

Some like it hot, this guy likes it sinfully spicy

Grenfell native gets deal to make official Roughrider hot sauce

By Crystal Palmer,
News Editor

Growing up a prairie boy, you would think Craig Lowenberg's palate would be pretty plain. Like many prairie boys you would expect him to enjoy the basic meat and potatoes fare.

But this Grenfell native opened up his tastebud horizons when he moved to Calgary in 1991. That's where he discovered Thai, Vietnamese and Indian food. And a love for hot and spicy.

"There's an underground community known as chili heads or fire eaters, of which I'm a member," said Lowenberg of his love affair with spicy food.

Lowenberg loves spicy food so much it has led to a very successful business. He has a store in Saskatoon that caters to an appetite for heat. Droolin' Devil Fine Foods opened up shop last October and has taken off as a huge hit.

People can't get enough of the spicy condiments that

Lowenberg has come up with. He also carries other brands of spicy and gourmet foods and condiments. Customers must sign a waiver before taste testing or purchasing his wares.

Beyond the familiar grocery store chili and tabasco sauces Lowenberg decided to delve into a deeper realm of heat.

"I decided to make an alternative to your regular store hot sauces...we started bottling the first recipe for other people in 2001, and established a business in 2002...my recipe is flavour first. With our product, as hot as it is, you get five to 10 seconds of flavour then the heat will slap you in the head. It's not for the faint of heart," said Lowenberg.

Lowenberg created the hottest sauce made in Canada, called Uncle Big's Killer Hot Sauce with the most tongue burning one called "Liquid Sin". He's working on an even hotter sauce right now.

There are five other



UNCLE BIG - Craig Lowenberg has a sinfully spicy product line of hot sauces and other condiments.

varieties of that sauce that go down the heat levels. Part of his sauces are natural ingredients, including wild garlic grown in Saskatchewan.

Lowenberg also makes Canada's hottest wing sauce, called Uncle's Big's Killer Wing Sauce. Lowenberg's face is on the bottle of all those sauces.

"When I make wings with it, I mean my eyes are running, I'm sweating profusely, my nose is running. I just love it. I just keep going back for more," said Lowenberg.

If his sauces aren't for the faint of heart, then the Saskatchewan Roughriders are tough guys. Lowenberg is developing the first hot sauce ever made specifically for a Canadian Football League team.

He has designed two hot sauces for the guys in green. They are Jalapeno Lime and Serrano Hot Sauces.

"That was the biggest deal for us, it's a two year deal. I've been a Rider fan forever. I was as giddy as a school girl when they came back with the signed contract," said Lowenberg.

Fans will be able to sample and purchase the sauces at Rider games, at their Saskatoon store location, and can check

them out online, and places where Roughrider merchandise is sold.

That's not the only franchise that wants to get behind Lowenberg's heat. The Saskatoon Jazz Festival has made Lowenberg's hot sauce the official hot sauce of their festival.

For Lowenberg, these are just signs that his business has really taken off. He has been featured in many North American magazines for his contribution to spicy food.

"We put all of our life savings into this. We realized we could make a lot of money off our house. We sold our home in Calgary and chose to move to Saskatoon and we took the money that we made off our house in Calgary and bought a house here plus opened up our store downtown...We've already seen incredible growth and so much interest. I'm pretty dam happy about the Roughrider deal," said Lowenberg.

The business isn't only paying off financially, but it also paid off for Lowenberg's health.

"The most important benefits, for me as a type two diabetic, are the proven health benefits to fight inflammation, it's a natural pain reliever, there's cardiovascular

benefits, you can clear congestion with it, boost immunity, it can help stop the spread of prostate cancer, it can even prevent stomach ulcers," said Lowenberg.

It also makes things interesting for Lowenberg. Anecdotes always come along with the consumption of spicy food.

One of Lowenberg's

favourites is about a Mexican woman who came into his store and complained that Canadians don't make anything spicy enough.

He offered to let her sample his "Liquid Sin" sauce.

"She had an asthma attack it was so hot. Luckily the shop is only a few blocks from City Hospital."

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