

## Grace “Spice” Hamilton’s Biography



Charismatic, sexy and lyrically lethal are words that could be used to describe the fast-rising deejay, Spice, who even at her first major appearance at Sting 2000 made it clear that she was here to stay.

Today, she continues to enjoy unprecedented success courtesy of her collaboration hit, **Ramping Shop**, with Vybz Kartel, which had become a fixture on the Billboard R & B charts, debuting at # 96 spot and continued to catapult up the chart. The single also received immense rotation on mainstream urban stations including: HOT 97 and POWER105.1, all of which helped to boost her international appeal.

But getting to this point started more than a decade ago.

Born Grace Hamilton, she grew up in the crushing poverty of the Old Braeton community in Portmore, St. Catherine. While attending St. Catherine High School she distinguished herself in the annual Jamaica Culture Development Commission's (JCDC) festival contest in music, winning several gold medals. Spice eventually graduated from school with eight CXC subjects and immediately enrolled at the Edna Manley School for the Visual and Performing Arts to study voice and drama.

However, she soon began to experiment with deejaying and in no time, she generated interest in her community with her musical abilities at local stage shows. In 1999, her appearances on popular JACS cable station gave her exposure and soon after, Spice began to gain a reputation for her blistering lyrics, high energy and risqué stage performances.

In 2000, veteran promoter, Heavy D from Supreme Promotions discovered her talent and wasted no time giving her the chance to perform at Sting 2000. There, she delivered an excellent performance in front of Sting's usually acerbic crowd and earned four encores. That night a dancehall star was born.

In early 2002 while on tour in England with Ward 21 and Baby Cham and no hit to her credit, Spice again delivered an astounding performance and in the process earned the respect of Baby Cham, who later took her under his musical wings and introduced her to Dave Kelly. There, Spice recorded her first single on the Mad House Label, **Mi Gone** on the **Pretty Pretty** rhythm. The single went on to do well both locally and internationally.

Soon after, Spice recorded **Hype** and **Right There** (with TOI) on Dave Kelly's **Bad Gal** rhythm and the videos created even more inroads for her. She then released one of her biggest local hits, **Fight Ova Man**, which created a major wave in the dancehall. Spice continued to perform overseas for several years earning a reputation as one of dancehall's most consistent artistes.

In 2007, she became a mother and returned to the stage only six weeks later. In late 2008, she visited Guyana to do a show with Vybz Kartel and while there, a beverage company asked both artistes to stay an additional two days to shoot a commercial. There, she struck up a friendship with Vybz Kartel, so much so that they decided to do collaborations together and after returning to Jamaica, they voiced **Ramping Shop**.

The musical force ruled the airwaves for months and catapulted Spice to the top of the dancehall arena and in early 2009, she won the EME award for "Female Deejay of the Year". Spice also walked away with "Best Female Performer", "Female Deejay of the Year" and "Young Hot and Hype Female Deejay" at the Youth View Awards.

In late 2009, the racy lyrics in **Ramping Shop** ignited a number of debates questioning the song's impact on the younger generation. This quickly prompted the Broadcasting Commission to implement a radio ban on all songs that necessitated editing of any kind. However, it seems the ban merely fuelled the popularity of the song and a PG 13 version of the song voiced was soon re-voiced by Kartel and Spice. To date, the song has received over 5 million youtube hits.

The song's overseas popularity only further fueled demand for Spice at the shows, some of which include: the annual Best Of The Best concert in Florida, Reggae Sumfest (Jamaica) and Irie Jamboree in

new York. Spice says, "The dancehall public in the USA has accepted me and it's great. I have really worked hard to get to this stage of my career."

Spice has also started to diversify her business interests as an entrepreneur starting a 'Spicey Empire'. She recently opened a high-end clothing store called 'Spicey Couture' in an upscale mall in St. Andrew and a beauty salon called 'Spicey Salon', also in that area. She also teamed up with her fiancé and opened a sports bar in Portmore, St. Catherine called '8 Ball Lounge'.

On the musical side of things, in 2010 she again walked away with the 'Female Dancehall Artiste of the Year' award at the EME awards. She also recently collaborated with popular female entertainer Pamputtae for the single **Slim vs. Fluffy** which ruled the local airwaves and dominated the number one spot on the Canadian dancehall charts. In addition, she recently shot a video for her single, **Back Broad**, on the **DNA** riddim. Spice is currently working on promoting her latest single, **Jim Screechie** released on the Equinoxx Label.

With her hectic weekend schedules and business ventures, Spice always ensures that she puts in quality time at home with her fiancé Nicholas Lall and her son Nicholas Jr. "I adore my son and my family and it is hard being away from them on the weekends, but during the week, I put in quality time. Family is everything to me," Spice says.

Spice also recently inked a three-album deal with VP Records and plans to release her debut album soon.