



CLIENT:

Black Walnut Inn

With the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, A.wordsmith strategized with Black Walnut to realign the PR strategy to focus on the Inn's team and unique experience offered to guests, gaining strong awareness in local markets, and ensuring solid bookings throughout the pandemic.

Client Description

Black Walnut Inn & Vineyard is a luxury bed and breakfast located in Dundee, Oregon. Purchased by Rick and Erika Miller in 2017 from the Utz family, the Inn offers a luxurious, yet approachable Northwest travel experience that feels a world away. With nine guest rooms set above 100 acres of pinot noir and chardonnay vines, Black Walnut provides its guests with an extravagant experience offering services such as wine tasting, vineyard tours, massages and delicious meals.

Project Description

Black Walnut first approached A.wordsmith with the goal of promoting upcoming events and raising overall awareness of the Inn amongst previous and new guests. However, the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 shifted focus. A.wordsmith strategized with Black Walnut to realign the PR strategy to focus on the Inn's team and unique experience offered to guests. Shining a spotlight on Executive Chef Chase Williams, Vineyard Director Ryan Hannaford and General Manager Leah Schlechter became central to the proactive media strategy and storytelling efforts. With the public temporarily unable to come visit the property, elevating the voices of those working to make Black Walnut special was essential for capturing interest and attention amongst guests. Stories about recipes, vineyard management and Black Walnut's attention to health and safety kept the public engaged and informed while travel was on hold. A.wordsmith worked to fine tune newsletter content each month to better connect with guests, exemplify the elevated experience Black Walnut offers and establish a greater sense of community, especially amongst local audiences who were most likely to come stay once travel restrictions were lifted.

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Key Results

Highlighting Black Walnut staff, locally sourced dishes and the beautiful property led to successful placements and relationships with key national media contacts. Black Walnut gained strong awareness in local markets, and – paired with flexibility and careful consideration for guest health on the operations side – ensured solid bookings throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

- KPTV: In My Kitchen: Chef Chase Williams perfects the breakfast taco
- KPTV: In My Kitchen: Meet Chef Chase Williams
- Sip Northwest: [Recipe: Oregon Pinot Noir-Marinated and Braised Chicken](#)
- KOIN: [Foodie Friday: Father's Day brunch](#)
- KOIN: [Thirsty Thursday: Black Walnut Vineyard](#)
- KXL Afternoon News – Radio
- Black Walnut Newsletter