

## INSIDE THE CHEF'S KITCHEN

**Yoshiharu Kakinuma**

Executive chef, Sushi Shikon

Specialising in Edomae sushi, made with aged fish for extra taste, Yoshiharu Kakinuma of three-Michelin-starred Sushi Shikon breaks the common misconception that the best way to savour fish is to eat it fresh. We visit his kitchen to learn more about the art of sushi.

Text by Mandy Li, photos by Samantha Sin



## • Fish Knife

When we were awarded three Michelin stars, it felt like we had won the World Cup. So I decided I should get my dream knife as an encouragement and as a tool to help me advance further. It has a beautiful long blade that lets me slice fish without pressing and deforming the shape of the meat, and it has a good handle. I treat it the way other people treat their Ferraris – I polish the blade with fine sandpaper and brush oil on the handle every day. I want it to look shiny so the customer takes pleasure in appreciating it too.



## • Wasabi Grater

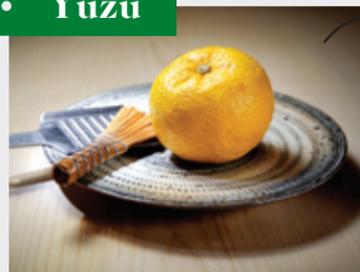
The best wasabi graters are made with shark's skin – you can feel the hardness of the surface. Grate the wasabi in a circular direction and revel in how fine the paste is. As wasabi turns dark after a while, we always grate our wasabi after the diner is seated. We are proud to say we have changed many people's impression of wasabi. When people say wasabi is too spicy, I tell them that is horseradish and to try our wasabi to know how it should really taste.

## • Kombu

Kombu is one of our basics – we use it in the broth for our pickles and marinades and in *kobujime*. *Kobujime* is an umami-enhancement skill. We sprinkle a tiny bit of salt on fresh fish and sandwich it in a big piece of kombu. Using my judgment, I decide how long to marinate and age the fish, from four days to a month. The process brings out the glutamate in the meat and makes it taste much better.



## • Yuzu



Yuzu from Shikoku, Japan, is another of our basic ingredients. We use the zest in miso soup for a refreshing, comforting flavour. We also use it to season sushi. For example, our Spanish mackerel is cured and smoked, and a touch of yuzu gives it a nice kick. We also add it to sea eel sushi, which is grilled on charcoal and smoked with bamboo leaves; a little zest brings out the barbecue flavour.

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