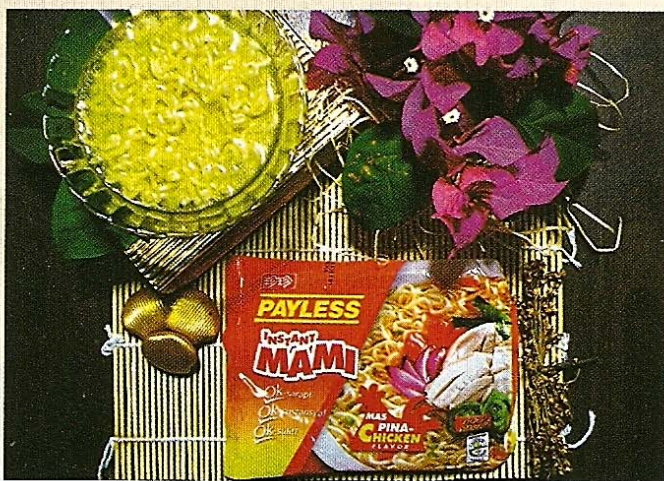


From mami to ramen, chicken instant noodles are always present in the pantry of most homes. Its ease of preparation, delicious comforting taste, and affordability, make it one of the popular meals mothers serve their kids for breakfast. But with all the brands available, you might wonder what the differences are, and which the best buy is.

In my quest to find the best instant chicken noodles, I decided to taste-test the top six most purchased brands found in all leading groceries. Since the preparation for all noodles are the same, I found it important to take note of the flavor differences of each soup base, and which item has the best quality for money spent.

Noodles of Chicken Noodles

By MARTIN H. OROSA



Payless

Payless literally lives up to its name since it retails the cheapest (P5.35 for 55g). Surprisingly, this brand was very well balanced. From its simple yellow soup color, down to its chicken bouillon taste, everything is relatively mild and just right. The noodles are neither thick nor thin, and the soup's taste is neither salty nor peppery. In fact, my only comment on Payless would be that because it is too balanced (which isn't necessarily a bad thing), it may probably fail to appease consumers accustomed to big flavors, and might have them switching to brands with stronger hints of spices and chicken essence to feel satisfied.



Lucky Me!

Just a few cents cheaper than Quickchow (P5.90 for 55g), the smell of Lucky Me's soup had me at first sniff. Its smell, owing to having twice as much chive flakes than its competitors, actually overpowered the chicken. Honestly, its aroma could verge on offensive to those who don't like onions. However, it does have a good and strong chicken meat broth taste which isn't apparent with the other first two brands. Lucky Me's noodles are as thin as Payless' and are a bit on the salty side. In fact, Lucky Me is a bit too salty, it easily made me thirsty.

Quickchow

Compared to Payless, Quickchow has thicker noodles. Priced higher than the previous brand (P6.15 for 55g), this product has a more distinct pepper and onion flavor and smell, which in my opinion, did not contribute much to its taste. Strangely, its broth is reminiscent of plain boiled chicken. The flavor is there, but is lacking. Thus, I think Quickchow could improve its broth by adding more salt and strengthening its chicken flavor to harmonize the whole dish better.

In fact, doing so would really bring

Quickchow's taste closer to that of homemade chicken soup, satisfying even fickle customers.

