



“EXPERTLY COOKED”: Dave’s #3 combo meal. Photo by Case Clapps (‘25).

## Restaurant Review: Dave’s Hot Chicken

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Reporter

Stamford... If you’ve been craving a spicy kick and mouth-watering flavor, you’re in luck. Dave’s Hot Chicken has officially opened its doors in Stamford, and it’s already making a bold impression on local food lovers.

Located on Summer Street near the heart of downtown, the new fast-casual spot welcomed crowds this past weekend with the signature scent of crispy, juicy chicken in the air.

Originally founded in a Los Angeles parking lot in 2017 by a group of friends, Dave’s Hot Chicken has rapidly expanded across the U.S. And now, it’s Stamford’s turn to get a taste.

Customers flocked to the opening, forming a line inside that reached the door. With its colorful murals, neon signage, and hip-hop beats pulsing through the speakers, the atmosphere was lively, but the real showstopper was the food.

I had the chance to try one of the most popular menu combos Dave’s Hot Chicken had to offer. Dave’s #3 combo meal, and it was nothing short of exceptional. The meal includes two tenders, crinkle-cut fries, sliced

pickles, a side of Dave’s sauce, and a lightly toasted slice of white bread. It may sound simple, but the flavor speaks volumes.

The chicken is expertly cooked: tender on the inside, with a perfectly crispy, spiced crust on the outside. The seasoning levels range from “No Spice” to the daring “Reaper,” the hottest option which requires guests to sign a waiver before trying it. I chose “mild,” which delivered a minimal burn and sacrificed no flavor. The light heat was perfectly balanced by the sweet and tangy Dave’s sauce and the cooling crunch of the pickles.

The fries were golden, generously seasoned, and crisp, while the bread at the bottom of the box soaked up the chicken’s spice and juice, offering a buttery bonus bite at the end. Every component of the meal was thoughtfully crafted, proving why Dave’s Hot Chicken has earned its cult following.

The staff was friendly and enthusiastic, even with the nonstop rush. Orders were prepared quickly and accurately, and the kitchen remained impressively efficient. For those looking to skip the lines in the future, online ordering and delivery are also available

through the Dave’s Hot Chicken app and popular third party platforms.

In addition to their signature tenders and sliders, the menu offers customization options, from spice level to extra sauce or cheese, allowing each guest to tailor their meal to their taste. The restaurant also offers halal chicken, appealing to a wider customer base.

Dave’s Hot Chicken joins a growing list of new places to eat, aiming to heat up Stamford’s fast casual dining scene. But, it’s not just the spice that sets this spot apart; it’s the attention to flavor, texture, and overall quality.

For fans of fried chicken, and even those who think they’ve tried it all, Dave’s Hot Chicken is a must-visit. Whether you’re daring enough to take on the Reaper, or you’re content with something milder, Dave’s has something for everyone. Just bring your appetite.