

# Does the Netherlands have a future in the wine industry?

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## **Motivation**

An article from a renowned Dutch newspaper, was the reason why I wanted to discover more about the Dutch wine industry and if the Dutch wine industry has a future. Because when speaking about wine, the Netherlands is not a wine country that pops up in your head.

I had tried some wine from the Netherlands before, but that was not anything of high quality and therefore my interest was there. To be honest, I was quite sceptical at first, because my first encounter with wine from the Netherlands was not positive. Though after research more and more, I discovered that there was a quality system in place and that wines had been rewarded with medals and awards.

Also, the other articles that I have find online, where speaking highly of the Dutch wine industry. However, one of the articles was stating that warmth resistant grape varieties were planted because the temperature was getting too high in the Netherlands. Therefore the question that was risen was: Does the Netherlands have a future in the wine industry?

## **Objective**

The objective of this thesis is to explore if the Netherlands have a future in the wine industry.

## **Methodology**

The literature research was made mainly based on online sources. Books were hard/not possible to find. After searching for literature, an interview was established and wineries were interviewed. Not only interviews were held with different wineries, also an blind tasting with sommeliers was held in order to see if the quality of the wines can be held up with the quality of wines in Austria.

## **Content**

In order to understand the Dutch wine market, the history of the wine industry in the Netherlands needs to be discovered. Not only the history of the Dutch wine industry, but also how the wine industry is nowadays.

After this, the terroir that influences the vegetation of the different grape varieties is discussed and the same goes for the different grape varieties.

After the basics has been established, an in-dept look to the qualification system of the Netherlands was researched in order to gain a better insight of the regions.

After the research was done, interviews were held with 4 different wineries of the Netherlands who answered the questions that appeared after the research was done. Also a blind tasting with three sommeliers of Vienna has been taken place.

## **Conclusion**

The Netherlands has an extended wine history. Though the first vineyards as we know them now were planted around 1970. From this moment on, more wineries came. Not only the numbers of wineries is growing, also the fact that a qualification system is in place, is a step in the right direction of increasing the quality of wines in the Netherlands.

The BGA qualification is an equivalent to an IGP in France and the BOB system is similar to an AOP in France. In this moment, there are 9 BOB's, which have their own specification. From different soils to difference in altitude and different climates or grape varieties used.

The wineries are speaking with a bright eye to the future and do think that the Netherlands have a great future ahead. Though it must be said that this future is solely in the Netherlands and not abroad. The Dutch people are drinking the wines, but abroad it is very hard to establish a name in the wine industry because the wines are too expensive, the land is too expensive, or the amount is not fitting to cover the question of the world. However, the wineries have a passion regarding making wine and that is the reason to reach for their goals and dreams.

The tasting with the sommeliers has soon that the quality of the Dutch wines is from high standard and can compete with the wines in Austria or Europe. However, they were also surprised by the prices asked for the wines.

For now, the Dutch wine industry has a future in the Netherlands, but not in Europe or the whole world. But maybe in a few years, the future is looking different for the Dutch wine industry.