

PALATE

Light, fruity wines were crowd pleasers as the heat rose into the 8

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the out-of-towners, planned on staying the weekend and evangelizing when they get home.

"We're definitely telling all of our friends about this wine," Mike Allen said.

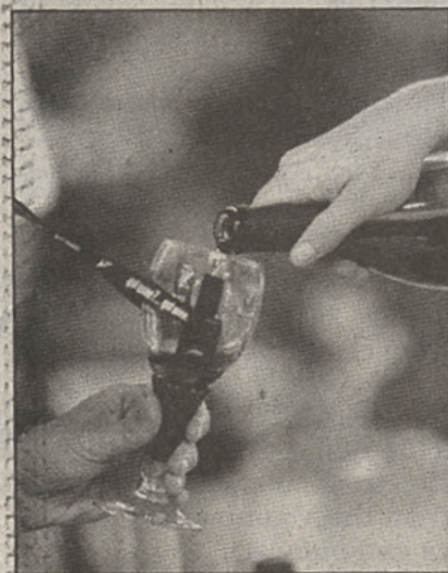
The Turner clan didn't travel from as far as Maryland, but still crossed state lines.

"We love it, this is the fifth year we've come here in a row," said Diane Turner, of Towanda, Pa., right after getting a temporary tattoo from Fox Run Winery.

Along with her husband, Robin, and "family that still treats us like friends," Vickie and Hugh Turner, Diane sipped Fox Run vintage in one of the two loud, boozy and hot tasting tunnels where wineries poured free samples.

People swarmed through the tunnels, rolling crowds who moved from one winery to another. Glasses clinked, and occasionally fell, and faces reddened, not solely because of the heat.

Wineries brought out some of the best of their selections, from reds to whites and drys to sweets.



"It's exciting, everyone seems to be having a great time and our wines are selling well, which definitely pleases us," said Len Wiltberger, owner of Keuka Spring Winery.

His hottest seller on Saturday was the red, semi-dry Miller's Cove Red, he said. On such a muggy day, though, he said the light Clara's Red was doing pretty well, too.

"An ice-cold Clara's while sitting on the porch on a hot day is perfect," he said.

Light, fruity wines seemed to be the crowd pleasers, according to other wineries.

"Ruby Vixen, a light blush, seems to be the most popular order this year," said Dan Mitchell, tasting room manager at the Fox Run Winery.

He was also known as "Super Tattoo" among tipsy wine-tasters, on account of the couple of pieces of temporary body art on his shaved head and eagerness to apply the same to others.

Not just wine

For those looking for little sustenance, the festival didn't disappoint. Small business owners from all over New York set up booths, allowing passers by to touch, smell and taste the merchandise.

Wendy and Ron Ochs, from Nunda, Livingston County, brought seven varieties of mustard, based on an old family recipe.

"One day I mixed up a mustard for a fish fry for Ron's job," Wendy said, "and people loved it so much that they offered me money to keep making it."

As temperatures reached into the 80s, Scott Fitchen's wine ice cream booth became



a magnet. He and helper Joey Manim endlessly buzzed between taking orders at the counter to scooping ice cream out of the ice box and back to the counter as the line kept growing. Four flavors were available: amaretto cream sherry swirled in chocolate, chocolate cabernet in cheesecake, strawberry chardonnay in cheesecake and Finger Lakes grapes in vanilla.

Finger Lakes Ice Cream, of Black River in Jefferson County, debuted just two weeks ago, Fitchen said. Already the response is phenomenal.

"We're already stocked in a number of wineries around here and just about everyone here is asking where they could get it," he said. "And why not? Everyone loves wine and everyone loves ice cream."

Also new this year was a biergarten, tended by the owners of Rooster Fish Brewing.

"People really seem happy to see us here," said Nicholas