

Singapore's 10 most popular dimsum dishes from the most healthy to the least

1. Har gao, 18g
Calories: 27,
Total fat: 1g,
Saturated fat: 0.3g,
Sodium: 74mg

* Nutritional figures from the Health Promotion Board's website. Ranking is based on total fat content per serving, which may vary.
* The daily recommended intake of calories, total fat, saturated fat and sodium for an average adult is 2,000, 64g, 21g and 2,000mg respectively.

PHOTOS: EDWIN KOO



2. Siew mai, 16g
Calories: 29, Total fat: 1g,
Saturated fat: 0.4g, Sodium: 99mg



3. Plain chee cheong fun with sauce, 101g
Calories: 133, Total fat: 2g,
Saturated fat: 1g, Sodium: 271mg



4. Pan-fried turnip cake, 23g
Calories: 62, Total fat: 4g,
Saturated fat: 1.4g, Sodium: 140mg



5. Deep-fried beancurd roll with shrimp, 29g
Calories: 77, Total fat: 6g,
Saturated fat: 2.1g, Sodium: 133mg



6. Stewed chicken feet, 108g
Calories: 84, Total fat: 6g,
Saturated fat: 1.8g, Sodium: 253mg



7. Egg tart, 64g
Calories: 178, Total fat: 10g,
Saturated fat: 5.5g, Sodium: 75mg



8. Deep-fried yam puff, 69g
Calories: 201, Total fat: 12g,
Saturated fat: 5.4g, Sodium: 794mg



9. Char siew pau, 120g
Calories: 363, Total fat: 15g,
Saturated fat: 5.5g, Sodium: 473mg



10. Steamed pork ribs, 242g
Calories: 282, Total fat: 20g,
Saturated fat: 7.3g, Sodium: 1,331mg

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SILVER RIVER ALUMINIUM CONSTRUCTIO
***, ROP, OC,

Okay in moderation



▶ **Teo Pau Lin**
FOOD CORRESPONDENT

TWO weeks ago, Hong Kongers received stomach-churning news. Dimsum, their beloved breakfast and lunch ritual, could be bad for their health.

On April 13, Hong Kong's Food and Environmental Hygiene Department issued a health warning after researchers studied the nutritional contents of 75 dimsum dishes from 10 dining outlets.

They found that some dishes contained high levels of fat and sodium, and most were low in calcium and dietary fibre.

The department cautioned diners to choose dimsum items wisely, as consuming too much fat could cause obesity, cardiovascular diseases and certain cancers.

Too much sodium, which is found in

dishes made with lots of salt, black bean sauce or MSG, could lead to hypertension, kidney disease and stomach cancer.

There was more bad news for lovers of steamed beancurd skin roll, yellow bean pudding with coconut milk and marinated jelly fish. These three items scored the highest in levels of total fat, saturated fat and sodium respectively.

Over in Singapore, should foodies worry? Restaurateurs say Singaporeans don't eat dimsum as often as Hong Kongers.

"Hong Kong people eat dimsum for breakfast, lunch and afternoon tea, even if it's ordering just two items. It's part of our culture," says Hong Kong-born Chan Kwok, masterchef of Hua Ting restaurant in Orchard Hotel.

Most Singaporeans eat dimsum only occasionally, so they're not as exposed to the dietary risk some dishes may pose, he adds.

It helps, too, that the range of dimsum available in Singapore is only about half that of Hong Kong's.

"What we have here is not as fatty as that in Hong Kong," says Daniel Goh, managing director of the Mouth group of Chinese restaurants.

For example, steamed beef balls — among the top five fattiest dishes ranked by the study — are not widely available in Singapore, he says.

At his five outlets, only four out of 20 dimsum dishes are deep-fried or pan-fried.

However, Singapore favourites like egg tarts, fried yam puffs and beancurd roll with shrimp are undeniably high in fat, and should be taken moderately, says Changi General Hospital's chief dietitian, Magdaline Cheong.

Healthier options include century egg or cuttlefish porridge, lotus leaf rice without Chinese sausage, vegetarian or red bean pau, she adds.

She suggests that diners tuck into dimsum only occasionally, and "definitely not weekly". As a general rule, she adds, order a few dimsum dishes and complete the meal with rice, porridge or soup noodles, and a vegetable dish.

So you can still eat your favourite char siew pau — just not too often. Phew.

Do you know any restaurant here which serves healthy dimsum? Let us know at stliffe@sph.com.sg

Advertisement

Simple Pleasures

Simple dishes become oral pleasures in the hands of master chef Chan Chen Hei

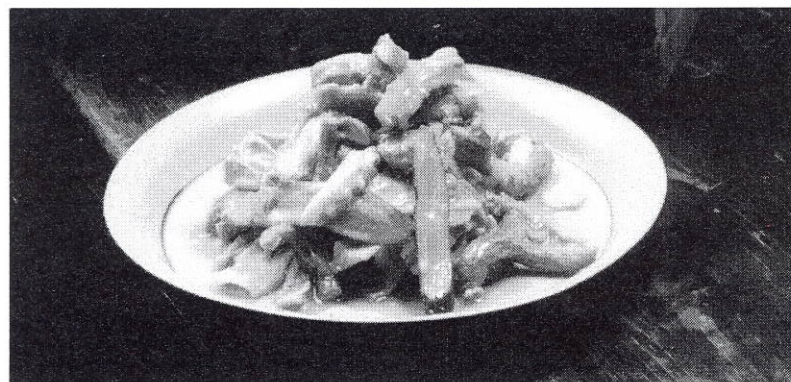
firstbiteswithUOB
Wong Ah Yoke

GOOD chefs are aplenty in Singapore, but great chefs are a much rarer species.

One of them is Chan Chen Hei, the man behind Chef Chan's Cantonese Cuisine in Odeon Towers.

The Hong Kong-born chef came to Singapore in the early 1990s to helm the Hai Tien Lo restaurant in Pan Pacific hotel. He left to open Chef Chan's in Saffra Toa Payoh two years ago before moving it to the heart of the city in March this year.

He stands out from the coterie of Hong Kong chefs because of his signature touch. Whether it is a simple roast chicken or a braised duck, his cooking is never one-dimensional.



His dishes boast an unrivalled complexity of flavours that trigger off tingles of pleasure on the taste buds.

The roast chicken, for example, is raised to practically an artform in the hands of the master chef.

Called Chef Chan's famous crispy chicken (\$14 for half a bird), it is unmatched in its juicy meat and crispy skin. Couple that with the wholesome flavour of the meat and the aromatic marinade on the skin, and you get the best roast chicken in Singapore.

The sauteed eel with bitter melon and spices (\$22) is another example of a dish that serves up an explosion of flavours. You

get pretty much a bit of every sensation the tongue can detect at one go.

The multi-dimensional facets of the dish work very well with the eel by detracting from its fishiness without masking its true flavour.

Another dish to get your taste buds tingling is the braised boneless duck with danggui root (above, \$22 for half a duck).

The aroma of danggui, a Chinese herb usually used in nourishing soups, is so well-imbedded into the tender duck meat that it must have cooked over a low fire for hours.

The baked flower crab with beer (\$4.40 per 100g) will certainly get you heady with pleasure. And it has nothing to do with the alcohol in the beer, which would anyway have evaporated with the cooking.

Instead, it has to do with the bitter flavours of the beer interacting with the sweetness of the crab to produce a brew of intriguing flavours.

At Chef Chan's, there is no soya or chilli sauce on the table. But the food tastes so good on its own that, chances are, you won't even notice that.

Now that is the sign of a great chef.

CHEF CHAN'S CANTONESE CUISINE

331 North Bridge Road
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