

The Food Truck Full of Heat

The city of Austin loves a food truck. The neighborhood of East Austin, known for its Mexican American history and rapid urban development, seems to have a food truck at every corner. Spicy Boys Fried Chicken is a pleasant surprise that isn't afraid to pack a punch of heat with sweet Asian flavors.

The Spicy Boys Fried Chicken sits right next to Zilker Brewing Company on East Sixth Street. Getting to the truck is easy but the parking is sparse. I took a few trips around the block before finding free Sunday street parking a few blocks up the street. If I was unlucky, I would have to pay \$15 to park at a lot just around the corner.

The truck is tucked into the corner of the brewery's expansive picnic area filled with large orange tables under warm and bright string lights. The relaxed and casual setup is great for intimate conversations across the table while being a great host for groups of friends migrating from the brewery. The sounds of rock music and dog barks fall onto patrons and drowns out the bustle of the highway.

My classmate, Juliana, and I visited on a Sunday afternoon, just as the brewery was coming to life and as the sun started to set. While the cornhole tournaments and football games began, we walked across the wood chips and were immediately greeted by one of the cooks. He waited patiently as we assessed the menu. It's pretty straightforward but the variety of each meal's flavors left and each item having a tiny flame scared me into going for the mildest dish.

Juliana decided to get the Nugs (\$10.99/10 pieces) with the Thai basil ranch and tater tots (\$3.49.) I ordered the OG fried chicken sandwich (\$9.49) and Som Tom (\$3.99) totaling out to \$17.50 with a 20% tip. I believe that sandwiches are a perfect meal so getting the OG felt like a no-brainer. I chose the Som Tom to counter the spiciness of the sandwich with a cooler side.

The server quickly punched in our orders and flipped the tablet around to show a below \$20 order. We walked a few steps to sit at one of the large orange tables and people watched the patrons at the brewery just a few yards away.

Just about five minutes later, the server called out our names and with a smile and a small "enjoy," handed us large, warm and bright pink bags with their brand, a perfect thick line tattoo design for chicken lovers or even a poster. I should have saved it and hung it up in my room!

My sandwich, wrapped in branded foil, is a fried fusion of pan-Asian flavors and southern classics. The warm bun is dressed with a creamy basil ranch that tastes too much like an Italian pesto. It is an unexpected flavor at first, but it elevates the chicken.

The fried chicken has a faultless crunch and melts in your mouth. The juicy and tender insides perfectly balance the crunch. It's marinated in a sweet chili honey that has enough heat to start cleaning your sinuses while sweetly soothing your taste buds. In between the bottom bun and

the chicken is shredded unripe green papaya to hone in on the Thai influences. The half soggy half crunchy papaya adds an exciting texture while not overpowering the sandwich's overall flavor.

The nuggets are a triumph. The meat steams and drips with the same sauces as the sandwich after the first bite and the ranch wonderfully cools the chicken. The nuggets are a great choice if you can't commit to a sandwich. Although they are pricier, by \$1.50, it is worth every penny.

The sides were frankly disappointing. The flame on the menu and the deep red color indicated that the tater tots would have some spice and heat, but there was nothing. It was a classic salty tot that was falsely advertised and underwhelming.

The Som Tom, a papaya salad, was confused. It was served in a small to-go bowl with the "best by" sticker still on it, hinting that it is a pre-prepared side that sits in the fridge all day. A Som Tom is supposed to be a spicy, savory and juicy Thai salad, but Spicy Boys' salad missed all of those tastes. The shredded papaya was hard, dry and bitter. The tamarind juice sat at the bottom of the bowl and barely added flavor once mixed into the rest of the salad. The crumbles of peanuts was the only enjoyable part.

The laid-back atmosphere of East Austin and Zilker Brewing Company's picnic area is a perfect spot for a late afternoon lunch with friends or even a first date. I went home that night raving about the chicken to my girlfriend and promised to take her soon. Despite the sides, Spicy Boys Fried Chicken is a food truck worth going out of your way for.

Spicy Boys Fried Chicken

1701 E 6th St.

Sunday 11 AM – 8 PM | Monday 11 AM – 9 PM | Tuesday-Thursday 11 AM – 10 PM | Friday - Saturday 11 AM – 11 PM

\$4 – \$11

Outdoor seating, wheelchair accessible, bathrooms located in Zilker Brewing Company

contact@spicyboyschicken.com

[Website](#) [Instagram](#)

