



# D Hot Shoppe turns 10!

January 30, 2015 By James Gike

It's been 10 years of good vibes for the husband and wife team at **D Hot Shoppe**. Simone came to Canada shortly after her husband Gabriel in 2004. In less than a year they had moved to Burlington and opened up their restaurant on Fairview Street between **Appleby and Walkers**.

It was quite a risk for the family who had just had their second child. They moved to Milton when they first arrived in Canada. Simone and Gabriel would come into Burlington occasionally to shop.

"We love Burlington. The lifestyle is great and there wasn't already a [roti] shop here," said Simone. The idea for D Hot Shoppe came from Simone's mother. Simone was working at Tim Horton's, prior to the birth of her second child. It wasn't a good fit for her and she knew that she needed something different when she was going to return from maternity leave. So she and Gabriel decided to open up shop.

"Gabriel has always been about the food, me I love dealing with people" said Simone. "That's why I am in the front and he is in the back." She joked about the dynamic of working with her husband, "We click together, we click well; we are a great team."

That aside, it's all about the island vibe and the authentic West Indian cuisine. Their roti is some of the best I've ever had. Simone and Gabriel are from Trinidad and Tobago, a country known for roti.

Simone says roti is a thin flat bread stuffed with seasoned, ground split peas. The filling is curried potato and either chicken, beef, goat or shrimp. "The hot sauce is the fun part," she joked. It's all up to you with the hot sauce, it's all in the amount you add!

"You can go with mild, so all you can taste is the West Indian spices. Or you can go with suicide and not be able to taste your tongue for an hour," Simone joked. She is amazed at Canadians tolerance for the tongue torching Trinidadian peppers she uses. "They come and want to get burned. I say okay, if you're going to let me!"

All of the love and spice goes into the food they make. For anyone who has never tried roti, or any Caribbean food should give D Hot Shoppe a try. There is such a beautiful blend of spices. I had the goat roti. The meat was tender and it was delicious!

D Hot Shoppe has had customers with them since it all began in October of 2005. Simone wants everyone to feel like they're coming to see family. "If I don't know your name, or if I've forgotten I'll call you sweetheart or darling," she said. "I just want you to feel comfortable."

Customers have been raving about D Hot Shoppe for years. Simone recalled a few customers who prefer the food there than back home in Trinidad. There have also been many who've wanted them to expand. While that's on their mind, Simone says that she doesn't want to ruin where it all started. They've been looking but haven't quite found the



right place yet. It's important that they keep the walk in and take out style that has made them so successful. One thing that Simone knows for sure is where it'll be, and that they wouldn't be where they are today without their amazing management staff.

"We want to stay in Burlington, it's great here. It's been insane the amount of people we get through the restaurant. But it's insane how few people north of Upper Middle know we are here, we want to get the word out!"

**If you've been to D Hot Shoppe, keep going; and if you haven't been get out and try it!**

