

## Eating to Cook: Dumplings for All

BY [ANNIE COPPS](#) POSTED ON 5/19/2011

Asian dumplings are on my short list of “things I really, really, reallllllly enjoy eating.” Mostly because they’re generally one or two bites, filled with yummy things, and served with a dipping sauce. If I could have them deep-fried all the time, I wouldn’t care what they were filled with as long as they were crispy and served with an aforementioned dipping sauce. I’d eat a sneaker if it were deep-fried and served with a dipping sauce.

I recently ate at Om in Harvard Square where I haven’t been since chef Rachel Klein left, years ago, for the Seaport Hotel. I liked what she was doing there, but once she left, never felt compelled to return. That is until now. Chef Patricia Yeo is behind the stove there now and my only advice is: Get there while you can. This hyper-talented chef of head-turning pedigree doesn’t stay put for long. We know she has a project, Moksa, planned for this fall in the Central Square Theater space. Here’s where the dumplings return to the story; the dinner I just ate there started with a half dozen different manifestations of filled and fried (or steamed) wonders from all parts of Asia and each was more beautiful and tasty than the next

Pork, chicken, fish, shrimp, vegetables: some were fluffy in texture, others had a bit of vegetable crunch. Perhaps the best part were the dipping sauces four types, my favorite being an emerald green, cilantro-based, sweet and sour one with a gentle underpinning of fish sauce. I could have left then, totally sated, but there was much to discuss with my dinner companion. And the meal continued as did Yeo’s creativity, by way of a traditional Southeast Asian green papaya salad (crunchy and slightly pickled tossed with peanuts and basil); delicate, but crunchy, fried chicken with a bit of pickled pineapple (vaguely spiced with clove); a twist on the Chinatown favorite cold chicken and jellyfish salad (she served hers with pork belly); a lovely fluke preparation; and my other favorite of the meal, a surprisingly simple but elegant tangle of tagliatelle pasta made from nori and tossed with sea urchin butter.

Which wiped away every last thought of deep-fried sneakers.

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