

Motivation factors of tourists in the Finger Lakes Region: Keuka and Seneca wine trails

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Abstract

This paper investigates the socio-demographic factors of Keuka and Seneca winery visitors and their overall motivation factors. Although the Keuka and Seneca regions are well-known as the hotspot wine regions of the northeastern United States, they tend to take less global and national attention. Drawing from online surveys with 265 respondents, including local residents and the tourists, this paper analyzes consumer demographic profiles and consumption perceptions. Both Finger Lakes and non-Finger Lakes residents view wineries as enjoyable, comfortable, friends and family socialization places. When it comes to wine-related activities, the live music is an appealing factor for the local residents, the locality and home environment are the appealing factors

for the tourists, and both Finger Lakes and non-Finger Lakes residents find food, culinary, and wine education events as attractive wine-related activities. As this data is limited to pre-pandemic preferences of the wine consumers, it is important to consider the cultural and structural changes of the consumers through the global pandemic.

Introduction

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Although tourism is a significant economic activity for both urban and rural regions, tourism is particularly more important for rural areas in terms of increasing economic activity and the awareness to these communities.¹⁻² Wine tourism is an especially good way to support the rural areas, sustain the cultural heritage, and improve the economy;³ it offers diverse experiences and connections with unique areas. Tourists get to visit wineries, explore their vineyards and surrounding lands, and experience wine-related events and activities—wine tourism also provides links to restaurants, hotels, transportation, accommodation, festivals, and seasonal shows.⁴ What is unique about wine tourism is the fact that tourists not only visit for the specific grape or wine regions, they also seek unique experiences and activities associated with wine, such as wine education.⁴⁻⁵

Keuka wine trail is one of the main and oldest wine trails in the Finger Lakes. The Finger Lakes region is the largest wine producer on the east coast; the USA Today 10 Best Readers named Finger Lakes as the top wine region in 2019.⁶ First, Finger Lakes has a good location for the potential visitors and convenient short drive for other day trips. Second, the region is known as a suitable location for cold weather wine varieties such as Riesling, gewürztraminer, pinot noir, and cabernet franc. Third, Finger Lakes region is well known for the small-town charm.⁷ While the wineries and vineyards at Keuka Lake are highly well-known by the Finger Lakes residents, Keuka Lake wineries are a well-known hotspot for the out-of-town visitors. Despite the pioneering winemakers, wineries, and vineyards in the Keuka region of Finger Lakes, the wineries and vineyards tend to take less national and global attention and recognition.

Drawing from online surveys with 265 respondents through an online survey platform (SurveyMonkey), this paper investigates consumer perceptions and motivations from the perspectives of Finger Lakes and non-Finger Lakes residents. This paper investigates consumer perceptions about their specific visitations to the wineries and vineyards in the Keuka region. While the tourism research tends to focus on the experiences of the tourists, this paper underlines the similarities and differences between the locals and the tourists who experience the wine tasting and visitation experience. This study aims to extend our current understanding of wine tourism development by investigating multiple dimensions. First,

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Informed consent: written informed consent was obtained from a legally authorized representative(s) for anonymized participants information to be published in this article.

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it is highly significant to understand who the visitors to the Finger Lakes wineries and vineyards are through determining their demographic profiles. Second, it is important to analyze the cultural and social context of the wineries and vineyards based on the experiences of the visitors. Third, the development of wine tourism is very important and beneficial for the surrounding rural areas and serves as a vehicle for community improvement.

The context of wine tourism

In the past, wine merchants traveled from one place to another to explain and sell their products, yet today the tourists visit wineries for unique experiences.^{4(p. 111),8} As wine tourism emerged as a new segment of tourism, more scholars focused on the definition of wine tourism. Hall and Macionis⁹ define wine tourism as the visitation to vineyards, wineries, wine festivals, and wine shows for which grape wine tasting or experience attributes of the grape and wine region are primary motivation factors for visitor. The area of wine tourism is very extensive, including food, culture, hospitality, dining, and history.¹⁰ Yet, the tourists' interests are not only limited to the cellar door experience, Roberts and Sparks¹¹ define wine tourism as a lifestyle experience. The tourist has the unique opportunities of connecting their wine tasting experience with culinary and cuisine of the region, the history of the destination, the art of the region, and outdoor activities. Wine tourism is a good vehicle that the consumers feel as they are the consumers, but they can experience learning the production process and taste the regional value.

Overall, wine tourism has a distinct position of offering potential visitors both service, and experience.¹¹⁻¹² However, very little research has been done on consumer perceptions, motivations, and evaluations about their specific visitations.¹¹ According to the research of Roberts and Sparks¹¹ on consumers' overall evaluation of a visit to a wine region, the visitors' experience means more than the cellar door experiences, and the factors such as authenticity, value of money, service interactions, settings and surroundings, and product and offerings tend to shape consumers' wine visitation experiences. Authenticity is an important cultural tool that attracts the visitors, and the visitors tend to feel the "at the middle of nowhere" vibe to feel the authenticity of a winery or vineyard. Location and its surroundings matter, as the setting and atmosphere attract people. Value of money is another valuable factor that might attract people, and more consumers desire to get the value of their experience when it comes to wine tourism. As wine tourism is a lifestyle experience, more visitors are seeking personal and unique interactions rather than crowd interactions. In fact, for the visitors, the meaning of wine tourism is to be able to meet with people, learn more about the content, and have very unique conversations and interactions. Lastly, the visitors tend to look for different ways to connect with the local people and culture. Visitation to a winery means a learning opportunity on the regional history and wine for more people. People tend to enjoy the specific area, county for their personal growth. Visitation to a winery means a learning opportunity on the regional history and wine for more people.¹¹

Although each wine region, the wineries, and vineyards are socially and culturally constructed, Charters and Ali-Knight¹⁰ developed a way to measure the wine visitor groups by three factors, such as the wine lovers, wine interested, and wine novice. Wine lovers are extremely interested in wine and the wine-making process, such as the wine production, and the details on the specific grape(s) used. The group might be employed in the wine and food industry, likely to have a higher income and education levels, and probably have visited other wine regions. In addition, wine lovers tend to have higher cultural capital on wine education, read books on wine, and have previous tasting experience. Wine interested is

the population that are highly interested in wine but only visit the destination and are less likely to be interested in education aspects of wine and see the winery as a restaurant or a cultural attraction, but still excited to learn about tasting wine. Wine novices are the population that are not very familiar with the wine-making process. The significant motivation of wine novices is for general tourist experiences. While wineries are just another cultural attraction, the wine novices are highly interested in the social experience. These wineries and vineyards are just another attraction, and they may have visited other places.

Wine tourism is a supply and demand driven sector like other parts of tourism and hospitality sectors. It is highly significant to hear and interpret the voices of the consumers. The consumers view wine tourism as a personal growth experience where they can learn more about the production process, history of the region, and they want to be part of this authentic culture. The next section of this paper will provide the history of wine tourism in the Finger Lakes region, interpret visitors' experiences from a quantitative perspective, and present implications for wine tourism development.

Wine tourism development in the Finger Lakes Region

According to the article coverage by Tracy Schuhmacher¹³ in USA Today 2018 10 Best Reader's Choice, Finger Lakes is named as best wine in the region. Keuka, Seneca, Canandaigua, and Cayuga have been chosen as the best region particularly for the cool climate varieties.⁷ In fact, the Finger Lakes area has a long history of being a destination for wine tourism but recognized even more in recent years. While acts and regulations supported the small wineries and vineyards of the region, winemakers who grew up outside of New York brought the styles that might be a good fit for the Finger Lakes region and contributed to the development of wine tourism.¹⁴

The domestic wine industry began during the British settlement at Jamestown, Virginia. The farmers began planting vineyards around 1830 in Canandaigua, Keuka, Seneca, and Cayuga.¹⁵ New York's Finger Lakes Tourism Alliance⁷ states that Reverend William Bostwick planted the first vineyard in the Finger Lakes in his garden in Hammondsport, NY. During the 19th century, hybrid grapes Catawba and Isabella were imported into the United States. In his article "How it began to root of Finger Lakes wine," Cox¹⁶ stated that beginning in 1847 small shipments of grapes were sent to New York City. By 1870, the Hammondsport region had 3,000 acres, in 1879 there were 5,000 acres, and in 1889 there were 14,500 acres.¹⁶ Around 1860, the Pleasant Valley Wine Company in Hammondsport, NY became the first bonded winery, and the first wine was shipped in 1862. French Champagne makers were brought into the Pleasant Company and the region won the best sparkling wine in Europe in 1867.¹⁶ Around 1882 Taylor Company was established.⁷ Although the prohibition era slowed down ongoing winemaking, post-World War II American soldiers were deployed, and people had developed a different taste of the types and styles of wine.¹⁴ In addition, the waves of European immigration contributed to the development of wine production. Sarah Thomson's book "Finger Lakes Wine Country"¹⁵ states that Konstantin Frank from Ukraine started wineries in Keuka Lake and produced European grape varieties. Dr. Frank, an immigrant from Ukraine, saw that the area had potential to grow vinifera. Dr. Frank received his PhD in viticulture and accepted a research position at Cornell University's Geneva Experimentation Station.¹⁷ Charles Fournier, who is a French champagne maker and the president of Gold Seal, hired Dr. Frank as a consultant for vinifera vari-

eties and producing European varieties of wine.¹⁷ The lake region and climate have many advantages. During the winter, the temperature of the lakes can diminish the harsh cold, and during the summertime the lakes can cool the surrounding vineyards.¹⁸ Dr. Frank saw the advantages of the climates. He created vinifera wine cellars, which has contributed to Riesling production. Along with Dr. Frank, Charles Fournier and Hermann J. Wiemer contributed to producing varieties of the European region.¹⁸

The new waves of European immigrants created great momentum for unique grape cultivation and winemaking in the Finger Lakes region, and new regulations encouraged initiation for the small farm wineries. Governor Hugh Carey signed the farm winery act in 1976, which allowed grape growers to sell their wine directly to the public and cut fees from the small wineries.¹⁴ This act increased the number of vineyards and wineries in the region. While there were 19 wineries in 1976, there are about 409 wineries based on the data on 2016.¹⁹ The state provides deregulation for wines to be sold at events, festivals, farm markets, grocery stores, and restaurants. The state created the New York Wine and Grape foundation and under the “Uncork New York” campaign, there are more funding and research for winemaking and production. In addition, the regional wine trails were established to make the wineries more accessible to the visitors, and to encourage connections and support among wineries. The Cayuga Lake wine trail was created in 1983, the Keuka wine trail in 1985, the Seneca wine trail in 1986, and the Canandaigua wine trail in 1995.⁷ After 2011, Governor Cuomo’s cut taxes, fees, and regulations and allow to sale in wine and permit wineries to open in branch locations.²⁰ Overall, the new regulations facilitated more wineries and vineyards to open in the Finger Lakes region, and the wineries created a culture where the local wineries help each other and learn from each other. The wineries and vineyards in the Finger Lakes region do not have big winery and vineyard atmosphere, but the wineries and vineyards are well known as small, unique, and inspiring areas.²¹

Materials and Methods

The purpose of this study is to expand our understanding on the demographics and lifestyle preferences of visitors to the vineyards and wineries in the Finger Lakes region. The data for this study underlines the differences and similarities of local residents versus the tourists in terms of demographic background, their engagement in wine, wineries and vineyards, and wine-related activities. From the perspectives of the two populations (Finger Lakes residents and non-Finger Lakes residents), this study explains the wine visitation experience from the voices of the consumers and proposes potential different ways to attract the visitors into the region.

The Finger Lakes is the largest wine producing region of the east coast in the United States.²² The Finger Lakes region is known for its four wine trails, including Keuka Lake, Canandaigua Lake, Seneca Lake, and Cayuga Lake wine trails. Each of the wine trails received the trails from their own unique names. The data collection for this study is limited to the wineries and vineyards around Keuka and Seneca Lakes. Keuka Lake is selected because of its unique history of wine tourism, and Seneca Lake is selected because of its potential growth for the wine tourism industry.

The Keuka Lake trail is as old as the birth of winemaking in the United States. Keuka is a ‘Y’ shaped lake, is known as the lady of the lakes. Keuka Lake wineries have native grapes and European varieties of grapes.⁷ Keuka Lake is in a good location for

visitors. It is only one to two hours from New York state’s metropolitan areas of Buffalo, Rochester, and Syracuse, and close to the northern Pennsylvania area.²² There are 20 wineries in Keuka Lake.²³ About six of the wineries are members of the Keuka Lake wine trail.

Like Keuka Lake, Seneca Lake has a significant history for regional wine development. Seneca Lake has the deepest lake of the Finger Lakes, and is characterized by its sloping hillsides, which provide good microclimates for grape growing. Tracy Schuhmacher¹³ states that the southern part of Seneca Lake nicknamed the “Banana Belt” because the temperature is higher than the other parts of the Finger Lakes, which is another advantageous situation for grape growing. In 1882, New York state opened an agricultural experiment station on the northern end of Seneca Lake for grape breeding. The 1970s was another significant period for development in wine production, when French native Charles Fournier brought 20 acres of vinifera to the east side of the lake, and German native Hermann Wiemer brought 140 acres of vinifera to the west of side of Seneca Lake.²⁴ Meanwhile, the Farm Winery Act of 1976 expanded grape growing and wine production in the region. While the Seneca Lake trail started with two wineries in the 1970s, currently there are about 50 wineries around the Seneca Lake, and 34 of these wineries are members of the Seneca Lake trail.²⁴ The region is well known for the varieties of Riesling, pinot gris, gewürztraminer, cabernet sauvignon, merlot, and cabernet franc.²⁴

The wineries and vineyards in the Finger Lakes region are open all year long. The peak of the tourism season begins on Memorial Day weekend and goes until Labor Day weekend, with another significant tourism season during fall foliage season. From Thanksgiving season until Saint Patrick’s Day is considered the off-tourism season, when most local residents remain in the region. The sample for this study includes the Finger Lakes and non-Finger Lakes residents, as the winery visitors are not limited to the tourists’ population.

Data was collected through an online self-administrated survey system, SurveyMonkey. I decided that the online survey method is more suitable for this study because the visitors to the wineries and vineyards tend to enjoy their personal interactions at the tasting room. The online survey provides flexibility for the consumers to evaluate their experiences at the winery and vineyards. The data collection locations include fifty-one wineries and vineyards, a local coffee shop, a local restaurant, a wine bar, two hotels, and a local transportation service. Each winery received 100 postcards, local transportation service received 500 postcards, hotels received 250 postcards, and the restaurant, wine bar, and coffee shop received 100 postcards (Table 1). Overall, 6,400 recruitment postcards were dropped off, which include a QR code to the survey link for participants to complete the survey in their private time. The recruitment postcards are a creative way to recruit participants to the study but might cause a limitation. As the recruitment postcards are distributed, there is a possibility factor that some hospitality sectors might encourage more participants than the others. However, I visited the hospitality places regularly to make sure to circulate the recruitment postcards. The data collection period began in June 2019 and lasted until March 2020 to be able to capture the potential differences of off-season and on-season times. Due to the pandemic, the data collection has been suspended. In total, 265 respondents completed the survey.

The survey questionnaire begins with demographic questions such as age, gender, level of education, employment status, and residential living conditions. The second phase of the survey questionnaire involves the respondents’ interest in wine, their frequency of wine consumption, their frequency of visiting wineries, their

favorite wines and wineries, their involvement and engagement in wine-related activities such as seasonal wine-related events, food and wine pairing events, or live music events. The remaining part of survey has different sets of questions for the Finger Lakes respondents versus non-Finger Lakes respondents. The Finger Lakes respondents were asked about their hometown residency, their length of living in the area, and their primary reasons of moving to the region. The respondents were asked to rank their preferences of wine-related events such as seasonal wine events, holiday festivals and parties, and weddings at the wineries and vineyards. In addition, the respondents were asked to rank their major purpose of visiting a winery/vineyard such as to taste wine, wine club membership, buy wine, or meeting the winemaker. The non-Finger Lakes respondents were asked about their length of staying, their accommodations preferences, the primary goals of the trip, and tourism and travel experiences. Like the Finger Lakes respondents, the non-Finger Lakes respondents were asked about their preferences of wine-related events such as seasonal wine events, holiday festivals and parties, weddings at the wineries and vineyards, as well as their major purpose of visiting a winery/vineyard such as to taste wine, wine club membership, buy wine, or meeting the winemaker. The reason that the online survey questionnaire has separate sets of questions for the Finger Lakes and non-Finger Lakes residents is to interpret the differences and similarities between the respondents' connection with the community, and commitment and involvement with the wineries. The survey questionnaire has 30 questions, and the respondents spend 15 to 30 minutes to complete the survey. The survey questionnaire includes a variety of the Likert scale questions, open-ended, and closed-ended questions.

The data were analyzed using the data analysis features of the SurveyMonkey platform. The percentages and raw numbers regarding the respondents were calculated for each question using MS Excel. The SurveyMonkey system provides visual charts and tables that include the frequency, percentage, and descriptive statistics for closed-ended questions, which helps to interpret the characteristics of the data set. Open-ended questions were analyzed using SurveyMonkey's word cloud feature, which provides visual sorting and filtering options. For instance, the respondents were asked to tell their three favorite wineries/vineyards and associate them with a word. The words were sorted using a specific font and color, and the word cloud technique hid non-relevant words. The individual responses from Finger Lakes and non-Finger Lakes residents were separated to interpret their differences and similarities when analyzing consumers' motivation factors.

The sample is not representative in terms of gender and hometown residency, which makes it particularly challenging to analyze the differences and similarities between the Finger Lakes and non-Finger Lakes residents. The high majority of the survey population are females and non-Finger Lakes residents (Table 2). The recruitment postcards are given to the locations regularly, yet the survey is underrepresented by males, Finger Lakes residents, and lower-class economic backgrounds.

Profile of Finger Lakes respondents

Table 2 presents the basic demographic profiles of the respondents. The age profile of the respondents demonstrates that the high majority of the respondents are between 50 to 69 years old, with respondents older than 69 and younger than 30 being less likely to be represented in this sample. 28.97% of the respondents are in between 50-59, 29.91% of participants are 60-69, 14.95% of the respondents are between 30-39, and 62.75% are between 40-49. While smaller percentages of respondents are between 20-29 (5.61%) and 70-79 (5.61%.) The youngest and eldest respondents

Table 1. The distribution of the recruitment postcards.

Locations	Recruitment postcards
Anthony Road Winery	100
Azure Hill	100
Barrington Cellars	100
Belhurst Castle	100
Billsboro Winery	100
Boundary Breaks	100
Bully hill Winery	100
Castel Grisch Winery	100
Chateau Renaissance Winery	100
Chateau Lafayette Reneau	100
Deep Root	100
Domaine Leseurre Winery	100
Dr. Konstantin Frank	100
Fox Run Winery	100
Fulkerson Winery	100
Hector Winery	100
Hermann J. Wiemer Vineyard	100
Heron Hill Winery	100
Hickory Hollow Wine Cellars	100
Hunt Country Vineyards	100
J.R Dill	100
Keuka Lake Vineyards	100
Keuka Spring Vineyards	100
Lacey Magruder Winery	100
Lakewood Vineyards	100
Lamoureux Landing	100
Magnus Ridge	100
McGregor Vineyard	100
Miles Wine Cellars	100
Monello Winery	100
Pleasant Valley Wine Co.	100
Point of the Bluff Vineyards	100
Prejon	100
Ravines Wine Cellars	100
Red Tail Ridge Winery	100
Rooster Hill Vineyards	100
Seneca Shore Wine Cellars	100
Serenity Winery	100
Shaw Vineyard	100
Starkey's Lookout	100
Stever Hill Vineyards	100
Torrey Ridge Winery	100
Three Brothers	100
Ventusa	100
Villa Bellangelo	100
Vineyard View Winery	100
Wagner Winery	100
Weis Vineyards	100
White Springs Winery	100
Yates Cellars	100
Amity Coffee	100
Keuka Taxi	500
Micro Hotel	250
Hampton Inn	250
Top of the Lake Restaurant	100
Wine Bar	100

tend to be minority in terms of numbers. A high majority of the respondents are females 69.95%, while 29.58% of the respondents are males. The respondents tend to be highly educated; 46.73% of the respondents have a post college degree or work, 35.05% have a college degree, and 6.07% has some college experience.

The respondents have economic diversity in terms of their annual income levels. 20.20% of the respondents have an annual income of \$150,000 or more, 22.66% have an annual income between \$100,000-\$149,00, 22.17% of the respondents have an annual income of \$75,000-\$99,999, 17.24% have an annual income of \$50,000-\$74,999, 10.34% have an annual income of \$35,000-\$49,999, and 7.39% have annual income of \$35,000 or less. Although a significant number of respondents have full-time employment status, the Finger Lakes region is also preferred location for the retired population as well. 60.47% of the respondents are employed full-time, 7.44% are employed part-time, 6.98% are self-employed, and 22.33% are retired.

The demographics part of the survey is sorted by the Finger Lakes versus non-Finger Lakes residents to provide an idea on the basic demographic similarities or differences on both populations, although a high majority of the respondents are not a resident of the Finger Lakes region. While 73.52% of respondents are not from the Finger Lakes region, 26.48% are residents of the Finger

Table 2. Profile of the survey respondents.

	N	%
Age		
20-29	12	5.61
30-39	32	14.95
40-49	32	62.75
50-59	62	28.97
60-69	64	29.91
70-79	12	5.61
Gender		
Female	149	69.95
Male	63	29.58
Trans female	1	0.47
Employment status		
Employed full-time	128	60.38
Employed part-time	16	7.55
Self-employed	15	7.08
Homemaker	3	1.42
Student	1	0.47
Retired	48	22.64
Unemployed	1	0.47
Education		
High school graduate or less	3	1.40
Some college less than two years	13	6.07
Technical degree/two years college	9	4.21
Some college (more than two years)	14	6.54
College graduate	75	35.05
Post-college work/degree	100	46.73
Household Income		
Under \$35,000	14	7.00
\$35,000 - \$49,999	21	10.50
\$50,000 - \$74,999	35	17.50
\$75,000 - \$99,999	45	22.50
\$100,000 - \$149,999	44	22.00
\$150,000 or more	41	20.50
Are you a residence in the Finger Lakes region?		
Finger Lakes respondents	58	26.85
Non-Finger Lakes respondents	158	73.15

Lakes. The high majority of the respondents who are not from the Finger Lakes region are coming from the following states: New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, and New Jersey, as stated in Table 3.

As Tables 4 and 5 state, the respondents have personal, social, and cultural connections with wine. When it comes to the frequency of visitation to the wineries and vineyards, it is different from drinking frequency. For the most part, visiting wineries and vineyards are preferred to visit on a yearly and monthly basis rather than a weekly basis, which is different from wine drinking patterns. When the respondents were asked how often they visit a

Table 3. Hometown distribution.

State	N	%
CA	2	0.95
CO	3	1.42
CT	3	1.42
DE	1	0.47
FL	2	0.95
IA	1	0.47
IL	2	0.95
LA	1	0.47
MA	3	1.42
MD	6	2.84
MI	2	0.95
MO	2	0.95
NC	1	0.47
NJ	12	5.69
NV	1	0.47
NY	111	52.61
OH	10	4.74
OK	2	0.95
ON	2	0.95
OR	2	0.95
PA	34	16.11
SD	1	0.47
VA	3	1.42
WA	1	0.47
WV	1	0.47
Switzerland	1	0.47
Turkey	1	0.47

Table 4. On average, how often do you drink wine?

How would you describe your interest in wine?	N	%
Every day	33	15.42
A few times a week	108	50.47
About once a week	29	13.55
Several times a month	27	12.62
About once a month	9	4.21
Once every 2-3 months	4	1.87
Less often than once every 2-3 months	2	0.93
Other	2	0.93

winery/vineyard, 19.63% specified that they have occasionally visited a winery/vineyard, 17.76% expressed that they have visited a winery/vineyard about monthly, while 22.90% visited once every 2-3 months, and about 11.68% visit several times a month (Table 6). It is important to measure the residents' overall connection with the Finger Lakes region. The data below includes the specific word associations with the Finger Lakes region. The respondents are given the options of matching their favorite wine region with a specific word. Based on the 182 respondents who chose the Finger Lakes region as their favorite wine region, the matching words included "beautiful," "enjoyable," and "relaxed." 14.84% believe the Finger Lakes region is beautiful, 8.79% consider the region enjoyable, and 7.14% think the region is relaxed. The words "close to home" (4.40%), "home" (2.75%), "fun" (2.75%), "local" (3.85%), "scenery" (3.30%), and "variety" (3.30%) were included for respondents to describe their word association for the region (Table 7). The respondents tend to expect the Finger Lakes region to be a low-key, easy going, relaxed, enjoyable get-away wine region where the respondents get the wine tourism experience in a close to home environment.

Finger Lakes visitor profiles

When the Finger Lakes residents were asked about their length of living in the region, 57.14% participants are Finger Lakes residents at least over 7 years, 14.29% have been living there 4-6 years, and 8.93% have been living there 1-3 years. Overall, the respondents have different reasons of settling in the area, but the top three reasons can be summarized as the proximity to family and friends (24.53%), employment opportunities (22.64%), and prior connection with the area (11.32%); the other reasons include relaxed and quiet atmosphere of the region and the atmosphere of reminding them of the Tuscany area of Italy.

When the Finger Lakes residents were asked about their primary motivations for winery and vineyard visitation, 60.00% demonstrate the top reason is to taste wine, 17.02% state that having a relaxing day/weekend is the top reason, and 10.42% indicate to socialize with their partners/friends/family as the top reason. The factors such as business and networking events (19.15%) and wine club event activities (13.33%) are less appealing compared to socialization-related events (*Supplementary Materials, Table 3*). When the Finger Lakes residents were asked about their interactions with wine-related events, 32.56% value music and festivals as their top motivation specifically for the wine-related events, 25.58% indicate food and culinary festivals as the top reason, 21.95% value the signature and seasonal wine-related events, and 15.91% are attracted by wine education classes at wineries and vineyards (*Supplementary Materials, Table 4*). The art festivals, sports-related events, charity events, and business networking events are very less likely to be preferred by the Finger Lakes residents.

Non-Finger Lakes respondent profiles

Based on 73.15% who are non-Finger Lakes respondents, the length of their stay varies. While 37.41% state their average length of stay is 2-3 days, 27.21% indicate a 4-6-day period. 14.97% of participants preferred to stay 1-2 days, and about 10.20% participants tend to have a day trip. In other words, the participants tend to view the Finger Lakes as a good hotspot for a quick and short vacation to spend a few days, and more likely to spend less than a week in the area (*Supplementary Materials, Table 5*). Considering how the non-Finger Lakes respondents view the region as a quick and short vacation spot, the short-term, hotel, Airbnb, family and friend's residences, and bed and breakfasts are the most preferred

options rather than long stay options. 40.28% prefer short-term stay options, 37.72% prefer hotels, 20.83% prefer Airbnb, and 22.22% prefer family and friends as the accommodations (*Supplementary Materials, Table 6*).

The Finger Lakes visitors view the area as a convenient and short vacation spot: most visitors' primary goals can be summarized as discovering wineries (38.10%), family and friends gathering (27.21%), and a weekend get-away (14.97%). While the Finger Lakes region is seen as a hotspot to learn more about wineries, for many respondents it is a good location to be able to connect with family and friends, or as a good spot for a weekend get-away. Other motivation factors include socialization at the lake, dropping the children at colleges and universities, or stopping by specific festivals. The business and networking purposes, or other recreation or leisure events such as fishing, hunting, or visiting the state park, are less likely to be preferred reasons by the visitors.

When the Finger Lakes visitors were asked about which factors are more important and valuable to them with regards to wine, 51.82% stated that their main motivations of visiting a winery is to taste wine, 21.58% ranked the factor of socializing with friends and family as the main factor, and 17.04% ranked the options of having a relaxing day and weekend as the main factor. The preferences of the non-Finger Lakes residents are very similar to the Finger-Lakes residents when it comes to their connection with winery and vineyard visitations.

Table 5. The interest in wine.

How would you describe your interest in wine?	N	%
Personal enjoyment	208	96.30
Pairing with meals	137	63.43
Gathering with friends	181	84.80
Gathering with meals families	135	62.50
Celebrating special occasions	152	70.37
Business gatherings	24	11.11
Networking events	32	14.81
Wine club events	60	27.78
Wine tasting trips	160	74.07
Other	14	6.48

Table 6. How often do you visit a winery/vineyard?

How often do you visit a winery/vineyard?	N	%
About once a week	1	0.47
Several times a month	25	11.68
About once a month	38	17.76
Once every 2-3 months	33	15.42
Less often than once every 2-3 months	10	4.67
2-3 months	49	22.90
Occasionally	42	19.63
First time visitor	4	1.87
Other	12	5.61

Table 7. Respondent's connection with the region.

Region	Word	N	%
Finger Lakes region	Abundant	1	0.55
Finger Lakes region	Adventure	1	0.55
Finger Lakes region	Affordable	2	1.10
Finger Lakes region	Approachable	2	1.10
Finger Lakes region	Attractive	8	4.40
Finger Lakes region	Authentic	7	3.85
Finger Lakes Region	Beautiful	27	14.84
Finger Lakes region	Calm	2	1.10
Finger Lakes region	Causal vibe	1	0.55
Finger Lakes region	Close to home	8	4.40
Finger Lakes region	Comfortable	1	0.55
Finger Lakes region	Community	1	0.55
Finger Lakes region	Convenient	2	1.10
Finger Lakes region	Country	3	1.65
Finger Lakes region	Delicate	1	0.55
Finger Lakes region	Delicate	1	0.55
Finger Lakes region	Different	1	0.55
Finger Lakes region	Diverse	1	0.55
Finger Lakes region	Dynamic	1	0.55
Finger Lakes region	Educational	1	0.55
Finger Lakes region	Enjoyable	16	8.79
Finger Lakes region	Entertaining	2	1.10
Finger Lakes region	Established	1	0.55
Finger Lakes region	Evolving	1	0.55
Finger Lakes region	Exciting	1	0.55
Finger Lakes region	Favorite	1	0.55
Finger Lakes region	Feels like home	1	0.55
Finger Lakes region	Fresh	1	0.55
Finger Lakes region	Friendly	1	0.55
Finger Lakes region	Fun	5	2.75
Finger Lakes region	Gateway	1	0.55
Finger Lakes region	Gorgeous	2	1.10
Finger Lakes region	Heaven	1	0.55
Finger Lakes region	Historic	1	0.55
Finger Lakes region	Holiday	1	0.55
Finger Lakes region	Home	5	2.75
Finger Lakes region	Interesting	3	1.65
Finger Lakes region	Intriguing	1	0.55
Finger Lakes region	Local	7	3.85
Finger Lakes region	Lovely	1	0.55
Finger Lakes region	Magnificent	1	0.55
Finger Lakes region	Most enjoyable	1	0.55
Finger Lakes region	Natural	3	1.65
Finger Lakes region	Outstanding	1	0.55
Finger Lakes region	Peaceful	1	0.55
Finger Lakes region	Perfect	1	0.55
Finger Lakes region	Picturesque	4	2.20
Finger Lakes region	Pleasant	1	0.55
Finger Lakes region	Popular	1	0.55
Finger Lakes region	Pride	1	0.55
Finger Lakes region	Quality	3	1.65
Finger Lakes region	Real	1	0.55
Finger Lakes region	Riesling	1	0.55
Finger Lakes region	Relatable	1	0.55
Finger Lakes region	Relaxed	13	7.14
Finger Lakes region	Restorative	1	0.55
Finger Lakes region	Romantic	2	1.10
Finger Lakes region	Rural	1	0.55
Finger Lakes region	Rustic	1	0.55
Finger Lakes region	Scenery	6	3.30
Finger Lakes region	Second home	1	0.55
Finger Lakes region	Special	1	0.55
Finger Lakes region	Surprising	1	0.55
Finger Lakes region	Unique	3	1.65
Finger Lakes region	Variety	6	3.30
Finger Lakes region	Wonderful	1	0.55

When the Finger Lakes visitors were asked about their specific interactions with wine-related events, 40.74% highly value the signature seasonal wine-related events as their preferred wine-related activity and 15.11% prefer food and culinary festivals at the wineries and vineyards. 10.07% state that the potential wine education events are the main wine-related activity for them.

Discussion and Conclusions

The Finger Lakes and non-Finger Lakes residents demonstrate similarities and differences in terms of demographic profile and preferences of visiting wineries and vineyards. Finger Lakes visitors view the wineries and vineyards as a tool to socialize with family and friends, and an accessible, convenient place for a weekend gateway. While the signature wine and food-related events and potential wine education classes are appealing factors, specific interests such as fishing, or hunting are attracting visitors specifically to the region. Despite the tourists visiting the Finger Lakes region for the wineries and vineyards, the tourist population is limited to the Northeast region of the United States. The visitors tend to be more local compared to overall wine regions in the United States. Like the Finger Lakes visitors, the Finger Lakes residents view the vineyard and winery visit as a good way to socialize with family and friends. Music and significant wine and food pairing events are attractive for the Finger Lakes residents, yet the business and networking-related events are less appealing for the Finger Lakes residents. The primary motivation factors for the Finger Lakes residents and tenants are to socialize with family and friends as it is supported by the wine research scholarship. Although the region is well-known with wineries and vineyards, there is still room for improvement for community outreach.

The data for this study is collected prior to the pandemic and it does not reflect the preferences of respondents throughout the pandemic. As the pandemic shapes the larger social and cultural structures along with the taste and preferences of people, it is possible to expect a cultural shift in the tourism sector. While the data for this study supports that the primary motivation factor for the overall Finger Lakes residents is socialization with friends and family, it will be fruitful to investigate in what ways the meanings and preferences of socialization in wineries and vineyards will change, what will be the general comfort level for the residents in terms of wine tourism, and for the visitors as the pandemic changes the tourism sector.

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Online supplementary material:

Table 1. The length of residency.

Table 2. What is the primary reason for settling in the area?

Table 3. Motivation factors (Finger Lakes residents).

Table 4. Wine related activities (Finger Lakes residents).

Table 5. The length of the stay (Finger Lakes visitors).

Table 6. Accommodations.

Table 7. Primary goals of the trip.

Table 8. Winery visitations reasonings (non-Finger Lakes residence).

Table 9. Wine related activities (non-Finger Lakes residence).

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