

A New Gastronomic Route Encompassing Oleo Tourism and Wine Tourism Along the Olive Corridor of South Marmara in Türkiye

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to assess the potential of oleo tourism and wine tourism within the Olive Corridor of South Marmara, one of the seven thematic tourism development corridors identified in the 2007 action plan, as part of the Türkiye Tourism Strategy 2023. Within the scope of this study, a holistic approach was taken towards the Olive Corridor of South Marmara, presenting a proposed route that encompasses oleo tourism and wine tourism products. The suggested route demonstrates that the corridor holds strong potential in terms of oleo tourism and wine tourism products, and it also possesses rich resources for destination experiences, including landscapes, cultural heritage, and outdoor activities. However, one of the findings of this study is that the corridor has room for development in terms of oleo tourism and wine tourism and should be diversified with new tourism products. Collaborations, support, incentives, marketing efforts, and contributions from producers and the local community, along with a sustainable tourism approach, have the potential to transform the corridor into a strong destination for oleo tourism and wine tourism.

1. INTRODUCTION

Due to the rapid technological progress in industries, the decrease in income and well-being in rural regions has made it imperative to improve these conditions, prompting the promotion of economic diversification and the establishment of alternative income sources (Andereck & Vogt, 2000). This has created an opportunity for the local population to utilize their agricultural and food-related activities as an attraction for tourism. The form of tourism that emerges from promoting tourist engagement in agricultural and food production activities is known as agro-tourism. An integral aspect of agro-tourism is gastronomy tourism.

Agriculture provides the product - food; culture brings in historical and authentic aspects, and tourism contributes infrastructure and services, harmoniously combining these three elements to shape the gastronomy tourism experience. Together, these three components serve as the cornerstone for integrating gastronomy tourism as a fundamental element within the broader tourism framework (Du Rand & Heath, 2006). According to Quan and Wang (2004), gastronomy tourism offers an alternative avenue to enhance the value of agricultural products, particularly in rural areas. The culinary culture found in regions abundant with diverse and local cuisines can be transformed into food-centred events, effectively converting local food resources into attractive commodities. Moreover, local foods can be integrated as a subsidiary attraction within mega event tourism. In this scenario, food consumption can also become an integral part of the overall experience. Food festivals and gastronomy tourism serve as assets that bolster the local identity of a destination community, thereby fostering increased community engagement. Such community participation and support are essential social prerequisites for the sustainability of gastronomy tourism. Therefore, there is ample reason to acknowledge the significance of local and traditional foods and their role in the advancement of tourism.

Gastronomy, being one of the primary drivers of travel, has the characteristic of being an economic catalyst that promotes economic growth and provides added value to tourists by introducing local products (Murgado, 2013). This has led to the emergence of various sub-niches within gastronomy tourism. This study focuses on two of these sub-niches: oleo tourism and wine tourism. In this exploratory study, the Olive Corridor of South Marmara was selected as the research area, which is one of the seven thematic tourism corridors recommended in the action plan prepared in 2007 within the framework of the Türkiye Tourism Strategy 2023. Although the action plan emphasized the region's significant potential in olive, olive oil, and wine production, since then, there has been no initiative, involving collaboration between the public and private sectors, to comprehensively address the corridor as a whole destination and promote tourism development. In this context, the study aims to assess the potential of the Olive Corridor of South Marmara as a destination for oleo tourism and wine tourism. As part of this research, a route is proposed that tourists can experience in the context of oleo tourism and wine tourism along the corridor, and this itinerary can also be incorporated into packaged tours.

In the study, first, oleo tourism and wine tourism are discussed conceptually, providing information about the key characteristics of these two types of tourism. Then, a section is presented that examines the distinctive features of the destinations that make up the Olive Corridor of South Marmara and aims to introduce the corridor in a general sense. Following that, a route comprising elements that can be experienced within the scope of oleo tourism and wine tourism in this corridor is prepared, along with various suggestions to enhance the route's effectiveness and efficiency in a tourist context. The fact that there hasn't been a comprehensive study encompassing the entirety of the Olive Corridor of South Marmara and assessing the potential for oleo tourism and wine tourism within it underscores the significance of this research. This study is anticipated to provide valuable guidance for future studies, projects and initiatives within the corridor.

2. OLEO TOURISM

Beyond its conventional role as a culinary staple, olive oil is acknowledged as a valuable resource in the realm of gastronomy tourism, offering substantial possibilities. The integration of culinary offerings with tourism creates promising opportunities for the olive sector, thereby stimulating economic development in particular areas (Murgado, 2013). As a form of agrotourism, oleo tourism offers the chance to simultaneously immerse in both cultural aspects and natural surroundings. The rich olive culture, often emblematic of nations and ethnicities, is regarded as a culinary heritage. Exploring olive groves and olive oil production facilities presents an opportunity to engage with social values, cultural traditions, ecological elements, and the beauty of nature.

Oleo tourism encompasses various activities, such as visiting current oil mills and restored historical factories, exploring museums that exhibit olives and olive oil products, engaging in olive and olive oil tastings, shopping for olive oil items, dining at restaurants that feature dishes prepared with olive oil, experiencing local cuisine, staying at farmhouse accommodations, and attending olive oil fairs and festivals, as well as other cultural and nature-related activities that establish a connection between the tourist and the region (Murgado-Armenteros et al., 2021; Murgado, 2013; Pulido-Fernández et al., 2019). Vena-Oya and Parrilla-González (2023) conducted a study in Jaén province, Spain, to determine whether national and international tourists differ regarding oleotourism activities. The results revealed that national tourists assign a very high level of importance to activities related to visiting the mill, whereas international tourists attribute less importance to these activities. For international tourists, exploring and tasting the local cuisine emerged as an activity with significantly high importance.

Olive oil routes provide substantial benefits for the regional development of rural areas and the exploration of alternative tourism prospects. These routes have been established with contemporary objectives, including fostering development by leveraging natural and cultural heritage, boosting tourism, and conserving heritage assets, among other objectives. Nevertheless, these routes also encompass numerous historical elements throughout their courses. They offer activities that educate tourists on the transformation of olives, an integral part of cultural heritage, into olive oil (Büyük & Can, 2020). Hernández-Mogollón et al. (2019) stated that the activities provided in the context of oleo tourism contribute to sharing both theoretical and practical knowledge that enhances not just the travel experience but also the overall lives of tourists.

Oleo tourism activities are prevalent not only in Mediterranean basin countries such as Spain, Italy, Greece, Morocco, Türkiye, and Portugal, where olive trees are the predominant crops but also in countries like Argentina, Australia, Chile, Japan, the USA, or Lebanon (Pulido-Fernández et al., 2019). According to D'auria et al. (2020), Mediterranean countries, led by Spain, account for more than 60% of the global olive oil production. Nevertheless, this share has been declining due to the rise of producer countries like Türkiye, Morocco, and Tunisia, as well as Australia and the USA. However, the Mediterranean's connection to its olives, olive oil, and its characteristic diet, despite current market changes, always forms an inseparable and balanced unity involving interconnected sustainable elements such as tourism, gastronomy, cultural heritage, and agriculture. The presence of international olive

oil routes and museums further supports this observation. According to the International Olive Council, Spain leads with 19 registered olive oil routes and museums, followed by France with 6, Italy with 6, Türkiye with 3, Greece with 3, and Portugal and Israel each with 1 (International Olive Council, n.d.).

Pulido-Fernández et al. (2019) contended that oleo tourism can be categorized as a type of special interest tourism. They observed that oleo tourism includes components from three broader categories of general interest tourism: nature-based tourism, rural tourism, and cultural tourism. Additionally, they pointed out that it exhibits common traits with various other forms of special interest tourism, such as gastronomic, industrial, ethnographic, landscape, creative, flora observation and fauna, health, business and agro-tourism aspects. In another study, Dancausa-Millan et al. (2022) discussed six key components of oleo tourism: oil culture, tourism, territory, sustainability, authenticity, and competitiveness. Oleo tourism heavily depends on the presence of oil culture, serving as its fundamental basis. The unique characteristics of each region are effectively conveyed through olive oil and the cultural elements associated with it. The demand and supply of oleo tourism products are predominantly influenced by tourism and tourists. The success of oleo tourism is closely tied to the quality of tourist facilities and essential supplementary services available at the destination. Territory plays a pivotal role in oleo tourism, encompassing olive groves, natural landscapes, urban areas, and the overall environment. The development of oleo tourism should align with the principles of sustainable tourism, ensuring the conservation of natural, cultural, and other resources for future generations while also benefiting the local community. Authenticity holds significant value in the region and the oleo tourism experience, especially for discerning individuals seeking distinctive experiences with higher expectations. The competitiveness of an oleo tourism destination is a result of its capability to adapt its offerings and services to changing market dynamics while upholding sustainable resource management practices.

Arıkan Saltık and Çeken (2017) pointed out that in oleo tourism, there is a strong emphasis on traditional family-run practices. What accelerates the development of these businesses is the activities carried out in the tourism sector. Hence, it holds paramount importance for pertinent stakeholders to engage in collaborative efforts. Stakeholders capable of fostering the advancement of oleo tourism encompass ministries, local authorities, community members, olive growers, educational institutions, and tourism establishments. D'auria et al. (2020) noted that local governments and businesses in Italy have recently begun to take notice of efforts aimed at improving local development. They have directed their efforts toward integrating food production, such as olive oil and wine, with tourism initiatives to achieve this goal. Due to the significant role of the local resident as a key actor in oleo tourism development, Campón-Cerro et al. (2017) conducted research on the role of the local resident in the Sierra de Gata and Las Hurdes districts in Spain. The findings suggest that the local community predominantly views tourism development as an economic opportunity and is more likely to endorse it when they witness enhancements in their quality of life. The study reaffirms that the local resident plays a fundamental role in planning tourism development, even in the context of rural tourism products such as oleo tourism. In another study, Alonso and Northcote (2010) conducted research on olive-growing operations, one of the key stakeholders in oleo tourism in Western Australia, to explore their potential for developing oleo tourism. The findings of the study indicate the

necessity for olive growers to collaborate among themselves, seek support from local authorities, and receive support in marketing promotion from visitor centres, accommodation providers, hotels, and other tourism operators in the region to realize their potential.

Travellers who embark on journeys with the intention of savouring gastronomic experiences represent significant consumer segments for destinations renowned for olive and olive oil production. These tourists are referred to as oleo tourists. Millán et al. (2018) characterize oleo tourists as individuals who, during their leisure time and away from their usual place of residence, embark on journeys to gain a deeper understanding of olive cultivation and olive oil. There is a classification that categorizes oleo tourists into groups as oil connoisseurs, oil enthusiasts, interested in oil, and oil novices (Dancausa-Millan et al., 2022; Millán et al., 2018). According to this classification, oil connoisseurs are highly knowledgeable about olive-related topics, and their primary motivation is to taste different types of olive oil, purchase bottles of olive oil, and learn more in situ. While oil enthusiasts may not have extensive formal education in olives, they have a relatively good understanding of the world of olive oil. The primary motivation of tourists in the group interested in oil is to explore some olive oil factories, often as a complement to other tourist activities. In contrast, the primary drive behind the travels of oil novices is typically not tied to olives and olive oil. Instead, it often involves individuals who come across such experiences for a variety of different reasons or by happenstance. Pulido-Fernández et al. (2020) identified the key characteristics of four different groups of olive oil tourists. "Dabbler Olive Oil Tourists" include local residents or non-overnight visitors who are interested in increasing their knowledge about olive oil varieties and seeking activities beneficial to their health. "Experiential Olive Oil Tourists," on the other hand, are comprised of individuals residing outside the destination. The primary motivation for this group is also to enhance their knowledge about olive oil varieties. "Half-day Guest Olive Oil Tourists" are residents from outside the city but stay overnight in a location other than the olive oil destination. They aim to discover the origin and the environment of a Protected Designation of Origin and learn about the organoleptic properties of olive oil. Lastly, "Enthusiast Olive Oil Tourists" consist of tourists accommodated in hotels in the destination who are keen on learning about the organoleptic properties of olive oil. In another study, Murgado-Armenteros et al. (2021) divided oleo-tourists into three different market segments based on the aspects sought at the destination: safety and comfort, demanding, and accessible.

3. WINE TOURISM

Wine tourism encompasses visits to vineyards, wineries, wine festivals, and wine shows where the primary motivating factors for visitors are grape wine tasting and/or experiencing the attributes of a grape wine region (Hall, 1996). Wine tourism can be seen "as a reflection of consumer behaviour, a method employed by destinations to cultivate and promote wine-related attractions and imagery, and an avenue for wineries to provide consumer education and directly sell their products" (Getz & Brown, 2006, p. 147). It blends elements of lifestyle, supply and demand dynamics, educational opportunities, and connections to art, wine, and food, seamlessly integrating into the overall image of the tourism destination. The wine tourism experience is achieved through options such as

participating in festivals, delving into cultural heritage, savouring local cuisine, enjoying warm hospitality, attending educational programs, wine tasting, exploring wine cellars, and joining winery tours (Charters & Ali-Knight, 2002).

According to Hall and Macionis (1998), there are three wine tourism market segments. The first segment is "wine lovers," comprising tourists who have a strong passion for wines and winemaking. Their main reason for travelling often revolves around visiting wineries. This segment is likely to consist of individuals with higher income and education levels, with some possibly working in the wine or food industry. They regularly purchase publications related to wine and food and have probably explored other wine tourism regions in the past, making purchases during their visits. The second segment is "wine-interested tourists," individuals with a high level of interest in wine, but this may not be the sole purpose of their travel. They tend to have higher education levels and fall into the middle to higher income brackets. Wine tourism promotions can pique their interest. Similar to wine lovers, this group of tourists is likely to have visited other wine regions before, be familiar with winemaking procedures, have purchased products from wineries, and have a high probability of revisiting them in the future. The third segment is "curious tourists," individuals with a moderate level of interest in wine, but they may not be familiar with winemaking procedures. They view wineries as just another attraction and visit them as a side activity during their travels. These tourists typically have a moderate income and education level. They may have visited other wine regions before, and their interest can be piqued by wine products, wine tastings, and general tourism promotions. Charters and Ali-Knight's (2002) study endorses this classification, proposing to name the "curious tourists" segment as "wine novices" and adding a fourth marginal group known as "Hanger on." This group comprises individuals who do not have a significant interest in wine but visit wine-related attractions as part of a group. However, Charters and Ali-Knight (2002) argued that considering the demographic and psychographic differences among wine tourists visiting each region, as well as national and cross-cultural variations, wine tourist segments may not hold significant meaning beyond assisting tour operators in a specific region. Tasci et al. (2023) conducted a study to identify the general wine consumer typology for both tourists and residents. They identified two types: the wine expert and the occasional wine consumer. The wine expert type represents consumers who are experienced and knowledgeable about wines. On the other hand, the occasional wine consumer type represents individuals who consume wine for socializing, relaxation, and special occasions. The study revealed that both visitors and residents were more likely to fall into the category of occasional wine consumers. Gómez-Carmona et al. (2023) conducted a study revealing the evolution of consumers' attitudes towards wine tourism from a period where they had no experience to the peak of their involvement. Overall, it was observed that certain pro-wine attitudes, such as the belief that wine is expensive or harmful to health, played a significant role in the evolution of the wine tourism experience. The study found that those with the highest level of experience in wine tourism were individuals who highly valued the pleasurable experience derived from wine consumption. Additionally, these tourists were shown to be enthusiastic about learning more about wine, actively participating in wine-related events, and holding the belief that wine is good and healthy for them.

Getz and Brown (2006) identified that tourists expect fundamental aspects from a wine-related travel experience, including the core wine product, core destination features, and

related cultural experiences. In the core wine product, elements like wineries that cater to visitors, well-informed winery staff, wine festivals, and familiar wineries hold significance.

Core destination appeal comprises characteristics such as picturesque landscapes, pleasant weather, reasonably priced lodging, readily available information, and clearly marked wine trails. The cultural product includes distinctive accommodations with a regional flair, high-quality dining establishments, and traditional wine villages. Sparks (2007) identified three dimensions of wine tourism, namely the core wine experience, destination experience, and personal development. These dimensions bear similarities to the dimensions identified by Getz and Brown (2006), with the addition of personal development as a new dimension. This dimension encompasses the motivation of wine tourists to gain in-depth knowledge about wine and wine production. Therefore, as indicated by Festa et al. (2020), the advancement of wine tourism unquestionably hinges on factors like the landscape, cultural heritage, services, amenities, and others. When the efforts of local institutions and the participation of the regional community come together with the enthusiasm of wine tourism entrepreneurs, progress becomes achievable. Regarding this topic, Telfer (2001) stressed the significance of forging strategic alliances within the realm of wine tourism and highlighted the possibility of creating strategic alliances due to the wine tourism product's ability to unite a multifaceted industry network, encompassing grape growers, wine producers, restaurants, and tour operators. Additionally, Kastenholz et al. (2023) suggested that involving the local residents in the planning and development process is essential to unlock the potential of sustainable development by creating meaningful, appealing, and collaborative wine experience products.

In wine tourism, wine routes serve as the pathways leading to the main attractions, which are the wines and the wineries. A wine route is defined as basically "a tourist route that connects several wine estates and wineries in a given area" (Bruwer, 2003: 424). Wine routes are distinguished by their natural attractions (such as mountains and scenic views), physical features (including winery facilities on wine estates), vineyards, and the presence of roads and markers (signposts) guiding tourists to the specific wine route estate establishments (Bruwer, 2003). Wine routes, highlighted by their emphasis on natural, cultural, and environmental values and promoted through unique marketing campaigns, serve as tools through which viticultural regions and their products can be commercialized as tourism products (Ramos et al., 2020). Studies that have chosen wine routes as their research area have focused on topics such as marketing strategies of wineries, tourists' motivations and revisit intentions, brand loyalty, the economic, socio-cultural, and environmental impacts of wine routes, the perceptions of the local community, and the role of local governments.

The strategic role of wine tourism is to support the development of certain rural areas that face socio-economic development constraints (Kastenholz et al., 2023). Wine tourism stands out as a significant sector for regions, by offering advantages such as generating foreign currency revenue, establishing both full-time and part-time employment opportunities, and fostering the growth of secondary economic endeavours (O'Neill & Palmer, 2004), thereby enhancing the quality of life for the community (Kastenholz et al., 2023). Carlsen (2004), on the other hand, has argued that the benefits of wine tourism extend to all areas of the regional economy and even to the urban areas that wine tourists

visit. Eusébio et al. (2023) conducted a study to assess the local community's perceptions regarding the economic, socio-cultural, and environmental impacts of wine routes. They concluded that negative effects are deemed less significant when compared to positive ones. The study's results suggest that the local community prioritizes economic effects and shows less concern about environmental impacts. Kastenholtz et al. (2023) researched the perceptions and attitudes of the local community towards wine tourism development in The Beira Interior wine route in Portugal. The study found that the local community generally holds an extremely positive view of the impacts of wine tourism and exhibits a favourable attitude towards tourism development. Additionally, it was concluded that the local population perceives not only the economic benefits but also significant cultural and social advantages associated with wine tourism.

In wine tourism, just like in all other facets of tourism, the consumer's assessment of service quality plays a crucial role. How visitors perceive the service quality during their winery experiences significantly influences their future purchase intentions and brand loyalty. (O'Neill & Palmer, 2004). Dias et al. (2023) found a positive relationship between brand love and wine involvement in wine tourism destinations with emotional satisfaction, evaluation satisfaction, and word-of-mouth intention. A higher level of satisfaction leads to an increase in brand love, subsequently resulting in more individuals becoming wine tourists through positive word-of-mouth. Bruwer (2003) conducted a research study covering South African wine routes and concluded that the South African wine industry has an active wine tourism market and well-developed facilities and infrastructure. The study revealed that most wine tourists belong to the "wine lover" segment, and their primary motivations include exploring vineyards, visiting wineries, purchasing wine, and wine tasting, which are typical primary wine tourism motivations. Additionally, the beauty and splendour of the South African wine industry were identified as significant motivational factors. Gaetjens et al. (2023) concluded that wine tourists visit wine regions for broader hedonic and experiential attributes, emphasizing that motivations related to wine are as crucial as hedonic motivations. Enjoying the experience at a winery, meeting producers, and immersing themselves in cultural heritage are highly significant experiences for wine tourists. Additionally, leisure, relaxation, and socialization were identified as important push factors.

Ramos et al. (2020) conducted a study on the revisit intentions of wine tourists in the Valle de Guadalupe wine route in Mexico. The study concluded that both pre-visit and in-situ dimensions have an impact on revisit intentions. It was emphasized in the study that for wineries, providing a quality in situ experience involves having qualified and friendly staff, developing entertainment activities, and introducing the region's cuisine. Therefore, wineries are encouraged to be creative in these aspects. Consequently, enhancing collaboration between wineries and other businesses in the region, and implementing practices such as loyal customer programs and private guided tours within this collaboration, is crucial. Sparks (2007) revealed that past attitudes, normative influences, and a general interest in food and wine have small effects on intentions, and although some wine-related factors have direct effects, their impact is not very significant. Wine factors have emerged more as predictors related to emotional attitudes rather than intentions. Marzo-Navarro and Pedraja-Iglesias (2012) found that personal barriers had a more significant impact on participation in wine tourism compared to structural barriers. Structural barriers such as cost, time, and distance did not have a significant influence on

participation in wine tourism. Therefore, the study suggested that to enhance wine tourism, it is essential to increase individuals' interest in wine products and promote wine culture.

Hashimoto and Telfer (2003) conducted research focusing on the marketing strategies employed by wine producers situated along an emerging wine route in the Niagara region. With more than 50 wineries catering to diverse markets in the area, the study recommends that these wineries craft customized marketing strategies tailored to their specific target audiences. The study underscores the potential benefits for internationally oriented wineries to collaborate effectively with tour operators. Meanwhile, it emphasizes the significance of repeat visitors in the local market and suggests implementing strategies to foster brand loyalty. As a means of differentiation, the study also recommends that wineries emphasize not only the quality of their wine but also the quality of other products and services they provide. Carlsen (2004) mentioned that since it is known that young wine consumers are less inclined to visit wineries while on vacation, wineries need strategies to attract these groups. The study suggested that festivals, concerts, weddings, and similar events could be effective tools to pique the interest of this group and increase their likelihood of visiting wineries and wine regions. In another study, Hojman and Hunter-Jones (2012) investigated the roles of wine producers in Chile and found that each of them had different objectives for wine tourism, resulting in varying strategies. The study highlighted the production of high-quality wines and the establishment of strong international distribution networks as crucial strategies. This is because wine tourism can only contribute to a wine producer's income if the producer can consistently produce very high-quality wine and maintain highly effective international distribution networks. In their study examining wine tourism development in the example of Romania, Pop and Caros (2023) found that Romanian wine-growing communes were unable to attract a large number of tourists. Despite having a high number of day-trippers, the study concluded that the frequency of repeat visits from these visitors was considerably low. López-Guzmán et al. (2011) conducted a study focusing on The Sherry Region in Spain to examine how wine routes are created and developed. One noteworthy result obtained from the study highlights that the biggest obstacle to tourism development in the Sherry Region is the lack of coordination from the local government and a deficiency in long-term planning.

4. THE OLIVE CORRIDOR OF SOUTH MARMARA

The Olive Corridor of South Marmara encompasses the Gemlik and Mudanya districts of Bursa province, the Bandırma, Erdek, and Gönen districts of Balıkesir province, the coastal area and its surroundings extending up to the Ezine district of Çanakkale province, the Erdek Kapıdağ Peninsula, and the northern islands of Avşa, Paşalimanı, Ekinli, and Marmara. The Türkiye Tourism Strategy for 2023 highlights the region's substantial potential for olive, olive oil, and wine production, in addition to its natural beauty, diverse plant species, and the cultivation of olives and grapes and that this potential will serve as the central focus in advancing the development of the corridor (Ministry of Culture and Tourism of the Republic of Türkiye, 2007).

The Olive Corridor of South Marmara holds strong potential for olive and wine production. According to the National Olive and Olive Oil Council report, the total number of fruit-

bearing olive trees in Türkiye is 167,652,603. Within the Olive Corridor of South Marmara, which includes the provinces in the region, this figure is observed to be 27,332,883. The olive fruit obtained from the olive trees planted in the Olive Corridor of South Marmara constitutes 16.31% of the total in Türkiye (National Olive and Oliveoil Council, 2022). Marmarabirlik, established in 1954 through the collaboration of olive sales cooperatives in the Olive Corridor of South Marmara, including Gemlik, Mudanya, and Erdek, and later joined by various cooperatives within the region in the following years, has evolved to become a global brand (Marmarabirlik, n.d.). According to the report released by Marmarabirlik in June 2023, in the business year 2022, a total of 7,000 tons of olive exports, amounting to 20 million dollars, were made to 61 countries. Marmarabirlik officials, anticipating an increase in this ratio by the end of 2023, have stated that the estimated export is expected to reach around 8,000 tons and 25 million dollars to 65 countries (Marmarabirlik, 2023). As Cabaroğlu (2023: 270) indicated, “In 2021, grape cultivation in Türkiye amounted to 3,670,000 tons, within which 382,911 tons of grapes were grown specifically for wine production. The wine production is reported to be 81,999,497 litres.” The Marmara Region meets 17% of Türkiye's wine grape production (Şenuyar et al., 2014). Analyzing the regional distribution of wine businesses in Türkiye reveals that the Marmara Region, encompassing the Olive Corridor of South Marmara, holds the top position with a total of 76 wine establishments. The province of Çanakkale, located in the Olive Corridor of South Marmara, ranks third in the country with 22 wine establishments (Cabaroğlu, 2023).



Figure 1. The Olive Corridor of South Marmara. Source: Own elaboration.

The Olive Corridor of South Marmara begins in the Gemlik district of Bursa. Gemlik distinguishes itself as a destination known for its well-developed agriculture and status as the primary centre for olive production. Olive cultivation is also crucial in its industrial landscape (Bursa Provincial Directorate of Culture and Tourism, n.d.). Gemlik olive was registered as a geographical indication by the Turkish Patent and Trademark Office in 2003. The most significant characteristic that sets Gemlik olives apart from other olives is that they are obtained from olive trees whose seedlings are grown and processed from olives originating in the Bursa Gemlik region (Turkish Patent and Trademark Office, 2003). Gemlik Olive was registered also by the European Union in 2023 (Turkish Patent and Trademark Office, 2023). Gemlik also exhibits characteristics of a tourist destination with its natural and cultural resources. Along the Gemlik-Mudanya road, various tourist facilities and beaches are available for visitors.

Mudanya district functions as a crucial transit hub connecting Istanbul and Bursa through both maritime and road transportation routes. In Mudanya, where olive cultivation is the primary source of livelihood, coastal areas are predominantly covered with olive groves, located within 0-15 km from the coast. Its appeal to both domestic and international tourists is attributed to its wealth of natural and cultural resources, along with various recreational opportunities. The Mudanya Armistice House Museum, where the Armistice of Mudanya was signed, stands out as the most significant tourist attraction in the destination (Akdeniz et al., 2020).

Tirilye, which is a part of Mudanya, is one of the significant tourist destinations along the Olive Corridor of South Marmara. In the past, Tirilye had gained worldwide recognition for its olive and olive oil production. Besides olive cultivation, sericulture, wine, vinegar, and soap production were also quite prevalent. Although wine production has diminished in later years, olive and olive oil production continues to thrive. Nearly every family in the region owns an olive orchard. In terms of cultural heritage, Tirilye boasts a rich collection of tangible cultural assets, including the Stone School, Ottoman Bath, Saint Vasil Church, Fatih Mosque (formerly Hagios Stephanos Church), Saint John Church, Saint George Church, Aya Sotiri Monastery, DüNDAR House (Priest's House), and the Arched Church (Panagia Pantobasilissa). Additionally, an industrial heritage, the olive oil factory, adds to the significant tourist attractions in the area (Çiçekçi, 2022).

The Olive Corridor of South Marmara continues through the districts of Bandırma, Erdek, and Gönen, which are part of Balıkesir province. In Bandırma and Erdek, both situated at the foothills of the Kapıdağ Peninsula, olives play a vital role in the local economy. This area, abundant with olive trees, is renowned for producing both pickled and cracked olives, along with olive oil. Additionally, this region is home to numerous olive factories and is known for the widespread production of various cosmetic products made from olive oil. This area boasts abundant tourism resources. Erdek, recognized as one of Türkiye's earliest tourist destinations, shines with its natural beauty and sun, sea, and sand tourism. It offers numerous accommodations and food and beverage establishments along its coastline. Moreover, the Kapıdağ Peninsula holds substantial potential for ecotourism activities. With its rich plant diversity and endemic species, the Kapıdağ Peninsula is well-suited for activities such as trekking, camping, and agro-tourism. Additionally, cultural heritage sites like the ancient city of Kyzikos, the Temple of Hadrian, and the Kirazlı Monastery are among the attractions that captivate the attention of tourists.

The islands of Avşa, Paşalimanı, Ekinli, and Marmara, situated to the north of the Kapıdağ Peninsula, also stand as notable tourist destinations within the olive corridor. These islands draw in a considerable number of tourists, particularly during the summer months, and olive farming is a significant activity in these regions. Moreover, Avşa Island holds promising potential for wine tourism. Although wine production, alongside fishing and olive cultivation, used to serve as the primary livelihood for the island's residents until the 1980s, the surge in tourism has led to the conversion of vineyards into tourist facilities and villas to some extent. Nevertheless, there are still individuals on the island who continue to engage in wine production. On Avşa Island, the adakarası grape variety, which accounts for approximately 65% of the production in Türkiye, is cultivated (Değirmencioğlu, 2000). This grape variety, unique to Avşa Island in the world of viticulture literature, produces very

high-quality, elegant, aromatic wines. These wines are characterized by their beautiful red colour, and soft and pleasant taste, and are ready to be consumed in a short time. They are also suitable for aging. Additionally, wineries on the island cultivate high-value grape varieties like Syrah, Cabernet Sauvignon, and Merlot (Türkben et al., 2012).

Another district in Balıkesir within the Olive Corridor, Gönen, is chiefly recognized for its thermal tourism offerings. Furthermore, the district's traditional handicrafts, serving as a representation of its intangible cultural heritage, play a substantial role in elevating its prominence in tourism. Notably, the Gönen lace market, where traditional and distinctive needle lace items are exhibited and greatly appreciated by tourists, has become one of the district's defining features (Özbek & Çevik, 2018).

The province of Çanakkale plays a significant role in the olive corridor, encompassing the districts of Biga and Lapseki as well as the coastal areas and surroundings extending to the Ezine district. Çanakkale is notable as a crucial Turkish province in the realm of olive cultivation. Positioned in close vicinity to Balıkesir and Bursa, renowned for their olive production, Çanakkale additionally boasts an extensive coastline along the Aegean and Marmara Seas, as well as the Çanakkale Strait. While olive farming is prevalent in all districts of Çanakkale, Ezine and Ayvacık emerge as the frontrunners in this endeavour. The primary focus of olive farming in the province is the production of olive oil (Koca, 2004). Geyikli Olive Oil, which is produced in the town of Geyikli in the Ezine district along the South Marmara Olive Corridor and is highly popular due to its unique and distinctive qualities, was registered as a geographical indication in the year 2021 (Turkish Patent and Trademark Office, 2021).

In addition, viticulture activities are also highly prevalent in Çanakkale. Viticulture in the province dates back to around 3500-4000 BC. The vineyards, where cultivation is extensively carried out throughout Çanakkale, are divided into four different regions: Bozcaada, Lapseki-Umurbey, İntepe, and Bayramiç (Dardeniz et al., 2005). In Çanakkale, approximately 50% of the total fresh grape production is attributed to wine grape varieties, with the "Karacakız" grape variety accounting for roughly 85% of these wine grape varieties. This grape variety has a broader distribution across the province compared to other varieties (Dardeniz & Güven, 2003). Additionally, wine grape varieties such as "Bozcaada Çavuşu", "Vasilaki (Altıntaş)", "Karalahana", and "Sıdalan" are also cultivated. Particularly in Bozcaada, the majority of vineyards are comprised of the "Bozcaada Çavuşu" grape variety (Dardeniz et al., 2001). Bozcaada Çavuşu grapes, another geographical indication registered product of Çanakkale province, was registered in the year 2020 (Turkish Patent and Trademark Office, 2020).

Çanakkale, with its natural beauty, tangible and intangible cultural heritage, historical sites, islands, and diverse tourism opportunities, is undeniably a significant tourist destination in Türkiye. Visitors can explore several of the province's tourist attractions along the Olive Corridor of South Marmara, including the waterfront promenade, the Troy Horse, museums, bazaars, the ancient city of Troy, the ancient city of Agamnia, and the village of Tevfikiye. Moreover, Çanakkale, recognized as a significant destination for gastronomy tourism, boasts a range of other delights, such as the geographically indicated Ezine cheese, cheese halva, seafood, sardines, tomatoes, and Biga meatballs (Köseler et al., 2019).

5. METHODOLOGY

This study aims to determine the oleo tourism and wine tourism potential of the Olive Corridor of South Marmara, which was designated as one of the seven thematic tourism development corridors due to its significant potential in olive, olive oil, and wine production within the framework of the 2007 action plan but has not been holistically addressed for the development of these tourism types since that date. The study aims to address two key questions: 1) What attributes does the Olive Corridor of South Marmara have concerning olive, olive oil, and wine production? 2) How can these attributes be employed as tourism products in packaged tours?

In this exploratory study characterized by a qualitative data analysis approach, electronic data was gathered using document analysis, a qualitative research method. Websites stand out as a notable source for gathering electronic data. Websites, containing both visual and textual information, provide access to additional data sources and enable real-time information retrieval through their continuous updates. Furthermore, they facilitate the collection of data across a broad geographical scope related to the research issue (Baş & Akturan, 2017).

The main sources for this study were the municipal and other institutional websites of the districts within the Olive Corridor of South Marmara. Furthermore, in the September 2023 timeframe, the websites of businesses identified through search engine queries using keywords such as "vineyards," "wineries," "wine houses," "olive oil factory," and "olive oil retail stores" for each district were also analyzed. In addition, recognizing the significance of experiencing supplementary elements such as other natural, historical, and cultural values of the destination for oleo and wine tourists, data on these destination attributes in the Olive Corridor of South Marmara were gathered through the utilization of secondary data. Through the analysis of all this data, a themed route proposal for wine tourism and oleo tourism was developed, taking a holistic approach to the Olive Corridor of South Marmara.

6. FINDINGS

The tours designed for oleo tourism and wine tourism along the Olive Corridor of South Marmara should commence from the Gemlik district. Gemlik, located close to Istanbul, serves as an ideal starting point for foreign tourists. The tour itinerary can incorporate the numerous olive and olive oil production facilities and retail stores found in Gemlik. These stores provide tourists with the opportunity to sample olive varieties distinguished by their unique characteristics, confirmed by geographical indication registration. Moreover, tourists can explore olive oil, various homemade local products, and Bursa-specific items like chestnut sugar. Furthermore, many of these stores feature a diverse range of cosmetic products infused with olive oil, which may pique the interest of tourists due to their quality and variety.

The Gemlik Olive and Olive Oil Museum inaugurated in 2019 through the restoration of a century-old olive oil mill in Gemlik, represents another noteworthy attraction that can be

incorporated into the itinerary. At this museum, visitors have the opportunity to acquire knowledge about the cultural attributes, unique qualities, historical significance, and cultivation equipment associated with olives and olive oil.

The International Gemlik Olive Festival, a 30-year tradition in Gemlik, is a significant attraction that should be incorporated into the olive tourism route. Arranging tours along this route coinciding with the festival held every year in the second week of September will undoubtedly boost the overall appeal of the tour. Spanning 4 days, this festival offers olive-themed activities suitable for all age groups. Events such as olive route exploration walks, olive oil soap crafting workshops, culinary workshops featuring olive-infused dishes, competitions, concerts, and theatrical performances are all part of the festival's program. During the festival dates, it's advisable to allocate more than one day to Gemlik in the route for tours, and tourists can be accommodated in local lodging establishments. This way, tourists can fully immerse themselves in Gemlik's natural beauty and explore its various tourist attractions. Furthermore, the route should encompass restaurants that serve cuisine crafted using Gemlik olive oil and other distinctive local gastronomic delicacies characteristic of Gemlik.

Mudanya, serving as the second destination on the route, is not only well-suited for oleo tourism and wine tourism but also offers a diverse array of tourism attractions, including its natural beauty, cultural heritage, gastronomic delights, and local architecture. Similar to Gemlik, Mudanya is home to a multitude of olive production facilities. These facilities, along with local olive retail shops and stands run by residents, can be seamlessly integrated into the tour program, allowing tourists to sample olives, olive oil, and cosmetic products, as well as engage in shopping activities.

The Tirilye Olive Oil Factory, situated in the Tirilye neighbourhood of Mudanya and representing an industrial historical heritage, can be integrated into the route. Although this historical building is currently in a dormant state and can not be considered a product within the scope of olive tourism, tourists can still be directed to its location and provided with information about the history and significance of olive cultivation in Mudanya. If the tours are scheduled to coincide with the last week of July, the Tirilye Olive Festival, held in Tirilye, can be incorporated into the program. The two-day festival highlights the promotion of olives, the exhibition of olive oil and cosmetic products crafted from olive oil, and includes a variety of activities.

Throughout history, Tirilye has been renowned for its olives and wine; however, wine production has gradually decreased in recent times. In the context of wine tourism, the Baküs Winery, which revitalizes a historic Greek winery in Tirilye and produces Baküs brand wines unique to Tirilye, can be included in the program to allow tourists to taste these regional wines (bursadakultur.org, n.d.). Additionally, in Mudanya, the facility engaged in viticulture and producing Yusta brand wines can also be part of the itinerary for tasting visits.

Following Mudanya, the route extends into the Kapıdağ region, which includes the Bandırma and Erdek districts in Balıkesir, and then continues to Avşa, Marmara, Paşalimanı, and Ekinli islands departing from Erdek. More days can be allocated for this region in the

tours conducted within the route. Both oleo tourists and wine tourists desire to experience the natural and cultural landscape of the regions they visit. The Kapıdağ region and the islands offer a wide range of attractions for tourists, including natural beauty, outdoor activities, and cultural heritage, in addition to their primary appeal of sea, sun, and sand tourism. The region hosts numerous accommodation, food & beverage, and entertainment establishments. Therefore, this stop on the route holds significant potential for the supplementary services of oleo tourism and wine tourism. Concerning oleo tourism, Erdek's olive oil production facilities, their retail outlets, local shops selling olives and olive oil within the district, and coastal stands run by residents can all be included in the tour. Tours scheduled during the olive harvesting season in October and November can provide tourists with the opportunity to witness the olive harvest. Regarding wine tourism, Avşa Island is a notable destination on the route. Including the wineries on Avşa Island in the tour program, where wine is crafted from native "adakarası" grapes, provides an opportunity for tourists to observe the wine production process, engage in wine tastings, and make purchases. Notable wineries on Avşa Island include Büyülübağ Winery, Bortaçına Winery, Kardeşler Wines, Mert Winery, and Sezer Winery. The island, renowned for its olives and olive oil as well, offers production sites, retail shops, and stalls to explore in this context. Restaurants serving dishes prepared with the island's unique olive oil can also be included in the program.

Marmara, Ekinli, and Paşalimanı islands, located within the Olive Corridor, are also highly valued tourist destinations. These islands offer opportunities for olive-related tastings and shopping experiences, making them valuable supplementary services for the tour. Moreover, within the olive corridor, the districts of Gönen in Balıkesir and Biga in Çanakkale can also be considered as supplementary stops on the tour. In Gönen, tourists can enjoy a break for thermal tourism or explore the lace market held on Tuesdays. In Biga, restaurants serving the renowned Biga meatballs of the region can also be featured as part of the itinerary.

Along the coastline of Çanakkale province, where the Olive Corridor of South Marmara stretches, there is the opportunity for a meal break to be taken at seafood restaurants that serve wine produced from grapes cultivated in Çanakkale. As part of the destination experience, a city tour can be organized in the centre of Çanakkale, covering prominent attractions such as the waterfront promenade, the Troy Horse, museums, and the bazaar. Furthermore, the city centre of Çanakkale offers significant potential for both wine and oleo tourism. Tourists have the opportunity to participate in wine tastings and shop at numerous wine houses located in the city centre. Similarly, various olive retail stores offer tourists the chance to sample a diverse range of olives and unique Çanakkale olive oils. These establishments also provide insights into olive oil production in Çanakkale, host olive oil tasting workshops, and offer cosmetic products derived from olive oil for purchase.

The city's cultural heritage can be experienced by incorporating cultural heritage sites such as Tefikiye village, the ancient city of Troy, and the ancient city of Agamnia into the itinerary while travelling from Çanakkale's city centre towards the Ezine district along the Olive Corridor of South Marmara. The Ezine district and its affiliated town, Geyikli, are renowned as some of the prime locations for olive cultivation in Çanakkale. Consequently, this stop holds a significant potential for oleo tourism. The tour program can incorporate

visits to olive processing facilities within the district, offering tourists the chance to explore the diverse varieties of olives and olive oil crafted from locally cultivated olives, which are exported worldwide. Travellers can receive information about the olive cultivation practices in the area and learn about the unique qualities of Geyikli olive oil, distinguished by its geographical indication registration. Additionally, they can enjoy opportunities for olive tasting and shopping. Another globally renowned product of Ezine is Ezine cheese, which has also received geographical indication registration. Within the tour program, introducing tourists to this product and conducting tastings can be included as an attraction in the context of the destination experience. During the third week of October, Geyikli hosts the Olive Harvest Festival, where products made from olives and olive oil are displayed, and various competitions and activities take place. Incorporating the Olive Harvest Festival into the tour program would significantly enhance the tour's appeal.

Bozcaada serves as the ultimate destination on this route, accessible by ferry from Geyikli town. It holds a dual distinction, being not only a prominent tourist destination in Çanakkale but also a pivotal stop along this route, thanks to its significant assets in the realm of wine tourism. Visiting the vineyards and wineries in Bozcaada, where viticulture and winemaking have long-standing traditions, provides tourists with a chance to delve into the intricacies of wine production. Furthermore, including wine tastings in the wine bars within these wineries would greatly boost the attractiveness of the tours planned along this route. In addition to featuring wineries such as Amadeus, Yunatçılar, Corvus, Gülerada, Talay, Ataol, and Çamlıbağ, the tour program can also integrate a variety of wine houses on the island. Furthermore, it's worth noting that Bozcaada hosts the Bozcaada Culture, Art, and Grape Harvest Festival every beginning of September. This festival, which has been held for 23 years, includes activities where local wine producers on the island begin the festival with a symbolic grape harvest in their vineyards. During the festival, tourists also have the opportunity to join the vineyard workers in riding tractors to the vineyards and experience the harvest process. The festival, spanning two days, also features a wide array of activities such as competitions, tournaments, film screenings, concerts, exhibitions, panels, and more. With a high level of participation, incorporating the festival into the tours along this route during its occurrence will provide tourists with significant and memorable experiences in the context of wine tourism.

Bozcaada has the potential for oleo tourism alongside its reputation in wine tourism. Despite initial doubts regarding olive cultivation due to the island's strong winds, in 2012, Arbequina olive trees from Catalonia, Spain, which share similar climate characteristics with Bozcaada, were introduced to the island. The successful outcomes encouraged those interested in olive cultivation to start planting this tree species in their gardens. Annually, in September, Bozcaada organizes an olive harvest festival that showcases the promotion of olive oil and an array of products crafted from Arbequina olives (Egeo Norte, n.d.). Integrating the olive harvest festival into the tour program provides a compelling opportunity for tourists to delve into the history of olive cultivation in Bozcaada and discover the unique qualities of this olive variety. Considering that Bozcaada is not just renowned for its wine and olive tourism but also serves as a comprehensive tourist destination in its own right, the tour program should incorporate offerings that allow tourists to fully immerse themselves in the Bozcaada experience. This should entail an

island tour that includes visits to landmarks like beaches, windmills, the Greek and Turkish neighbourhoods, the Church of the Virgin Mary, and Bozcaada Castle.

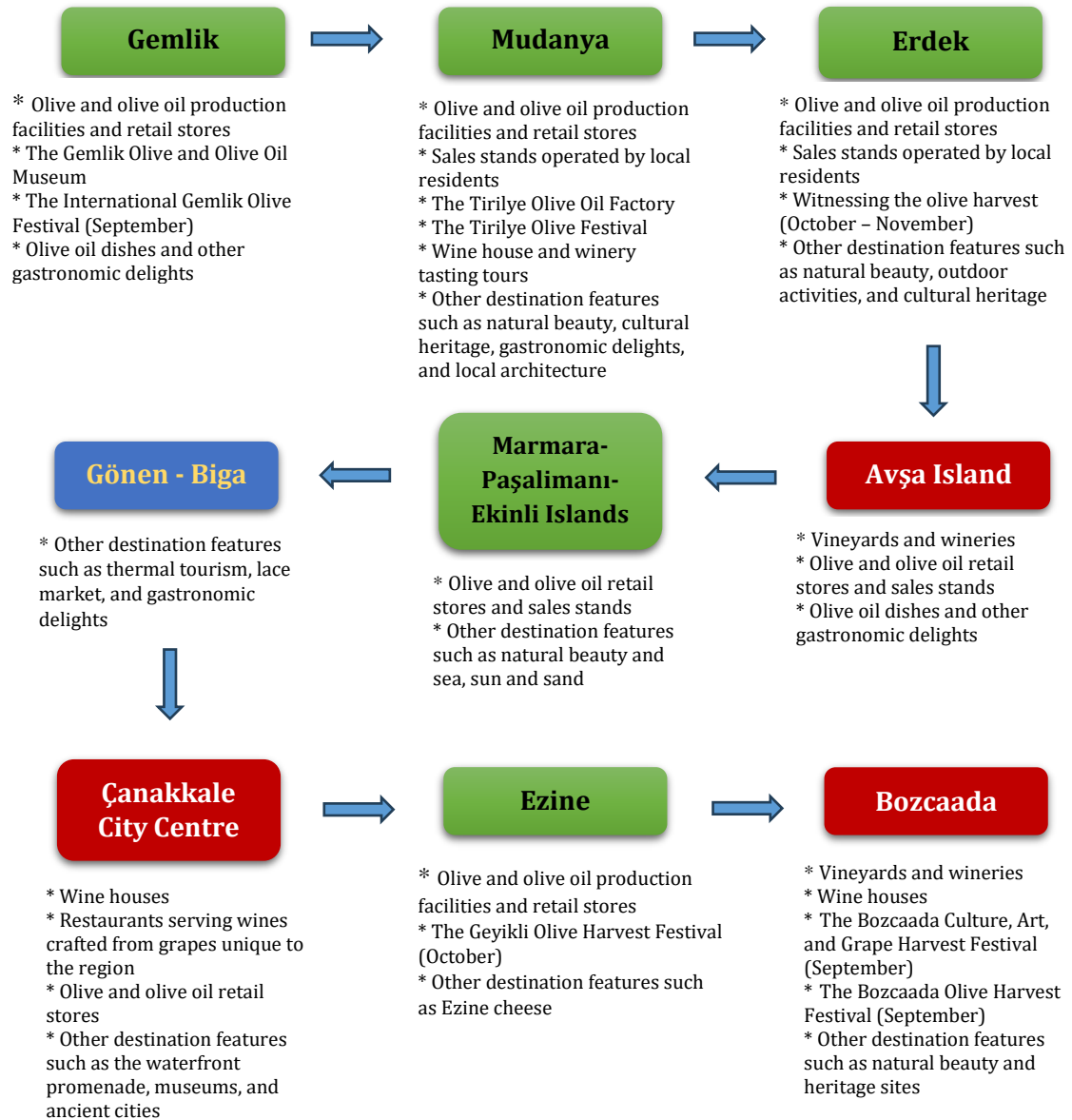


Figure 2. Oleo Tourism and Wine Tourism Themed Route. Source: Own elaboration.

Figure 2 depicts the suggested route with a theme centred around oleo tourism and wine tourism in the Olive Corridor of South Marmara. The green-shaded regions in the diagram signify destinations boasting a greater variety of products associated with oleo tourism, whereas the red-shaded areas showcase destinations that stand out in wine tourism. Furthermore, other tourist attractions offered by these destinations (such as natural, historical, cultural, etc.) are also indicated. Tour operators have the flexibility to develop various package tour alternatives along this route, concentrating solely on oleo tourism or wine tourism, or accommodating both types of tourism.

7. CONCLUSION

Within the framework of the Turkey Tourism Strategy 2023, a variety of destinations known for their cultural richness have been consolidated under the title "The Olive Corridor of South Marmara", in line with the action plan released in 2007, to support economic development objectives. The Olive Corridor of South Marmara is a promising and distinctively culturally rich tourist destination. It provides an excellent chance to commemorate and display the region's deep-rooted heritage in olive cultivation and wine production.

The findings outlined in this route for oleo tourism and wine tourism along the Olive Corridor of South Marmara provide a diverse range of options for travellers in pursuit of exceptional cultural and gastronomic adventures. Visitors have the opportunity to delve into the historical aspects of olive cultivation and the art of producing olive oil. They can taste a diverse range of olives and olive oils, as well as take part in interactive activities such as participating in olive harvesting and crafting olive oil soap. Furthermore, the inclusion of wine tourism brings an extra dimension of cultural wealth with its vineyards, wineries, and the festivities dedicated to wine. Festivals like the International Gemlik Olive Festival, Tirilye Olive Festival, Geyikli Olive Harvest Festival, and Bozcaada Culture, Art, and Grape Harvest Festival allow tourists to fully engage in local customs, partake in competitions, attend workshops, and enjoy various forms of entertainment. These occasions can serve as the pinnacle of the tour, offering an exceptional and memorable experience.

The suggested route along the Olive Corridor of South Marmara guides travellers across a range of landscapes, spanning from coastal towns to islands. This rich variety opens up possibilities for an array of outdoor experiences, including trips to the beach, exploration of natural wonders, and visits to cultural heritage sites like ancient cities and historical landmarks. Oleo tourists and wine tourists both desire to immerse themselves in the entirety of a destination, going beyond just experiencing the core oil and wine products (Büyük & Can, 2020; Dancausa-Millan et al., 2022; Festa et al., 2020; Getz & Brown, 2006; Murgado, 2013; Murgado-Armenteros et al., 2021; Sparks, 2007). It is clear that the Olive Corridor of South Marmara holds significant promise when considering these supplementary elements.

The route holds significant promise for both oleo tourism and wine tourism. However, it's evident that there is a requirement to emphasize greater diversity in tourism products. As highlighted by Pulido-Fernandez et al. (2019), olive oil mills play a crucial role in oleo tourism. By collaborating with the current oil mills along the route these mills can be seamlessly incorporated into the organized tours. Nevertheless, there are deficiencies in the route, particularly in the conversion of historical factories into olive oil museums, and in the overall development of olive oil museum-related products. Apart from the newly established olive oil museum in the Gemlik district, there are no olive oil museums in any of the destinations along the route that prominently feature olives and olive oil. In the Ayvacık district of Çanakkale, there is the Adatepe Olive Oil Museum, which is one of three olive oil museums registered with the International Olive Council and holds the distinction of being Türkiye's first olive oil museum. However, it's worth noting that the Ayvacık district has not been incorporated into the Olive Corridor South Marmara. The historical olive oil factory in

Mudanya should be restored and converted into an olive oil museum, as suggested by Acar Bilgin (2015). Additionally, the number of olive and wine festivals along the corridor should be increased, and their scope should be expanded. The Olive Corridor of South Marmara should host wine and olive oil production fairs.

It is crucial to emphasize that collaborations are of paramount significance in advancing oleo tourism and wine tourism and in fully harnessing the economic benefits associated with these two types of tourism (Alonso & Northcote, 2010; Arıkan Saltık & Çeken, 2017; D'auria et al., 2020; Telfer, 2001). Ministries, development agencies, and local authorities should collaborate with producers, educational institutions, non-governmental organizations, and tourism establishments in the corridor to enhance the potential and sustainability of oleo tourism and wine tourism in the region. Government support and incentives should be provided to encourage initiatives in the Olive Corridor of South Marmara. Tourism establishments operating in the region should also negotiate agreements with national and international tour operators for tours within the Olive Corridor of South Marmara. Olive and wine producers should be supported in marketing efforts by local authorities and tourism establishments in the region.

Local residents play a significant role as key stakeholders in both types of tourism (Campón-Cerro et al., 2017; Kastenholz et al., 2023). As many destinations along the route are already tourist destinations, the local population in these areas is relatively aware of the benefits of tourism, and they are not unfamiliar with tourism. However, in the context of two niche markets, oleo tourism and wine tourism, it is essential to organize various activities such as seminars and courses for the local residents and producers. Collaborations with universities in the region can be a valuable approach for these initiatives. Furthermore, introducing programs related to olive cultivation and viticulture in vocational schools associated with universities in the region can significantly enhance awareness in this particular context.

This study was conducted to evaluate the potential of oleo tourism and wine tourism in the Olive Corridor of South Marmara, one of the seven thematic tourism development corridors proposed in the action plan prepared in 2007, within the framework of the Türkiye Tourism Strategy 2023. The proposed route in this study sheds light on the oleo tourism and wine tourism potential in the Olive Corridor of South Marmara, which has not been addressed with a holistic approach to date. Collaborations, support mechanisms, promotional efforts, and a sustainable tourism approach can all contribute to fostering tourism development along this corridor.

The most significant limitation of this study is that it proposes a route based solely on the potential within the corridor without relying on field research. However, this exploratory research can provide valuable insights for future studies. Future research could involve conducting studies on the feasibility of this route by seeking the perspectives of destination marketing organizations and tour operators. Furthermore, quantitative or qualitative studies can be conducted on topics related to promotion and marketing activities, challenges faced by producers, and the experiences of tourists in the Olive Corridor of South Marmara regarding oleo tourism and wine tourism.

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