

With Take-Out, Dine-In, Catering and Delivery, Arboc Chicken Delight is Open for Business!

by Staff Writer

Although they've been on the Headingley map for over a decade, there are some exciting new additions for Arboc Smoke Shop & Gas Bar, who are thrilled to welcome a spacious new building, friendly new staff and a brand-new Chicken Delight restaurant. General Manager Jason Soldier's enthusiasm for the business is obvious and infectious, but he insists on crediting his staff and customers for the growth and success of the Arboc enterprise. In partnership with Swan Lake First Nation, Arboc is proudly Aboriginal owned and operated, and the staff regard themselves as part of a large and extended family. Equipped with state of the art food storage and preparation equipment, the team has been trained extensively in health and safety protocols and have adopted additional policies that ensure the highest quality food and service continue to be offered to Arboc Chicken Delight customers. Arboc itself is an interesting story. Opening in

November of 2006, Arboc Smoke Shop & Gas Bar has come a long way from its humble origins. Looking around the new Arboc building now, it's hard to believe the pictures of Arboc's early years that dot the walls. The first generation of Arboc was a small, modified trailer. In the years since, Arboc has left the original unit behind and grown to a full service 14 pump gas station, equipped with both gasoline and diesel fuel, tobacco, a surprising variety of drinks and snacks, and, most recently, a brand new Chicken Delight.

Jason credits the customers with the idea of including a restaurant. "A lot of our customers are from out of town, either on their way into or out of Winnipeg, which often meant spending hours travelling in the car. Many people were asking if we had any food available. We started offering pre-made sandwiches and saw that there was a real need for a restaurant. Whenever we hosted events, such as our annual customer appreciation day, we would serve complimentary soup and sandwiches and our customers really enjoyed that. In discussions with our regular customers we received a lot of positive feedback, so it was a natural progression." The only restaurant of its kind in Headingley, the decision to make that restaurant a Chicken Delight was an easy one. It was decided early on to operate a franchise and after some preliminary community research and some friendly -

but not-so-subtle - directions from regular customers, the Arboc management started comparing different franchise opportunities, ultimately deciding upon a Chicken Delight. That decision has proven to be a wise one.

The newest addition to the Chicken Delight chain reports excellent support from the corporate head office. Offering a classic Chicken Delight menu, complete with a wide variety of fresh toppings to build your own pizza, they're proud to offer chicken pieces, chicken wings and, of course, the favourite of every child: chicken fingers. There is something on the menu for every occasion, taste and budget. Whenever possible, Jason insists on using locally-sourced ingredients and suppliers as a means of ensuring freshness and a quality menu, as well as supporting Manitoba's producers and giving back to the surrounding communities. Offering take-out service as well as dine-in options, the seating for 60 is split, allowing customers to dine in the restaurant itself or in the bright and spacious glassed-in vestibule seating area.

While Arboc Smoke Shop & Gas Bar is open all day, every day, Arboc Chicken Delight is open from 11:00 am to 10:00 pm. Delivery can be arranged to Headingley, Cartier and St. Francois Xavier. Full-service catering is available and customers are invited to call to discuss their event and catering needs. Plans are in place to open a drive-thru in summer of 2018 and a Grand Opening is in the works; celebratory food specials are in the planning stages and will be announced shortly. The Arboc website will be up and running very soon, but in the interim, the Chicken Delight menu is available online at www.chickendelight.com and any questions can be directed to 204-895-8519. Although it's been open only a few weeks, Chicken Delight and its staff have received tremendous support and positive feedback. In a place where most customers are greeted by name, Jason insists on being visible and available, able to manage any concerns or complaints immediately in the same hands-on approach that has served him since Arboc first opened. "Headingley is full of amazing people", says Jason. "We have great neighbours and everyone has been so supportive and patient during our expansion."

Every new business experiences a learning curve, and Jason and his staff seem to be weathering the start-up storm with grace and poise. When asked about any problems they've experienced, Jason touched on an issue that Arboc has dealt with since its inception: they're open to the public! While customers with Aboriginal Status enjoy treaty tax exemption discounts on the Chicken Delight menu, fuel and tobacco, Arboc's doors are open to everyone. Jason fondly recalls times when non-Aboriginal customers have poked their heads through the doors and tentatively asked if they were allowed to shop there, and then the subsequent surprise when the answer was a resounding yes!



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