

The spice is right at Jamaican jerk palace

Fans of Jamaican food need not look far for Caribbean pastries, jerk chicken, beef patties and oxtail.

For 12 years Paterson's Golden Krust has been serving these traditional dishes, mostly for lunch and dinner takeout, at its 10th Avenue location.

Golden Krust's first bakery opened in 1989 in the Bronx. In 1996, the company branched out to other locations, including eight in North Jersey, for a total of 120 stores. While hot meal items are prepared on location, baked goods are prepared in New York and distributed to various Golden Krust sites. Supermarkets stock the company's microwaveable Jamaican beef patties.

In Paterson, Golden Krust's slow-roasted jerk chicken wings are a top seller, as is braised oxtail, especially among customers of non-Caribbean heritage, says Lynn Reid, who hails from Jamaica. Even before becoming a co-owner in 2006 alongside Joseph Cleary, Reid always purchased Golden Krust products. Paterson's sizable West Indian community is "ideal for a restaurant like this," she says.

The well-known patties are made not only with beef but also with a choice of jerk chicken, soya, vegetables, chicken, shrimp and, most recently, spinach.

Pastries include bulla cakes. These ginger-flavored sweet breads, made with vanilla and nutmeg, can be eaten alone or paired with cheddar cheese, butter or avocado. "It's like an Oreo or Stella D'oro cookie," Reid says. "You dip it."

Other decadent treats include spice buns, another sweet bread made with fruit and raisins, and rum cake. You'll find coconut in Golden Krust's rock cake and gizzarda, a baked pastry shell filled with ginger-flavored coconut. Other favorites are carrot cake and bread pudding. The store also stocks D&G soda from Jamaica in flavors such as cream, pineapple and cola-champagne.

Golden Krust Caribbean Bakery & Grill is at 432 10th Ave., Paterson; 973-684-4504; goldenkrustbakery.com.