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Good Alfredo? The best

UC culinology team rates 10 microwaveable chicken meals: Lean Cuisine rules roost

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As quick lunch or easy dinner, they require perhaps only a few minutes in the microwave. But which one of those slick convenience meals from the grocery taste best?

To find out, we asked members of the University of Cincinnati culinology team to blindly sample 10 frozen and refrigerated microwaveable meals. We chose chicken alfredo as our test product because it is a common meal variety - and because we had to choose one.

Perhaps more than most, the UC team - two students and two faculty advisers - know how a good microwaved meal should taste. After creating their own frozen convenience meal, the culinology team recently placed second in a national competition in Seattle.

Culinology is the relatively new field that blends the culinary arts with the science of flavoring and preserving food. These folks are admitted convenience food wonks.

While tasting in a kitchen at the Midwest Culinary Institute at Cincinnati State, the panel discussed disturbing "blue cheese notes" in one sample and wondered aloud if the chicken in another meal was pumped with moisturizing phosphates.

As you might expect, culinologists are tough to please. But they knew their favorite when they tasted it: The Lean Cuisine Chicken Fettuccini in Alfredo Sauce. Their decision wasn't based on health or nutrition. The panel lauded the Lean Cuisine meal for its appearance, good sauce-to-chicken ratio and authentic chicken flavor.

And when they were done tasting and scoring, the team asked to read the ingredients on the packaging of every meal. You'd expect nothing less from curious culinologists.

- [Dig into the taste team's finding.](#)

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