

# Importance–performance analysis of olive oil tourism activities: Differences between national and international tourists

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## Abstract

Olive oil tourism offers enormous potential in rural areas where extra virgin olive oil is produced. This sector is characterized by the high seasonality of its economic activity (from November to February), which generates huge inequalities between rural and urban areas, leading to high rates of unemployment and depopulation due to the lack of stable work throughout the year. The set of activities that revolve around olive oil tourism help to structure the offer and generate satisfaction with the service. This could generate a constant flow of income throughout the year and complement agricultural activity, thus reducing the seasonality problems mentioned above. In this respect, the configuration of these olive oil tourism activities represents a challenge from the supply-side perspective, especially if we take into account the differences that may arise between different groups of tourists. This article seeks to analyse and structure the main olive oil tourism activities using Importance-Performance (I-P) analysis in relation to national and international tourists' satisfaction. The aim is to select and structure the key activities in the supply of olive oil tourism, and determine which need to be improved in order to offer a better service. These key activities differ between the two study target audiences, where a higher requirement is observed on the part of international tourists, so a series of strategies are recommended to help the management of these destinations.

## Keywords

Importance-performance analysis, olive oil tourism, international tourism, national tourism, tourist marketing

## Introduction

Olive oil tourism is as an activity that offers major potential for developing tourism in rural areas where olive oil is produced. Among the positive effects generated by olive oil tourism, rural olive oil producing areas and the companies involved now have a motivation to create new tourism products that can be marketed under this type of tourism. In this way, these areas, which for years have been fully absorbed in the monoculture of the olive grove, find an

opportunity to diversify their economy by developing a unique tourist destination notable for activities such as visiting olive groves, taking part in harvesting the olives, visiting an oil mill, interpretation center or museum, and doing tastings and food pairings (Cañero et al., 2015).

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Thus, olive oil tourism is a hugely important element linked to agricultural activities, whose ties to the local territory draw in olive oil tourists, enrich the experience of these consumers and promote local culture as a distinguishing feature (Connell, 2005; Kivela and Crotts, 2016).

From a scientific standpoint, the study of olive oil tourism underscores the fact that this activity is still in its early stages, so there is a marked lack of literature on this subject (Hernández-Mogollón et al., 2019; Moral Cuadra et al., 2014). Most of the scientific studies of olive oil tourism have focused on the product offering (Alonso and Krasjsic, 2013; Alonso and Northcote, 2010; Millán-Vázquez de la Torre et al., 2017) although they are notable for being superficial and exploratory without any in-depth examination of the development of olive oil tourism activities and experiences, or for focusing on the role of these activities as a complement to agricultural work (Hernández-Mogollón et al., 2019).

One of the most relevant issues for many companies in the tourism sector is understanding how the management of their services is valued by their customers (Oh, 2001), measured through customer experience as the subjective personal reactions and feelings associated with tourism activities (Chen and Chen, 2010). In a market saturated with largely undifferentiated tourist products, the success of olive oil tourism will depend on the ability to design a product offering that provides value to the tourist. Furthermore, it is especially interesting to develop these activities in a post-COVID society, in which tourists are demanding safe, tailored experiences (Murgado-Armenteros et al., 2021). Thus, the objective of this research is to expand the knowledge base on this type of tourism, especially from the point of view of the appropriateness of the product offering, as suggested by some leading authors in this field (Pulido-Fernández et al., 2021). On the other hand, the origin of the tourists will also be taken into account, as their knowledge and motivation may differ and thus affect their perception of the activities they are going to carry out. (Oplanić and Čop, 2020).

To that end, an Importance-Performance (I-P henceforth) analysis is applied to identify the key activities in this sector and evaluate the performance of the companies therein. By so doing, the aim is to present a series of suggestions that can help with the management and promotion of this type of tourism, taking into account both national and international tourists. The conclusion is that international tourists differ completely not only

in the importance of the activities they carry out in an olive oil tourism destination, but also in the satisfaction they derive from them, so different strategies must be established for each stakeholder group.

## Theoretical framework

### *Importance of olive oil tourism in olive oil producing areas*

The term olive oil tourism was coined in the 1980s in relation to the transformation of traditional factories into other business models that were more open and involved direct contact with the consumer. The original concept referred to *farm tourism* but was later expanded to cover the need for marketing and specification of olive oil in the European countries of the Mediterranean basin, Australia, the United States and southern cone countries such as Argentina and Uruguay (Millán-Vázquez de la Torre et al., 2017; Orgaz Agüera et al., 2017).

Olive oil tourism can be defined as a set of tourist activities that revolve around olive oil. They include multiple rural leisure activities such as visits to olive groves and mills, olive oil tasting sessions and samplings of traditional regional dishes featuring olive oil, combined with other rural, cultural, gastronomic, urban or nature-based activities that allow the visitor to engage with the environment of the region in question (Murgado, 2013; Ortega and Parrilla, 2021).

The rise of this type of tourism has also been reflected in studies conducted at the international level (Campón-Cerro et al., 2022; Hernández-Mogollón et al., 2019; Ruiz Guerra et al., 2011). Some studies have focused on studying the potential of olive oil tourism; many of them are focused on Spain—more specifically, Andalusia (Murgado, 2013)—as well as other countries such as Australia, Italy, Croatia, Turkey, Greece, Portugal and Argentina, as can be seen in the summary in Table 1. This table presents the main studies from around the world relating to the potential of olive oil tourism in terms of the product offering and its uptake in olive oil producing areas. However, there is a notable lack of studies on certain countries that play a major role in the production and consumption of olive oil, such as Tunisia, Morocco or Syria.

In short, the review of the literature on the product offering reflects the need for further research on olive oil tourism, which is

**Table 1.** Key olive oil tourism initiatives around the world.

Authors	Countries	Description
Ruiz Guerra et al. (2011)	Spain	A study of 15 countries to investigate the expected degree of acceptance of olive oil tourism activities in the Spanish olive oil industry.
Hernández-Mogollón et al. (2019)	Spain	This study assesses the state of the art of olive oil tourism from different perspectives, highlighting the potential of this activity. This study constitutes a bibliographic reference on olive oil tourism at an international level
Calzati and De Salvo (2017)	Italy	An analysis of the demand for olive oil tourism products, focusing on thematic events as successful strategies for olive producing areas in Umbria (Italy).
Marchini et al. (2016)	Italy	This study examines the factors that determine the success of olive oil tourism in the Italian region of Umbria. The results are relevant for the management of olive oil tourism and the Italian gastronomic industry.
Sabbatini et al. (2016)	Greece	This study points to olive oil tourism in Greece as one of the main tourist destinations driving the choice of olive oil in tourist activities. It explores the olive oil preferences of tourists on the island of Crete and profiles the tourist who decides to buy olive oil, demonstrating that the country of origin and the time spent in the destination are the most influential factors.
Kizos and Vakoufaris (2011)	Greece	The study centers on the olive oil producing areas of the island of Lesbos and examines three different olive oil products as a potential tourist resource: protected geographical indication (PGI), organic and conventional olive oil.
Žužić (2014)	Croatia	Olive oil tourism is presented as an activity of special interest for the diversification and qualification of the tourism sector in the region of Istria (Croatia).
Čehić et al. (2020)	Croatia	The authors identified the requirements for the development of olive oil tourism and the improvement of the product offering in Croatia. They are as follows: mills open to visitors, museums and interpretation centers dedicated to olive oil, olive farms open to visitors, protected geographical indications, olive groves, events/fairs dedicated to olive oil, olive oil routes and shops specializing in olive oil.
Arikan-Saltik (2017)	Turkey	An examination of the critical success factors in olive oil tourism and the basic characteristics of an olive oil tourism company, through a study in the rural olive oil producing areas of Turkey.
(Cankül and Ezenel, 2018)	Turkey	This study represents an opportunity for Turkish producers to serve a new market segment and to gain economic benefits.
(Arikan Saltik and Çeken, 2018).	Turkey	This study finds the support of local governments, local people and non-governmental organizations is needed to ensure success in the implementation of olive oil tourism
Alonso (2010)	Australia	This paper analyses the potential of olive oil tourism and identifies marketing problems and external competition as the main weakness and threat, respectively.
Alonso and Northcote (2010)	Australia	The authors highlight producers' interest in this tourist activity, which represents an alternative way to market their products and boost their income, as well as being beneficial for rural areas
Felgueiras et al. (2021)	Portugal	The aim of this study is to identify the potential for olive oil tourism in the municipality of Mirandela, Portugal, linked to the tourist resources in the largest Portuguese olive producing area, in the region of Trás-os-Montes
Almeida and Silveira (2021)	Portugal	The study focuses on identifying the potential for olive oil tourism in Portugal through the elements that lay the bases for developing this activity, and contextualizing the current offer in that country
Elias and Barbero (2017)	Argentina	This study examines the potential for olive oil tourism as a tourist activity that provides a boost to traditional economic activities and enhances the value of local cultural features, while also providing genuine employment options in rural areas and a possibility for producers to diversify their income.

Source: own elaboration.

**Table 2.** Main olive oil tourism activities.

Activity	Description
Guided tours	Learning about the olive oil production process through visits to olive mills, olive presses, and farmhouses. Visiting olive oil museums or olive groves and viewing olive grove landscapes, most notably with visits to ancient olive groves.
Active olive oil tourism	Active participation in olive oil production processes.
Buying local products	Shopping in specialized shops selling olive oil and buying other products derived from olive oil.
Taking part in fairs and social and experiential events	Taking part in olive oil festivals and fairs related to olive oil production
Visiting the cultural, natural and social attractions of the area	Learning about the different popular traditions linked to the cultivation of olive trees.
Sampling the cuisine	Engaging in gastronomic activities with olive oil as the main attraction: oil tastings.
Tourist routes in the area	Tourist routes linked to the Designations of Origin of Olive Oil.
Knowledge and experience	Learning about the characteristics of other industries related to olives and olive oil (cosmetics, preserves, wood crafts, marinated olives, etc.)

Source: Own elaboration based on Middleton and Clarke (2001) and Buhalis (2003) adapted to olive oil tourism.

understandable given that this is a growing tourist activity (Pulido-Fernández et al., 2021). An important body of literature is focused on Spain, the leading producer of olive oil, and particularly the region of Andalusia. This is to be expected given that this area is the world's leading producer of olive oil. However, despite Mediterranean countries' legacy of extra virgin olive oil (EVOO), it should be noted that other regions of the world are contributing strongly to the development of this type of tourism, seeking to use this specialization to position themselves in international tourism markets (Hernández-Mogollón et al., 2019).

To sum up, these studies have addressed different issues such as the current state of olive oil tourism, specific olive oil tourism experiences, the success of the destinations and/or regions where this activity is on offer, and the relationship between olive oil tourism and other elements such as cuisine, culture, heritage, nature and local development. The common thread running through these studies is that they all highlight the importance of and potential offered by olive oil tourism.

### *Configuration of activities related to olive oil tourism*

In the scientific literature, the configuration of tourist activities is key to structuring tourist experiences. Buhalis (2003) defines five key components in each destination: the tourist

attractions on offer (based on their quality and appeal, their nature and their cultural and historical potential); the accessibility of auxiliary services (infrastructure enabling access to services, services used by the local population, telecommunications etc.); comfort and convenience of the destination (the structures and infrastructures that allow the tourist to enjoy the tourist attractions, such as hotels, cultural facilities like museums and sports centers); products available in the destination (the configuration understood as a tourism product in the destination accompanied by a set of activities that shape the tourism product); and finally, the activities (those derived from the tourist product configured in the destination).

Middleton and Clarke (2001) identify a series of factors that influence tourism activity. They can be summarized as follows: nature-based, cultural and social tourist attractions; the variety and structure of tourist accommodation; gastronomy; social and experiential events; availability of means of transport, and accessibility to the tourist destination; availability and quality of the tourist destination; relations with the local population; the image of the tourist destination; price levels offered by the tourist destination; safety and cleanliness, sustainability of the tourist destination; saturation of the destination; and additional infrastructure.

In line with the configuration of tourist activities (Buhalis, 2003) and the factors that influence them (Middleton and Clarke, 2001), we can clearly observe a number of tourism activities

related to olive oil tourism that have already been identified. Through these activities, the visitor can gain an in-depth understanding of tourist destinations as they relate to the culture of olive oil (Alonso and Krasjsic, 2013). Table 2 categorizes the activities highlighted in the scientific literature that refer to olive oil tourism.

In line with this approach, and following Murgado (2013), the design of the olive oil tourism product offering can be represented through a model of concentric circles comprising different activities and experiential components summarized as follows: visiting the mill, doing an olive oil tasting, buying olive oil, visiting speciality olive oil shops, visiting museums, fairs and festivals related to the product, sampling the regional cuisine, viewing landscapes and olive farms, and accommodation in places related to the product (Figure 1).

### *Key activities of olive oil tourism for national and international tourism*

If we consider the latest research related to oleotourism, it focuses on adapting these activities to the behavior, motivations and characteristics of the tourist. Thus, we find how Pulido-Fernández et al. (2021) try to analyse the demand of the sector from a supply perspective. Thus, through a detailed study of the olive oil tourism supply, they try to characterize the demand for it, trying to generate an olive oil tourist profile with which the companies in the sector can carry out different attraction and positioning actions. However, as indicated by these authors, it is still necessary to make a strong effort in the study of the consumer profile, but also a more in-depth assessment of the current olive oil tourism offer (Orgaz-Agüera et al., 2018). On the other hand, we find the study by Oplanić and Čop (2020) which tries to understand the motives that lead a tourist to carry out this type of activity. In the first place, they try to characterize these elements that make up olive oil tourism in order to check the degree of interest in them of a set of consumers. This work is a first approach to find out which are the key activities that a tourist demands when he/she is going to carry out olive oil tourism. However, it is an exploratory study based on 9 in-depth interviews.

Furthermore, with regard to previous studies and research related to the characteristics of olive oil tourists at national and international

level, Hwang and Quadri-Felitti (2022) highlight that tourists from olive oil producing countries enjoy greater knowledge and motivation to carry out this type of activity, far above that of international tourists who are not producers or from countries with an emerging crop, as they do not have such a deep-rooted knowledge. Other authors have highlighted that olive oil tourism markets present a knowledge gap in light of the growing demand for this type of tourism, while the interest of international tourism markets is growing towards this type of tourism, so studying both emerging and traditional markets contributes to the development of this tourism activity (Roselli et al., 2016).

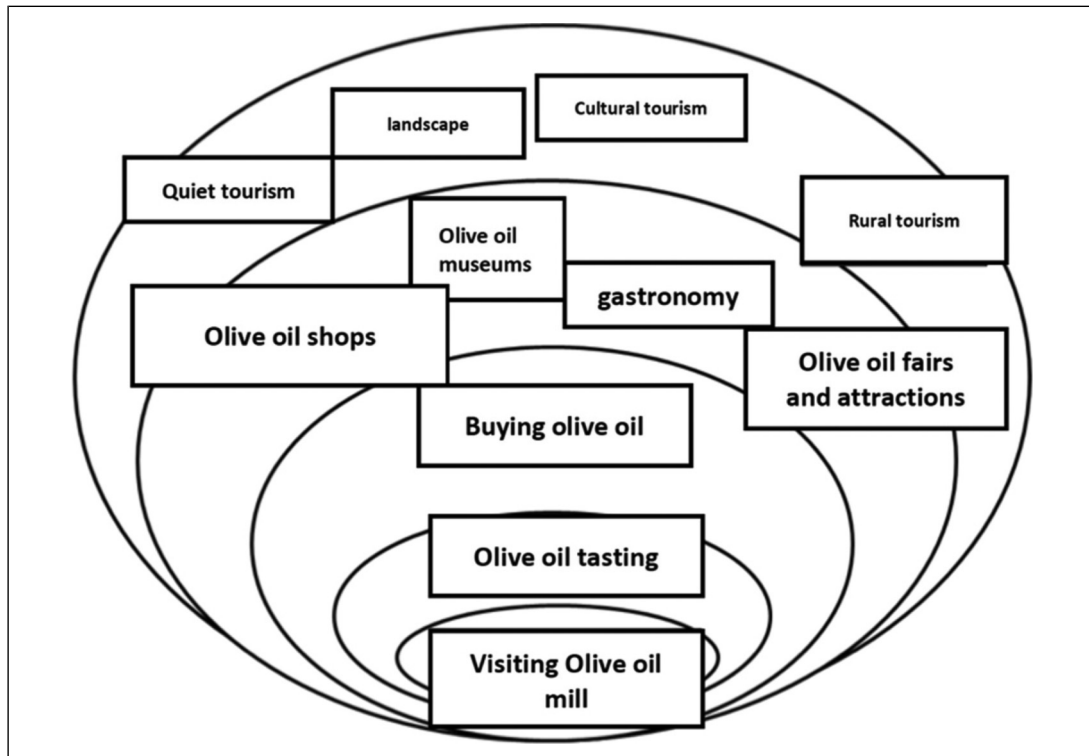
Thus, if we take into account the proposals made by Oplanić and Čop (2020) and Pulido-Fernández et al. (2021) about the need for further study of activities related to oleotourism and the differences in motivations and knowledge highlighted by Roselli et al. (2016) Hwang and Quadri-Felitti (2022), we pose the following research question:

RQ: What are the key activities of olive oil tourism for national and international tourists?

### *Importance-Performance analysis in the tourism context*

The I-P analysis is a technique that has been applied in different studies about tourism, among other areas, as it yields clear implications for management (Boley et al., 2017). This technique has been used in recent studies in the analysis of destination image for emerging markets (Atadil et al., 2017), the evaluation of sustainable tourism initiatives (Boley et al., 2017) or different tourist activities related to hotel experiences (Lo and Yeung, 2020).

Regarding its application to certain types of tourism, this technique has been widely used by researchers to learn about key aspects of the tourist offer and tourists' satisfaction with them. It provides an alternative to traditional methods of measuring satisfaction such as SERVQUAL (Parasuraman et al., 1985) and is similar to other approaches such as those proposed by Oliver (1980) or Turner and Reisinger (2003), which involve evaluating motivations/prior expectations and the level of performance in relation to them. As examples of specific types of tourism to which I-P analysis has been applied, Marasinghe et al. (2021) examine 16 attributes



**Figure 1.** Components of the experiential olive oil tourism product offering.  
Source: Murgado (2013).

of a nature-based tourism activity, while Ziegler et al. (2012) identify the key issues of a specific activity for a coastal destination and Rašovská et al. (2021) identifies the key activities in three types of regions (mountain, spa, and wine). It has also been applied to urban destinations in an attempt to explore the possible competitive advantages of the destination (Deng, 2007), rural destinations (Chiou et al., 2016) and to compare the perspectives of national and international tourists (Sörensson and von Friedrichs, 2013).

The present study is thus the first attempt to understand the key activities in this emerging type of tourism, for both national and international tourists. By so doing, we can improve our knowledge of the crucial factors for tourists and the activities that generate greater satisfaction, and consequently produce a series of recommendations for the managers of the different companies dedicated to olive oil tourism.

## Methodology

Originally developed by Martilla and James (1977) ha sido empleada en numerosas áreas relacionadas con los servicios. In these studies,

respondents are asked to rate the importance and performance of selected attributes in relation to their experiences (Lai and Hitchcock, 2015), plotting the results on a four-quadrant map. This analysis is very interesting when the strategic planning of the sector is in its initial stages (Tyrrell and Okrant, 2004), as in the case of olive oil tourism. For the development of this study, an adaptation of the steps proposed by Lai and Hitchcock (2015) has been followed:

1. Identification of key factors related to olive oil tourism (in the previous section).
2. Reliability and validity analysis.
3. Descriptive analysis of the factors.
4. Identification of the differences between the different groups through analysis of variance (ANOVA) analysis.
5. Representation and interpretation of the I-P maps.

Thus, it is first necessary to identify the key activities that take place in a given service (Djeri et al., 2018). Secondly, it is then required to carry out an analysis of the validity and reliability of the factors that can be found once the questionnaire has been completed (Lai and Hitchcock, 2015),

**Table 3.** Quadrants of the I-P matrix.

Importance/performance level of attribute	Low Performance	High Performance
High Importance	Q2 “Concentrate here”: Increase resources	Q1 “Keep up the good work”: Sustain resources
Low Importance	Q3 “Low priority”: No change in resources	Q4 “Possible Overkill”: Curtail resources?

Source: Own elaboration based on Martilla and James (1977).

**Table 4.** Profile of surveyed tourists.

	Total (%) (n = 489)	National (%) (n = 252)	International (%) (n = 237)
<i>Sociodemographic</i>			
Male	280 (57.26%)	135 (53.57%)	145 (61.18%)
Female	209 (42.74%)	117 (46.43%)	92 (38.82%)
Age (Mean/SD)	42.19 (9.81)	43.79 (10.36)	40.49 (8.91)
<i>The reason for your visit</i>			
Leisure	404 (81.62%)	211 (83.73%)	193 (81.43%)
Work	85 (17.38%)	41 (16.27%)	44 (18.57%)
<i>You have visited with</i>			
Alone	46 (9.41%)	26 (10.32%)	20 (8.43%)
Family (no children)	129 (26.38%)	67 (26.59%)	62 (26.16%)
Family (with children)	144 (29.45%)	60 (23.81)	84 (35.44%)
Work colleagues	57 (11.65%)	25 (9.92%)	32 (13.51%)
Friends	113 (23.11%)	74 (29.36%)	39 (16.46%)

Source: own elaboration.

followed by a descriptive analysis of these factors. Regarding their representation in these I-P maps, we find several approaches, from the original Scale-centered quadrants approach developed by Martilla and James (1977), to others that include certain changes to provide greater richness to the analysis, such as the means and diagonal line model developed by Rial et al. (2008). However, despite the ease of application, there are certain issues affecting this technique that must be taken into account (Azzopardi and Nash, 2013). According to the study conducted by Boley et al. (2017) the first issue is the “ceiling effect” (in line with Taplin, 2012, whereby assigning high values in importance and performance can mean that most of the attributes fall in the quadrant “Keep up the good work”). This issue can be addressed by centering the data on the mean in I-P (Azzopardi and Nash, 2013) and including a 45° diagonal line that reveals the activities for which performance surpasses importance ( $P > I$ ) (Azzopardi and Nash, 2013). These activities are worth paying attention to as they give rise to a positive disconfirmation and the customers are likely to be satisfied (Boley et al., 2017; Oliver, 1980). Thus, the

different quadrants of the I-P matrix can be shown as follows (see Table 3) (Ahmed, 2021):

### Sample and questionnaire

The questionnaire assessed 22 factors based on the original research on the quality components of a destination (Buhalis, 2003; Middleton and Clarke, 2001) and the theoretical formulations for destination quality management presented by Woods and Deegan (2003). The factors under analysis also capture the functional and technical quality of services (Gronroos, 2007) and were adapted for the case of olive oil tourism in particular. This set of factors has been divided into five groups after the corresponding factorial and reliability analysis as proposed by Lai and Hitchcock (2015), where all loadings exceed 0.6 (see Appendix 1) (Nunnally and Bernstein, 1994): visiting the mill (VISIT), actively participating in oil extraction (EXT), other activities related to olive oil tourism (OTHER), activities related to the destination being visited (DEST) and characteristics of 4S destinations<sup>1</sup> (4S). By so doing, the I-P

**Table 5.** Results from the surveys administered.

NOTATION	Total (n = 489)		National Tourists (n = 252)		Int. Tourists (n = 237)		Significance < 0.05	
	I (SD)	P (SD)	I (SD)	P (SD)	I (SD)	P (SD)	I_ANOVA	P_ANOVA
VISIT_1	3.947 (1.048)	3.721 (1.323)	4.190 (1.03)	4.008 (1.349)	3.688 (0.997)	3.419 (1.229)	0.000	0.000
VISIT_2	3.303 (1.126)	3.178 (1.480)	1.073 (1.073)	3.273 (1.499)	3.578 (1.119)	3.111 (1.466)	0.000	0.284
VISIT_3	3.601 (1.126)	3.528 (1.488)	3.802 (1.080)	3.924 (1.355)	3.388 (1.201)	3.153 (1.514)	0.000	0.000
VISIT_4	3.654 (1.240)	3.525 (1.454)	4.071 (1.148)	4.084 (1.355)	3.211 (1.182)	2.913 (1.308)	0.000	0.000
EXTRACTION_1	3.532 (1.180)	3.445 (1.515)	3.833 (1.141)	4.046 (1.394)	3.211 (1.137)	2.880 (1.408)	0.000	0.000
EXTRACTION_2	3.256 (1.165)	3.321 (1.401)	3.266 (1.141)	3.769 (1.305)	3.245 (1.160)	2.983 (1.380)	0.841	0.000
EXTRACTION_3	3.701 (1.187)	3.521 (1.495)	4.075 (1.096)	4.187 (1.286)	3.304 (1.153)	2.851 (1.391)	0.000	0.000
EXTRACTION_4	3.078 (1.119)	3.113 (1.452)	2.984 (1.033)	3.316 (1.407)	3.177 (1.197)	2.978 (1.470)	0.058	0.025
OTHER_ACT_1	3.663 (1.249)	3.524 (1.400)	3.849 (1.201)	3.840 (1.356)	3.464 (1.271)	3.185 (1.371)	0.001	0.000
OTHER_ACT_2	3.333 (1.276)	3.183 (1.434)	3.480 (1.316)	3.643 (1.420)	3.177 (1.215)	2.700 (1.286)	0.008	0.000
OTHER_ACT_3	3.160 (1.348)	3.118 (1.379)	3.060 (1.475)	3.654 (1.207)	3.266 (1.194)	2.688 (1.360)	0.089	0.000
OTHER_ACT_4	2.722 (1.319)	2.779 (1.310)	2.202 (1.148)	2.786 (1.292)	3.274 (1.177)	2.774 (1.326)	0.000	0.932
OTHER_ACT_5	3.407 (1.224)	3.119 (1.413)	3.591 (1.148)	3.573 (1.401)	3.211 (1.275)	2.652 (1.268)	0.001	0.000
DESTINATION_1	3.450 (1.247)	3.263 (1.419)	3.607 (1.263)	3.763 (1.313)	3.283 (1.211)	2.740 (1.339)	0.004	0.000
DESTINATION_2	3.935 (1.229)	3.566 (1.542)	4.310 (1.067)	4.152 (1.350)	3.536 (1.267)	2.943 (1.490)	0.000	0.000
DESTINATION_3	3.765 (1.262)	3.476 (1.430)	4.202 (1.192)	4.083 (1.279)	3.300 (1.168)	2.821 (1.292)	0.000	0.000
DESTINATION_4	3.470 (1.256)	3.182 (1.435)	3.738 (1.276)	3.627 (1.425)	3.186 (1.171)	2.726 (1.298)	0.000	0.000
DESTINATION_5	3.519 (1.239)	3.190 (1.389)	3.770 (1.179)	3.705 (1.339)	3.253 (1.250)	2.657 (1.233)	0.000	0.000
4S_TOURISM_1	3.740 (1.238)	3.397 (1.488)	3.956 (1.158)	3.811 (1.445)	3.511 (1.281)	2.961 (1.409)	0.000	0.000
4S_TOURISM_2	3.581 (1.242)	3.499 (1.449)	3.718 (1.219)	3.719 (1.401)	3.435 (1.253)	3.266 (1.467)	0.012	0.001
4S_TOURISM_3	3.861 (1.152)	3.709 (1.379)	4.095 (1.153)	3.980 (1.335)	3.612 (1.101)	3.419 (1.370)	0.000	0.000
4S_TOURISM_4	4.092 (1.064)	3.782 (1.384)	4.242 (1.038)	3.996 (1.333)	3.932 (1.071)	3.556 (1.405)	0.001	0.000

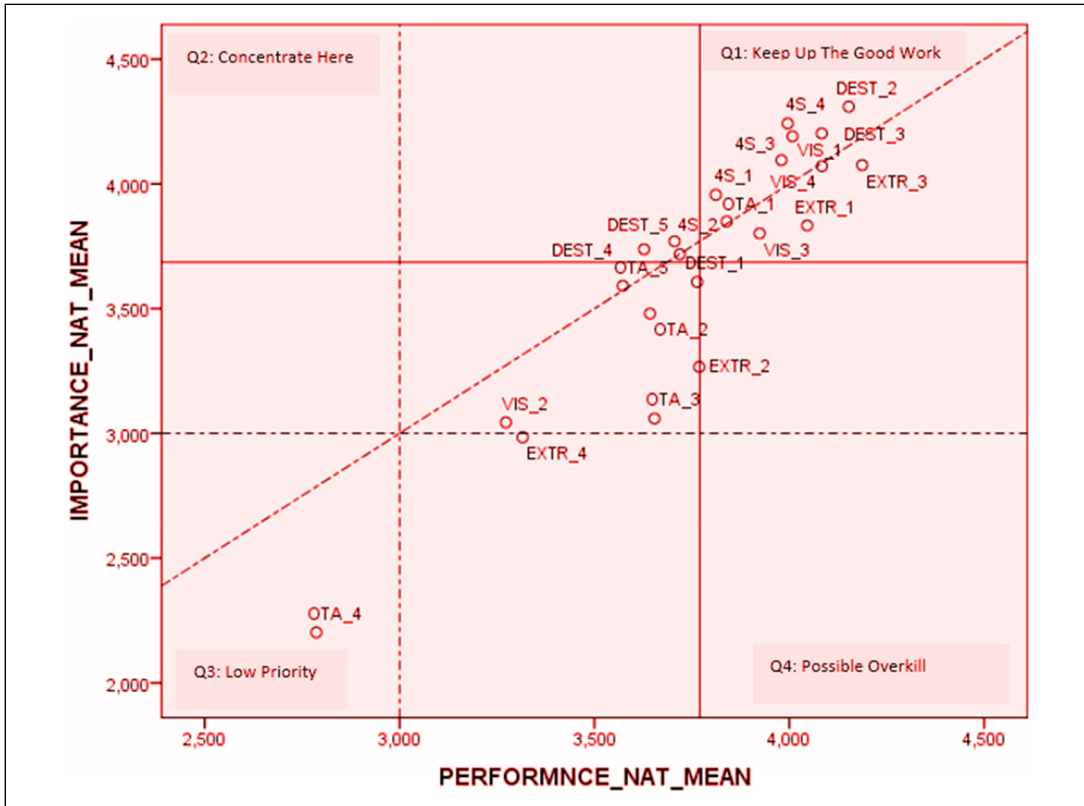
Source: own elaboration.

analysis makes an important contribution to the development of these activities.

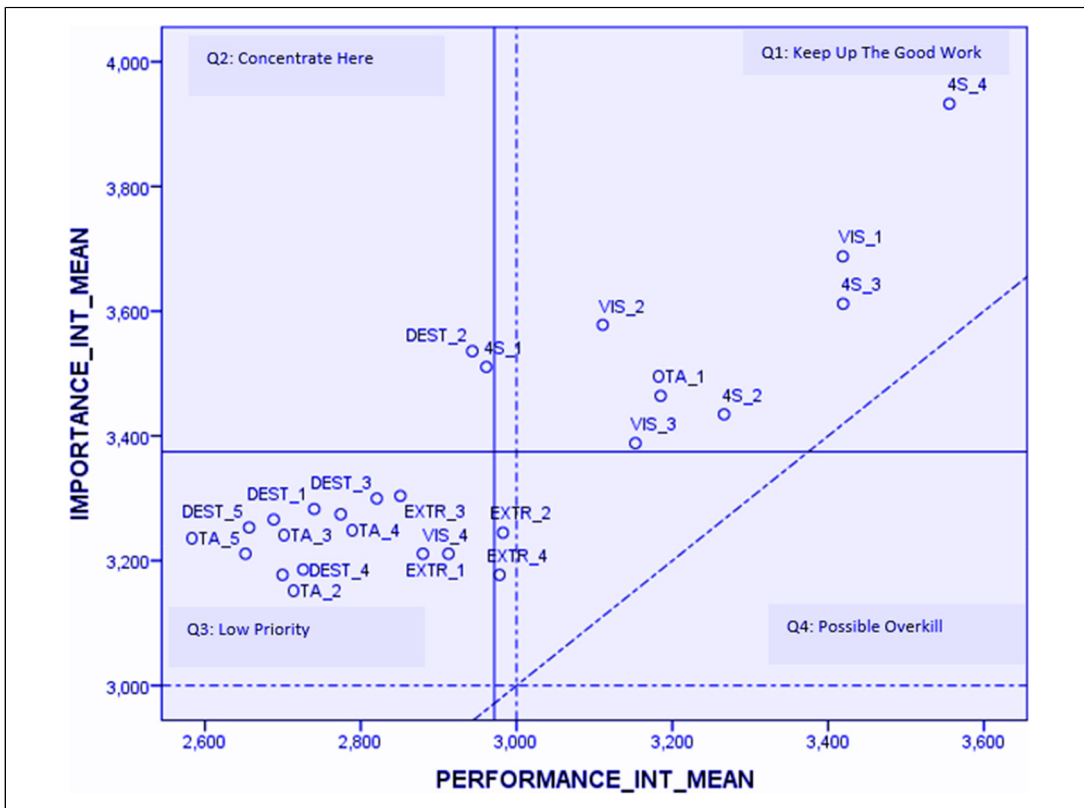
Once the questionnaire was developed, it was distributed to the different olive mills so that the tourists could respond on a scale of 1 to 5 (following the works of Lai and Hitchcock, 2015; and Djeri et al., 2018) to the importance for them of the different activities on offer and their degree

of satisfaction with them. A total of 500 tourists were interviewed during their visit to different olive mills in the province of Jaén (Spain) that offer activities related to olive oil tourism. This sample was taken in different locations in the province of Jaén where olive oil tourism activities can be carried out, so the type of sampling is by convenience. These 500 tourists were interviewed





**Figure 2.** Importance-performance matrix national tourists.  
Source: own elaboration.



**Figure 3.** Importance-performance matrix international tourists.  
Source: own elaboration.

**Table 6.** Summary of the results from the I-P matrix.

Activity	National tourism	International tourism
VISIT_1	Q1: Keep up the good work	Q1: Keep up the good work
VISIT_2	Q1: Keep up the good work	Q1: Keep up the good work
VISIT_3	Q1: Keep up the good work	Q1: Keep up the good work
VISIT_4	Q1: Keep up the good work	Q2: Concentrate here
EXTRACTION_1	Q1: Keep up the good work	Q2: Concentrate here
EXTRACTION_2	Q1: Keep up the good work	Q2: Concentrate here
EXTRACTION_3	Q1: Keep up the good work	Q2: Concentrate here
EXTRACTION_4	Border of Q1/Q4	Q2: Concentrate here
OTHER_ACT_1	Q1: Keep up the good work	Q1: Keep up the good work
OTHER_ACT_2	Q1: Keep up the good work	Q2: Concentrate here
OTHER_ACT_3	Q1: Keep up the good work	Q2: Concentrate here
OTHER_ACT_4	Q3: Low priority	Q2: Concentrate here
OTHER_ACT_5	Q1: Keep up the good work	Q2: Concentrate here
DESTINATION_1	Q1: Keep up the good work	Q2: Concentrate here
DESTINATION_2	Q1: Keep up the good work	Q2: Concentrate here
DESTINATION_3	Q1: Keep up the good work	Q2: Concentrate here
DESTINATION_4	Q1: Keep up the good work	Q2: Concentrate here
DESTINATION_5	Q1: Keep up the good work	Q2: Concentrate here
4S_TOURISM_1	Q1: Keep up the good work	Q2: Concentrate here
4S_TOURISM_2	Q1: Keep up the good work	Q1: Keep up the good work
4S_TOURISM_3	Q1: Keep up the good work	Q1: Keep up the good work
4S_TOURISM_4	Q1: Keep up the good work	Q1: Keep up the good work

Source: own elaboration.

between September 2021 and January 2022. his sample is more than sufficient to ensure the reliability and representativeness of the study, as we have 22 items, which would require about 300 respondents (Lai and Hitchcock, 2015). Two questionnaires were designed, one in English for international tourists and one in Spanish for domestic tourists. Eleven responses were discarded because of errors, leaving a final sample of 489 tourists, of which 252 (51.53%) were domestic tourists and the remaining 237 (48.47%) were international tourists from central Europe (40%), the Gulf states (25%), the UK (15%), North America (10%), South America (5%) and Asia (5%). In Table 4 we can see that 57.26% the tourists who completed the survey were men, the average age of the sample of tourists was 42.19 years old, their main reason for the trip was leisure (81.6%) and they were traveling in the company of family members (55%).

## Results

In Table 5, we analyse the results obtained in the surveys administered in different olive oil tourism locations. The mean importance that tourists assign to the activities in the analysed destination is 3.58 and the mean performance of these activities is 3.41. Looking at the mean importance

for national tourists, it stands at 3.68, with performance at 3.77. The corresponding scores for international tourists are 3.37 and 2.97, respectively. An ANOVA analysis is then carried out for the I and P of each of the activities. This analysis is used to check whether in all cases the mean scores for the activities differ (either in I, in P or in both) meaning it would not make sense to carry out a common cross-hair selection for the two groups of tourists based on the mean of the total. As can be seen in Table 5, practically all activities differ in their importance or performance, with no activity obtaining the same average for both evaluations in the different groups of tourists. We also check for a difference between the variances of the two groups of tourists (p-value Importance Box's M=0.00; p-value Performance Box's M=0.00) and find this assumption is met (Hair, 2009), so we can continue with the elaboration of the I-P matrix differentiating between these two typologies of tourists.

### *I-P matrix for national and international oleotourists*

Each of the 22 activities assessed by the tourists were included in their corresponding I-P matrix (Figure 2, in red, national; Figure 3, in blue,

international) to analyse the decisions to be made and the possible communication strategies aimed at each of the different groups of tourists under study. Looking first at the I-P matrix for national tourism (Figure 2), we can see that most of the activities are located in the first quadrant (Keep Up the Good Work). However, it can be seen that the majority of these activities are above the diagonal, suggesting a failure to entirely fulfil domestic tourists' expectations of certain activities, primarily those related to 4S tourism, the visit to the mill and the destination. Conversely, it is the activities related to the milling and extraction of olive oil that give these tourists greater satisfaction relative to the importance previously assigned, along with other activities that can be done in the destination (rural tourism, for example). The only two activities that lie outside this quadrant are OTA4 (Sports tourism (water sports, climbing...)) which is located in the third quadrant (Low priority) and Extr\_4 (Milling and producing the olive oil myself), located in "Possible overkill". The actions to be undertaken in relation to the different activities will be analysed in the Discussion and Conclusion section.

Turning now to the I-P matrix for international tourism (Figure 3), the picture that emerges is very different from that of national tourism. While in the previous matrix, most of the activities were located in the first quadrant, in this one the set of activities needed for international tourists to have a fully satisfactory tourist experience are clearly distinguished. These activities, located in Q1, are the activities related to the visit to the mill and those related to 4S tourism, with the safety of the tourism and visiting other cultural attractions in the area (OTA1) being particularly worth noting. The rest of the activities are in the second quadrant (Q2: Concentrate here), meaning that despite being of some importance to international tourists, they do not register high levels of satisfaction. Notable in this quadrant is the importance of activities such as Getting away from mass tourism (4S1) and finding out about and tasting the local cuisine (DEST2): these are the activities that require special attention. As with the previous matrix, the possible strategies to follow will be analysed in the next section.

## Discussion

This article is in line with the contributions of numerous authors who use an I-P matrix to analyse the key factors of a certain type of

tourism (e.g., Marasinghe et al., 2021; Matzler et al. 2003, Ziegler et al., 2012), differentiating between national and foreign tourists (Sörensson and von Friedrichs, 2013). This approach allows us not only to determine the key factors of a type of tourism but also to identify those activities that do not entirely satisfy tourists or meet their expectations (Boley et al., 2017). Given the relevance of this emerging type of tourism, mainly in the countries of the Mediterranean basin and in olive oil producing areas worldwide (Hernández-Mogollón et al., 2019), this initial attempt to identify the key activities of olive oil tourism is intended as a starting point: drawing on this research, similar studies can be conducted to help stakeholders gain a better understanding of the activities to which they must dedicate more resources in order to improve the olive oil tourism experience. This will allow them to formulate a product offering that is more competitive and tailored to meet the demands of the olive oil tourist Table 6 presents a summary of the different quadrants in which the activities related to oil tourism are located.

Regarding the main academic implications that can be drawn from the results, the first is the clear difference between the I-P matrix for national tourists (Figure 2 in red) and the one for international tourists (Figure 3 in blue). While national tourists assign greater importance to the activities related to visiting the mill (VISIT), with such activities meeting their expectations, international tourists assign less importance and their prior expectations are not met, despite the fact these activities are mostly in the first quadrant. This may be because foreign tourists are seeking out a more exclusive experience, and attach particular importance to a safe destination (4S4) away from mass tourism (4S1). On the other hand, both groups of tourists assigned a high degree of importance to the relationship between 4S tourism and olive oil tourism, a modality of tourism increasingly in-demand by tourists visiting Spain, particularly since the COVID-19 pandemic. Focusing on international tourists, safety is the most important factor; however, this aspect does not lie near the diagonal so it does not score high in terms of satisfaction.

The factors related to the destination (DEST) are all located in the first quadrant for domestic tourists, near the diagonal, which indicates that the level of performance achieved is adequate given the level of importance indicated by these

tourists. For international tourists, it is the activity DEST2 (Finding out about and tasting the local cuisine) that merits special attention since it scores very high on the importance scale and is placed in Q2 (concentrate here).

The activities related to the extraction and milling of olive oil (EXTR) are, together with other activities (OTA), the ones that are assigned the least importance by the two groups. If we analyse the I-P matrix of national tourists, we see how these two groups of activities lie below the diagonal, which indicates that the degree of satisfaction with the provision of these activities is higher than the importance they are assigned. For international tourists, on the other hand, performance does not exceed importance for any of these activities. Going back to the red matrix (national tourists) we see how OTA4 (Sports tourism (water sports, climbing...)) is the only activity in Q3 (low priority). This may be due to the profile of the middle-aged tourist engaging in olive oil tourism activities, who may be less interested in doing this type of activity (Pomfret and Bramwell, 2016).

With this, we have not only tried to characterize the key activities of this incipient typology of tourism, as suggested by some of the most important authors in this field such as Pulido-Fernández et al. (2021), but we have also been able to verify how international tourists have different perceptions not only with respect to the motivation to carry out different activities within this typology of tourism, as suggested by authors such as Roselli et al. (2016) and it has been observed that the development of these activities does not meet the expectations of international tourists, so the following section will suggest a series of strategies to try to partially solve this problem.

## Conclusions

First of all, we would like to highlight the theoretical implications that have been achieved with this work and which represent a breakthrough in the literature on olive oil tourism. Firstly, a classification of the 22 key activities into 5 major groups has been proposed, through an analysis of the literature which has been compared with the corresponding reliability analyses of the factors found. This can help the different managers of these destinations to carry out differentiated strategies for each of these sets of activities. Secondly, it has been found that there are huge differences both in the importance given

by national tourists and in the satisfaction achieved compared to international tourists. For this reason, a series of differentiated strategies are proposed for each of these groups.

After analysing both matrices, we can propose a series of implications for the management of this type of destination. Regarding domestic tourists, it can be seen that they value this type of tourism more than foreign tourists do. For the former, the activities related to visiting the mill and those related to the destination are very important and achieve high satisfaction scores. Therefore, comprehensive tour packages should be offered in an attempt to extend the average stay in these destinations and to enhance satisfaction by complementing this activity with others related to cultural or gastronomic tourism. This could solve some of the biggest problems faced by cultural destinations, such as the small number of overnight stays by tourists (De Menezes et al., 2008) and help improve tourists' average satisfaction with their stay (Vena-Oya et al., 2021). In turn, this may encourage recommendations and build loyalty with highly satisfied tourists (Huh et al., 2006). Another strategy would be to position these activities within the so-called 4S tourist destinations, especially within the dimensions of safe, quiet tourism, which is highly valued by domestic tourists. This would provide a competitive advantage over other, more overcrowded tourist destinations, particularly bearing in mind the current pandemic that is still seriously affecting tourism.

With respect to the strategy for the international tourist, the focus should be on offering unique, high-quality experiences, in an effort to improve the low satisfaction scores currently being registered in olive oil tourism destinations. To do so, it would be a good idea to harness the synergies between these environments and gastronomy, which is highly valued and demanded by international tourists (Gálvez et al., 2017). Moreover, as with national tourists, linking this type of tourism to 4S destinations, especially to the dimensions of safety and off-the-beaten-path tourism, would generate more interest in the international market, which tends to seek a more unconventional tourist experience. Nevertheless, it should be emphasized that the main recommendation to attract this profile of tourist is to focus on improving the services currently on offer in these destinations.

Finally, this research is not without its limitations. The first is that the study has been conducted in a single geographical area (province

of Jaén), which can offer a series of additional services that other tourist areas do not have (complementary cultural and natural product offerings, for example). It would thus be interesting to analyse key factors of olive oil tourism in other areas of interest, such as Italy. Another limitation is that not all respondents enjoyed the same activities. In an effort to address this issue, the answer option "I have not done this activity" was added to the questionnaire. That said, given the novelty of this work, an analysis of the responses of 500 national and international tourists is a good first step towards determining the key factors in this type of tourism. We would also like to propose some future lines of research. For example, it would be interesting to replicate this study in other areas where the olive oil sector is relevant. Finally, another interesting point would be to link the degree of knowledge about olive oil with the satisfaction achieved after carrying out activities related to olive oil tourism.

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#### Note

1. [https://www.hosteltur.com/comunidad/nota/022158\\_nacen-los-destinos-4s.html](https://www.hosteltur.com/comunidad/nota/022158_nacen-los-destinos-4s.html)

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**Appendix I:**

NOTATION	ACTIVITY	Cronbach alpha	Loading factors
VISIT		0.87	
VISIT_1	Visiting an olive oil mill		0.85
VISIT_2	Visiting an olive oil museum		0.91
VISIT_3	Visiting an olive grove		0.87
VISIT_4	Buying products related to olive oil culture (cosmetics, olives, chocolate, gel ...)		0.85
EXTRACTION		0.71	
EXTRACTION_1	Watching the olive oil harvest		0.75
EXTRACTION_2	Harvesting the olive oil by myself		0.69
EXTRACTION_3	Watching the olive oil production process		0.73
EXTRACTION_4	Milling and producing the olive oil myself		0.76
OTHER ACT		0.73	
OTHER_ACT_1	Visiting other cultural attractions in the area		0.65
OTHER_ACT_2	Urban tourism		0.72
OTHER_ACT_3	Other activities related to rural tourism (hiking, horse riding, visiting natural parks ...)		0.73
OTHER_ACT_4	Sports tourism (water sports, climbing ...)		0.66
OTHER_ACT_5	Being in contact with nature in an environmentally sustainable way		0.75
DESTINATION		0.85	
DESTINATION_1	Interacting with residents		0.83
DESTINATION_2	Finding out about and tasting the local gastronomy		0.86
DESTINATION_3	Enjoying a quality accommodation service		0.81
DESTINATION_4	Accessibility and adequate transportation service		0.88
DESTINATION_5	Having complete information on all the attractions of the destination before my arrival		0.81
4S TOURISM		0.89	
4S_TOURISM_1	Getting away from mass tourism		0.88
4S_TOURISM_2	Engaging in environmentally sustainable tourism		0.89
4S_TOURISM_3	Enjoying quiet tourism		0.91
4S_TOURISM_4	Safety when I enjoy this experience		0.87