





# ANTHOLOGY AT THE FOUR GRACES WINERY

| BY TRACY ELLEN BEARD

**T**his past winter, my friend Connie and I found ourselves tucked away in Oregon's Dundee Hills, awaiting the rumored experience of something unforgettable: Anthology at The Four Graces Winery. I had heard about this culinary adventure—that it was less a dinner and more a journey, crafted by Chef Chase Williams and Sous Chef Zach Ehrlich, with wine pairings orchestrated by the ever-talented Sommelier Peter Marcy. It promised to be an evening of storytelling through food and wine—an anthology in the purest sense.

From the moment we stepped into the warm, inviting tasting room, we could feel the evening's spell beginning. Connie and I were handed glasses of crisp sparkling wine and delicate little meatballs while we lingered in the lounge area. We toasted, laughed, and reminisced before being summoned to the long, 14-seat chef's table.

"Anthology changes every two months," Chef Williams explained. He shared how they chase the seasons, looking for what is at its peak right now. He and Chef Ehrlich work exclusively with local farmers and ranchers, weaving the freshest ingredients into dishes that feel both comforting and daring.

We were here for the Winter Anthology, a season that the chefs embrace not as a limitation but as an invitation. "The Willamette Valley has such an amazing growing season through summer and fall," Chef Williams said. "But winter pushes you to get creative—to honor the humble root vegetables, the ferments and preserves we worked on all year."

Our first course set the tone beautifully: Beef Kelaguen, or what Chef Ehrlich called "Guamanian hot beef." "It's like beef ceviche," he grinned, plating delicate piles of marinated, minced beef. It had bathed in a mixture of soy sauce, lemon juice, vinegar, and zest before being finished with charred onions, pickled onions, a sprinkle of fried garlic, and a dusting of jalapeño powder. Each bite was bright, rich, and thrilling—and paired brilliantly with the Elise Dechannes Blanc de Noirs' Essentielle' 2020 from Champagne, France. The bubbles cut through the umami, creating a fabulous marriage between the food and the wine.

Just when we thought we understood the rhythm, the chefs flipped the script with a Savory Churro. "It's familiar, but it's not," Chef Williams said. Crispy outside and pillowy inside, the churro was dusted with duck fat powder and served alongside a luscious "chocolate" mole sauce. It was comforting and rebellious all at once, the culinary equivalent of sneaking dessert before dinner.

Next came the Farmer's Choice, a dish with its own history at the Black Walnut Inn, where both chefs also helm the kitchen. Initially inspired by the simplicity of a farmer's breakfast, the dinner version was whimsical and deeply satisfying. Inside a hollowed eggshell sat



Sous Chef Zach Ehrlich



layers of Fresno chili, maple bacon, and a barrel-aged hot sauce, topped with crispy potato chips, truffled béarnaise, and sourdough crumbs. “We wanted to take something familiar and elevate it,” Chef Ehrlich said. The moment my spoon cracked into the eggshell, releasing a symphony of spice, smoke, and richness, I knew they had succeeded.

Each course seemed to outdo the last. The Scallop Crudo—delicate slices of scallop adorned with compressed apple, a citrusy broth, and a pinch of fermented strawberry powder—was a creative inspiration. The Heirloom Squash Ravioli, meanwhile, was pure winter comfort, the kind of dish that could warm your soul on the grayest of Oregon days.

Of course, no Oregonian feast would be complete without salmon. Here, it arrived nestled against a sunchoke purée and framed by a playful leek foam, with crispy roasted sunchoke adding crunch and earthiness. Paired with a glass of Marc Colin’ Santenay Rouge’ 2022, the dish was outstanding. The wine’s soft acidity and notes of red fruit teased out the natural sweetness of the sunchoke and complemented the rich, buttery salmon perfectly.

Then came a tribute to another Pacific Northwest treasure: mushrooms. Chef Williams placed a plate before me—a cluster of grilled and glazed Maitake mushrooms sourced from Misty Mountain Mushrooms in Yamhill County. “Bob grows the best mushrooms around,” he said proudly. The texture was meaty, the glaze intensely flavorful, and the pairing—a

velvety Dusky Goose Pinot Noir, Fenwood Vineyard 2015—was inspired. Notes of dark cherry and dried blueberry in the wine made the earthy mushrooms even more delicious.

As we moved into the heartier courses, the kitchen’s playful spirit remained, but there was also a sense of deep tradition. The Pot Roast, made with slow-braised beef cheek, umami-drenched potatoes, and fire-roasted carrot and celery root purée, felt like a love letter to winter.

Dessert was not a single course but a final act broken into two playful chapters. First, a nostalgic nod: Cranberry Fruit Leather filled with vanilla ice cream. “It’s our grown-up take on a fruit roll-up,” Chef Ehrlich said, laughing. One bite in, and I was ten years old again, chasing the ice cream truck down the block. Second, a Boba Frappuccino—salted caramel semifreddo encircling coffee boba, served with toasted oat crème anglaise and oatmeal cookie crumble. It was a new take on a delicious favorite, affogato.

By the end of the evening, Connie and I didn’t want to leave. It was a fun evening, listening to the stories that surrounded each dish served.

Anthology isn’t just a meal. It’s a tribute—to the seasons, to Oregon’s bounty, to the old ways and the new. It’s a love story written in food and wine, reimagined every two months by two chefs and a sommelier who care deeply about what ends up on your plate and in your glass. ❖