



**CHEF GRANT VAN GAMEREN**  
Thanks to his Jamaican grandma, chef grew up on jerk chicken. "Jerk's all about the scotch bonnets, the allspice, the nutmeg, the ginger, the cinnamon...."

**A WINNER:**

**MONA'S ROTI, 4810 SHEPPARD AVE. E., \$8.50**  
"This is hitting every flavour note that I'd like," chef says. Although he'd prefer a touch more heat, this pick is deemed the most authentic. "You get all those traditional flavours — this is definitely good jerk!"

**B Happenin' heat**

**CARIBBEAN BISTRO, 2439 YONGE ST., \$13.95**  
Chef commends the heat levels of this jerk but notes that it's lost some juiciness: "It feels like it's been sitting around a little too long."

**C Flavourful find**

**ISLAND FOODS, 1310 DON MILLS RD., \$7.97**  
"Unfortunately, there's no bone here — people like eating things off the bone," chef says. However, this pick is moist and has nice — if slightly mild — flavour.

**D Visual delight**

**CARIBBEAN PALMS, 747 DON MILLS RD., \$7.50**  
Chef points out the charred crust, noting that, visually, this pick is very appealing. Taste-wise, it doesn't quite qualify as jerk. "I think for a regular person, jerk chicken should always seem a little bit too spicy."

**E Cinnamon-scented**

**CARIBBEAN JERK PIT, 10737 YONGE ST., \$7.35**  
"Right off the nose, I get a lot of cinnamon on this one," chef notes. Unfortunately, that's as far as the spice goes. "You'd think that just cooking chicken would be easy, but it's not!"

**F Marvellous marinade**

**FAHIMEE BAKERY, 119 MONTEZUMA TR., \$4.50**  
"This one's actually really nice — though it might be more of an Americanized version," van Gameren says. He enjoys the marinade and the juiciness but wishes there were more skin to speak of.

**G Pretty piece**

**PAT'S HOMESTYLE, 558 QUEEN ST. W., \$8**  
Chef is instantly drawn to the robust colour but finds the meat lacking moisture and traditional seasoning. More heat would've improved its standing.

**H West Indies win**

**ALBERT'S REAL JAMAICAN FOOD, 542 ST. CLAIR AVE. W., \$10**  
"This is definitely more of a West Indian-style of jerk — it's a little bit stronger on the cinnamon and allspice." Extra scotch bonnets would bring it up.

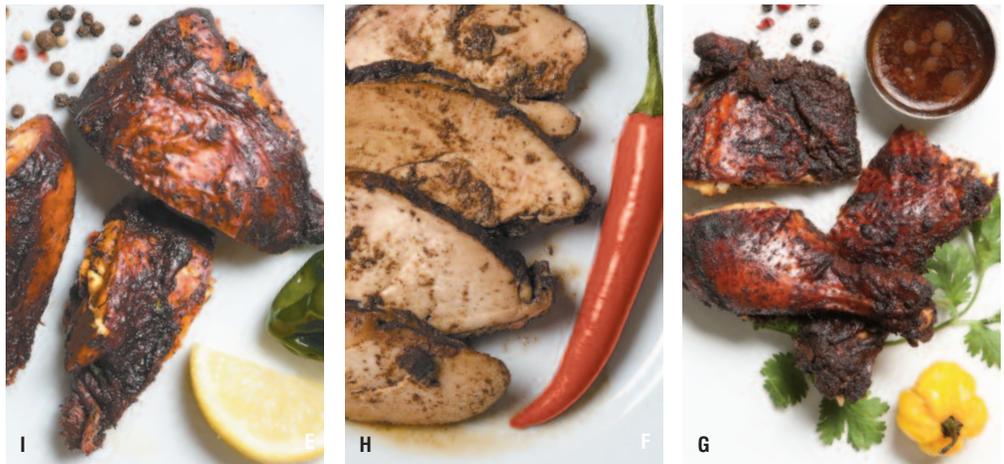
**I Tasty try**

**JERK KING, 522 BLOOR ST. W., \$7**  
"This is tasty chicken, but there's not enough depth of flavour in the spices." For chef, it's good, but it's not quite jerk.



# Not your average jerk

Toronto's climate may not compare to the Caribbean, but we sure have our fair share of joints dishing out Jamaican heat. Chef Grant van Gameren tells us who knows their jerk chicken — and who doesn't.



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