



NICOLE'S WILL BE CLOSING PERMANENTLY AT THE END OF THIS YEAR

OUR LAST DAY WILL BE DECEMBER 31

Please read a letter from the owners below:

Dear Friends, Customers, and Colleagues:

It's with a mixture of sadness and gratitude that we are announcing the closure of Nicole's Market & Café after almost 30 years in business. On December 31st, 2024, after being a part of so many people's holiday celebrations, we will turn off the lights & lock the doors for the last time.

This has been an extremely difficult decision to make for Julia & me. We have a deep sense of obligation to my mom, Nicole Grandjean, who founded the business, as well as our staff and the community that have supported us for so many years. But the reality is that the business has lost money every year for the last several years and has only been able to remain open with financial support from our other business.

For the last few years, our commitment kept us pushing forward, and the memory of all the hard work and dedication my mom invested to build and sustain this business over the years kept us hopeful that better & profitable times would eventually come. Instead, despite multiple price increases, reducing as many expenses as possible, and other measures, the cost of doing business – especially as a small business – in California, is simply too high. Our lease term ends on January 31st, 2025, and we cannot justify renewing.

My mom, Nicole, grew up in the Loire Valley in France. In 1989, after living all over the world, and while raising a child on her own, she started Nicole's Gourmet Foods out of our home. Her goal seemed simple: to sell specialty foods to discerning L.A. chefs. In the early days, she was CEO, salesperson, delivery driver, and accountant, all wrapped up into one. Just six years later, in 1995, she decided to again follow her gut and opened a specialty shop located in a bland strip mall on N. Allen Avenue in Pasadena. The tiny shop offered cheese, oils & vinegar, charcuterie, caviar, and more.



THE ORIGINAL SHOP

In 1997, my mom was diagnosed with cancer, and I jumped in to help run the business. We argued & disagreed about almost everything – yet our dynamic paved the way for a powerful partnership that lasted until her passing. In 1999, she set her sights on a building in South Pasadena where the market & cafe has operated for the past 25 years.



MOM INSTALLING SHOP FLOORS

My mom was diagnosed again with cancer only weeks before her death, and passed away on May 14th, 2020. My mom had a profound & indelible impact on the Los Angeles culinary scene that likely will never be fully recognized or appreciated. This shop – Nicole's Gourmet Market & Cafe – meant the world to her. It was her dream, her passion, and her life's work. Needless to say, the decision to close it has been heartwrenching.

I remain proud, however, of our near 30-year run. As painful as it is to close this business, my immense gratitude for all of the amazing people, stories and relationships we've forged over the past three decades, softens the emotional blow.

Though the market & cafe is closing, my mom's legacy continues in Gourmet Imports, our wholesale business. The wholesale business was in fact the start of it all for her, and though she focused her last 20+ years on the market & cafe, to this day Gourmet Imports serves many of the chefs she personally recruited back in those early days. At its core GI is still very much the company she created, and we move forward with her passion, perseverance, and grit as our guide.

Nicole's is closing, but for me, the legacy of the store is so much bigger than the store itself. And that part will never be forgotten.

With gratitude,

Steven Grandjean