

SLURP SEASON

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H-Mart has one of the city's best selections of instant ramen. This chart will help you navigate them.

As the days get increasingly shorter and the city transforms into a soggy gray puddle, basic life functions can feel like a chore.

Leaving home to get groceries or making yourself presentable enough to dine out become laughable pursuits. Staying home all day—buried beneath blankets, eyeball-deep in a Netflix binge—is a perfectly acceptable winter hobby.

And to fuel your marathon lounging, you're going to want to stock up on meals that require the least amount of effort. Cue instant ramen.

We're not talking about Cup Noodles, though. We're not complete philistines.

With the arrival of H-Mart, a Korean supermarket mecca at Southeast 33rd Avenue and Belmont Street last April, Portlanders have easy access to an overwhelming array of freeze-dried soups, with many flavors you can't get at the convenience store around the corner.

We sampled 19 and ranked them on scales of sweet, spicy, salty and sweet. Consider this your guide to easy winter eating.

SWEET

SPICY

MILD

LOLA SEAFOOD SOUP: The creamy lime and crawfish flavor of this ramen is impressively strong for instant soup. As is the accompanying punch of spice.



NONGSHIM KIMCHI NOODLE SOUP: Kimchi fanatics may be better off buying a jar and boiling noodles, but this ramen packs a surprising punch of heat, and the freeze-dried morsels maintain an at least perceptible amount of tang.



NONGSHIM CHAPAGETTI: Very thick noodles and dark, sweet broth that are easy to oversaturate and make bland with too much water.



SAMYANG KOREAN GOMTANG: Nice soy sauce-heavy broth and large, soft and chewy noodles. The perfect mild bowl of soup to cuddle up with when winter sniffles hit.



PALDO JJAJANGMEN: Big, extra-chewy noodles and very sweet black bean paste sauce with ambiguous chunks of what are either plums or beef. It's loaded with sugar, but the flavor is still full.



SAMYANG SU TAH RAMEN: Really chewy noodles and spice that ramps up a couple of levels as you eat.

MAMA SPICY PORK: Thin, dense, delicious noodles and a super-flavorful broth enhanced by an included sesame oil packet.



SAMYANG (KOREAN LABEL): A really mild ramen with a salty-sweet soy sauce broth that would be great with a soft-boiled egg added to it.



SAPPORO ICHIBAN TONKOTSU RAMEN: Simple, lightly chicken-flavored broth that's some of the most comforting to sip. Keep this blanket in a bowl in store for days when you're snowed in.

INDOMIE CHICKEN CURRY: Classic instant ramen noodles upgraded with deliciously rich yellow curry spice.



SAPPORO ICHIBAN ORIGINAL: The most reminiscent of cup o' noodles classics, but in every way better.



PALDO KOKOMEN SPICY CHICKEN FLAVOR: This ramen cured my cold. The broth is light and clean with peppery spice and salty chicken broth.



VIFON PHU GIA MIEN: The translucent glass noodles in this ramen are extra slimy and slurpable. The pork flavor is subtle, but the bamboo shoot tang comes through prevalently.

SAPPORO ICHIBAN CHOW MEIN: These thin noodles are sponges for rich, fish sauce-heavy broth. Additional seaweed flakes on top add a nice, earthy kick of salt.



NONGSHIM SHIN RAMYUN: A rich salty broth with subtle seafood hints and a substantial amount of spice.



SAMYANG SEAFOOD FLAVOR U-DONG: For fish lovers, the seafood flavoring in this ramen, despite being freeze-dried, is surprisingly robust.



OTTOGI CHEESE RAMEN: If Annie's mac 'n' cheese were ramen, it might taste a little bit like this. But be prepared for a substantial addition of spice.



HAO HAO SATE ONION FLAVOR: Super-thin, delicate noodles in a light broth. The hints of onion flavor get a little lost behind the soup's saltiness.

SALTY