

## RESTAURANT

CINTA MT EDEN

# Fish for compliments

The anchovies and the prawns were great, says **PHOEBE FALCONER** ... and everything else was, too.

**KAN BILIS** are tiny dried anchovies that have been deep-fried. Accompanied by roasted peanuts, prawns in sambal and served with nasi lemak, they are brilliant.

And Cinta does this dish well ... one of a lot of things it does well.

A recent addition to the Dominion Rd dining strip, it inhabits the old Kashmir premises on the corner of Herbert Rd, but with new decor. The walls are white and bright, the carpet dark and the light fittings enviable. It has a small bar area and two dining spaces, with tables far enough apart to keep things discreet.

But if the interior is small, the menu is vast. It starts off, comfortably enough, with a comprehensive beer and wine list, mainly New Zealand whites and Australian reds — just as it should be. Bill has a Tiger beer, and I go for a glass of Allan Scott sauvignon blanc. Thus fortified, and with the help of waitress and co-owner Amy, we attack the menu.

The appetisers include satays, spring rolls, boxing chicken (chicken wings mari-



nated and deep fried), vegetable fritters and more. The mains, four pages of them, run the gamut of seafood, curries, sizzling platters, claypots, noodles, soups, rice dishes ... and 27 vegetarian options.

Most of the entrees and appetisers come at single serving prices or with a

price for two or three servings. That's a nice idea for large groups.

I'm not in the mood for chicken, so Amy suggests deep-fried button mushrooms to start with and the prawns as a main course. Bill, who has no problem deciding for himself, has meat parcels as an

**SEDUCTIVE:**  
Nasi lemak with sambal prawns.

PICTURE / RICHARD ROBINSON

**WHERE:** 452-454 Dominion Rd, Mt Eden, (09) 623-2808.

**OUR MEAL:** \$70.40 for two entrees, two mains, two beers, two glasses of wine.

**OUR WINE:** By the glass \$6 to \$8, by the bottle \$24 to \$49.

**VERDICT:** A very welcome addition to The Strip, until now short on authentic Malay food. Well worth a visit.

**OUT OF 10**

**FOOD: 8**  
**VALUE: 10**

**SERVICE: 9**  
**AMBIENCE: 8**

entree, followed by chicken mee goreng.

The meat parcels are more like wontons, crisp without falling apart at the first bite, and tasty. My mushrooms are crunchy and peppery on the outside and sweet and soft in the middle. Delicious.

Bill doesn't often order chicken, so his choice is surprising, but he enjoys it. It is a touch bland, but when extra sambal is offered, he is much happier.

I have never encountered nasi lemak before. It is Malay for "rice in cream", derived from the cooking process in which rice is soaked in coconut cream and the mixture is steamed. It is mild but seductively scented and the accompanying prawns in sambal are an excellent complement. I'm hooked. And there is plenty of it, so much that some of the 14 prawns are surreptitiously shovelled onto Bill's plate. He doesn't complain.

We pass on the Malaysian coffee, described as espresso with condensed milk. We vowed to come back though, and have done so, twice. You should too. □