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 Sitara
INDIAN CUISINE





- **Sitara Indian Cuisine was founded in 2012 in Sarnia, ON and is located in rural areas around the city**
- **The restaurant has been recognized on national and international levels for serving quality and authentic Indian food**
- **Sitara uses Moneris Go and wireless and countertop solutions to process payments**

Sitara Indian Cuisine



Line of business: Restaurant

Products used:

- Moneris Go
- Desk 5000
- V400C
- V400M



At the heart of Sitara is community. We want to build relationships with the guests we welcome into our restaurant because we really care about them.



- Manjit Singh,
Founder & Owner of Sitara Indian Cuisine



Sitara Indian Cuisine was founded in 2012 in Sarina, ON and has expanded to rural areas around the city. The business came to life because founder and owner, Manjit Singh had a desire to offer delicious and authentic Indian food to the Sarnia community.



We focus on providing our guests with a memorable experience and this means tailoring dishes to their preferences while offering fresh Indian meals. We make the food exactly how our guests like it.



- Manjit Singh,
Founder & Owner of Sitara Indian Cuisine

Background

We often have ideas in various aspects of our lives; whether it be in school, work or our personal. However, what motivates us to make ideas a reality? How do we achieve goals born from a vision? Manjit Singh's story has some great perspective about these questions.

Singh's career path is one that has success written all over it, as he is the founder and owner of Sitara Indian Cuisine restaurant in Sarnia, ON. His journey towards the restaurant began when he moved to Canada in 1987 from India, settled in Toronto, ON and was educated in the city. He became a Registered Nurse and moved to London, ON, at the beginning of his career. Singh then branched out to the United States and started working in Michigan in 2002, where he updated his skills and practiced in Anesthesia. Eventually, his family moved to Sarnia, ON, so that his commute to work would be shorter. Singh retired as a nurse specializing in Anesthesia in 2020.

Although Singh had a fulfilling career, something in Sarnia was missing—an Indian restaurant for the community to come together and experience authentic Indian food. "If you wanted a taste of India, you had to travel roughly an hour to get it," says Singh. It was important to his family to have a part of their culture close to them, one they enjoy so much—a place to gather and enjoy Indian food. Not only did they have the desire to pay tribute to the Indian culture in Canada, they wanted to share it with their community in Sarnia. In 2012, Singh took a new career risk and opened an Indian restaurant for the community of Sarnia to enjoy.

The restaurant was located in a rural area just outside of Sarnia and had 30 seats. At the time, it was a 'hole in the wall' kind of place with an interior that was minimal, but the focus was providing delicious food. When they originally opened, they were operating five days a week so that they could use the other two days to prepare for the following week. Singh would travel to Toronto to purchase ingredients. In just two years, the restaurant established a loyal customer base and expanded to accommodate over 100 seats.

In 2018, Sitara expanded further to another location in downtown Sarnia. Fast-forward to 2020, a third location opened in Petrolia, ON. Shortly after opening that location, they closed the downtown Sarnia location and moved into their own building with over 200 seats in Point Edward, ON. The original rural location offers take-out only. Singh is excited about their food truck that goes to Wallaceburg, ON five days a week and to events in the surrounding areas of Sarnia.

Purpose

Operating Sitara and working roughly 50 hours per week across the border was no easy path for Singh. He would stop in the restaurant early in the mornings and ensure everything was ready for the day before driving to Michigan to work as an Anesthetist. “Although each day required perseverance, the passion and enjoyment from the guests at the restaurant motivated me to push forward each day,” says Singh. The excitement around Sitara was very clear when it was rated number one in Sarnia out of over 40 restaurants in their first year on Trip Advisor. Since then, the restaurant has been recognized on local and global levels.

“At the heart of Sitara is community. We want to build relationships with the guests we welcome into our restaurant because we really care about them,” says Singh. During the COVID-19 pandemic, Sitara stayed true to their mission of putting their community at the heart of everything they do. The restaurant sent out over 200 complimentary meals to frontline and essential workers along with non-profit community organizations.

Today, understanding the needs and preferences of guests are still at the top of Singh’s mind. “We focus on providing our guests with a memorable experience and this means tailoring dishes to their preferences while offering fresh Indian meals. We make the food exactly how our guests like it.” Recipes are based off authentic Indian dishes; however, spice level and ingredients are tailored to the palate of each guest. Singh tries every single item offered



on the menu and listens closely to feedback to ensure the restaurant improves each day. “For example, we have noticed that our customers don’t like chilli in certain menu items, so we have either taken it off or reduced the quantity used on some items in the menu.” Singh says they practice strategies like that so each guest has nothing short of an amazing experience.

Singh attributes his success to being patient with his business and taking the time to understand what guests want. “My advice to other small business owners is to closely listen to customers. Take time to understand reviews and use negative feedback as an opportunity to learn and grow your business, instead of simply being offended.”

Sitara is not only a restaurant, it has become an institution-like facility for international high school and university students to work under strong mentorship. Singh offers paid co-op placements for students. They learn about Canadian culture, Canadian practices, Canadian dialect and rich Canadian values. Along with preparing meals, they learn to provide guests with a wonderful experience when they come into the restaurant.



I left the alternative payment processor because I quickly learned that they did not meet the standards that Moneris had and we switched back before we knew it. Whenever I get an offer for a payment processor now, I turn them down without hesitation because I am confident that they cannot compete with the payment solutions and the flexibility they offer.”



– Manjit Singh, Founder & Owner of Sitara Indian Cuisine



Why Moneris?

Sitara has been on a memorable journey with Moneris® and uses Moneris Go, wireless and countertop processors. Moneris Go has been a device that is more than convenient because the restaurant can use the portable terminal not only at restaurant locations but at events in their food truck too. Using Moneris Go has meant the restaurant has access to features such as setting tip amounts, offering cash back and the ability to report and enter cash transactions. Moneris Go, the wireless and countertop solution have all been reliable tools beginning with a simple set-up process. The restaurant started with Moneris when they originally opened. "We chose to go with Moneris because we knew after speaking with the customer representative, the service would be excellent," says Singh.

After a few years of using Moneris, another payment service told Singh that they could offer the restaurant better rates and convinced them to switch. When using the alternative provider, Singh quickly realized that their services, products and customer service availability did not closely align with what Moneris offered them.

Singh says, "I left the alternative payment processor because I quickly learned that they did not meet the standards that Moneris had and we switched back before we knew it. Whenever I get an offer for a payment processor now, I turn them down without hesitation because I am confident that they cannot compete with the payment solutions and the flexibility they offer."

Looking forward

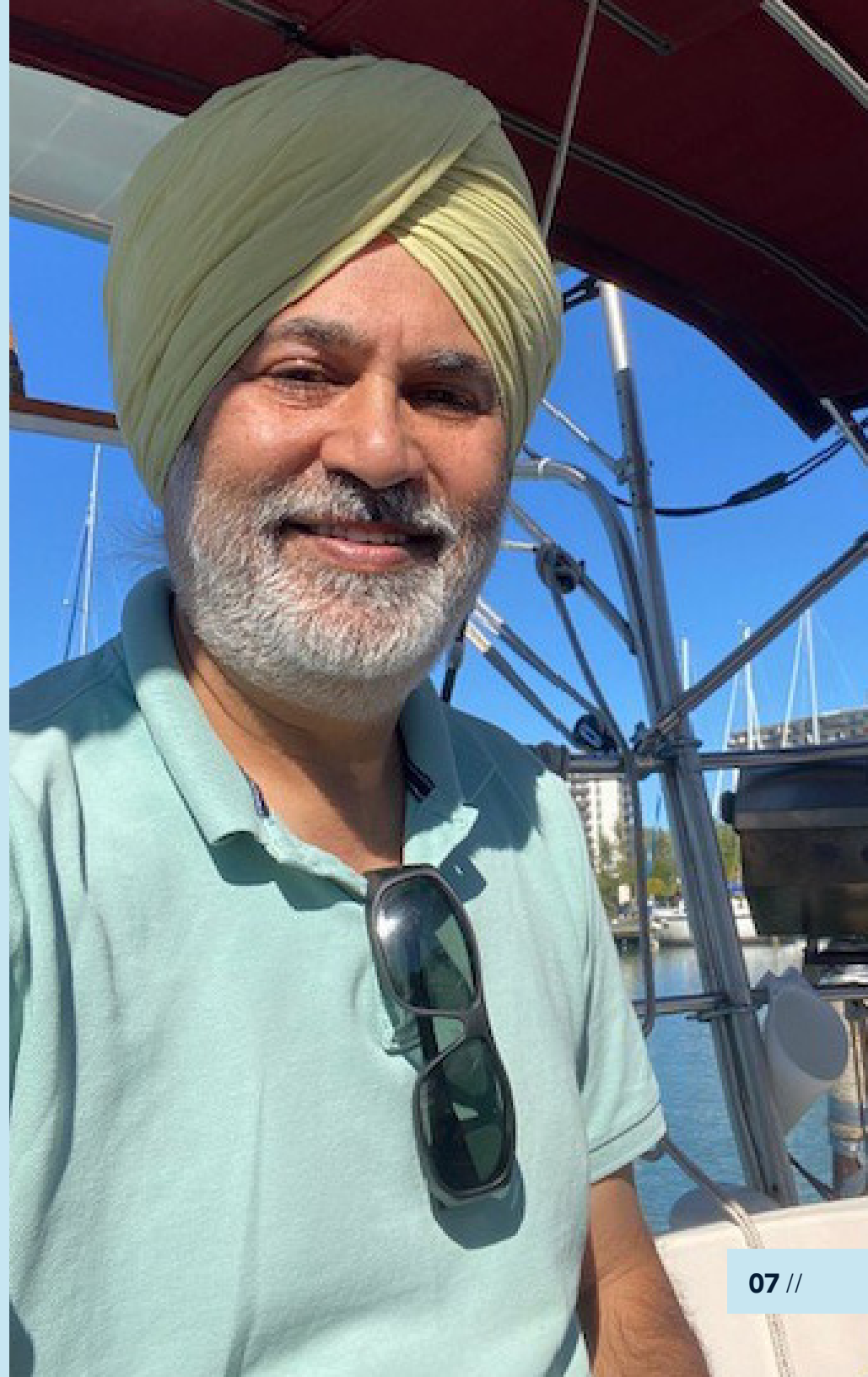
For now, Singh is very satisfied with where his business is at. “We are happy with our three locations and we are focused on these restaurants.” He looks forward to continuing to serve his guests and watch them leave with fond memories of tasting authentic Indian food in a family-oriented restaurant.



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