

Austin American-Statesman

Hao Hao Restaurant – Round Rock Review

FOOD AND DRINK/ON THE SIDE



Marla Brose FOR AMERICAN-STATESMAN

The Vietnamese hot and sour chicken soup has different flavors in every spoonful.

HEAD SOUTH NOW NOW TO DINE AT HAO HAO

BY DALE RICE

Tucked in the corner of a large strip shopping center in far South Austin is a Vietnamese-Chinese restaurant with a thriving business.

At lunch on Sunday, nearly every table was occupied, several with large after-church groups. The next night, one of the slowest for most restaurants, at least half the tables were full, with a steady turnover in customers.

Judging by the orders that passed by, most were there for the Chinese food. But it's Hao Hao's Vietnamese menu that offers a welcome change of pace.

The spring rolls (\$2.75) featured shrimp, pork, lettuce and rice noodles, with just a hint

of basil, and a good peanut sauce for dipping.

The lemongrass shrimp (\$8.25) provided a generous amount of shrimp cooked with onions and mushrooms in a lemongrass sauce.

The beef with ginger root (\$7.25) combined bite-size, extremely tender pieces of beef with onions and mushrooms in a sauce packed with red pepper flakes and minced ginger for a very spicy kick.

They were delicious, but my favorite was the Vietnamese hot and sour chicken soup (\$7.95). The bowl of broth was filled with cabbage, celery, pineapple, okra, tomatoes, jalapeños, basil and chicken breast, with a side of rice noodles to combine with the soup. It was at once sweet and zesty, with flavors and textures changing with each bite.

With dishes like that, it was easy to see why a steady stream of South Austin folks are well acquainted with Hao Hao.

Hao Hao: 1901 W. William Cannon Drive, 447-8121 **Rating:** Forks up **Price:** Cheap