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Nelson Barber, Associate Professor of Hospitality, WSBE, travels to Italy

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Nelson Barber

Associate Professor of Hospitality - Whittemore School of Business and Economics

Professor Barber traveled to Sicily, Italy, in June 2010 to present a conference paper at the annual meeting of the European Association of Wine Economists held at the Università di Palermo.



Nelson Barber at the entrance to the Aula Magna G.P. Ballatore Conference Hall, Università di Palermo

I travelled to the Università di Palermo in June to present a paper at the Enometrics XVII conference, titled "From Under the Shadows: Developing Awareness in a Conventional Market with a Product Less Recognized." This annual scholarly meeting of the VDQS chapter of the European Association of Wine Economists represents all European specialists and noted world specialists about wine production, economics and consumer marketing. The conference took place in Palermo Italy.

This is my third annual presentation at this association, which is generally held throughout Europe. The conference is always an exciting adventure for me. The research presented is very professional and topics related to current industry and market concerns. Although I was the only consumer marketing professor among an international group of economists who used a lot more econometric data about wine production and distribution, over the last three years, more presentations are directed to a better understanding of the influence consumer behavior has on wine production and distribution. This fits very well into my research and has allowed me to garner many international contacts for research collaboration. For example, my paper dealt with small region equity and consumer preferences, taking a complete marketing perspective. There is some discussion whether wines produced in sub-regions can ever become "conventional" and be considered as seriously as the larger country, state or popular regions suggesting that strong marketing leadership is needed.

It has been acknowledged effective marketing communications need to recognize the relationship between a product and the consumption values or benefits consumers seek. Previous research has examined wine producing countries (e.g. France, Italy) rather than specific sub-regions (Burgundy or Chianti). To explore these issues further it is necessary to gain a better understanding of consumer perceptions of the dimensions of sub-region wine identity and to determine if perceptions of these sub-regions are similar to perceptions of other sub-regional wine regions. At the conference two other papers "Is Region of Origin a Valuable Cue for the Consumer?" and "Consumption and Production of Wine: Territorial Differences" considered the region of origin and consumer perceptions from an economic perspective. Our work dovetailed in such a way we are now considering future collaborative studies. Finally as a member of the scientific committee I had the pleasure and honor of reviewing many of the papers and meeting the presenters to discuss their work.

The conference featured many events, such as a Sicilian wine tasting by Dottressa Giovanni Giardina the President of the ONAV Sicilia Organization Nazionale Assaggiatori di Vino and Olive Oil tastings sponsored by such companies as Azienda Agricola Lombardo. The closing dinner was held in the beautiful Palermo Botanical Gardens surrounded by luscious and exotic plants and trees. Many new professional contacts were made and I reaffirmed many prior acquaintances at the conference.

My participation in the conference was made possible by the Department of Hospitality and CIE travel grants, and I am grateful that even in these tough economic times, UNH continues to fund its faculty's participation in international scholarly meetings and research.



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