

Beer that's sheer gold

quaffers

Chris Shanahan



David and Karen Golding brew wonderful beer at Red Hill on Victoria's Mornington Peninsula. Their brewery and cellar door sits smack in the middle of one of Australia's leading pinot noir neighbourhoods.

The cool climate that favours pinot noir also suits hops. The Goldings grow their own because they had to be primary producers to get their liquor licence.

For drinkers, that's a bonus, as the fresh hops flowers give Red Hill Brewery beers a unique piquancy and delicacy – even in two classic styles usually devoid of hops aroma or flavour.

Red Hill Brewery wheat beer has the classic fruity esters of the style, but there's a lovely, subtle tang of tettnanger hops. It's beautifully done, as the hops don't take over the delicate wheat flavours.

Big, bold, malty scotch ale sometimes uses no hops at all. But the chocolate richness of Red Hill's version is successfully balanced by a lick of goldings and willamette.

Golden Ale is a great beer – complex, refreshing, full-flavoured but not heavy and cut through with the delicate flavour and soft bitterness of hallertau and tettnanger hops.

Order at www.redhillbrewery.com.au

Fusion Brewing Bluebottle Beer 330ml 6-pack \$17.99

Fusion Brewing says its beers are designed and brewed to match specific foods. Try this one with bream or prawns. It's suitably delicate for that purpose – light and tangy with a pleasant hops flavour but not a lot of bitterness.

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Fusion Brewing Firefly Beer 330ml 6-pack \$17.99

Firefly is a little richer than Bluebottle, a tad more alcoholic and a little hoppier – though it's far from bitter as pilsners go. It's clean, fresh and easy to drink. It's billed as a companion for spicy food, but to my taste it needs more hops bitterness to achieve that goal.

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