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*Recipes excerpted from **5 Spices, 50 Dishes, Simple Indian Recipes Using Five Common Spices** by Ruta Kahate. Photography by Susie Cushner. Copyright 2007. Published by Chronicle Books, San Francisco, CA. Reprinted with permission of the publisher. All rights reserved.*

Goan Shrimp Curry with Eggplant

All along the western coast of Goa, you'll find picturesque fishing villages, ancient forts, golden beaches, and some of the most delicious seafood in the country. The fruit of the ubiquitous coconut palm finds its way into many local shrimp curries, along with an array of vegetables – summer squash, okra, green mango, and, my very favorite, eggplant.

3 small Japanese or Italian eggplants (about 12 ounces)
2 tablespoons canola oil
1/2 medium yellow onion, finely chopped (about 1 cup)
1 small tomato, finely chopped (about 1/4 cup)
2 cloves garlic, minced
1 teaspoon cayenne
1/2 teaspoon coriander seeds, finely ground
1/4 teaspoon cumin seeds, finely ground
1/4 teaspoon ground turmeric
2 small green Serrano chiles, cut lengthwise in half
3/4 teaspoon salt
1 pound small or medium shrimp, peeled and deveined
1 cup canned coconut milk
1/2 cup water
1-1/2 tablespoons apple cider vinegar

Slice the eggplants lengthwise in half and then crosswise into 1-inch chunks.

Heat the oil in a large saucepan over medium heat and sauté the onion until softened. Add the tomato, garlic, cayenne, coriander, cumin, and turmeric, and sauté until the tomato has completely disintegrated. If necessary, deglaze the pan by adding a few tablespoons of water and using a spatula to loosen the browned bits if the mixture starts sticking to the bottom.

Add the eggplant, chiles, and salt, and mix well. Cover and cook over low heat until the eggplant is soft, about 10 minutes. Add the shrimp and stir gently. When the shrimp begins to turn pink, add the coconut milk and water. Continue simmering, uncovered, until the shrimp is cooked through, another 5 to 8 minutes. Very gently stir in the vinegar and remove from the heat.

This curry tastes even better the next day. Reheat gently over low heat, stirring carefully once in a while, just until warmed, to prevent overcooking the shrimp.

Serves 4.