

LET'S GO! DINING

'Hot' new Indian restaurant pleases customers

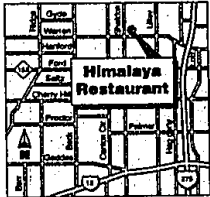
BY RENEE SKOGLUND
SPECIAL WRITER

The area melting pot has been stirred, and some rather distinctive ethnic restaurants are beginning to surface to the top. The Himalaya, near the intersection of Warren Road and Sheldon Road in Canton, is certainly one of them.

Since its opening in December of 1993, its Indian-South African cuisine has spiced up the adventurous diner's choices of interesting eateries. Owner Jeff Nadaseen, 31, boasts using over forty different spices in his kitchen, which prepares an exotic assortment of vegetarian, seafood, chicken and lamb dishes.

"Our most popular dishes are the vegetarian, along with Lamb Curry, Chicken Curry, and Peri Peri Chicken," said Nadaseen. Peri, Peri, which simply means "hot, hot" (and that's exactly what you say when you taste it!), is a sauce of fresh green peppers, tomatoes, onions and green onions. It represents the South African influence in the Himalaya's Indian cuisine and is part of the house specialties. In consideration of both Western and Eastern palates, all menu items, including the Peri Peri's, are prepared mild, medium, hot or extra hot.

The Himalaya also offers a small, but inclusive, selection of western dishes, some of which



Himalaya Restaurant
44202 Warren Rd.
Canton, Mich. 48187
418-0860 (phone), 418-0820 (fax)
Menu: Indian-South African
Appetizers, soups, salads: \$1.50 - \$4.95
Entrées: \$6.95 - \$10.95
Pleasant disco/travel music
Liquor, wine and beer
No reservations: Cash cards accepted
Seating capacity: 90
(smoking section available)
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Nadaseen learned how to prepare when he worked at the Steak and Ale. Of that experience he said, "I worked in the kitchen, dining room, everywhere I could get. Now, everywhere I could get very good New York strip steak."

He's also aware of today's health-conscious diners, and his chefs use very little oil in their food preparation. "The oil is not for the vegetables, but to cook the spices, which are fresh," he said.

Nadaseen, who came to the United States from South Africa with his parents and two sisters in 1972, has lived in Canton with his family since 1982. Choosing a Canton site for his restaurant was a natural, he said, "like the Canton area because it is a growing community. I knew this area and I felt comfortable here. I knew it was going to grow." Most of his staff came from the immediate area.

Nadaseen's family is doing everything it can to make sure his restaurant takes root and flourishes. His mother, Yanum, greets

customers or works behind the handcrafted white-oak bar. His father, Aruna, takes care of the books. Nadaseen himself oversees the interior, which housed a former auto parts store. "I built everything, the walls, the kitchen, the floor, the bar," he said. The bar took three weeks to finish.

"This family approach to running the restaurant extends to the staff. When asked how he trains his waitstaff, Nadaseen said, "Not only do they taste the food, they comment on it. They have a certain amount of leeway. This is their food." He quickly added, "Even though we're all off on Tuesday, we still get together. We talk about food, service, customers. Everybody says exactly what's on their mind."

Nadaseen also listens to his customers — and his chefs. "They have taught me so much," he said. Thanks to Gajjan Singh and Darshan Singh, two chefs trained in classical Indian cuisine and



BOB BREKLER/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Indian fare: Jeff Nadaseen, owner of Himalaya Restaurant, shows off two popular dishes, Chicken Mahhni and Vegetable Biryani. From (left to right), G.S. Sandhu, head chef, Darshan Singh, Tandoori Chef, Yanum Nadaseen, (Jeff's mom), Indran Chetty and Renita Nadaseen.

with respective expertise in curries and tandooris, the Himalaya's menu has undergone two changes. It is about to undergo a third. Customers are appreciative of the diversity.

Brooke Diabrow, a retired Canton teacher who was dining with her husband, Royce, also a teacher, said, "It's such an unusual mix and blend of flavors. Not only the flavors, but the menu choices

you get." Diabrow recommended the Peri Peri Chicken.

Tell us about your favorite new or improved restaurant. Call Keely Wagonik, Taste/Entertainment editor, (313) 953-2105 to recommend restaurants to be featured in Entertainment.

Restaurant Specials

Send items to be considered for publication to: Keely Wagonik, Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, 36251 Schoolcraft, Livonia 48150, or by fax 1-313-591-7278.

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Tickets must be purchased before 8:30 p.m.

Admission: Adults - \$6.00

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Directions: West on Commerce Rd. North on Carey to site or 1-96 Wixom exit north to Duck Lake Rd. East on Commerce Rd. North on Carey to site or M-59 to south Duck Lake Rd. East on Commerce Rd. North on Carey to site.

SEPTEMBER 15 - 18 '94

Map showing location of Homearama '94 at the intersection of Cooley Lake Road and Commerce Road.