

FOOD/DRINK

Yakitori to go with a branded brew at Beer Market.



2 When you're feeling bullish about beer

THE concept seems straightforward enough: Drink prices here climb and fall according to consumer demand.

Now, this might leave some to speculate that this "stock exchange" approach to retailing beers and other alcoholic beverages may not necessarily be the best thing for fans of a particularly popular brand. But, as serious pub crawlers would have already guessed, there is a twist to this simple rule of economics. "Occasionally", it is said that promotions might "unnaturally" drive prices down.

So really, this novel concept, which

some say originated in Barcelona before spreading across Europe, is more of a clever marketing tool that only geeky economists and brand managers might take more seriously.

The rest of us, quite simply, should aim to revel in the opportunity to take advantage of inevitabilities such as "market crashes" — when the price of a brand hits rock bottom in light of a variety of factors, which include a sustained low demand and, conversely, "brand favouritism".

"In many ways, this is entertaining and serves as a talking point as our customers mingle," said Alex Lu, 33, business man-

ager and one-third of the three-man partnership behind Beer Market. "It is pretty thrilling for our customers to see the prices for famously expensive brands dipping while the costs of less popular drinks shoot through the roof."

Jeffrey Wan, managing director and co-founder, added: "The stock market concept has also in recent years become popular in Europe, especially Germany, and is now catching on around the world."

The story is that after chancing upon a bar in Barcelona called La Bolsa (meaning "stock exchange") that operated under similar guidelines, Jeffery then rallied two of his best buddies and bar-mates of 15 years, and "tossed the idea of starting a similar bar in Singapore". A year of research and planning later and Beer Market — bar, bistro and new addition to Clarke Quay's chill-out hotspot — was born.

And if one Singaporean's obsession with getting a good deal is anything to go by, this could be the next big thing since, well, happy hour. **DON MENDOZA**

Beer Market (Bar, Cafe, Music & Sports) is located at #01-17/02-02 The Foundry @ Clark Quay, 3B River Valley Road.