*chef michael katz’s* **fish kebabs**

 D or P yields 4 servings

*One of the perks of leading a culinary tour to Israel is meeting many prominent chefs. One of my favorites, Chef Michael Katz, is so sweet, I can only describe him with the Yiddish word “aidle.” He is executive chef of the Adom Group, among the best restaurants in Israel. Our stop was Trattoria Haba, outside the shuk. Michael treated us to a demo, including this dish, which we devoured. To listen to Michael is to learn through food about science, history, art, love, and life in Israel.*

*Michael used ras el hanut, a local spice blend made of approximately 15 spices. Pick up some next time you are in the shuk. I subbed in spices easier to find here in the States.*

*The main “secret” is to chop all the fish by hand and not with a meat grinder or a food processor. This keeps the proteins from becoming a sticky mass. I say, leave it to the professionals with the razor-sharp knives, and have the fishmonger chop it for you to make prep work a snap.*

**½ pound tilapia fillet,** *cut into ½-inch dice*

**½ pound cod fillet,** *cut into ½-inch dice*

**¹∕³ cup unflavored breadcrumbs**

**1 tablespoon pine nuts**

**¼ teaspoon cumin**

**¼ teaspoon smoked paprika**

**¼ teaspoon chili pepper**

**¼ teaspoon schwarma spice** *or* **ras el hanut**

**¼ teaspoon baking soda**

**¼ teaspoon salt**

**¼ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper**

**2 fresh cloves garlic,** *minced*

**1 tablespoon chopped fresh curly parsley**

**1 tablespoon chopped fresh cilantro leaves**

**1 scallion,** *chopped, white and pale green parts only*

**¼ small white onion,** *peeled, finely chopped*

**extra-virgin olive oil**

**techina, yogurt,** *or* **tartar sauce,** *for serving*

Place the diced fish into a medium bowl. Add the breadcrumbs, pine nuts, cumin, smoked paprika, chili powder, schwarma spice, baking soda, salt, pepper, garlic, parsley, cilantro, scallion, and onion. Mix gently. Oil your hands with olive oil. Knead the mass until it combines and holds together, but don’t over-knead or the fish will be chewy. If it won’t hold together well, sprinkle in a little more breadcrumb.

Dampen your hands. Divide mixture into 8 portions; shape each into a kebab form, like a small egg. Heat a thin layer of olive oil in a medium skillet over medium heat. Cook the kebabs until golden on all sides, 4-6 minutes total, turning until colored on all sides and cooked through.

Serve 2 kebabs per plate with techina, yogurt, or tartar sauce.