wine Region in Portugal (Trigo & Silva, 2022; Jezierska-Thöle et al., 2025).

These relationships acquire particular significance in island and volcanic destinations, where geographical isolation, environmental constraints, limited resources, and economic dependence on tourism can simultaneously create distinctive tourism assets and structural vulnerabilities. This study focuses on Macaronesia, a geographical region comprising the archipelagos of the Azores, Madeira, the Canary Islands, and Cabo Verde, with particular emphasis on the latter two (Figure 1). These Atlantic archipelagos share significant environmental characteristics associated with their volcanic origin, biodiversity, and geodiversity (Dóniz-Páez et al., 2020), while displaying different socioeconomic and tourism trajectories. These characteristics make Macaronesia a particularly relevant geographical context for examining the relationships between wine tourism, landscape, territorial identity, and wine culture (Albuquerque et al., 2025).

The volcanic origin and evolution of these islands have generated distinctive landscapes and forms of human adaptation to the territory. The Canary Islands and Fogo in Cabo Verde provide particularly illustrative examples, sharing geological and geographical characteristics while presenting substantial differences in their patterns of territorial and tourism development (Carracedo et al., 2015). From a tourism perspective, volcanic landscapes and geoheritage increasingly constitute resources for the development of experiences associated with nature, landscape interpretation, and volcanic environments (Alfama et al., 2024). At the same time, insularity influences tourism development through factors such as economic dependence on tourism, environmental vulnerability, limited territorial capacity, and exposure to external crises, reinforcing the need for diversification strategies capable of strengthening destination resilience (Dorta Antequera et al., 2020).

Within this broader context, the Canary Islands represent a mature international tourism destination with a long trajectory of specialization in mass sun-and-beach tourism (Díaz Armas, 2008). Within this consolidated tourism system, wine tourism has progressively emerged as a complementary product capable of contributing to tourism diversification, territorial valorization, and the incorporation of rural and agricultural landscapes

into the destination experience (Díaz Armas, 2008; Duarte Alonso et al., 2008; Dorta & Quintela, 2024). The distinctive volcanic wine landscapes of the archipelago—including traditional cultivation systems such as the *cordón trenzado* in the Orotava Valley and the volcanic vineyards of La Geria—provide territorial resources that can support differentiated tourism experiences based on heritage, landscape, gastronomy, and local production.

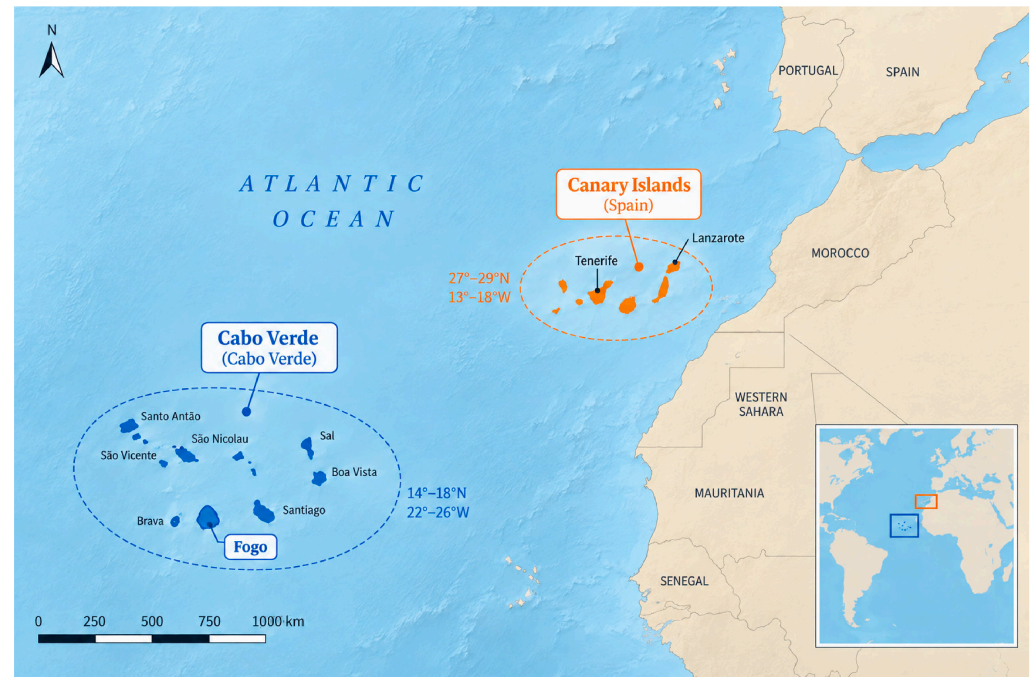


Figure 1. Location of Cabo Verde and the Canary Islands within the Macaronesian region. Source: Authors' own elaboration.

Cabo Verde presents a substantially different tourism context. Tourism development is spatially uneven across the archipelago, with much of the international tourism activity concentrated in islands such as Sal and Boa Vista, whereas Fogo follows a different trajectory associated with its volcanic landscape, rural communities, agricultural production, and emerging forms of nature- and culture-based tourism. In this context, wine tourism remains an emerging activity centred primarily on Chã das Caldeiras, within the volcanic environment of Pico do Fogo (Alfama et al., 2024). Viticulture and wine production are closely connected to the local landscape and community, providing opportunities for tourism experiences that combine volcanic heritage, local products, gastronomy, and cultural identity. Previous research has therefore identified wine tourism as an activity with potential to contribute to local development and community-based economic activity on Fogo (Castillo Canalejo & López Guzmán, 2011).

The contrast between these two island contexts raises an important question concerning the relationship between destination maturity and the development of specific tourism products. Butler's (1980) Tourism Area Life Cycle (TALC) provides a well-established conceptual framework for interpreting destination evolution through successive stages of exploration, involvement, development, consolidation, stagnation, and possible subsequent trajectories of rejuvenation or decline. However, applying this framework to wine tourism requires distinguishing between the life cycle of the destination as a whole and the development trajectory of wine tourism as a specific tourism product. A mature destination may contain emerging or developing tourism products, while such products may perform substantially different functions in destinations at earlier stages of tourism development.

The choice of Butler's Tourism Area Life Cycle (TALC) as the main interpretative framework responds to its extensive use and adaptability in tourism research and to its capacity to examine the evolution of destinations and tourism products over time. Its evolutionary perspective is particularly suitable for comparative analysis, as it provides a common analytical framework through which territories with markedly different tourism trajectories can be interpreted. In this study, this approach allows comparison between the Canary Islands, a mature international tourism destination in which wine tourism has progressively emerged as a diversification strategy, and Fogo, a peripheral island within the Cabo Verdean tourism system where tourism remains more closely connected to small-scale activities, local production, and the volcanic landscape. The selection of Fogo is particularly relevant because, within Cabo Verde, the island provides an especially illustrative setting for examining the relationship between wine production, volcanic landscapes, and tourism under demanding climatic and environmental conditions. Despite these constraints, viticulture and wine production have developed a distinctive territorial and cultural presence, particularly in Chã das Caldeiras, providing a valuable case for examining the potential evolution of wine tourism in an emerging micro-destination.

Furthermore, the use of TALC enables the analysis to operate at two interconnected but non-equivalent scales: the evolutionary trajectory of the destination and the development of wine tourism as a specific tourism product. This distinction is central to the study because destination maturity and product maturity do not necessarily evolve simultaneously. Wine tourism may remain at a developing stage within an already mature tourism destination, as in the Canary Islands, while in a less consolidated tourism context such as Fogo it may contribute directly to structuring and diversifying the local tourism offer. TALC is therefore employed not as a deterministic sequence through which all destinations must necessarily progress, but as a comparative and interpretative framework for identifying different evolutionary trajectories and assessing the role that wine tourism may play within them.

Accordingly, the study addresses two research questions: (RQ1) How does wine-tourism product development differ between a mature island tourism system such as the Canary Islands and a peripheral emerging micro-destination such as Fogo? (RQ2) To what extent does destination-level tourism maturity correspond to the stage of wine-tourism product development in each case?

Four specific objectives are addressed: (i) to analyse the level of development and main characteristics of wine tourism in the Canary Islands and Fogo based on scientific, institutional, and documentary evidence; (ii) to examine the role of wine tourism in relation to economic, social, cultural, and environmental sustainability in both island contexts; (iii) to interpret the relationship between destination-level tourism maturity and wine-tourism product development through the TALC framework; and (iv) to identify the main challenges, opportunities, and strategic implications for the future development of wine tourism in island destinations.

2. Materials and Methods

This study was conducted between April and September 2026 within the framework of a broader research collaboration involving researchers and institutions in Portugal and Tenerife (Canary Islands, Spain). This collaborative framework encompasses several research lines related to tourism, territorial development, cultural heritage, and wine tourism in Atlantic island contexts. The present study constitutes one specific line within this broader research framework, focusing on the comparative analysis of wine tourism development in the Canary Islands and Fogo (Cabo Verde). Within the Canary Islands, particular attention was given to Tenerife, Lanzarote, and La Palma because of their relevance to the development of wine tourism and the strong relationships between viticulture, cultural

landscapes, heritage, and tourism activity. These islands provide particularly illustrative cases of the different ways in which wine production and wine landscapes are being incorporated into the tourism system of a mature island destination. The methodological process comprised four stages: (i) selection of the comparative cases; (ii) identification and review of scientific, institutional, and technical documentary sources; (iii) organization and comparative analysis of the evidence according to common analytical dimensions; and (iv) interpretation of the two cases through the TALC framework at both destination and wine-tourism product levels. Figure 2 provides a graphical overview of the methodological framework, illustrating the main stages of the comparative research design and their relationship to the six analytical dimensions considered in the study.

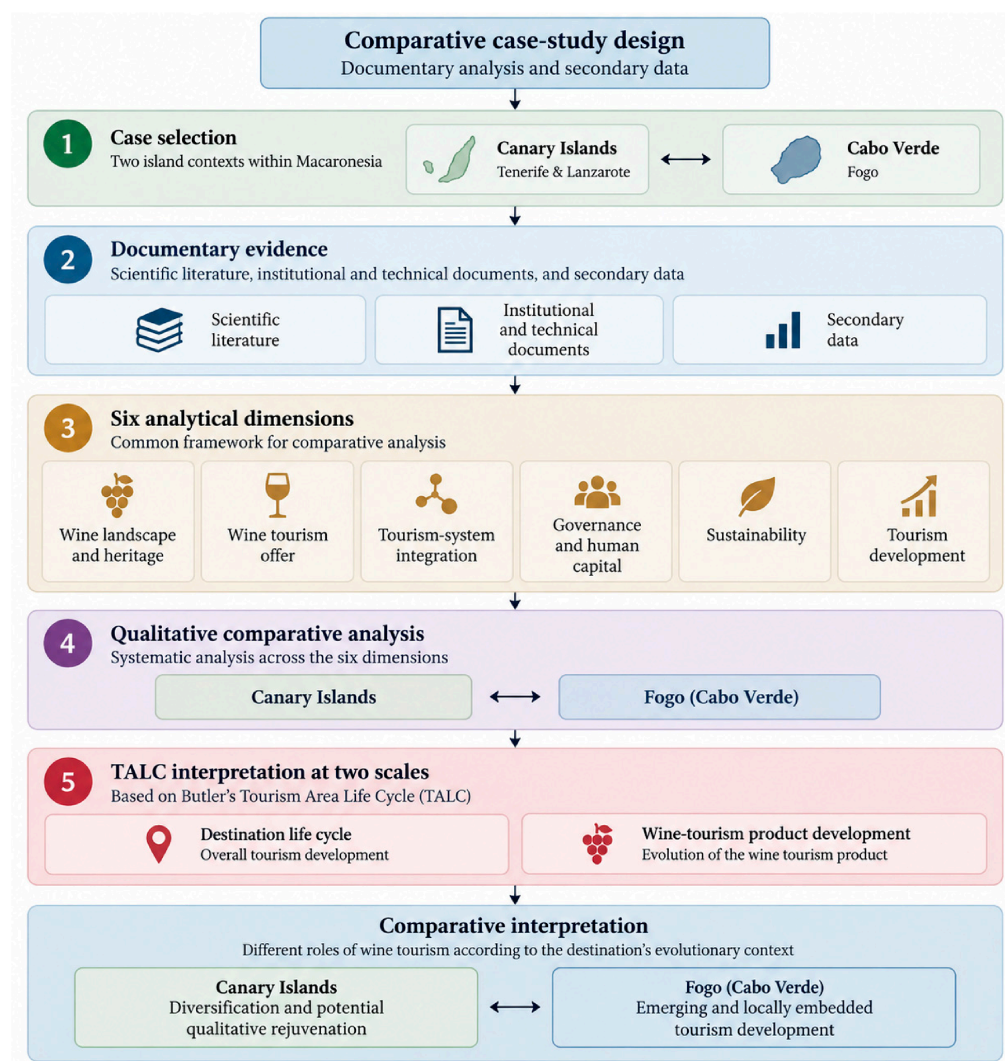


Figure 2. Methodological framework for the comparative analysis of wine tourism in the Canary Islands and Fogo (Cabo Verde). Source: Authors' own conceptualization and methodological design. Graphical visualization generated using ChatGPT (OpenAI) following the authors' instructions.

2.1. Case Study Selection

The selection of the study areas forms part of broader research examining wine tourism and wine landscapes in Macaronesia. For the purposes of the present study, the analysis focuses on the Canary Islands and Cabo Verde, with particular attention to the principal territories in which viticulture and wine tourism have acquired territorial and tourism relevance: Tenerife, Lanzarote, and La Palma in the Canary Islands and Fogo in Cabo Verde. The selection of Tenerife, Lanzarote, and La Palma was based on three

complementary criteria: viticultural representativeness, territorial and landscape diversity, and differences in tourism development. According to AVIBO (2021), these islands account for approximately 91% of the vineyard area in the Canary Islands (Tenerife, 47%; Lanzarote, 30%; and La Palma, 14%). Beyond their quantitative importance, they illustrate contrasting cultivation systems, volcanic landscapes, environmental conditions, and relationships between agricultural heritage and tourism. This purposive selection therefore captures intra-archipelagic diversity and avoids treating the Canary Islands as a homogeneous territorial and tourism context.

The cases were selected purposively according to a most-different comparative logic within a shared island and volcanic context. Both territories share insularity, volcanic environments, historical viticultural practices, and agricultural landscapes shaped by adaptation to restrictive environmental conditions. However, they differ substantially in their tourism trajectories. The Canary Islands constitute a mature international destination historically characterized by mass sun-and-beach tourism, whereas tourism development in Cabo Verde is spatially uneven, with major tourism concentrations in Sal and Boa Vista and a substantially different trajectory in Fogo, where tourism remains more closely associated with volcanic landscapes, local production, and small-scale activities.

This combination of territorial similarities and contrasting tourism trajectories provides an appropriate comparative setting for examining whether wine tourism performs different functions according to the maturity of the tourism system in which it develops.

2.2. Documentary Sources and Selection Procedure

The documentary corpus comprised scientific publications, institutional and technical documents, and publicly available secondary data directly related to the analytical objectives of the study.

Scientific literature was identified through a broad and targeted search of academic literature, including publications indexed in major international academic databases, particularly Scopus and Web of Science. The search was complemented by academic books and book chapters published by recognised scholarly publishers. The documentary corpus was further expanded through institutional and technical reports, official statistics, publicly available governmental and sectoral sources, and academic reports resulting from public-private cooperation.

The scientific literature search focused on five thematic areas: wine tourism development; island tourism; wine landscapes and cultural heritage; sustainability and local development; and the Tourism Area Life Cycle (TALC). The temporal analysis primarily considered scientific and documentary evidence published between 2005 and September 2026, while earlier seminal contributions were retained when necessary to establish the theoretical and conceptual framework, particularly Butler's original TALC model and foundational international wine-tourism literature. Particular attention was given to studies specifically addressing the Canary Islands and Fogo. For the Canary Islands, the documentary corpus included research on wine tourism development, wine-sector constraints, destination diversification, volcanic wine landscapes, and traditional viticultural systems (e.g., Díaz Armas, 2008; Duarte Alonso et al., 2008; Scherrer et al., 2009; Alonso & Liu, 2012; Alonso & Kok, 2020; Dorta & Quintela, 2024). For Fogo, the analysis incorporated studies addressing wine tourism potential, local development, volcanic heritage, environmental vulnerability, and the relationship between tourism and the volcanic landscape (e.g., Olechowski et al., 2008; Castillo Canalejo & López Guzmán, 2011; López-Guzmán et al., 2014; Alfama et al., 2024).

Institutional and technical documentation was used to complement the scientific literature with information on tourism development, wine production, sectoral organization,

heritage recognition, and sustainability. Sources included documents produced by tourism and statistical institutions in the Canary Islands, the [Monitorización del Enoturismo en las Islas Canarias \(2023\)](#), the Government of Cabo Verde, and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), among others.

Sources were included when they provided evidence directly related to at least one of the analytical dimensions established for the study and contained information relevant to the geographical areas examined. Documents without a direct relationship with wine tourism, viticulture, tourism development, wine landscapes, sustainability, or the tourism trajectories of the selected cases were excluded from the comparative analysis. Given the more limited availability of wine-tourism-specific evidence for Fogo, the analysis also incorporated studies addressing the wider relationships between tourism, volcanic heritage, agriculture, environmental vulnerability, and local development where these provided contextual evidence necessary to interpret wine tourism development.

2.3. Analytical Dimensions

The selected documentary evidence was examined through a qualitative comparative analysis. To ensure analytical consistency between the two cases, information was organized according to six common dimensions derived from the literature and the characteristics identified during the documentary review: (i) wine landscape and heritage; (ii) wine tourism offer; (iii) integration into the wider tourism system; (iv) governance and human capital; (v) sustainability; and (vi) tourism development.

These dimensions provided a common analytical structure for examining both territories and reduced the risk of treating the cases through unrelated descriptive narratives. Wine landscape and heritage included volcanic landscapes, traditional viticultural practices, cultural heritage, and territorial identity; wine tourism offer considered winery visits, tastings, direct sales, gastronomy, events, and landscape-based experiences; integration into the tourism system addressed connections with the wider destination offer and tourism services; governance and human capital included institutional involvement, stakeholder cooperation, professionalization, training, and community participation; sustainability considered economic, social, cultural, and environmental dimensions; and tourism development addressed the degree of product structuring, market development, and its relationship with the wider tourism trajectory.

2.4. Comparative Analysis and Application of the TALC Model

[Butler's \(1980\)](#) Tourism Area Life Cycle (TALC) was applied as an interpretative comparative framework rather than as a deterministic or strictly chronological classification system. The analysis distinguished between two interconnected but analytically different scales: (i) the tourism life cycle of the destination and (ii) the development trajectory of wine tourism as a specific tourism product.

At the destination level, the analysis considered documentary evidence relating to the historical evolution of tourism, the degree of tourism development, market integration, infrastructure, and the overall structuring of tourism activity. At the product level, the analysis examined the degree of structuring of the wine tourism offer, its integration into the wider tourism system, commercialization and market visibility, governance, professionalization, local participation, and diversification of visitor experiences.

The positioning of each case within the TALC framework was based on the combined interpretation of these qualitative criteria rather than on a single indicator or numerical score. Characteristics associated with earlier stages included limited product structuring, weak market integration, locally organized initiatives, and restricted tourism specialization. Development and consolidation were interpreted through increasing diversification of expe-

riences, greater commercialization, stronger integration into the destination tourism system, stakeholder coordination, and professionalization. The resulting TALC positions should therefore be understood as analytical approximations based on converging documentary evidence rather than as rigid chronological classifications.

Finally, the two analytical scales were compared to determine whether destination maturity coincided with wine-tourism product development. This procedure enabled the identification of different strategic functions of wine tourism: diversification and potential qualitative rejuvenation within the mature tourism context of the Canary Islands, and the structuring of locally embedded tourism development within the emerging tourism context of Fogo.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Wine Landscapes, Heritage and Wine Tourism Potential in the Canary Islands

The documentary analysis shows that the Canary Islands possess a distinctive set of resources with considerable potential for wine tourism development. These resources are closely associated with the volcanic origin of the archipelago and include highly differentiated wine-growing landscapes, distinctive terroirs, traditional cultivation practices adapted to difficult terrain, pre-phylloxera grape varieties, and a long-standing relationship between viticulture and local communities. Together, these elements have shaped the cultural and agricultural landscapes of the islands over more than five centuries of wine-growing history (Macías Hernández, 2005; AVIBO, 2021). Historically, Canary wines also achieved considerable recognition in European markets and among social elites, particularly during periods of international expansion of the archipelago's wine trade (Álvarez Santos et al., 2025).

The Canary Islands are characterized by considerable diversity in their wine-growing landscapes (Elías Pastor & Contreras Villaseñor, 2013). Of particular relevance are the distinctive wine landscapes identified by Elías Pastor (2016) and Elías Pastor and Contreras Villaseñor (2013), which encompass wine-growing areas of significant landscape and heritage value and constitute important territorial assets for differentiating wine tourism within the archipelago. However, their tourism potential is not determined exclusively by visual quality or geological distinctiveness. It also depends on the existence and degree of development of associated tourism resources and services, including wineries, viewpoints, restaurants, accommodation establishments, thematic routes, and accessibility. As shown in Table 1, several of these landscapes already possess a material and tourism-related base that facilitates their incorporation into wine tourism products, although their levels of structuring and consolidation vary considerably.

This relationship between the wine landscape and tourism development is uneven across the archipelago. The volcanic ash vineyards of Lanzarote represent the most clearly integrated example, as the wine landscape forms part of the island's wider tourism value chain and is supported by wineries, visitor experiences, gastronomy, routes, and other tourism services. By contrast, several wine-growing landscapes in Tenerife and La Palma retain a more incipient or underdeveloped tourism dimension despite their considerable landscape and heritage value. The results therefore reveal a gap between the existence of distinctive wine heritage resources and their effective transformation into structured tourism products.

Among these landscapes, two cases are particularly illustrative of different forms of interaction between viticultural heritage, volcanic landscapes, and tourism development: the *cordón trenzado* system in the Orotava Valley (Tenerife) and La Geria in Lanzarote. The *cordón trenzado* constitutes a distinctive vine-training technique recently recognized as an Asset of Cultural Interest (Bien de Interés Cultural) by the Government of the Canary Islands (BOC, 2026). It represents an agricultural cultural landscape whose heritage

significance is closely connected to the historical knowledge and practices of local wine-growing communities. Previous research involving wineries in the Orotava Valley has also identified this heritage dimension and its potential contribution to wine tourism development in the area (Dorta & Quintela, 2024; Dorta et al., 2024; Dorta et al., 2025).

Table 1. Classification of distinctive volcanic wine landscapes and their wine tourism potential in Tenerife, La Palma, and Lanzarote.

Type of Volcanic Wine Landscape	Representative Wine Landscapes	Landscape Value Proposition	Wine Tourism Potential
Vineyards on recent volcanic lava flows	Calvario de los Baldíos; Hoya Cáscara; Fuente Caliente–Los Llanos Negros (Tenerife and La Palma)	Vineyards on visible lava flows, shallow soils, extreme cultivation conditions	Volcanic wine tourism, interpretive routes, experiential tourism
Vineyards adapted to volcanic ash (arenados)	La Florida; La Geria–Tinasoria; La Corona–Los Quemados (Lanzarote)	Artificial volcanic ash layers, protection of vines, strong visual impact	Iconic Canary wine tourism landscape and internationally recognized landscape-based tourism
Vineyards in volcanic hollows and cavities	El Sobaco; deeper areas of La Geria (Lanzarote)	Vines planted in excavated volcanic ash pits, providing natural protection against wind and aridity	Niche wine tourism, photography, and cultural interpretation
Vineyards on ancient volcanic badlands	Hoya Cáscara; Los Llanos de Trevejos; La Traviesa (Tenerife and La Palma)	Stabilized lava, terraces, transition between natural and agricultural landscapes	Landscape-based wine tourism and vineyard hiking
Regressive or abandoned volcanic vineyards	Calvario de los Baldíos; Las Palmas de Anaga; areas of La Corona (Tenerife and Lanzarote)	Abandonment of cultivation, remains of terraces and traditional wine presses	Cultural tourism and interpretation of agricultural heritage

Source: Authors’ own elaboration based on Elías Pastor and Contreras Villaseñor (2013) and Elías Pastor (2016).

The origins of the *cordón trenzado* are associated with the expansion of viticulture following the European conquest of Tenerife in the fifteenth century. Its distinctive structure allowed vines to be moved and agricultural land to be used for other crops, traditionally including potatoes, after the grape harvest. Historically, the long braided vines were supported by wooden stakes, whereas metal supports are also used today. The technique therefore reflects the adaptation of agricultural knowledge to the constraints of limited and difficult-to-cultivate land. Its preservation must also be considered within the broader territorial transformations experienced by Tenerife. Urban expansion, dispersed development, tourism growth, and agricultural abandonment have contributed to increasing pressure on agricultural land and to the fragmentation and transformation of productive rural landscapes (Mejías & Romeo, 2022).

Although this cultivation system is labour-intensive and no longer performs the same agricultural function to the extent that it did historically, it remains in use in vineyards across the Orotava Valley. Its continuity provides a tangible link between contemporary wine production, inherited agricultural knowledge, landscape, and territorial identity. Some wineries incorporate these elements into their visitor interpretation and storytelling, presenting the *cordón trenzado* not only as a cultivation technique but also as part of the cultural narrative surrounding local wines. The case of Bodega Tajinaste illustrates how interpretation of this traditional system can be incorporated into the wine tourism experience

and used to strengthen the relationship between wine, landscape, and local heritage (Dorta et al., 2025).

A second particularly significant case is La Geria in Lanzarote, where the viticultural landscape has achieved a substantially higher degree of integration into the island's tourism image and visitor economy (González et al., 2015). Its distinctive cultivation system, developed in response to volcanic ash, aridity, and wind exposure, has become one of the most recognizable examples of viticulture under extreme environmental conditions in the Canary Islands. However, the long-term sustainability of this traditional viticultural system is increasingly conditioned by the impacts of climate change, introducing additional challenges for its adaptation and continuity (Cataldo et al., 2026). The heritage value of this agricultural system has recently received further international recognition through its designation by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations as a Globally Important Agricultural Heritage System (GIAHS) (FAO, 2025). This recognition reinforces the significance of La Geria not only as a productive wine landscape but also as an agricultural heritage system resulting from long-term adaptation between human communities and a highly constrained volcanic environment. Previous research had already highlighted the exceptional cultural landscape values of La Geria and discussed its potential suitability for international heritage recognition (Martínez Arnáiz et al., 2019).

From a tourism perspective, La Geria represents the clearest example within the cases examined of the articulation between volcanic landscape, wine production, and tourism activity. Initiatives such as the Sonidos Líquidos Festival further illustrate how wine landscapes can be integrated with cultural events, sustainability, and place-based tourism narratives (Dorta et al., 2026). Wineries, wine experiences, gastronomy, landscape interpretation, and tourism promotion coexist within a landscape that has itself become part of the destination's image. This reinforces the role of volcanic viticulture as a differentiating element of wine tourism in the Canary Islands and supports previous interpretations of Lanzarote as a particularly valuable context for examining the cultural relationships between society and volcanic environments (Atoche & Ramírez, 2021).

From a broader sustainability perspective, these cases demonstrate that the wine landscape should not be understood merely as a visual setting for tourism. Rather, it constitutes part of the tourism product itself, integrating agricultural practices, cultural heritage, territorial identity, and local knowledge. Nevertheless, the tourism valorization of these landscapes also raises an important challenge: their preservation ultimately depends on the continuity and economic viability of viticulture. Wine tourism may generate additional economic and symbolic value for vineyards and wineries, but it cannot be considered independently from structural challenges affecting the wine sector, including vineyard abandonment, production costs, labour intensity, and generational renewal (Alonso & Liu, 2012).

The comparison between La Geria, the *cordón trenzado*, and other wine-growing areas consequently illustrates different levels of integration between heritage resources and tourism development. While La Geria represents an advanced articulation between wine landscape and tourism activity, the *cordón trenzado* demonstrates the potential of a highly distinctive heritage resource whose wine tourism valorization remains more localized. Other landscapes in Tenerife and La Palma occupy intermediate situations. This heterogeneity is particularly relevant to the TALC interpretation developed below, as it demonstrates that the existence of distinctive territorial resources does not automatically imply the consolidation of wine tourism as a structured tourism product.

3.2. Wine Tourism Supply, Governance and Product Development in the Canary Islands

The results of the *Monitorización del Enoturismo en las Islas Canarias* (2023) reveal a heterogeneous wine tourism supply with different levels of development across the

archipelago. The report identifies staff qualifications, tourism-related skills, and the professionalization of winery management as relevant areas for the future development of the sector. These factors are particularly significant given the characteristics of the Canary wine industry, where many wineries involved in tourism activities are small- and medium-sized businesses, often characterized by limited production volumes and strong family and territorial ties. Previous studies conducted in islands such as Tenerife and La Palma have similarly highlighted the close relationship between wineries, family structures, and local communities (Sheridan et al., 2009; Dorta et al., 2025).

The characteristics and scale of these wineries also influence their capacity to invest in tourism infrastructure, specialized staff, and complementary visitor services, a constraint previously identified in research on the Canary wine sector (Alonso & Liu, 2012). The documentary analysis shows that the most widespread wine tourism experiences remain guided winery visits, wine tastings, and direct wine sales. These activities constitute the core of the current wine tourism offer, whereas more diversified experiences combining wine with gastronomy, cultural activities, vineyard hiking, landscape interpretation, or other forms of experiential tourism are less widespread.

Nevertheless, the analysis also identifies wineries and wine-growing areas that have expanded beyond conventional tasting and winery-visit formats. Some initiatives combine wine with gastronomy, cultural events, music, performing arts, or landscape-based experiences. Among the most distinctive examples are Wine&Sex, developed by Bodegas Monje in Tenerife, and Sonidos Líquidos, held in Lanzarote, which integrates music, wineries, and the wine landscape of La Geria. Although these initiatives cannot be considered representative of the entire wine tourism sector in the archipelago, they illustrate the capacity of wine tourism to generate differentiated experiential formats and to connect wine production with other cultural and creative tourism activities.

Evidence from tourism activities and experiences marketed in the Canary Islands also suggests that wine-related tourism occupies an intermediate position within the broader portfolio of tourism experiences. According to Turismo de Islas Canarias (2023), wine-related activities have a visible presence alongside other specialized tourism products, although they remain below the most frequently marketed and demanded activities. This pattern is consistent with a wine tourism product that is already identifiable within the destination but is not yet fully integrated into the broader tourism value chain. Previous research has similarly highlighted the need to strengthen marketing, cooperation, and destination positioning in order to consolidate the Canary Islands as a wine tourism destination (Alonso & Kok, 2020).

A further limitation concerns the availability of specific information on wine tourism demand. Despite the extensive tourism statistical system available in the Canary Islands, there is still limited official information allowing the profile and behaviour of wine tourists to be clearly differentiated from those of other visitors. The Canary Islands tourism expenditure survey, for example, includes the combined category “wineries/festivities” among the activities undertaken by tourists. Approximately 11.9% of tourists are included within this category; however, the aggregation of wineries and festivities prevents this indicator from being interpreted as a specific measure of wine tourism participation or from being used to identify a distinct wine-tourist profile (Observatorio Turístico de Canarias, 2026). This limitation is relevant not only from a statistical perspective but also for product planning, as the absence of specific demand data constrains the capacity to evaluate visitor profiles, behaviour, expenditure, and the evolution of the wine tourism market.

Governance and human capital constitute additional factors affecting the transition from individual wine-related experiences towards a more structured tourism product. The Monitorización del Enoturismo en las Islas Canarias (2023) identifies professionalization, staff training,

and tourism management capabilities among the areas requiring further development. This reveals an important contrast: wine tourism operates within a highly professionalized and mature international tourism destination, yet the wine tourism product itself does not necessarily benefit from the same degree of specialization and integration.

At the same time, recent institutional and sectoral developments indicate a progressive structuring of wine tourism at regional level. The emergence of specialized cooperation structures, including the Canary Islands Wine Tourism Cluster, together with the activities developed by the University of La Laguna's Chair of Agrotourism and Wine Tourism and the *Strategic Plan 2025–2029* of [DOP Islas Canarias–Canary Wine \(2025\)](#), reflects increasing attention to coordination, professionalization, commercialization, knowledge generation, and improvement of the visitor experience. These developments are particularly relevant from an evolutionary perspective because they indicate a transition from dispersed wine-tourism initiatives towards a more organized and institutionally supported tourism product.

The increasing attention to systematic knowledge generation represents another indicator of this evolution. The [Monitorización del Enoturismo en las Islas Canarias \(2023\)](#) constitutes an important step towards identifying the characteristics, limitations, and development needs of wineries involved in tourism. The availability of this type of sector-specific monitoring differentiates the current stage from earlier periods in which wine tourism was primarily addressed through individual wineries, local initiatives, or isolated academic studies. However, the continued lack of sufficiently disaggregated demand data demonstrates that this monitoring and knowledge base remains incomplete.

Recent commercialization initiatives also illustrate emerging attempts to strengthen the integration between the winery experience and the tourism value chain. One specific constraint concerns the difficulty visitors face when purchasing wine directly from wineries and transporting it by air. Proposals promoted through the Canary Islands Wine Tourism Cluster seek to facilitate purchases at wineries followed by shipment to visitors' home addresses, thereby reducing logistical barriers associated with insularity and air travel ([El Espejo Canario, 2026](#)). Although these initiatives remain recent, they indicate increasing efforts to connect winery visits, direct sales, commercialization, and post-visit consumption.

Despite this progress, institutional development alone does not guarantee consolidation. Effective integration requires stronger connections between wineries, tourism authorities, accommodation providers, gastronomy businesses, tour operators, wine routes, and rural territories. This need for greater cooperation is consistent with previous studies emphasizing coordination as a prerequisite for integrating wine tourism into established sun-and-beach destinations ([Díaz Armas, 2008](#)). The coexistence of a highly developed tourism industry with an unevenly structured wine tourism sector therefore represents one of the central characteristics of the Canary Islands case.

Overall, the evidence indicates that wine tourism in the Canary Islands has moved beyond an incipient stage. A recognizable core product based on winery visits, tastings, direct sales, wine landscapes, and increasingly diversified experiences is accompanied by growing institutional attention, sector-specific monitoring, strategic planning, cooperation, and new commercialization mechanisms. At the same time, persistent gaps in professionalization, specific demand knowledge, coordination, commercialization, and integration into the wider tourism system indicate that consolidation remains incomplete. These characteristics provide the empirical basis for interpreting Canary Islands wine tourism as a product evolving from development towards consolidation, an interpretation that is examined comparatively through the TALC framework in Section 3.4.

3.3. Fogo (Cabo Verde): An Emerging Wine Tourism Destination

The case of Fogo presents a markedly different tourism context from that observed in the Canary Islands. Cabo Verde has experienced significant tourism growth since the late twentieth century, but this development remains highly uneven across the archipelago. International tourism activity has been concentrated predominantly in Sal and Boa Vista and is strongly associated with the sun-and-beach model, while islands such as Fogo remain comparatively peripheral to the country's principal international tourism flows (Fortes, 2010). This distinction is important because Fogo should not be interpreted as representative of the evolutionary stage of Cabo Verde as a whole, but rather as a peripheral island micro-destination within a national tourism system characterized by markedly different levels and models of tourism development.

This territorial context is accompanied by significant environmental and socioeconomic constraints. Population dynamics, agricultural pressures, and environmental limitations have contributed to ecological vulnerability in several islands, including Fogo (Olehowski et al., 2008). Díaz-Pérez et al. (2025) emphasize the importance of tourism for Cabo Verde's economic development, while islands such as Fogo, Santiago, and São Nicolau maintain stronger links with primary-sector activities. The FAO evaluation for the 2018–2022 period also highlights the country's vulnerability to soil degradation, desertification, climate change, and water scarcity, which impose structural limitations on agricultural activities (FAO, 2022). These conditions increase the relevance of tourism strategies capable of connecting environmental conservation, local production, and income-generating activities.

Within this context, Fogo presents distinctive conditions for tourism based on landscape, agriculture, and local products. Viticulture in Cabo Verde is concentrated primarily on this island and particularly in Chã das Caldeiras, located within the volcanic environment of Pico do Fogo. The combination of active volcanism, agricultural practices, settlement patterns, and viticulture has created a landscape of considerable geological, cultural, and symbolic value (Olehowski et al., 2008). Vine cultivation within the caldera represents a distinctive example of agricultural adaptation to an extreme volcanic environment and provides the territorial basis for the development of wine-related tourism experiences.

The contemporary development of wine production in Chã das Caldeiras has been strongly influenced by international cooperation and local collective organization. From the late 1990s onwards, technical and financial support from Italian cooperation and the NGO COSPE, together with the involvement of the Chã das Caldeiras Farmers' Association, contributed to improving vineyard cultivation and wine production. According to the *Governo de Cabo Verde* (2017), production reached approximately 110,000 bottles prior to the 2014 volcanic eruption, and this experience was subsequently identified as an example of good practice in territorial and local development. These developments are important for understanding the foundations of wine tourism on Fogo, although the consolidation of wine production itself should not be interpreted as equivalent to the consolidation of wine tourism.

The 2014–2015 eruption of Pico do Fogo represented a major disruption in this trajectory, affecting settlements, agricultural land, productive infrastructure, and local livelihoods. Nevertheless, the continuity and subsequent recovery of viticultural and tourism activities demonstrate the close relationship between the local community and the volcanic environment. The post-eruption landscape has also reinforced the potential relationship between tourism and volcanic heritage, creating opportunities to integrate wine-related experiences with geotourism and landscape interpretation (Nunes, 2015; Alfama et al., 2024). The eruption should therefore be understood as an external shock rather than as a TALC stage in itself: it temporarily disrupted the territorial and productive trajectory while subsequently contributing to a reconfiguration of the relationship between volcanic landscape, local production, and tourism.

Previous research had already identified the potential of wine tourism before this disruption. [Castillo Canalejo and López Guzmán \(2011\)](#) examined wine tourism in relation to economic development in Cabo Verde, while [López-Guzmán et al. \(2014\)](#) described wine tourism on Fogo as an emerging tourism resource with the capacity to contribute to diversification and to the valorization and commercialization of local wine. More recent evidence indicates that tourism associated with the volcanic landscape incorporates a wider range of local agricultural products and experiences. Wine forms part of a broader territorial offer that includes volcanic landscapes, hiking and geotourism activities, local gastronomy, fruit products, jams, and goat cheese ([Alfama et al., 2024](#)). Wine tourism can therefore be understood not as an isolated tourism product but as part of a wider territorial experience combining landscape, agriculture, gastronomy, volcanic heritage, and local culture.

The organizational structure of wine production constitutes another distinctive characteristic of the Fogo case. Viticulture and winemaking have developed through a combination of small-scale production, collective organization, cooperative initiatives, and international cooperation. These structures reinforce the relationship between wine production, community, and territorial identity and provide an organizational basis from which wine tourism may develop. Unlike tourism products primarily driven by large external operators, wine-related experiences on Fogo remain closely connected to local producers and productive structures.

This community dimension constitutes an important opportunity but should not automatically be equated with sustainable tourism. The capacity of local actors to retain tourism value depends on adequate infrastructure, professional skills, commercialization, market access, and coordination. Strengthening these capacities without weakening community participation therefore represents a central governance challenge for the future development of wine tourism on Fogo.

The external visibility of Fogo's wine production has also increased. According to [Monteiro \(2025\)](#), wines associated with the Chã das Caldeiras cooperative received six gold medals between 2021 and 2025 in international competitions dedicated to wines produced under extreme conditions. These awards should not themselves be interpreted as indicators of wine tourism development, but they contribute to the external recognition of Fogo's wine production and reinforce the association between local wines and the distinctive volcanic characteristics of their place of origin.

From the perspective of the tourism offer, wine tourism on Fogo is primarily articulated through winery and vineyard visits, local wine tastings, interaction with producers and residents, and experiences connected with the agricultural and volcanic landscape. Compared with the more structured wine tourism offer identified in parts of the Canary Islands, these experiences display a lower degree of standardization and remain more closely embedded in local production and community interaction. This configuration provides opportunities to connect wine tourism with cultural tourism, gastronomy, rural experiences, hiking, and geotourism.

From a sustainability perspective, the potential contribution of wine tourism consequently extends beyond the commercialization of wine itself. By linking tourism expenditure with locally produced goods, agricultural activities, and community-based productive structures, wine tourism may provide complementary economic opportunities while contributing to the valorization of local resources. At the same time, the maintenance of viticulture contributes to preserving the agricultural and cultural significance of the volcanic landscape. Fogo therefore illustrates particularly clearly that landscape should not be considered merely as the visual setting for wine tourism but as an integral component of the tourism experience and of local territorial identity.

However, the documentary evidence also identifies important constraints on further development. These include limitations in tourism infrastructure, professional training, commercialization, accessibility, investment capacity, and integration of wine tourism into broader tourism planning. Environmental vulnerability represents an additional challenge, particularly because of water scarcity, soil constraints, climate pressures, and exposure to volcanic hazards (FAO, 2022). Compared with the Canary Islands, Fogo also lacks an equivalent level of specialized wine-tourism organization, sector-specific monitoring, commercialization structures, and integration with major international tourism flows.

Taken together, these characteristics are important for the evolutionary interpretation of the product. Wine tourism is clearly identifiable on Fogo and is increasingly connected to local producers, community structures, volcanic heritage, gastronomy, and geotourism. However, the documentary evidence does not indicate a sufficiently structured, professionalized, commercially integrated, and institutionally coordinated wine-tourism system to support its classification within the development stage. Fogo is therefore interpreted in this study as an emerging wine-tourism micro-destination whose wine-tourism product is positioned between the exploration and involvement stages of the TALC. This positioning reflects the existence of recognizable wine-tourism activity and increasing local and external involvement, while acknowledging that the organizational, infrastructural, commercial, and governance structures associated with a more advanced development stage remain incipient.

3.4. Comparative Results: Wine Tourism Within the Tourism Area Life Cycle

The comparative analysis reveals two differentiated wine-tourism trajectories shaped by the broader tourism systems in which wine tourism is embedded. The evidence also confirms that the evolutionary stage of a destination as a whole does not necessarily coincide with the development stage of a specific tourism product. This distinction is particularly relevant when applying Butler's (1980) Tourism Area Life Cycle (TALC) framework to the Canary Islands and Fogo.

In the Canary Islands, wine tourism operates within a mature international tourism destination characterized by extensive tourism infrastructure and a long-standing specialization in sun-and-beach tourism (FRONTUR, 2024). Wine tourism, however, follows a different evolutionary trajectory. As shown in Table 2, the product is supported by an identifiable and increasingly diversified supply, specific academic research, sectoral monitoring, growing institutional coordination, strategic planning, commercialization initiatives, and the progressive valorization of wine landscapes and viticultural heritage (Díaz Armas, 2008; Duarte Alonso et al., 2008; Scherrer et al., 2009; Alonso & Liu, 2012; Alonso & Kok, 2020; Monitorización del Enoturismo en las Islas Canarias, 2023; DOP Islas Canarias–Canary Wine, 2025).

The temporal reconstruction also considered institutional developments preceding the explicit emergence of wine tourism. The establishment of Denominations of Origin and their Regulatory Councils provided an institutional and territorial basis for the organization, quality recognition, and collective identity of the Canary wine sector. These developments are not interpreted as wine tourism *per se*, but as antecedents that facilitated the subsequent development of wine routes, winery experiences, cooperation structures, and destination-based wine-tourism strategies. From the 2000s onwards, wine tourism became increasingly identifiable as a specific field of tourism activity and academic research, while more recent monitoring, planning, cooperation, and commercialization initiatives indicate a progressive transition towards a more structured tourism product.

Table 2. Comparative evidence and analytical dimensions supporting the TALC positioning of wine tourism in the Canary Islands and Fogo (Cabo Verde).

Dimension	Canary Islands	Fogo (Cabo Verde)	Main Supporting Sources
Tourism context	Mature international destination with extensive tourism infrastructure and long-standing specialization in sun and beach tourism	Peripheral island within the Cabo Verdean tourism system; international tourism flows are primarily concentrated in Sal and Boa Vista	FRONTUR (2024) ; Fortes (2010) ; Díaz-Pérez et al. (2025)
Wine landscape and territorial heritage	Highly differentiated volcanic wine landscapes, including La Geria and the <i>cordón trenzado</i> system of the Orotava Valley	Viticulture concentrated particularly in Chã das Caldeiras and strongly associated with the volcanic landscape of Pico do Fogo	Macías Hernández (2005) ; Elías Pastor and Contreras Villaseñor (2013) ; González et al. (2015) ; (Dorta et al., 2024) ; (Dorta et al., 2025) ; FAO (2025) ; Olehowski et al. (2008) ; Alfama et al. (2024)
Wine-tourism offer	Recognizable offer based on winery visits, tastings and direct sales, complemented by gastronomic, cultural and landscape-based experiences	Small-scale experiences based on winery/vineyard visits, tastings, interaction with producers and experiences associated with local products and volcanic landscape	Díaz Armas (2008) ; Sheridan et al. (2009) ; Monitorización del Enoturismo en las Islas Canarias (2023) ; Castillo Canalejo and López Guzmán (2011) ; López-Guzmán et al. (2014) ; Alfama et al. (2024)
Organization and governance	Increasing institutional and sectoral organization, although coordination remains fragmented	Wine production strongly connected to cooperative/community organization and international cooperation; specific wine-tourism structuring remains more limited	Díaz Armas (2008) ; Alonso and Liu (2012) ; Monitorización del Enoturismo en las Islas Canarias (2023) ; DOP Islas Canarias–Canary Wine (2025) ; Gobierno de Cabo Verde (2017)
Professionalization and human capital	Tourism-related skills and professionalization are improving but remain uneven among wineries	Professional training and tourism-management capacity remain important development constraints	Alonso and Liu (2012) ; Monitorización del Enoturismo en las Islas Canarias (2023) ; Gobierno de Cabo Verde (2017) ; López-Guzmán et al. (2014)
Commercialization and integration into the tourism system	Wine tourism is increasingly visible within the destination, although integration into the wider tourism value chain remains incomplete	Wine tourism remains small-scale and less integrated into the principal international tourism flows of Cabo Verde	Alonso and Kok (2020) ; Turismo de Islas Canarias (2023) ; Fortes (2010) ; López-Guzmán et al. (2014)
Knowledge and monitoring	Specific wine-tourism research has developed since the 2000s and is complemented by recent sector-specific monitoring	Wine tourism has been specifically addressed in the literature, but the documentary corpus shows a substantially more limited evidence and monitoring base	Díaz Armas (2008) ; Duarte Alonso et al. (2008) ; Scherrer et al. (2009) ; Alonso and Liu (2012) ; Monitorización del Enoturismo en las Islas Canarias (2023) ; Castillo Canalejo and López Guzmán (2011) ; López-Guzmán et al. (2014)

Table 2. Cont.

Dimension	Canary Islands	Fogo (Cabo Verde)	Main Supporting Sources
Environmental vulnerability and resilience	Climate change, agricultural abandonment and pressures on traditional wine landscapes affect long-term sustainability	Water scarcity, soil constraints and volcanic hazards directly affect agriculture, communities and tourism; the 2014–2015 eruption represented a major territorial disruption	Mejías and Romeo (2022); Cataldo et al. (2026); FAO (2022); Nunes (2015); Alfama et al. (2024)
Main development constraints	Uneven professionalization, fragmented coordination, limited wine-tourism-specific demand data, vineyard abandonment and generational renewal	Infrastructure, training, commercialization, accessibility, investment capacity, environmental vulnerability and limited tourism integration	Alonso and Liu (2012); Monitorización del Enoturismo en las Islas Canarias (2023); FAO (2022); López-Guzmán et al. (2014); Alfama et al. (2024)
Strategic role of wine tourism	Diversification of a mature destination, territorial redistribution, heritage valorization and potential qualitative rejuvenation	Local development, valorization of local production and volcanic heritage, community participation and structuring of a small-scale tourism offer	Díaz Armas (2008); Dorta and Quintela (2024); Gobierno de Canarias (2025); Castillo Canalejo and López Guzmán (2011); López-Guzmán et al. (2014); Alfama et al. (2024)

Source: Authors' own elaboration based on the documentary evidence cited in the table and the Tourism Area Life Cycle framework proposed by Butler (1980).

Heritage recognition provides additional evidence of this continuing process. The international recognition of Lanzarote's agricultural systems as a Globally Important Agricultural Heritage System (GIAHS) in 2025, including the distinctive volcanic agricultural landscape associated with La Geria, reinforces the heritage value of viticulture within the island (FAO, 2025). The increasing recognition and protection of traditional viticultural practices, including the *cordón trenzado* system of the Orotava Valley, similarly demonstrates that the valorization of wine landscapes remains an active process rather than a completed one. These developments are particularly significant because they occur within an already mature tourism destination, reinforcing the distinction between destination maturity and wine-tourism product development.

Fogo presents a markedly different trajectory. Although viticulture and wine production have a longstanding territorial presence, particularly in Chã das Caldeiras, the structuring of wine tourism remains closely connected to local production, cooperative and community organization, and the volcanic landscape. International cooperation and collective organization contributed to the modernization and organization of wine production from the late 1990s onwards (Gobierno de Cabo Verde, 2017), while subsequent studies explicitly identified wine tourism as a potential instrument for local development and tourism diversification (Castillo Canalejo & López Guzmán, 2011; López-Guzmán et al., 2014).

The 2014–2015 eruption of Pico do Fogo represented a major disruption to this trajectory, affecting settlements, agricultural activities, productive infrastructure, and local livelihoods. However, subsequent reconstruction and renewed interest in the volcanic landscape have reinforced opportunities to connect wine production with geotourism, gastronomy, local products, and landscape-based experiences (Nunes, 2015; Alfama et al., 2024). More recent external recognition of Fogo wines has also increased their visibility, although such recognition

should be interpreted as evidence of the growing profile of local wine production rather than as a direct indicator of wine-tourism maturity (Monteiro, 2025).

The comparison also demonstrates that neither trajectory should be understood as strictly linear. External shocks may interrupt or redirect tourism-product development without necessarily implying a transition to another TALC stage. The COVID-19 pandemic represented an exceptional disruption to tourism activity in the Canary Islands, while the 2014–2015 volcanic eruption produced a profound territorial disruption in Fogo. These events are therefore considered contextual disturbances within the temporal reconstruction rather than stages of the TALC itself.

To enhance the transparency and traceability of the TALC interpretation, Table 2 synthesizes the analytical dimensions considered, the evidence identified in each case, and the principal documentary sources supporting the comparative assessment. The final TALC positioning does not derive from any single indicator or documentary source, but from the convergence of evidence concerning tourism context, wine-tourism supply, governance, professionalization, commercialization and tourism integration, knowledge and monitoring, landscape and heritage, environmental vulnerability, and structural constraints.

Taken together, this evidence supports the positioning of Canary Islands wine tourism between the development and consolidation stages. The product has clearly moved beyond isolated or predominantly exploratory initiatives and is increasingly supported by an identifiable supply, institutional structures, knowledge generation, monitoring, strategic planning, commercialization, and heritage valorization. Nevertheless, uneven professionalization, fragmented coordination, limited wine-tourism-specific demand data, and differences in tourism integration between islands indicate that consolidation remains incomplete.

By contrast, Fogo is positioned between the exploration and involvement stages. Wine tourism is clearly identifiable and increasingly connected to local producers, cooperative and community structures, volcanic heritage, gastronomy, and geotourism, demonstrating progression beyond purely exploratory activity. However, its limited scale, specialized infrastructure, professionalization, commercialization, systematic monitoring, specific wine-tourism governance, and integration into international tourism flows indicate that the conditions associated with the development stage have not yet been sufficiently established.

Figure 3 synthesizes these differentiated trajectories through a temporal interpretation of the principal milestones identified in the documentary evidence. The analytical positions represented correspond to the evidence available up to September 2026 and should not be interpreted as precise quantitative measurements of tourist demand or visitor numbers. Rather, they represent comparative positions derived from the convergence of the documentary indicators summarized in Table 2 and the temporal milestones identified in the analysis.

The comparative interpretation therefore demonstrates that destination maturity and wine-tourism product development do not necessarily evolve synchronously. In the Canary Islands, wine tourism performs primarily a diversification function within a mature tourism system and may contribute to qualitative rejuvenation by strengthening connections with rural territories, local production, gastronomy, cultural heritage, and volcanic landscapes. In Fogo, by contrast, wine tourism performs a more formative role, potentially contributing to the structuring of a small-scale tourism economy based on local production, community participation, and territorial resources. TALC is therefore particularly useful in this comparison when applied not as a deterministic sequence, but as an interpretative framework capable of distinguishing between the evolutionary trajectory of the destination and that of the wine-tourism product.

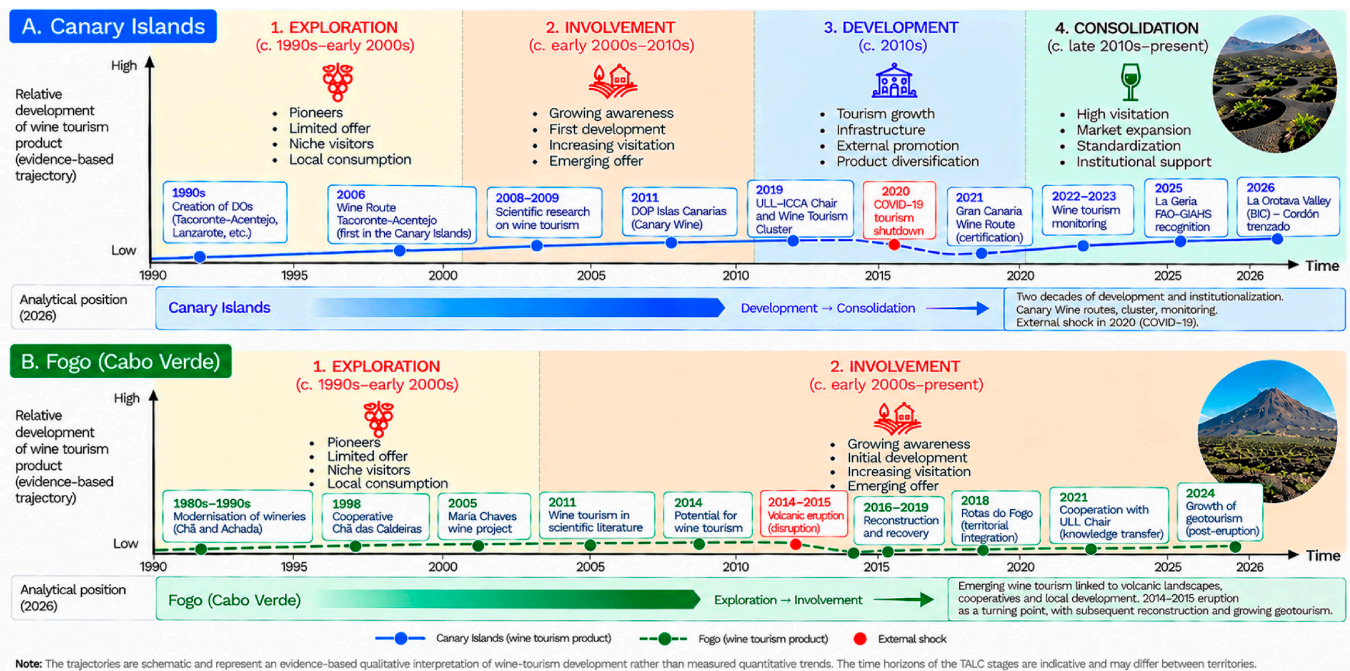


Figure 3. Evidence-based temporal interpretation of wine-tourism product development in the Canary Islands and Fogo (Cabo Verde) through the Tourism Area Life Cycle (TALC). Source: Authors' own elaboration based on Butler (1980) and the documentary evidence summarized in Table 2. Graphical visualization generated using ChatGPT (OpenAI) following the authors' instructions.

3.5. Wine Tourism, Diversification and Resilience in Island Destinations

The comparative findings have broader implications for understanding the role of wine tourism in island destinations. Insularity can generate competitive advantages based on territorial distinctiveness, cultural identity, local products, and highly differentiated landscapes, but it also increases vulnerability through geographical constraints, limited resources, dependence on external markets, and the concentration of economic activity. In this context, wine tourism may perform different strategic functions depending on the characteristics and evolutionary trajectory of each destination.

In the Canary Islands, wine tourism provides an opportunity for both geographical and thematic diversification within an already mature tourism system. This is consistent with broader destination strategies aimed at promoting a more diversified and sustainable tourism model (Gobierno de Canarias, 2025). By connecting tourism with wineries, agricultural landscapes, gastronomy, cultural heritage, and rural territories, wine tourism can encourage the redistribution of tourism activity beyond the principal coastal tourism areas and strengthen linkages between visitor expenditure and locally produced goods and services. Its strategic relevance therefore lies less in its capacity to generate large additional visitor volumes than in its potential to generate differentiated territorial value.

This distinction is particularly important when considering the concept of rejuvenation in mature destinations. Rejuvenation should not necessarily be understood as renewed quantitative growth in visitor numbers. In destinations already characterized by high tourism intensity, it may instead involve a qualitative transformation of the tourism offer, including greater product diversification, stronger territorial distribution of tourism benefits, increased connections with local productive sectors, higher-value experiences, and enhanced recognition of cultural and agricultural heritage. From this perspective, wine tourism may contribute to qualitative rejuvenation without replacing the dominant sun-and-beach model or becoming a mass tourism product.

Fogo presents a different strategic context. Wine tourism does not operate as a mechanism for diversifying an already mature mass-tourism economy; rather, it can broaden the economic and tourism functions associated with viticulture, volcanic heritage, agriculture, and local production. The combination of wine with geotourism, gastronomy, hiking, local products, and interaction with producers may contribute to the development of a more integrated territorial tourism experience (Castillo Canalejo & López Guzmán, 2011; López-Guzmán et al., 2014; Alfama et al., 2024). This model may also facilitate greater retention of tourism value within the territory when tourism activities remain connected to local productive and community structures.

The comparison also highlights the importance of resilience. In both cases, wine tourism depends on landscapes and agricultural systems exposed to environmental and socioeconomic pressures. In the Canary Islands, vineyard abandonment, generational renewal, climate change, and pressures on agricultural land may compromise the continuity of the landscapes upon which wine tourism depends (Alonso & Liu, 2012; Mejías & Romeo, 2022; Cataldo et al., 2026). In Fogo, water scarcity, soil constraints, climate pressures, and volcanic hazards create additional challenges for local agriculture and tourism development (FAO, 2022; Alfama et al., 2024). Consequently, the sustainability of wine tourism cannot be separated from the long-term viability of viticulture and the capacity of local communities and institutions to adapt to environmental and socioeconomic change.

At the same time, the two cases demonstrate that sustainability should not be assumed merely from the small scale, rural location, or heritage orientation of wine tourism. Its contribution depends on the extent to which tourism supports viable agricultural activity, retains economic value locally, strengthens rather than displaces community participation, preserves cultural landscapes, and operates within environmental limits. This is particularly relevant for Fogo, where future tourism growth may create economic opportunities but could also generate increasing pressure on infrastructure, water resources, waste management, and local communities if development is not appropriately managed.

The comparative evidence therefore suggests that there is no single pathway through which wine tourism contributes to sustainable island development. In mature destinations such as the Canary Islands, its principal value lies in diversification, territorial redistribution, heritage valorization, and qualitative rejuvenation. In Fogo, its potential lies primarily in local economic diversification, community participation, territorial valorization, and the structuring of a small-scale tourism offer around wine, volcanic landscapes, and local production. These differentiated functions reinforce the need for wine-tourism strategies adapted to the evolutionary, environmental, institutional, and socioeconomic characteristics of each island territory.

4. Conclusions

This study comparatively analysed the development, sustainability, and strategic role of wine tourism in the Canary Islands and Fogo (Cabo Verde), two Atlantic island contexts characterized by markedly different tourism trajectories. Using Butler's (1980) Tourism Area Life Cycle (TALC) as an interpretative framework, the analysis addressed four interconnected dimensions: the development of wine tourism, its relationship with sustainability, the correspondence between destination maturity and product development, and the challenges and opportunities associated with its future evolution. These dimensions respond directly to the objectives established at the beginning of the study. In relation to the research questions, the findings demonstrate that wine-tourism development follows differentiated trajectories in the Canary Islands and Fogo (RQ1) and that destination-level tourism maturity does not necessarily correspond to the evolutionary stage of the wine-tourism product (RQ2).

The main finding is that destination maturity and wine-tourism product development do not necessarily evolve synchronously. This distinction is particularly evident in the Canary Islands. Although the archipelago constitutes a mature international tourism destination, the evidence analysed indicates that wine tourism itself is more appropriately positioned between the development and consolidation stages. The progressive diversification of experiences, greater institutional attention, sectoral monitoring, commercialization initiatives, strategic planning, and increasing recognition of viticultural landscapes demonstrate that wine tourism has moved beyond an incipient phase. Nevertheless, persistent differences between islands, uneven professionalization, fragmented coordination, and limited wine-tourism-specific demand information indicate that full consolidation has not yet been achieved. The latter remains particularly relevant given the difficulties involved in identifying a differentiated wine-tourist profile in existing tourism statistics.

Within this mature tourism context, the strategic importance of wine tourism lies less in generating additional visitor volumes than in contributing to the qualitative diversification of the destination. Wine tourism can connect tourism activity with agricultural landscapes, local production, gastronomy, heritage, and rural territories, thereby extending tourism value beyond established coastal tourism areas. This interpretation also allows the concept of rejuvenation to be reconsidered. Rather than implying renewed quantitative growth, qualitative rejuvenation may involve new products, stronger connections with local productive sectors, a wider territorial distribution of benefits, higher-value experiences, and greater recognition of cultural and agricultural heritage. The increasing heritage recognition of distinctive wine landscapes reinforces this potential, while simultaneously emphasizing that their tourism value ultimately depends on the continuity of the agricultural practices that created them.

Fogo presents a different evolutionary and territorial context. The island should not be interpreted as representative of the Cabo Verdean tourism system as a whole, but rather as a peripheral micro-destination in which viticulture, local wine production, community and cooperative structures, and the volcanic landscape converge. The comparative evidence supports the positioning of its wine-tourism product between the exploration and involvement stages. Wine tourism is already identifiable through winery and vineyard visits, tastings, interaction with producers and residents, gastronomy, and experiences associated with the volcanic and agricultural landscape, but it remains less standardized and institutionally structured than in the Canary Islands.

The significance of wine tourism in Fogo therefore lies primarily in its potential contribution to the structuring of a small-scale territorial tourism model. The integration of wine with volcanic heritage, geotourism, gastronomy, hiking, agricultural products, and community participation may broaden the economic functions associated with viticulture and increase the retention of tourism value within the territory. However, this potential is conditioned by infrastructure, accessibility, professional training, commercialization, investment capacity, and environmental vulnerability. Water scarcity, soil constraints, climate pressures, and volcanic hazards demonstrate that the development of tourism and the continuity of agricultural activity cannot be considered independently (FAO, 2022).

From a theoretical perspective, the principal contribution of this study lies in applying the TALC framework at two interconnected analytical scales: the destination and the specific tourism product. Butler's (1980) model remains useful for interpreting tourism evolution, but the comparison indicates that assigning a destination-level stage automatically to the specialized products operating within it can obscure significant internal differences. A mature destination may contain products that remain in development, while a specialized product in a peripheral micro-destination may participate in shaping tourism from its earlier stages. The distinction between destination-level tourism maturity and product-level

development therefore provides a more nuanced application of TALC to specialized forms of tourism such as wine tourism.

From a practical and territorial perspective, the findings indicate that wine-tourism strategies should be adapted to the evolutionary conditions of each destination rather than transferred uniformly between territories. In the Canary Islands, greater attention is required to professionalization, coordination, demand knowledge, commercialization, integration into the tourism value chain, and the continuity of viticultural landscapes. The recent development of sector-specific monitoring and initiatives aimed at coordination and commercialization suggests that these issues are increasingly entering the institutional agenda. In Fogo, priorities are more closely related to strengthening local capacities, infrastructure, accessibility, professional skills, commercialization, environmental management, and community-based structures.

Overall, the comparison demonstrates that similar territorial resources—wine, volcanic landscapes, agricultural heritage, local knowledge, and cultural identity—can perform different tourism functions depending on the evolutionary and institutional context in which they are embedded. In the Canary Islands, wine tourism can contribute to diversification, territorial redistribution, heritage valorization, and qualitative rejuvenation; in Fogo, it can contribute to local diversification, community participation, and the structuring of a territorially embedded tourism offer. In both contexts, however, its long-term contribution depends on maintaining the relationship between tourism, agricultural production, landscape, and local communities, a relationship that is increasingly recognized as central to sustainable wine-tourism ecosystems (Bail et al., 2026).

Study Limitations and Future Research

Several limitations should be considered when interpreting the findings of this study. First, the present article constitutes a documentary and comparative contribution to an ongoing collaborative research line on wine tourism, cultural landscapes, and territorial sustainability in Macaronesia, rather than a formally funded research project. This research line is developed through academic collaboration among researchers affiliated with the University of La Laguna (Spain) and Universidade Portucalense (Portugal), and is connected to research activities undertaken within the Interdisciplinary Research Group on Agrotourism, the CajaCanarias–Ashotel–ULL Chair of Tourism, etc. The collaboration between the two universities is being progressively strengthened through academic mobility, research stays, and joint scientific publications, with a view to developing future competitive research proposals. The evidence analysed in the present article derives primarily from scientific literature, institutional and technical documentation, and secondary data. Accordingly, the TALC positions proposed for the Canary Islands and Fogo should be understood as evidence-based analytical interpretations rather than as classifications derived from direct longitudinal measurement of wine-tourism demand or destination evolution. This distinction is particularly important because tourism products do not necessarily evolve through clearly delimited or linear stages, and their trajectories may be affected by institutional change, environmental pressures, market dynamics, and external shocks.

A second limitation concerns the uneven availability of documentary evidence. The Canary Islands have a substantially larger body of scientific literature, tourism statistics, institutional documentation, and sector-specific monitoring, whereas evidence specifically addressing wine tourism in Fogo remains more limited and dispersed. This asymmetry affects the depth of the comparison and prevents the application of completely homogeneous indicators to both territories. The TALC positioning should therefore be interpreted as the result of the convergence of the available evidence rather than as a standardized quantitative classification.

The geographical scale of the comparison also requires consideration. The Canary Islands constitute an archipelago with considerable internal diversity in tourism development, viticulture, wine landscapes, and wine-tourism supply. Although the archipelago provides the general analytical framework, particular attention is given to Tenerife, Lanzarote, and La Palma because of their relevance to the processes examined in this study. Conversely, the Cabo Verdean analysis focuses specifically on Fogo because of its relationship between viticulture, wine production, volcanic landscape, and tourism. Consequently, the findings for Fogo should not be extrapolated to Cabo Verde as a whole, particularly given the markedly different tourism trajectories of islands such as Sal and Boa Vista.

Importantly, the absence of primary field data from the present article does not mean that the empirical phase has been postponed to an undefined future stage. This collaborative research line remains active, and field-based research activities are already being undertaken as part of its continued development. The documentary analysis presented here provides the comparative and conceptual basis for this empirical phase, which progressively incorporates direct engagement with wineries, winegrowers, tourism actors, public institutions, local communities, and other stakeholders linked to wine tourism and wine landscapes. The purpose of this ongoing work is to contrast, refine, and where necessary reconsider the interpretations derived from the documentary evidence, particularly those concerning governance, cooperation, professionalization, local participation, landscape valorization, and tourism-product development.

As this research progresses, the empirical component will allow the incorporation of more systematic primary evidence through interviews, participant observation, stakeholder analysis, and surveys, where appropriate. Particular attention should also be given to the demand side of wine tourism, including visitor motivations, expenditure, satisfaction, origin, length of stay, consumption patterns, and interactions with wineries and local products. This dimension is especially relevant because the available Canary Islands statistics do not currently allow wine-tourism participation to be clearly isolated from other activities; for example, the existing combined “wineries/festivities” category cannot be interpreted as a specific measurement of wine-tourism demand.

The continuation of the fieldwork will also provide an opportunity to assess the TALC interpretation longitudinally. Rather than treating the positions identified in this article as fixed classifications, subsequent phases of this research can examine whether the Canary Islands wine-tourism product progresses towards greater consolidation and whether Fogo develops from local involvement towards more structured forms of tourism development. This will also make it possible to test empirically the study’s principal theoretical proposition: that destination maturity and specialized tourism-product development may follow different but interconnected evolutionary trajectories.

Finally, extending the comparative research to other wine-producing territories in Macaronesia would allow the analytical framework to be tested under different island conditions. The present study should therefore be understood not as the endpoint of the research process, but as the documentary and conceptual foundation of an ongoing empirical research programme on wine tourism, cultural landscapes, and sustainable territorial development in Macaronesia.

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Abbreviations

The following abbreviations are used in this manuscript:

TALC	Tourism Area Life Cycle
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
GIAHS	Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems

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