

## Chilliwack a favourite for burger ad shoots



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Get ready for the return of the Spicy Mama Burger.

When the burger campaign eventually comes back, it will be preceded by a zesty new commercial shot in Chilliwack last week.

The new A&W at Eagle Landing was specifically chosen to film the fresh 30-second spot starring the friendly A&W manager Allen, played by actor Allen Lulu.

When The Progress arrives on-scene a few hours into the 12-hour shoot, the restaurant is as warm as a steam room, and is packed to the rafters with cast, crew, extras and props.

Lulu playfully jumps aboard the camera dolly, and mugs good-naturedly for The Progress camera.

Outside massive transport trucks and a black tent flank the drive-thru restaurant and a huge light reflector screen looms nearby, tipping off passersby that it's the scene of a film shoot.

"Quiet on the set!" snaps the voice over the walkie-talkie coming from inside the restaurant. "Shut it down inside and outside. We're rolling."

The new ad, with a script emblazoned with the title, "Bring Back Spicy Mama Burger II," is the latest in a series of ads, created by Vancouver's Rethink ad agency with Industry Films of Toronto.

There's a sense of consistency about the return to Chilliwack for cast and crew.

The Eagle Landing site is the third Chilliwack A&W in the past five years to have a commercial shot on the premises, said Glen Chalcraft, group account director with Rethink.

"This new restaurant is a big draw. It's the reason why we're here."

Turns out it's the first A&W outlet on the Lower Mainland to be built with the distinctive "boomerang" roof design, with modern and retro visual elements built in.

The fast food franchise has actually undergone a design metamorphosis of late, and the Eagle Landing restaurant will likely be the site of more shooting, as the vanguard of its kind in the area.

"They do a redesign like this every 10 years," Chalcraft said.

The other reason they're here is the welcome reception they know they'll get from everyone from the franchisee, to city, CEPCO officials — and the public.

It's not always like that when they try to shoot similarly in Vancouver.

"That comes with its own set of challenges."

A&W restaurant owner Kim Konias was tickled last week to host yet another shoot at one of his five A&W franchise outlets in Chilliwack.

"It's just great to see a Chilliwack A&W on national TV," he says.

The commercials are obviously popular with the public.

"We just had a lady come by to say how enjoyable the ads are to watch," Konias says. "It just puts our restaurants on the map. Regular customers love it."

A&Ws on Luckakuck Way and Vedder Road were used in the past and now it's time for the new Eagle Landing A&W to get its moment, he figures.

"Because we've done it a few times, they just call us up to see if it's okay, and then we go ahead and schedule it. To help out the franchise, I'm always good with it."

The recognizable star of the commercials, Lulu, has been in all of the Rethink ad spots in recent years that feature the A&W family products.

"I can't even count how many he's been in," Chalcraft said. "He brings a warmth and personal approach to it."

Lulu is the affable A&W guy who says, "Formi-doubly!" in the current commercial in rotation with a snooty food critic who is won over by the deliciousness of the Grandma burger.

Humour is often a recurring element in this entertaining series of ads, and a little improved dialogue between the actors is not out of the question.

"We're always looking to strike a balance between the humour and the product itself," Chalcraft said.

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