

THE HAMILTON SPECTATOR

GO Thursday

SEPTEMBER 29, 2005

ants

er

Good
taste

Authenticity and ea





Measured portions of frozen pureed garlic is a new addition to the Arvinda's line.

Indian spices spark business

Student names her line of ingredients after another cook – her mom



REBECCA FIELD JAGER

Preena Chauhan named her baby after her mom. There's nothing unusual about that, except Preena's baby is a new line of Indian spice mixtures that hit retail shelves recently. Although still in its infancy, the Arvinda's brand has made its way into local stores known for selling top-of-the-line gourmet foods.

Gourmet made easy is how Preena describes the products. Although she's young, attends university full time and runs her own company, she still believes in making homemade meals.

She introduced Arvinda's to help people do just that.

"I've always wanted to share my culture and help people be able to make really good Indian dishes at home," says Preena. "It's so much more healthy and pleasurable than prepared foods or going out all the time."

Arvinda's are freshly made authentic Indian spice mixtures comprised of fresh, whole-roasted spices that Preena grinds in a second kitchen located in her family's Oakville home.

started cooking when she was only seven. She grew up in Uganda but was forced out in the early '70s by Idi Amin's regime. She immigrated to England and eventually Canada."

Preena explains that her mother, Arvinda Chauhan, first made her mark in culinary circles more than a decade ago when she opened Healthy Gourmet Indian Cooking school in Oakville. Today, the school offers a variety of courses as well as international culinary tours.

"In the summer of 1993, to help raise funds for the poor people of India, my mom set up a booth at the Canada Day Celebrations at Princess Point in Hamilton, where she and I sold all things Indian. Everybody fell in love with the food and begged my mother to teach them how to cook Indian cuisine. That's how her cooking school got started."

Mirroring her mom's methodology for creating curry, garam and chai masalas, today Preena does everything, including packaging, in her home. Back at York now, she has less time to run her business but is preparing to rent out a commercial kitchen or lease space for production.

For now, she'll keep plugging away with a little help from Mom.

"Things have been really great. Around the time I was launching Arvinda's, the Women's Culinary Network of Canada named my mother Woman of the Year," Preena gushes.

Given how well she's doing with her company so far, it's not unlikely one



Preena Chauhan used business initiative funding to start a line