



WHAT IT IS Known as *tobiuo* to the Japanese, the flying fish reside in the coastal waters of southern Japan. They are mostly found in subtropical climates, and their population increases throughout March and May. The flying fish can grow up to 12 to 15 inches in length, and they possess large oversized pectoral fins – like wings – that allow them to leap out of water. Slicing the air like a storm of arrows, the flying fish with streamlined torpedo shape can glide airborne at 2m above the water surface and reach a distance of 400m. Just so you know, these

fish are exactly the ones you find in the film 'Life of Pi'.

PREPARATION Captured during the spawning season in spring, flying fish can be grilled as *yakimono*, deep-fried as *agemono* or made into fish sticks called *chikuwa*. But executive chef How Yoke Seng insists that his flying fish – flown in from Tsukiji market in Tokyo – are best served raw with a side of the mellow Abe Kameji sake. After deboning, the fish is flayed and mounded on a monolith of ice, garnished with smidgens of wasabi, ginger, seaweed and spring onions.

For the plate up, the fins of the flying fish are spread out and fastened with a stick before placing them with the sashimi.

TASTE A clear flesh tinged with a faint red line, the flying fish – sliced so thinly without exceeding 5g each – is vividly fresh. Because it's found in warm waters, the fish lacks fat so you don't get the slick mouthfeel of salmon or tuna. But the texture is still downright velvety. The usual wasabi-shoyu combo is less apt as a dip; Chef How recommends a mix of chopped spring onions,

shoyu and a judicious amount of grated ginger. True enough, the twin punch of the hearty ginger and zesty spring onion eliminates all traces of fishiness to coax out the underlying sweetness of the meat. The abiding rule for sashimi is freshness, and this dish, albeit a little showy, truly plays to its strength. **Kong Wai Yeng**

EAT IT AT **Kampachi** ground floor, The Troika, 19 Persiaran KLCC (03 2181 2282); sixth floor, Pavilion KL (03 2148 9608/www.kampachi.com.my). RM180.

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