

ALL RANGOONS ARE GOOD RANGOONS

A PEEK INTO THE DUBUQUE RANGOON SCENE

BY KRISTINA NESTEBY

Crab rangoons are a Chinese-American appetizer staple and always find their way to my belly whether I'm at a buffet or ordering a meal. For the uninitiated, a crab rangoon is a deep fried wonton filled with a cream cheese concoction. The wonton wrappers can be folded in various ways to seal in the piping hot filling which usually consists of cream cheese and imitation crab meat as well as seasonings and aromatics like garlic and green onions. Below are three fan favorites according to my highly scientific Facebook poll. We have 10 more places to cover in Dubuque, so stay tuned for more crab rangoon-age in the future.



OOLONG ASIAN CUISINE

145 W 11TH ST, DUBUQUE, IA

563-239-1019

LOVEOOLONG.COM

Hours: Mon-Sat: 11 AM-2:30 PM & 4:30-9 PM;
Sun: 11 AM-2:30 PM

Walking into Oolong Asian Cuisine, you wouldn't recognize it from its former life. Colorful glass lanterns hover over tables and booths while Top 40 hits serenade you through your meal. Although the menu is fairly small with six entrées and six appetizers, the rich flavors and passion behind the food are not lacking.

Owner Ken Lin wanted to offer the Dubuque community something different, and after cooking the typical sesame chicken and general's chicken fare for many years, he was ready for change too. A fairly new addition to the menu, Oolong offers lobster rangoons that are filled with equal parts real lobster meat and imitation crab meat. The wrapper is the largest I've seen and is on the thicker side. The rangoons are served with a side of Thai sweet chili sauce which is to say a fancier sweet and sour sauce. A top pick for many rangoon enthusiasts, Oolong's rangoons are on the bougie side without being pretentious.

Coming in at 4 for \$7, these rangoons are on the higher end of the price spectrum, but it only reflects the quality of the ingredients and, well, lobster!



GREAT DRAGON

3500 DODGE ST, DUBUQUE, IA

563-583-8860

GREATDRAGONDUBUQUE.COM

Hours: Sun-Thu: 9:30 AM-9:30 PM;
Fri-Sat: 9:30 AM-10 PM

I say this in the most loving way possible: if you're looking for "cheap Chinese," look no further than Great Dragon. Located in the strip mall next to Target, Great Dragon offers a lunch buffet and ginormous lunch and dinner specials (meals) in addition to à la carte pint and quart entrées.

Great Dragon's crabmeat rangoons are simple and sweet. They have a smaller, thinner wonton wrapper that doesn't shatter although they do feel fragile compared to their counterparts. They're kind of the Lay's chip of the rangoon world while most are thicker like Ruffles. The filling is very smooth and makes you wonder if there's even any crab inside, but something about its simplicity has me going back for seconds. Warmed sweet and sour sauce is provided or a variety of sauce packets are available. The lunch buffet is the way to go if you're looking for a variety of options and an unlimited supply of rangoons, but if buffets aren't your thing, you can get a lunch or dinner special and swap two rangoons for the eggroll.

You can get 6 for \$5.35. I can easily down two or three during lunch and could probably eat all six for dinner if you dared me. (Please, someone, dare me.)



HOUSE OF CHINA

170 JOHN F KENNEDY RD, DUBUQUE, IA

563-557-8275

HOUSEOFCHINA.COM

Hours: Sun-Thu: 11 AM-2:30 PM & 4:30-9 PM;
Fri-Sat: 11 AM-2:30 PM & 4:30-10 PM

House of China is a longtime favorite of many Dubuquers with a slew of menu options and even a lunch buffet on Sundays (perfect for those hang-over cravings). They have been serving the community since 1984 and have continuously been the winner of Hospice of Dubuque's BestFest Best Place for Chinese Cuisine every single year.

The crabmeat rangoons at House of China are average in size and are wrapped with a thicker wonton skin. This gives the rangoons a slightly bubbly appearance and add extra texture to an already crunchy delight. The creamy cheese filling is garlic-forward, and you can see a smattering of green onion dispersed throughout. You can dress the rangoons on your own with sweet and sour sauce, hot mustard, or my favorite: both. Although the crab is not the most prominent flavor, these were the top pick in my poll.

With the option of half and full orders, these rangoons are priced at an affordable 6 for \$5.25 or 3 for \$2.84. You could do a half order, but don't kid yourself. Or just go on Sunday for the buffet and eat as many as you can shove in your gullet. Instead of judging you, I'll be there cheering you on. Go get 'em.