

LV Chinese Seafood in Long Beach dishes out nostalgia

The place to go when you long for hard noodles with hot mustard and duck sauce

[Merrill Shindler](#) January 15, 2019 at 2:14 p.m.



LV Chinese Seafood in Long Beach (Photo by Merrill Shindler)

"Seafood" is part of the name at LV Chinese, north of Long Beach Airport on restaurant-heavy Norse Way.

The menu informs us that, "You never imagined that healthy Chinese food could be this tasty!" And, indeed, there's plenty of seafood on the menu. And the cooking may (or may not) be healthier than most.



Egg drop soup at LV Chinese Seafood in Long Beach (Photo by Merrill Shindler)

But my real takeaway from LV is a wonderful, warm, cozy feeling of having meandered back to the good old days, when hard noodles arrived as soon as you sat down, along with hot mustard and the sweet sauce we always referred to as "duck sauce," which may have been something we just made up, because we rarely ordered duck back then. It was fancy stuff. And we weren't out for fancy food. We were out for Chinese — done old school.

And that's what LV delivers, and very nicely too. The menu is a pleasure to meander through, filled with reassuring dishes like egg foo young, done four ways ... fried rice, done eight ways ... crab Rangoon, paper-wrapped chicken and a po-po plate ... egg flower soup and wor wonton soup ... almond chicken, lemon chicken and sweet and sour chicken ... chop suey, done six ways ... and, yes, moo goo gai pan, which is really chicken with mushrooms, but it comes with a name that carries me back in time, to when my family always went out for Chinese food on Sunday night.

There are even pre-set dinners, two of them, the Gourmet Dinner for \$19.95 per person (with a two person minimum), the Mandarin Dinner, going for \$16.50 a person. Complete dinners come with "one egg roll, soup of the day and fried rice," a lot of food for entrees that run \$11.50 to \$13.95. All that's missing is the old style of "one from Column A, two from Column B ... and with four you get egg rolls ..."

Okay, admittedly I'm nostalgic to find myself in a Chinese restaurant that reminds me of my youth. But there's more to LV Chinese than nostalgia. There's food that's soul-satisfying, and a pleasure with which to become reacquainted. I've been so busy, in recent years, incinerating my tastebuds on the outlandishly hot peppers of Szechuan and Hunan, that I've forgotten the simple pleasure of beef with broccoli or almond chicken. I'll admit that sweet & sour seems a lot sweeter to me now than it did in memory. But then, I don't inhale Snickers the way I used.

These days, everything seems overly sweet to me, and too salty too — possibly because our thrill-starved tastebuds demand more and more. But there's some unexpected subtlety to the cooking at LV Chinese. Let us return to our beloved moo goo gai pan, a dish that's may be in a sauce that's a tad too thick, but otherwise is very well-prepared. The

chicken slices are many, and tender, oozing goodness.

The mushrooms are many as well, and not cooked into submission. These are ingredients treated with respect, wokked just enough, and not more. I was duly impressed.

Of course everything meal came with steamed white rice, because that's how it was done back in the day. It's the default rice, the rice you order because you do. (There's brown rice on the menu as well, a bit of modernism, but not overwhelming. Honestly, I think white rice goes better with the sauces — even if it has far less nutritional value.)

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The menu tells us there are numerous concessions to the way things are today. They use "cholesterol-free canola and specially brewed mild soy sauce." They "do not use MSG." They take "special requests ... a unique vegetarian dish, low salt or milder spices ..."

They also say they have "fresh seafood, live fish, crab and lobster right in our tanks." Which may be true. Sometimes. But the times I've dropped by, only a few of the tanks have been in use.

An empty tank is a lonely design element. But it's easy to overlook, especially if you show up with a bunch of heavy forks, happy to dig into their mu shu and their kung pao and their oyster sauce and their black bean sauce over many proteins and veggies.

And looking forward, believe it or not, to those slices of orange for dessert. Yup, just like back in the day.

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him an email at mreats@aol.com.

LV Chinese Seafood

Rating: 2 stars

Address: 4139 Norse Way, Long Beach

Information: [562-938-8088](tel:562-938-8088), www.lvchineseseafood.com

Cuisine: Chinese

When: Lunch and dinner, every day

Details: Beer and wine; reservations accepted

Atmosphere: Very old school Chinese restaurant, the place to go when you long for hard noodles with hot mustard and duck sauce, and memorable dishes like moo gai pan, chop suey many ways and eggs foo young many ways. Lots of seafood too. But it's the nostalgic dishes that leap out at me.

Prices: About \$18 per person

Suggested dishes: 88 Daily Lunch Specials (\$6.25-\$11.95), 11 Appetizers (\$5.50-\$13.95), 10 Soups (\$5.95-\$8.95), 4 Lettuce Wraps (\$11.50-\$12.95), 4 Moo Shu Dishes (\$8.75-\$11.25), 15 Shrimp Dishes (\$13.95-\$17.25), 8 Fish Dishes (\$11.95-\$14.95), 5 Scallop (\$14.50-\$15.95), 15 Clam/Crab/Lobster/Oyster/Squid Dishes (\$11.95; Seasonal), 8 Beef Dishes (\$10.95-\$15.50), 4 Pork Dishes (\$10.50-\$11.50), 13 Poultry Dishes (\$9.50-\$27.95), 14 Vegetable Dishes (\$9.25-\$13.95), 6 Chop Suey Dishes (\$9.25-\$13.95), 4 Egg Foo Young Dishes (\$9.75-\$11.25), 4 Hot Pot Dishes (\$13.50-\$15.50), 26 Noodle Dishes (\$6.50-

\$11.95), 13 Rice Dishes (\$6.50-\$13.95), Mandarin Dinner (\$16.50 per person), "Gourmet" Dinner (\$19.95 per person)

Cards: MC, V

What the stars mean: Ratings range from 4 stars to zero. 4 stars is world-class (worth a trip from anywhere). 3 stars is most excellent, even exceptional (worth a trip from anywhere in Southern California). 2 stars is a good place to go for a meal (visit if you're in the neighborhood). 1 star is a place to go if you're hungry and it's nearby. Zero stars is not worth writing about.