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Montecito Miscellany

Ellen Joining Duncan Partners in Ex-Pierre Lafond Space?

by Richard Mineards

Could former TV talk show host **Ellen DeGeneres** be entering the restaurant business, having been a serial real estate flipper for years?

DeGeneres was spotted with hedge fund titan **Graham Duncan**, who has taken over the former Pierre Lafond bistro space in the upper village, in photos in the *London Daily Mail*, for whom I used to scribe in the 1970s.

Yale graduate Duncan, 48, as I revealed here, has taken over the space under the name East Valley Kitchen LLC.

Wendy Foster, Lafond's widow, tells me Duncan, co-founder of East Rock Capital, hopes to open the eatery, which closed in July 2021 and has been empty since then, in March or April.

Local Children to Attend School

Prince **Harry** and former actress wife **Meghan Markle** are eyeing entering their two children, **Archie** and **Lilibet**, at a local private school, I can exclusively reveal.

The Riven Rock twosome were spotted inspecting an institution's campus last week, bringing them one-step closer to a decision.

School fees in our area range from \$6,000 to \$50,000+ for older grades, with most of the institutions having 100 percent of students going on to attend four-year colleges.

An Evening of Transformation

Ted Nash, a regular figure of Jazz at Lincoln Center led by **Wynton Marsalis**, made his debut with the Santa Barbara Symphony, under conductor **Nir Kabaretti**, premiering a new orchestral expansion of his work *Transformation* at the Granada.

Nash also performed with a trio led by Los Angeles-based pianist **Josh Nelson**. A short film also showed Nash's son, **Eli**, revealing to his father that he was now transgender.

Dohnányi's "Variations on a Nursery Song, Op. 25" based on the 19th-century lullaby "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star," launched the show with resident pianist **Natasha Kislenko**. It also included **Richard Strauss's** "Death and Transfiguration" and wrapped with Ravel's rousing "Boléro."

Earlier in the week, major supporters of the symphony gathered at the Sage Hill Ranch of real estate investor **John Whitehurst** in the Goleta foothills for the latest in the organization's Concert Aperitif series celebrating its 70th anniversary featuring Nash and the tony musical triumvirate in an Evening of Jazz featuring

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Pianist Josh Nelson, maestro Nir Kabaretti, singer Kristen Lee Sergeant, and bassist Luca Alemanno (photo by Priscilla)



Musician/composer Ted Nash and host John Whitehurst (photo by Priscilla)



Nancy Golden, Kim Kebler, Kristen Lee Sergeant, and Eric and Anne Capogrosso (photo by Priscilla)

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