



eat

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Sizzling rice soup is offered at a few Chinese restaurants in the area. It has a mild broth that is filled with vegetables and chicken (or shrimp). It gets its name from the crispy rice that sizzles when dropped into the hot soup.

Hot and sour soup, which is often offered as a first course, has fewer ingredients. The savory broth has red peppers or white pepper (hot) and vinegar (sour). It also usually has bamboo shoots, sometimes accompanied by tofu and eggs. Gelatinous wood-ear mushrooms complement the hearty broth flavors.

All of the soups I tried were traditional recipes (no fusion ingredients like truffle or other creative alternatives). The soups were either delivered or ordered for takeout.

A common issue with the to-go soups was not enough broth to properly submerge the packed ingredients. If you like it as more of a soup, order a second container with just broth when you order for pickup or delivery.

Cindy's Chinese Garden, Redmond

The wor wonton soup was extraordinary because of Cindy's barbecued pork. The pork was trimmed of all fat and marinated in soy, brown sugar and white pepper for more than six hours. It was then barbecued. The result is smoky meat that was tender despite its thick cuts. The pork lends a hint of smoky flavor to the broth. The wontons in this soup may be the best in Central Oregon. And there were plenty of tasty dumplings, which are made by wrapping thin wontons around juicy aromatic pork. The shrimp were large and cooked just enough to remain tender. There were big disks of water chestnuts, chunks of tender carrots and other vegetables that rounded out the soup.

Chan's, Bend and Redmond

The dark broth of this hot and sour soup was a bit spicier and sweeter than the others I've tried. Nonetheless, it offered a satisfying tang from a touch of vinegar. It was filled with small squares of tofu, lily flowers, tomatoes, chewy bamboo shoots and wood-ear mushrooms (aka black mushrooms).

Chan's Wor Wonton soup had the most perfectly-cooked and juiciest wontons filled with a combination of shrimp and pork. The wontons were soft and firm, not too large or doughy, and floated in a meaty broth. This meaty broth had a sweeter profile due to big slices of sweet barbecue pork, tender chicken and beef.

CHI Chinese and Sushi Bar, Bend

Chi's wor wonton soup had the freshest flavors and a complex broth. The broccoli and bok choy retained their bright green color and firmness, as they were perfectly cooked. Shiitake mushrooms, chicken, gulf shrimp and barbecue pork brought protein and a taste of umami. The

wonton filling was juicy and tasty, but the wontons were a bit too delicate and fell apart.

Gee's Family Restaurant, Prineville

Gee's makes wor wonton soup with a unique flavor profile. The soup and the wonton filling have a distinct, pleasant ginger taste. The soup was chock full of ingredients, including firm broccoli spears, large onion slices, snap peas and carrots. While the shrimp were large and juicy, the other meats were a bit tougher. The wontons are large, and I could see bits of scallions, and again, an unmistakable taste of ginger. However, there was some hard fat in a couple of the wontons. If you can overlook it, the flavor was excellent and a welcome change.

Yi's Wok, Redmond

Yi's makes a sizzling rice soup that would have been undoubtedly best eaten at the restaurant. It's always a better show to listen to the popping and sizzling rice as it is dumped into the hot soup at your table. Yi's provides a separate packet with the rice so it is crisp when you bring it home and serve it. The mild-flavored broth was filled with lots of vegetables, water chestnuts, egg, chicken, pork, shrimp and beef. Puffed rice gave the soup a nutty flavor and crunchy texture. I heated the soup before topping it with rice.

Yi's wor wonton soup had wontons with lots of aromatics for a fuller flavor. This was the only soup that included Chinese cabbage along with snap peas, zucchini and big chunks of carrots. The beef and other meat were the weak links in this soup, but the light broth had a tasty complexity.

Double Happiness, Bend

This Chinese restaurant's wor wonton soup was packed full of big, flavorful wontons, tender beef, chicken and bar-



Cindy's Chinese Garden wor wonton derives its smoky flavor from delicious barbecue pork.



Chi's Chinese and Sushi wor wonton soup is fresh and complex.

becue pork. I've had this soup several times in the past and always felt satisfied, but it didn't compare well to the others. The broccoli and zucchini were a bit overdone. Long pieces of celery were tender but firm. The shrimp was overdone, chewy and smaller than other offerings.

Restaurant addresses

Chan's
1005 SE 3rd Street, Bend

541-389-1725
chanchinese.com

CHI Chinese and Sushi Bar
3118 N Hwy 97, Bend
541-323-3931
bendchi.com

Cindy's Chinese Garden
1362 S Hwy 97, Redmond
541-923-9928
cindyschinesegarden.net

Double Happiness
2115 NE Hwy 20
541-319-7886
dhchinese.com

Gee's Family Restaurant
987 NW 2nd, Prineville
541-447-6115
<https://www.facebook.com/Gees-Family-Restaurant>

Yi's Wok
615 NW 6th Street, Redmond
541-316-1298
yiswokofredmond.com