

We're Out: Sarah Willingham & Nick Jenkins to Leave Dragons' Den

News Article



Sarah Willingham and Nick Jenkins joined the BBC Two show in 2015

After two years investing in new and exciting UK businesses alongside some of the country's best-known entrepreneurs, Sarah Willingham and Nick Jenkins are set to step down from their roles on Dragons' Den.

According to the BBC, the pair will feature in their final episode on 26 February, leaving behind Deborah Meaden, Touker Suleyman and Peter Jones – the only founding Dragon remaining on the show.

Making her name as owner of the successful Bombay Bicycle Club chain, Willingham turned six loss-making sites into the largest chain of Indian restaurants in the UK. She continued in the hospitality space with later investment in The London Cocktail Club, winner of BBC Two series The Restaurant.

Speaking to the BBC of her exit, Willingham said: "Being part of Dragons' Den has been one of the best experiences of my life."

Willingham added that she was leaving to follow her

"long-held dream" to spend a year travelling around the world with her family.

For Jenkins, founder of greeting card website Moonpig.com, leaving Dragons' Den meant being able to focus on existing business commitments.

"I have thoroughly enjoyed making Dragons' Den but I want to focus more on my portfolio of educational technology businesses and that would make it difficult to take on any more investments from the Den," he told the BBC.

Since joining Dragons' Den in 2015, Sarah Willingham and Nick Jenkins made joint investments in several ventures, both backing the coconut entrepreneur behind organic food brand Ccofina and recently each investing £40,000 in the promising Love Me Beauty product subscription service.

BBC Two's channel editor, Patrick Holland, paid tribute to Sarah Willingham and Nick Jenkins.

"Nick and Sarah have both been terrific Dragons, using their nous and insight to make some great investments and produce some compelling entertainment in the process.

"As they step down from the show I want to thank them and wish them all the very best for the future."

With two seats in the Den now vacant, we speculated over the entrepreneurs who could replace Sarah Willingham and Nick Jenkins.

Moshi Monsters founder Michael Acton-Smith has probably been asked numerous times, but with his business now growing at a slower rate and his position being more on the creative side now could be the time to expand his portfolio.

Other high-profile investors to have been previously linked with the show include Innocent Drinks co-founder Richard Reed, TV Presenter and hotelier Alex Polizzi and West Ham Utd Football Club

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joint-chairman David Gold.

On the more left-field predictions side of things, maybe disgraced British businessman Philip Green could use Dragons' Den as a way of repairing the reputational damage inflicted following the demise of BHS. And then there is the world of reality TV to tap into – could Made in Chelsea star and McVitie's fortune heir Jamie Laing look to expand his burgeoning business empire by joining the BBC show?

Whatever happens, there will be some new bums in the seats of Sarah Willingham and Nick Jenkins when the show returns for a 15th series.

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