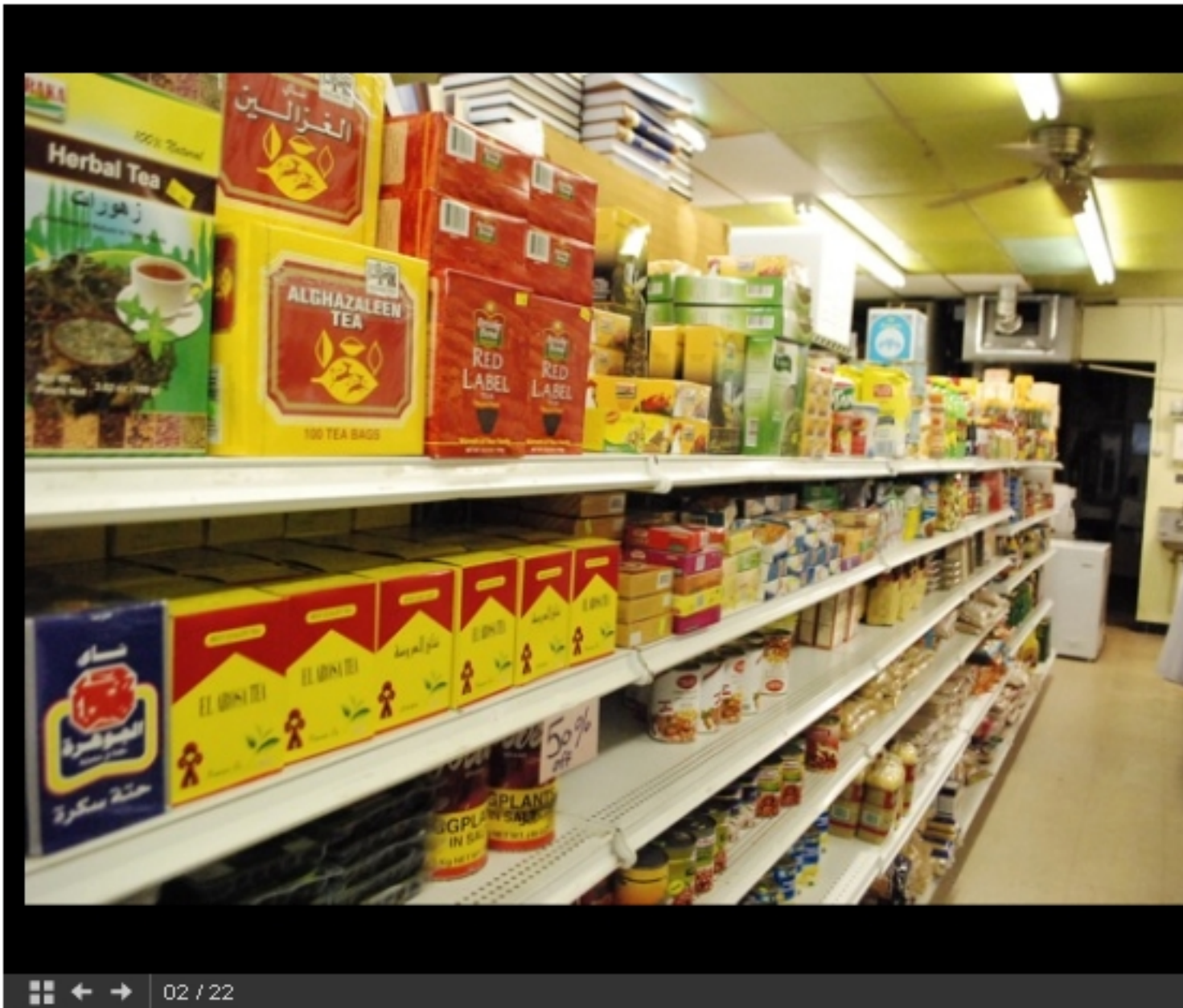


By Kristin Tangel | Published by [DC Intersections](#) on January 1, 2010



captions

Nestled within a shopping center in College Park, just a short drive from the Beltway, is International Tropical Foods, also known as Salsabeel. It is run by the Dar-us-Salaam

Community.

Half grocery store, half Islamic bookstore, it stocks halal food, religious and school literature, CDs, DVDs and clothing that fits Islamic modesty guidelines.

“We try to keep a little bit of everything,” said manager Rizwan Khan.

...The store also sells black seed products, hailed as a source of amino acids, carbohydrates, minerals, oil and fiber. Black seed comes from the *Nigella sativa* plant and is found in few stores besides halal and Middle Eastern shops.

Black seed, also known as “blessing seed”, is popular because it is mentioned in the hadith, of word of the Prophet Muhammad. Employee Mukhtar Sheikh said that many non-Muslims come to the store to buy black seed products.

Dar-us-Salaam used to have a separate kitchen, but a fire rendered it unuseable in May 2008.

The store previously sold only African food (under the same name) before the community took over it.

Khan said there are plans to expand the store into the space next door so it could offer a wide range of cuisine, especially because of the multicultural makeup of the community.

[Read the rest of the article on the 'American Observer'](#)