

FROM CHACKAS TO CHUTNEY

"I knew you would have it," is a common sentence heard at A Gourmet's Pantry. Richard de Groot takes pride in locating that uncommon spice, sauce or rub for his customers at his shop in Erwinna, PA. Sure, foodies from up and down the Northeast Corridor come to this rustic, red building in Upper Bucks for packaged ingredients not found at the local market, such as smoked paprika or pomegranate-merlot balsamic vinegar. But aside from his eclectic collection of stoneware and saffron, apple butter and Bucks County memorabilia, de Groot offers something more at this market once stocked with and named Chachkas; and that is a passion for what he does.

Pull up a tasting cup and de Groot will pour you a shot or two of his favorite infusion, offer you a recipe from his mental database and tell you a little history about each and every item he stocks. And by the way, if it is edible and in the shop, he has tasted it and deemed it worthy. Even if you don't come in for something special, dare to leave A Gourmet's Pantry empty-handed. If the ingredient is not a necessity for your weekday meals, it just may be something fun to stock for the next dinner party or holiday feast because it tastes, sounds or looks so darn good.

Surprisingly larger than it appears from the outside, A Gourmet's Pantry is worth a visit for the interesting selections, great dinner music, knowledgeable service and beautiful location overlooking the Delaware River. — CS



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