



JAPANESE · ITALIAN · SPANISH (FUSION) · AMUSE · FIRST COURSE · CRUDO PLATE

Kanpachi Crudo (Ponzu, Shiso, Yuzu, Arbequina)

Sashimi-grade Hawaiian kanpachi sliced paper-thin, dressed fifteen seconds before service with ponzu and yuzu zest, topped with shiso leaf chiffonade, finished with a drizzle of Arbequina olive oil. Five ingredients, no cooking, fifteen minutes of active prep across eight hours of fish-maturation time. The east-meets-west crudo that sits between Japanese sashimi and Italian crudo and belongs in a category of its own.

Protein Sashimi-grade Hawaiian kanpachi (yellowtail amberjack)

Serves 4-6 as amuse · 2-3 as starter · 200 g fish per serving size

Difficulty Beginner

Active 15 min (5 min slice + 5 min plate + 5 min sauce)

Total 8 h 15 min (8 h fish-mature + 15 min assembly)

THE STORY

Between Sashimi and Crudo

Italian crudo and Japanese sashimi share the same raw-fish foundation but are opposite philosophies. Sashimi is minimalism codified: perfect fish, perfect knife cut, maybe soy sauce and wasabi. The fish is the entire experience; anything added is a distraction. Italian crudo is the opposite: the fish is a canvas for citrus, oil, salt, and herbs. The Italian coastal cook takes a beautiful piece of fish and composes a small dish around it. Both traditions produce extraordinary results with the same basic ingredient.

Kanpachi crudo sits between the two traditions. Sashimi-grade Hawaiian kanpachi (*Seriola rivoliana*, a close cousin of yellowtail amberjack) is sliced thin like sashimi, but dressed like crudo with ponzu (Japanese citrus-soy), shiso leaf (Japanese herb), yuzu zest (Japanese citrus), and Arbequina EVOO (Spanish oil). The result is east-meets-west by design: the precision of sashimi knife work, the composition of crudo plating, the specific Japanese-Spanish fusion of ingredients that Pablo's collection is built around. This recipe documents the amuse-bouche pattern that appears repeatedly in Pablo's dinner-party orchestration — a small plate, five ingredients, paper-thin fish, fifteen minutes of prep, maximum visual and flavor impact at the start of a meal.

The fish sourcing matters more than anything else. Kanpachi from Honolulu Fish Co (Pablo supplier ✓) is farmed in Hawaiian open-ocean pens and shipped overnight — the quality gap between this and standard grocery-store yellowtail is the gap between a shipped-same-day Japanese sashimi plate and a compromise. The ● Everyday version uses the best yellowtail, hamachi, or kanpachi your local fishmonger can source — still excellent, still dramatically better than any cooked-fish alternative. The ● No Limits version is the Honolulu-Fish-Co-direct pattern that defines Pablo's Saturday dinner-party amuse.

The eight-hour mature is the unexpected detail. Raw fish benefits from a brief resting period after slicing — the cut edges begin to firm slightly, the texture becomes silkier, and the flavor integrates. Classical Japanese masters plate sashimi with a 30-minute to 2-hour rest before service. This recipe extends that to 8 hours in the refrigerator, allowing same-day morning slice for evening service. Not mandatory — works with a 15-minute rest if time-constrained — but noticeably better with the longer hold.

AT A GLANCE

Specs

YIELD 4-6 amuse servings (300 g fish)	FISH Sashimi-grade kanpachi (Hawaiian yellowtail)	CUT Paper-thin (~3 mm) against grain	DIFFICULTY Beginner ●○○○○
ACTIVE TIME 15 min (sauce + slice + plate)	FISH MATURE 15 min - 8 h refrigerated (8 h optimal)	MAKE-AHEAD Sauce up to 3 days; fish SAME DAY only	CARDINAL RULE Dress 15 seconds before service, not earlier
FINAL SIGNAL Translucent fish, glossy dressing, herb punch	PAIRS WITH Sake, Albariño, chilled Cava, nothing heavier		

UMAMI ADAPTATION

What Changed & Why

Classical Italian crudo is olive-oil + citrus + salt + herb on raw fish. Classical Japanese sashimi is minimal — fish + soy + wasabi. This recipe fuses the two via the ponzu-shiso-yuzu-Arbequina combination: Japanese ingredient precision with Italian plating composition. The adaptation respects both traditions by keeping the knife work Japanese-exact (paper-thin, against-grain, ice-cold blade) and the composition Italian-flexible (drizzle vs toss, herb on top, bright finish). The ● Everyday version uses the best fish your local fishmonger can source. The ● No Limits version is the Honolulu Fish Co direct-order pattern that defines the recipe at its fullest expression.

CHANGE	ORIGINAL	UMAMI VERSION	WHY
TECH	Dress the fish as assembled (10+ min before service)	Dress 15 SECONDS before service, not earlier	Ponzu begins chemically cooking the fish (ceviche effect at micro-scale) after 30 sec; timing is critical for texture
TECH	Slice fish at service time	Slice 8 hours ahead, refrigerate covered	Cut edges firm during rest, texture becomes silkier, flavor integrates (classical Japanese mature)
ADD	—	Shiso leaf chiffonade on top	Shiso's anise-mint-basil-like flavor complements kanpachi's clean fat without overpowering
ADD	—	Yuzu zest + Arbequina EVOO finish	Yuzu is the Japanese citrus for fish; Arbequina EVOO is the Spanish bridge — fusion by design, not accident
ELEV	Single plate service	Individual amuse plates (4-6 identical portions)	Amuse is one perfect bite per guest; individual plates communicate precision of the cook's attention

What You Need

● Everyday

The Crudo Base (●)

- 300 g sashimi-grade fish — kanpachi OR yellowtail OR hamachi OR fluke (any good fishmonger with trusted sashimi-grade sourcing; confirm it's labeled 'sashimi-grade', 'sushi-grade', or specifically sourced for raw consumption)
- 60 ml ponzu sauce (bottled Japanese ponzu, Yamasa or Kikkoman — any good Asian grocery)
- Zest of 1 fresh yuzu (OR substitute: zest of 1 Meyer lemon + 1 tsp rice vinegar, see substitution notes)
- 4–6 fresh shiso leaves (Japanese perilla — Asian groceries, Asian farmers' markets)
- 2 tbsp good Spanish extra virgin olive oil (any Spanish EVOO — Arbequina preferred for milder profile)
- Maldon flaky salt (for finishing)
- Optional: 1 tsp black or white sesame seeds for garnish

Substitution Notes

- *No kanpachi?* Yellowtail (hamachi, buri) is the closest substitute — slightly fatter, still clean. Hiramasa (another yellowtail species) works perfectly. Fluke (hirame), sea bream (tai), or high-quality tuna (maguro or saku block) all work. AVOID salmon for this specific preparation — too strong, clashes with ponzu.
- *No ponzu?* Make quick ponzu: mix 1 tbsp soy sauce + 1 tbsp yuzu juice (or 50/50 lemon + lime) + 1 tsp rice vinegar + 1/2 tsp mirin. Not classical but serviceable. Bottled is easier and more consistent.
- *No yuzu?* Meyer lemon zest + 1 tsp rice vinegar is the closest single-ingredient substitute. Regular lemon + lime mix (50/50) is acceptable. The specific yuzu aroma (floral + tangerine + grapefruit) is hard to replicate — if you can find frozen yuzu juice (sold at Asian groceries), use 1 tsp of that.
- *No shiso?* Thai basil is the closest herb substitute (anise-basil profile). Fresh mint + fresh basil (50/50) is acceptable. Do NOT use Italian basil alone — wrong flavor category.
- *Frozen sashimi-grade fish?* Fully acceptable and actually required by US law for any fish to be sold as sashimi-grade (must be frozen at $-35\text{ }^{\circ}\text{C}$ for 15 hours to kill parasites). Thaw slowly in the refrigerator overnight. Do NOT thaw at room temperature.

No Limits

Premium Kanpachi Crudo (— Pablo Pattern)

- 300 g Honolulu Fish Co sashimi-grade kanpachi cut (Pablo ✓ supplier — 'sashimi cut' 2 lb for \$219.95 serves 12–20 amuse portions; overnight from Hawaii)
- 80 ml premium ponzu — Mizkan Ajipon (Japanese specialty grocery) OR make scratch: 50 ml yuzu juice + 50 ml soy sauce + 10 ml rice vinegar + 1 tsp mirin + 1 small piece kombu steeped 2 hours
- Zest of 1 fresh yuzu (Japanese specialty grocers — occasionally available fresh, more commonly frozen juice) OR zest of 2 Meyer lemons + 1 tsp yuzu juice (if fresh yuzu unavailable)
- 8–10 fresh shiso leaves (green variety — Asian groceries, usually sold in 10-count packs)
- 2 tbsp Arbequina EVOO (Pablo ✓ pantry) — single-estate, cold-pressed, under 6 months from harvest
- Maldon flaky salt (Pablo ✓)
- 1 tsp toasted black sesame seeds OR togarashi pepper flakes for garnish (Japanese pantry bridge)

Plating Enhancements (Pablo Signature Amuse Pattern)

- 4–6 small ceramic plates OR individual amuse spoons (ceramic preferred for cold fish; metal conducts too much heat)
- Chilled plates — rinse with cold water 10 min before plating, shake off, or rest in refrigerator 30 min. Cold plates keep fish at optimal temperature for full 5-min service window
- Sharp sashimi-grade knife (Yanagiba preferred — single-edged Japanese slicing knife, 240+ mm blade)
- Alternative: very sharp chef's knife — dip blade in ice water before slicing
- Cutting board DRY and clean
- Plating tweezers (for precise shiso placement, optional but elevates)
- Microplane for yuzu zest and optional shiso stem shaving

Service Companions (Pablo Amuse Pattern)

- Chilled dry sake (Junmai Ginjo, served cold in a small tokkuri) — classical Japanese pairing
- Chilled Albariño (Pablo ✓ wine pattern) — Spanish bridge pairing
- Chilled dry Cava Brut Nature — Spanish sparkling alternative
- Nothing heavier — this is amuse territory, not main-pairing
- NO bread with crudo (distracts from the fish); bread can come later in the meal

EQUIPMENT

Your Kit

- Sharp sashimi-grade knife (Yanagiba preferred) OR very sharp 8-10" chef's knife

- Clean dry cutting board — dedicated to fish if possible

- Small ceramic plates (4-6 for amuse) OR individual amuse spoons

- Small bowl for ponzu + yuzu mixing

- Microplane (for yuzu zest)

- Fine-mesh strainer (for shiso chiffonade rinse if desired)

- Paper towels (for patting fish, surface prep)

- Kitchen tweezers (for precision plating of shiso)

- Ice bowl (for holding fish during slicing if ambient is warm)

- Timer (for the 15-second dress-before-serve rule)

MISE EN PLACE

Before You Start

- Fish pulled from fridge 5-10 min before slicing (not longer — sashimi-grade fish stays cold)

 - Yuzu zested in advance (zest dries fast; do within 30 min of service)

 - Shiso leaves washed, spun dry, chiffonade just before service (shiso wilts fast once cut)

 - Ponzu measured in small bowl; optional: add 1/2 tsp fresh yuzu juice for brightness

 - Sesame seeds (or togarashi) in small ramekin

 - Individual plates chilled in refrigerator 30 min before plating

 - Sharp knife wiped clean, blade dipped in ice water just before slicing (reduces friction)

 - Cutting board dry
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- Plating tweezers (if using)

- Maldon salt in small dish

- Arbequina EVOO in small pour container with spout

MAKE-AHEAD

Timeline

- **T-8 h (morning of service) – Slice and hold**

Pull sashimi-grade kanpachi from fridge 5 min before slicing. Pat dry with paper towels. Place block flat on dry cutting board. Make paper-thin slices (3 mm, against grain — the grain runs lengthwise in the block). Work quickly; the fish should stay cold. Place sliced fish in a single layer on a chilled plate; cover with plastic wrap pressed gently onto fish surface (prevents oxidation). Refrigerate.
- **T-3 h – Make scratch ponzu (● only)**

If using scratch ponzu: mix 50 ml yuzu juice + 50 ml soy sauce + 10 ml rice vinegar + 1 tsp mirin + 1 small piece kombu (2 cm square). Let steep in refrigerator 2–3 hours. Remove kombu before use. Bottled ponzu (●) needs no prep — use as is.
- **T-30 min – Chill plates**

Rinse serving plates in cold water or refrigerate them. Cold plates keep fish at optimal serving temperature. Pull when ready to plate.
- **T-10 min – Final mise**

Zest yuzu or lemon onto a small plate. Wash shiso leaves, spin dry. Stack 3–4 shiso leaves, roll tightly, slice into thin ribbons (chiffonade). Toast sesame seeds in dry pan 30 seconds if not already toasted.
- **T-2 min – Plate fish**

Pull sliced fish from fridge. Arrange 4–5 slices per amuse plate in a slightly overlapping fan OR rosette pattern. Work fast; fish should NOT warm up. Return plates to refrigerator if not serving in next 2 min.
- **T-30 sec – Bring to table**

Bring plates to the serving area. Guests seated and ready. The dressing must happen immediately before eating.

● T-15 sec – DRESS JUST BEFORE SERVING

For each plate: spoon 1 tsp of ponzu across the fish (streaks, not a pour). Sprinkle pinch of yuzu zest. Scatter shiso chiffonade across the top. Drizzle 1/2 tsp Arbequina EVOO. Small pinch Maldon flaky salt. Optional: toasted sesame seeds or togarashi pinch.

● T-0 – Serve immediately

Plates to guests. The window between dressing and eating is roughly 2 minutes — the ponzu begins micro-denaturing the fish surface after 60–90 seconds. Guests should eat within this window for optimal texture.

METHOD

The Cook

1 The Slice — 8 Hours Before Service

1. Pull the kanpachi from the refrigerator 5 minutes before slicing. It should still be very cold — 3–5 °C. Any warmer and the fish won't slice cleanly.
2. Pat the fish completely dry with paper towels. Surface moisture causes the knife to drag.
3. Place the block flat on a dry cutting board. Identify the grain direction (muscle fibers running lengthwise through the block). You will slice PERPENDICULAR to the grain for the most tender result.
4. Hold your sharp sashimi-grade knife at a 20–30 degree angle to the cutting board. Dip the blade in ice water and wipe dry. The cold blade reduces friction during slicing.
5. Slice with a single long pull — use the full blade length. Do NOT saw. The cut should be one smooth motion from heel to tip of the blade. Target thickness: 3 mm (paper-thin).
6. Place each slice flat on a chilled plate as you cut. Lay slices in a single layer — don't overlap during this storage stage.
7. When all fish is sliced, cover the plate with plastic wrap pressed gently onto the fish surface (not loose — direct contact prevents air exposure and oxidation).
8. Refrigerate for 15 minutes minimum, 8 hours optimal. The mature time allows the cut edges to firm slightly, the texture to become silkier, and the flavor to integrate.
9. If slicing too far ahead (more than 12 hours), the fish begins losing quality — the cut edges dry and the surface loses its sashimi character. 8 hours is the sweet spot for morning-of service.

WHY THIS WORKS

The knife cut is the most important technique in crudo. A clean cut produces a smooth surface that holds texture and dressing well; a ragged cut produces a rough surface that absorbs dressing unevenly and feels mushy in the mouth. Three factors produce the clean cut: (1) SHARP knife — sashimi knives are single-edged and maintained razor-sharp because fish flesh is delicate and tears if the blade isn't cutting cleanly. (2) COLD knife + cold fish — reduces friction and prevents the fish from heating and softening during slicing. (3) SINGLE PULL — the full blade length in one smooth motion, not a sawing action that produces micro-tears. The 8-hour mature works because raw fish proteins naturally integrate over time — the cut edges partially re-bond, the flavor compounds distribute evenly, and the texture becomes more silken. Too long (18+ hours) and the fish begins losing water to the plate and texture degrades. Reference: Protein Encyclopedia chapter 8 (Fish Cookery); Knife Skills chapter 5 (Sashimi Work).

2 The Dress — 15 Seconds Before Service

1. This is the most time-sensitive step in the recipe. Do NOT dress the fish ahead of service — dress 15 seconds before guests eat.
2. For each plate: spoon 1 teaspoon of ponzu across the fish in streaks (not a pour — you don't want ponzu pooling underneath the fish).
3. Sprinkle a pinch of yuzu zest across the surface. The zest should be visible but not heavy — a few specks of golden-orange.
4. Scatter the shiso chiffonade across the top. 2-3 pinches per plate. The shiso should be visible green on top of the fish, not hidden.
5. Drizzle 1/2 teaspoon of Arbequina EVOO over the fish. The oil creates a glossy finish and bridges the Japanese and Spanish flavor worlds.
6. Small pinch of Maldon flaky salt — just a few crystals per plate. The crystals should be visible and provide textural contrast to the silky fish.
7. Optional: 1 pinch of toasted sesame seeds or togarashi flakes for a Japanese-leaning presentation.
8. Bring the plate immediately to the guest. From dressing to eating should be under 2 minutes for optimal texture.

WHY THIS WORKS

The 15-second dress-before-serve rule is not ceremonial — it is chemistry. Ponzu contains citrus juice (yuzu, lemon), soy sauce, and vinegar — all sources of acid. When acid contacts raw fish proteins, it begins denaturation similar to the ceviche effect: the proteins unfold and the surface texture changes from silky-raw to slightly-firm-cooked. At 30 seconds of contact, the change is imperceptible. At 60-90 seconds, the surface begins to firm noticeably. At 3-5 minutes, the fish is partially 'cooked' (light ceviche character). For crudo, you want the silky-raw texture — which means dressing immediately before eating. The 15-second rule preserves the raw character while allowing the ponzu flavor to coat the fish. If service is delayed, the texture degrades. This is why restaurant sashimi and crudo are dressed tableside — the kitchen cannot afford any delay. Reference: Food Science Core chapter 1 (Protein Denaturation); Sauces and Condiments chapter 6 (Ponzu).

3 Plating Precision — Each Plate an Amuse

1. Use small ceramic plates (4–6 inch diameter) — chilled. Ceramic holds the cold better than metal.
2. Arrange 4–5 slices of fish per plate in a slightly overlapping fan OR concentric rosette. The slices should be visible as individual pieces, not a pile.
3. Leave negative space on the plate — don't fill the entire surface. The fish should occupy 40–60% of the plate visually.
4. The presentation communicates intent: each plate is an amuse, not a portion of a shared dish. Individual plates say 'I planned this for you specifically.'
5. If using plating tweezers: place shiso chiffonade with intention — a small mound in one spot, or scattered as intentional streaks, not tossed randomly.
6. The final plate should look like three things are happening: pale fish, bright green shiso, golden-orange yuzu zest + dark ponzu streaks + Maldon crystals catching the light. Visual drama in five ingredients.
7. Plate one at a time and keep completed plates in the refrigerator until the full set is ready. Serve all plates to guests simultaneously.

WHY THIS WORKS

Plating communicates information to the guest. A mound of fish with dressing dumped on top communicates 'casual, quick, filler course.' A precise arrangement with negative space, visible herbs, and intentional component placement communicates 'I thought about this bite for you.' The crudo's five-minute prep is amplified by careful plating into a dish that feels much more intentional than its prep time suggests. This is the value of the amuse pattern: minimum ingredients + maximum precision = maximum guest perception. Classical Japanese kaiseki plating principles (wabi, negative space, seasonal moment) apply here — the plate is a small still life, not a delivery mechanism. Reference: Dinner Party Orchestration chapter 4 (Plating Architecture); Knife Skills chapter 5.

QUICK REFERENCE

Timing Cheat Sheet

STEP	TIME	CUE
Buy fish same day as service (morning pickup ideal)	Same day	Fish tightly wrapped, cold, sashimi-grade verified

STEP	TIME	CUE
Slice fish 8 h before service, hold refrigerated	Morning for evening service	3 mm slices, covered with plastic on surface, chilled
Make scratch ponzu (●), let steep	2-3 h steep time	Kombu removed before use; bottled needs no prep
Chill plates, 30 min before service	30 min	Plates visibly cold to touch
Prep herbs + zest + salt 10 min before plate	10 min	Shiso chiffonade, yuzu zest, everything staged
Plate fish (no dressing), chill, 2 min before serve	2-5 min	Slices fanned or rosetted, plate cold
Dress fish 15 SECONDS before serving	15 sec	Ponzu streaks + zest + shiso + EVOO + salt
Serve immediately — eat within 2 min	Table	Guests seated, plates going out together

TROUBLESHOOTING

Emergency Protocols

FISH IS STUCK TOGETHER / FROZEN IN CHUNKS AFTER SLICING

Slicing was too early and pieces froze together on the plate. Thaw by leaving at room temperature 2-3 min, then gently separate with a fork or thin knife. Replate. Next time: cover with plastic wrap directly on fish surface (not loose), freeze for shorter periods, or slice closer to service.

FISH LOOKS DRIED OUT / EDGES ARE BROWN

Sliced too far ahead (12+ hours) OR not covered with plastic during hold. Not serviceable — discard. Next time: 8 hours max ahead, plastic wrap pressed directly onto fish surface.

 **FISH SMELLS 'FISHY' (NOT OCEAN-FRESH)**

Not fresh enough — don't serve. Raw-fish quality is non-negotiable. Any fishy odor = compromised fish. Prevention: buy same-day from a trusted fishmonger who specifically sells sashimi-grade; sniff before buying (fresh fish smells like ocean, not fish).

 **SLICING PRODUCED RAGGED EDGES / TORN FISH**

Knife wasn't sharp enough OR fish was too warm. Current batch: discard ragged edges, use only clean cuts. Next time: sharpen knife, dip blade in ice water before each 3-4 slices, work faster so fish stays cold.

 **NO YUZU AVAILABLE — WHAT TO SUBSTITUTE**

Meyer lemon zest is the closest single substitute (similar floral brightness). Regular lemon + lime zest 50/50 is acceptable. If frozen yuzu juice is available, use 1 tsp of that in the dressing + meyer lemon zest on top. Do NOT use lemon + lime bottled juice — harsh, wrong character.

 **PONZU SEEMS TOO SALTY OR TOO ACIDIC**

Bottled ponzu quality varies. Taste before plating: if too salty, dilute with 1 tsp water. If too acidic, add 1/4 tsp honey + 1/4 tsp mirin to balance. Scratch ponzu (🔴) is more predictable — 50 ml yuzu + 50 ml soy + 10 ml rice vinegar + 1 tsp mirin.

 **GUESTS ARE SQUEAMISH ABOUT RAW FISH**

Convert to Italian-style crudo: lightly sear the fish surfaces with a blowtorch for 5 seconds each, or flash-sear in a screaming-hot oiled pan 10 seconds per side. This produces 'crudo tataki' — raw interior with seared exterior. Classical Italian technique, addresses most raw-fish squeamishness. Pair with same dressing.

 **DRESSING POOLS UNDER THE FISH**

Poured ponzu instead of streaking. Use a spoon to tip ponzu onto the fish in streaks across the top — don't pour. Only 1 tsp per plate total. If already pooled, soak up excess with a paper towel edge, re-streak less aggressively.

SCALING UP FOR 10+ GUESTS

Recipe scales linearly. 600 g fish for 10 guests = 60 g per guest (standard amuse portion). Slicing takes 15 min per 600 g. The 15-second dress rule applies per plate — plate + dress + serve in waves of 4–6 plates, not all 10 at once. For very large parties (20+ guests), reconsider whether crudo is right — the quality window is narrow, difficult to sustain at scale. Consider ceviche (UMAMI-2 #1) instead for large groups.

DEEP DIVES

Technique Notes

Universal: Dress 15 Seconds Before Service

CRUDO TECHNIQUE • ACID TIMING • UNIVERSAL

The ponzu-citrus dressing in this recipe contains acid (yuzu juice, soy sauce's organic acids, rice vinegar). When acid contacts raw fish, it begins protein denaturation similar to the ceviche effect — the surface firms, texture shifts from silky-raw to firm-cooked. At 15 seconds of contact, no detectable change. At 60–90 seconds, surface begins firming. At 3–5 minutes, fish is partially ceviche-cooked. For crudo texture, you want silky-raw — which means dressing IMMEDIATELY before eating. The 15-second rule is non-negotiable. This principle applies to any raw-fish preparation with acidic dressing: tiradito, carpaccio, any ceviche-adjacent quick-raw dish. Never dress raw fish ahead of time if texture matters. Reference: Food Science Core chapter 1 (Protein Denaturation); Sauces and Condiments chapter 6.

● Universal: Slice Against the Grain, Single Pull, Sharp Knife

SASHIMI CUT · KNIFE DISCIPLINE · UNIVERSAL

Three rules govern all sashimi-grade slicing: (1) AGAINST the grain — muscle fibers run lengthwise through a fish block; slicing perpendicular to them produces tender bites; slicing WITH the grain produces chewy, ropy texture. (2) SINGLE PULL — the full blade length in one smooth motion, from heel to tip, in a single direction. Sawing tears the delicate flesh. (3) SHARP knife — sashimi knives are single-edged (Yanagiba), razor-sharp, maintained on a whetstone. A dull knife tears even a careful cut. For home cooks: sharpen any chef's knife on a whetstone the day of service; dip the blade in ice water before each 3-4 slices to reduce friction. The cut is the most important technique in crudo — more than the dressing, more than the plating. Reference: Knife Skills chapter 5 (Sashimi Work); Protein Encyclopedia chapter 8.

● Universal: 8-Hour Mature in the Refrigerator

FISH TECHNIQUE · REST TIME · UNIVERSAL

Classical Japanese sashimi tradition includes a brief resting period after slicing, typically 30 min - 2 hours, which allows the cut edges to firm slightly and the flavor to integrate. For home cooks doing morning-slice-for-evening-service, extending this to 8 hours produces noticeably better crudo — the texture becomes silkier, the surfaces less wet, the flavor more integrated. Plastic wrap pressed directly onto the fish surface is mandatory to prevent oxidation (air contact turns cut surfaces brown). Don't exceed 12-14 hours; beyond that, water loss to the plate begins to dry out the fish. The 8-hour window aligns perfectly with the Pablo Saturday dinner-party pattern: slice at 11 AM, serve at 7 PM. Morning slice, evening service, 8 hours of silent improvement. Reference: Protein Encyclopedia chapter 8; Knife Skills chapter 5.

● Universal: Chilled Plates Are Non-Negotiable

SERVICE TECHNIQUE • TEMPERATURE MANAGEMENT • UNIVERSAL

Raw fish at the correct serving temperature is 4–6 °C (slightly chilled). Warm plates heat the fish from below, shifting it toward room temperature, degrading texture. The fix is simple: chill plates in the refrigerator 30 min before service. Alternative: rinse plates under cold tap water, shake dry. Metal plates conduct heat too aggressively and can actually cool the fish too quickly. Ceramic is the classical material — holds temperature well without over-cooling. The chilled-plates rule applies to any cold protein service: ceviche, tartare, crudo, carpaccio, caviar service. It is the single overlooked detail that separates home crudo from restaurant crudo. Reference: Dinner Party Orchestration chapter 4 (Plating Architecture).

● No Limits: Honolulu Fish Co + Arbequina Fusion

SOURCING • JAPANESE-SPANISH BRIDGE • PABLO PATTERN

This recipe is the exemplary Japanese–Spanish fusion in Pablo's repertoire. Sashimi–grade Hawaiian kanpachi (Honolulu Fish Co ✓) + ponzu + shiso + yuzu = pure Japanese. Arbequina EVOO (Pablo ✓ pantry) + Maldon salt = Spanish. The bridge is not accidental — it is designed. Hawaiian kanpachi's clean, slightly–fatty profile matches beautifully with both Japanese sauce (ponzu's umami–acid) and Spanish oil (Arbequina's fruit–grass). The result tastes like neither Japanese nor Spanish alone, but something specific to Pablo's collection. Apply the same pattern to other fusion plates: Spanish jamón + Japanese yuzu, Japanese dashi + Spanish saffron, Catalan alioli + Japanese sesame. The cross-cultural ingredient match is a signature Pablo move. Reference: Sauces and Condiments chapter 5 (Fusion Patterns); Dinner Party Orchestration chapter 7.

● No Limits: The Amuse Pattern — One Perfect Bite Per Guest

DINNER PARTY PHILOSOPHY • AMUSE-BOUCHE • UNIVERSAL

The amuse (amuse-bouche, 'mouth amuser') is a single bite served before the first course that communicates the cook's intent for the meal. One bite per guest, individual plates, maximum precision, minimum volume. This kanpachi crudo is the exemplary amuse: five ingredients, 15 minutes of work, individual plating, immediate service. The amuse sets the tone — precision, thoughtfulness, care — that the rest of the meal will deliver on. For a 3-course dinner, amuse adds 5-10 minutes to the meal and transforms the guest's experience. Individual plates matter (not a shared dish) because the amuse communicates 'I planned this for you specifically.' Apply to any future Pablo dinner-party planning: always include an amuse, always individual, always under 4 ingredients. This is Kaiseki principle codified for Western service. Reference: Dinner Party Orchestration chapter 2 (Course Progression); chapter 4 (Plating).

PAIRING

What to Drink

Sake — Classical Japanese

Junmai Ginjo served chilled in a small tokkuri

The classical pairing for kanpachi sashimi/crudo. Junmai Ginjo's floral-rice character and chilled temperature match the fish's delicate profile without overpowering. Chilled (6-10 °C) is correct for this style; warm sake destroys the crudo dressing.

Wine — Spanish Bridge

Albariño (Rías Baixas) or dry Txakoli (Basque)

For Pablo's Japanese-Spanish bridge pattern: Albariño's saline minerality matches the Hawaiian kanpachi (open-ocean fish tastes of sea); Txakoli's slight spritz refreshes the palate between bites. Both are the Spanish axis that echoes the Arbequina EVOO in the dressing.

Sparkling Alternative

Dry Cava Brut Nature or vintage Champagne

For formal dinner service with multiple amuse courses: dry sparkling wine is the universal amuse pairing — bubbles cut richness, acidity refreshes palate, low alcohol keeps guests sharp. Cava Brut Nature is Spanish traditional-method at accessible price points.

Premium Alternative — Yuzushu

Yuzushu (Japanese yuzu liqueur) over ice

For the very adventurous: Yuzushu is a Japanese yuzu citrus liqueur (sweet-acid-floral). Small pour over ice, served alongside the crudo, echoes the yuzu zest in the dressing. Works as aperitif or palate-bridge. Sold at Japanese specialty stores.

CONTEXT

Menu Ideas

Formal Dinner Party Amuse (6-12 guests)

Kanpachi crudo as the opening amuse before the first course. One small plate per guest — 4-5 slices, 50-60 g fish per portion. 300-700 g total fish depending on guest count. Serve with chilled sake or Albariño. The amuse sets the tone for a precision-focused meal. Follow with: first course (soup, salad, or warm vegetable), main, dessert. 3-hour meal.

Saturday Dinner-Party Amuse (Pablo Signature Pattern)

Pablo's Saturday pattern: morning slice (11 AM), afternoon mise, evening service (7 PM). Individual plates for each guest. 4 guests = 4 plates, 6 guests = 6 plates. Chilled Albariño with the crudo, sake optional for the adventurous. Follow with a seafood-forward main (paella UMAMI-11 #1 or whole fish UMAMI-6 #3). The Japanese amuse + Spanish main pattern is a Pablo signature.

Cross-Recipe Integration

Complements UMAMI-2 #1 Swordfish Ceviche (both raw fish, distinct flavor profiles — ceviche is bright-acid, crudo is silky-umami) and UMAMI-2 #3 Beef Tartare (both raw protein, rounds out Raw directory). The Honolulu Fish Co supplier integration echoes UMAMI-11 #3 Fideuà (● uses same supplier). Arbequina EVOO in the dressing cross-refs to nearly every other recipe — establishes the Pablo pantry signature across cold and hot dishes. Sourdough (UMAMI-10 #1) or focaccia (UMAMI-10 #2) on the table AFTER the crudo — never before, never with.

YOUR NOTES

Cook Log

Session Notes

Date: _____ · Serves: ____ · Rating: __ / 5

Use this space to record what you changed, what worked, and what you'd do differently next time. Your future self will thank you.



Stop following recipes. Start understanding food.

