



## RESTAURANT ROUNDUP: ESSENTIAL EATS IN HAMILTON-BURLINGTON

JULY 15, 2014

Restaurant Roundup, our cross-country tour of Canada's great dining scene is well in Ontario for the moment as we keep moving eastward. We've already stopped in Kitchener-Waterloo to check out their burger scene. We'll also be heading to Toronto and Ottawa but today marks the first of two stops to get acquainted with essential eats in Hamilton-Burlington area.

Eat to the beat at this always-hopping roti joint in Burlington. Arrive near noon and you'll enjoy the line-up banter with other customers – many regulars, often greeted by name – before getting your order in. You can also call ahead for takeout and go to the head of the line to pick up if you want.

You'll likely meet the owners, Gabriel Lou-Hing and his lovely wife Simone: He was head chef of several establishments in Trinidad and Antigua before they came to Canada a decade ago. Simone says, "We love meeting people every day!" It shows in the broadest and most genuine of smiles.

Gabriel brought with him his grandmother's recipes including the one for mother roti sauce made from tomatoes, garlic, cilantro, Guyanan curry powders, chives and homemade pepper sauce. Oh, and the de rigeur secret ingredients of course.



Our order is inevitably "large goat, medium." Priced at \$7.74 the slightly sweet split pea-stuffed roti is wrapped around tender, boneless, dark Halal meat and potatoes. Pretty spicy at medium hot, it suffices for lunch for both of us, or – if we are really hungry – can be up-sized with an order of samosas with Gabe's tamarind sauce. (Six of these small bites run \$3.00 and usually comprise 3 flavourful variants.) Go for the additional gravy too (50¢), and get a frequent buyer card to claim your 12 roti free.

A ginger beer from the cooler is my favourite accompaniment. Goat not your thing? Then chicken, beef, shrimp, cuttlefish, and vegetarian (including pumpkin) roti options are also available, along with various curry or jerk chicken dinners (\$7.50 – 12.75), doubles (curried spice chickpeas bundled in fried dough, \$2.75) and phalourie (fried split pea flour dough with chutney, \$2.50).

Plaques from the Burlington Post adorn the vividly coloured walls showcasing D Hot Shoppe's "Readers Choice Awards" going back many years. (For instance, in 2013 they won top honours in the following categories: Friendliest, Vegetarian, Lunch, Portions, Quick bite, and Spiciest.) Clearly they are doing it right, and hundreds of customers a day agree. D Hot Shoppe: 4155 Fairview Street, Burlington, ON L7L 2A4  
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