



Prime beer

Fusion Brewing Co, Australia 4.9%

Typical price: \$3.40 per 330ml bottle; \$18 a six-pack



Fusion brewing specialises in beers designed for certain foods.

Their first effort, Bluebottle, goes with seafood.

The second cab off the rank was Firefly, a fizzy lager designed especially to complement spicy Asian tucker.

Third, not long on the market, is Prime (as in prime rib), a beer made to "enhance seared meat from the grill".

When they started I wasn't sure how long Fusion would last. But with some impressive awards under their belt and with their beers on the menu at a lot of good restaurants, they are doing very well.

Personally, I have a soft spot for Firefly and I'm always glad to find it when I'm eating out. It really does work well with hot Asian dishes.

Prime, made for red meat, is a stronger-flavoured beer than its predecessors.

The brewers describe it as a deep amber ale, and that does seem to sum it up fairly well.

Colour is a mid-coppery tan, the head is frothy and light with a bit of lacing and the aroma is very malty.

Mouthfeel is surprisingly smooth and thick for a beer with relatively modest alcohol content.

The flavour is quite strong, complex and interesting, dominated by malts and only moderately bitter.

On the wife-o-meter it registered a surprisingly positive: "Mmm, that's quite interesting, isn't it?"

I cheated a bit with mine: instead of searing a nice steak I drank it to accompany some reheated sausages that were left over from a weekend barbie.

Not really ideal, I suppose, but this beer is good enough to stand alone anyway.

Available from Warners at the Bay.