



BOEGER



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TASTING ROOM OPEN DAILY 10-5



## FOOD

BY TODD SOUTH



Poke bowls can be filled with myriad ingredients.  
PHOTO/ALLISON YOUNG

## Plenty of fish

### What was once a sushi restaurant

connected to a chicken wing shop is now Ijji Noodle House and Poke Don. Though the poke side has few seats and is geared more toward take-out, you can order it from the much larger dining room. With a sizeable menu of Japanese, Vietnamese, Korean and Chinese items, my family settled in for our latest outing.

My son ordered fresh coconut water (\$3.95), a whole coconut with the top cracked open by our server. Pop a straw in, and you're all set. The 4 year-old enjoyed it, but seemed puzzled by the presentation. Orders of veggie-filled rice paper spring and summer rolls (\$5.95 each) were shared—shrimp for spring, flame broil pork for summer. Both were good and included plenty of meat. The peanut sauce had a lot of fragrant flavor and a surprising amount of kick.

*Karaage* (\$6.95) bites were drizzled in spicy mayo, topped with fish flake and *nori* slivers, and served with ponzu sauce for dipping. The coating on the moist, dark meat chicken bites was nicely crispy and seasoned. Though *takoyaki* (\$5.95, six pieces) octopus balls were served in a similar manner and plenty warm, the ratio of seafood-to-tempura in the filling could have been better.

A good bowl of *pho* starts with a rich beef bone broth, long-simmered with veggies, spices and fish sauce. My daughter's vegetarian *pho* with tofu (\$9.95) was full of noodles and perfectly cooked veggies—with big slabs of lightly grilled tofu on top—but the broth was incredibly bland. She added shoyu, hoisin and sriracha just so it would taste like—something.

Ramen is served with cubed daikon on the side. The bowls include fish cake, bean sprouts, fresh baby spinach, *ajitama*

and *nori*. Pork bone broth formed the base of black *tonkotsu* ramen (\$11.95), topped with sliced pork belly and a few slivers of roasted black garlic—shredded wood ear mushroom added for an extra buck. While the broth did have decent flavor, my daughter-in-law added a bit of shoyu to taste. The noodles were springy enough and seemed fresh. The soft-boiled egg wasn't a perfect example of marinated *ajitama*, but close enough.

My son's bowl of miso spicy ramen with pork belly (\$11.95) included corn and crumbled pork sausage. The *nori* was replaced by considerably more spinach, which he enjoyed. The spicy heat overwhelmed the miso a bit, but he didn't seem to mind. A friend's bowl of spicy chicken ramen (\$11.95) featured chicken broth with five-spice soy sauce, crumbled braised chicken and wood ear mushroom. The broth was great.

My cold noodle bowl (\$12.95) included a nest of vermicelli topped with daikon, carrot, cucumber, lettuce, tons of delicious flame broiled pork and a couple of meaty egg rolls sectioned into bite-sized pieces. My only complaint was some difficulty in pulling apart the noodle ball. My grandson's three scoop poke bowl (\$11.95) had brown rice, salmon, scallop, octopus, pineapple ponzu, kewpie mayo, *tobiko*, krab, seaweed salad, pineapple, edamame, lemon, salmon skin, garlic chip, seaweed flake and tempura crunch. He wants everything. The scallop and octopus were good, but the salmon texture seemed thawed and refrozen. Regardless, the young poke aficionado was pleased with his meal. □

### Ijji Noodle House and Poke Don

199 Damonte Ranch Pkwy., 870-1198

Ijji Noodle House and Poke Don is open from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. Learn more at [ijjisushiandhibachi.com](http://ijjisushiandhibachi.com).