The Georgian Feast



THE VIBRANT CULTURE AND SAVORY FOOD OF THE REPUBLIC OF GEORGIA

DARRA GOLDSTEIN

INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CULINARY PROFESSIONALS
THE JULIA CHILD COOKBOOK AWARDS
BOOK OF THE YEAR

BEEF STEW WITH PICKLES
(Solyanka)

Solyanka is another piquant beef stew. Russians consider it Georgian because it has a bite, but actually *solyanka* is a Georgian adaptation of an originally Russian stew (the dill pickles give it away). Served with freshly cooked *mchadi* or corncakes (page 149), *solyanka* makes a robust meal, best suited for autumn or wintertime dining.

SERVES 4

2 pounds top round of beef, cut into 1½-inch cubes
Salt and freshly ground black pepper
2 tablespoons flour
3 tablespoons butter
2 medium onions, peeled and coarsely chopped
3 garlic cloves, peeled and minced
½ cup tomato purée
1 tablespoon picante sauce (Worcestershire sauce mixed with hot pepper sauce, or a prepared sauce like Pickapeppa)
1 bay leaf
1½ cups coarsely chopped sour dill pickles
2 heaping tablespoons capers
1½ tablespoons red wine vinegar
¾ cup water

Preheat the oven to 300° F.

Season the meat with salt and pepper, then sprinkle with the flour.

Heat the butter in a large ovenproof casserole. Sauté the meat until it browns. Stir in the onions and garlic and cook for 10 minutes.

Add in the remaining ingredients, mixing well. Cover the casserole and braise in the oven for 2 hours, or until the meat is tender.