

them with a wire twist. With a hammer crack the shell open. Discard the liquid and separate the meat from the shell. With a vegetable peeler remove the brown skin from the meat; cut the meat into 1-inch pieces.

Use the metal blade of a food processor to process half of the coconut, pulsing 10 times or until the meat is coarsely chopped. With the machine running add the water through the feed tube and process for 1 minute. Transfer to a mixing bowl and repeat for remaining coconut meat and the milk.

Let the coconut mixture stand for 15 minutes. Strain it through a colander lined with rinsed cheesecloth, pressing down to extract as much liquid as possible. The coconut milk may be refrigerated in a bottle for up to 4 days or frozen for up to 3 months.

## BEEF IN SPICY CUMIN-TOMATO GRAVY

### Masala Gosht

*An everyday stew of northern India. Accompany with pilaf or plain rice.*

- 4 large onions, peeled and quartered
- 4 pieces fresh ginger, each about 2 by  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch, peeled and halved
- 3 large garlic cloves, peeled
- 1 pound plum tomatoes, quartered; or 1 can (28-ounce) Italian peeled tomatoes, drained
- 3 pounds beef bottom round, trimmed and cut into 1- by 1- by 2-inch pieces
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup vegetable oil
- 2 tablespoons ground coriander
- 1 tablespoon paprika
- 2 teaspoons turmeric
- 1 teaspoon crushed red pepper
- 8 small new potatoes (about 1 pound), peeled
- 3 cups boiling water
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup loosely packed fresh coriander leaves
- 1 tablespoon cumin seed
- Salt

Use the metal blade of a food processor to chop the onions, in 2 batches, pulsing 10 to 12 times or until finely chopped; set aside. With the machine running drop the ginger and garlic through the feed tube and process until minced; set aside. Process the tomatoes until pureed; set aside.

Put the beef in a shallow mixing bowl and add 2 tablespoons of the oil. With a wooden spoon turn the meat to coat the pieces evenly.

Heat 2 tablespoons of the remaining oil in a large skillet over high heat. Brown the meat, in 2 batches, on all sides, about 3 to 5 minutes. With a slotted spoon transfer the meat to a 5-quart ovenproof casserole; set aside. Preheat the oven to 325°F.

Add the remaining 4 tablespoons of oil and the reserved onions to the skillet and cook, stirring often,

until the onions are browned, about 15 to 20 minutes. Stir in the reserved ginger and garlic and cook 1 minute more. Stir in the coriander, paprika, turmeric and crushed red pepper until well blended; add the potatoes and cook 3 or 4 minutes. Add the reserved pureed tomatoes and the boiling water and blend well. Pour the mixture over the meat and stir to distribute ingredients evenly. Cover with a tight-fitting lid and bake in the center of the preheated oven for 2 hours, until the meat is very tender. Turn off the oven and let the casserole stand in the oven for 15 minutes more.

Meanwhile, use the metal blade to chop the coriander leaves, pulsing 5 or 6 times or until coarsely chopped; reserve 1 tablespoon for garnish and set the rest aside. Roast the cumin seed in a small skillet over moderately high heat, shaking the pan constantly, until they are well browned, about 2 minutes. Transfer to a plate and let cool; then crush the seeds with a mortar and pestle or on a flat surface with a rolling pin.

Remove the casserole from the oven and skim off the excess fat. Stir in the chopped coriander, cumin and salt to taste. Transfer to a serving dish and garnish with reserved coriander.

Makes 8 servings.

*Beef in Spicy Cumin-Tomato Gravy.*

