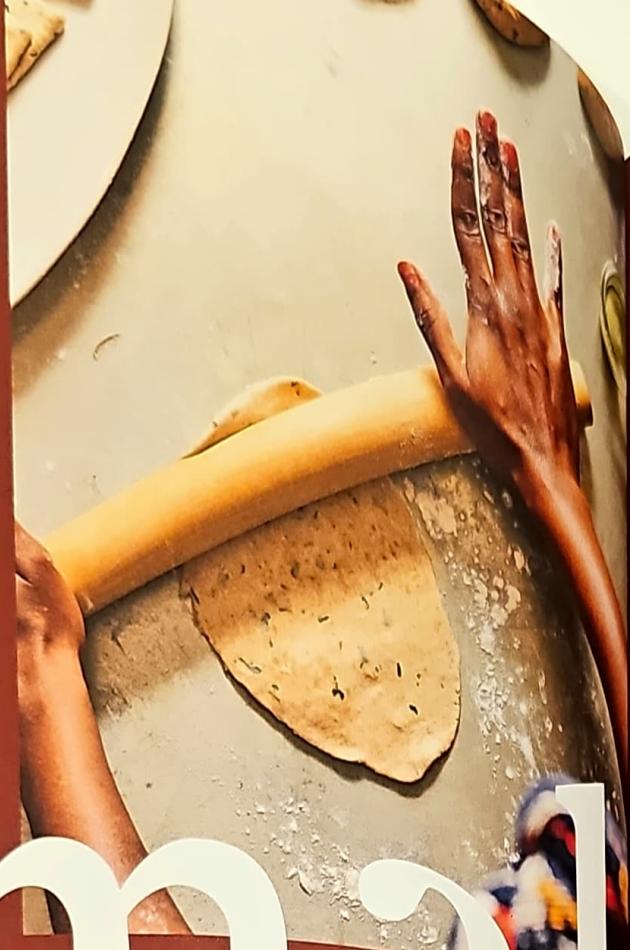


Chapter Two

Somai

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- A photograph showing a close-up of a person's hands working with dough. One hand holds a wooden rolling pin, flattening a piece of dough on a light-colored, textured surface. Another hand is visible, resting near the top right corner of the frame.
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Digaag Qumbe

(CHICKEN STEW WITH YOGURT AND COCONUT)

Made with bite-sized pieces of boneless, skinless chicken thighs, this stew is also incredibly quick cooking. Serve over cooked rice or on a bed of spinach—this is Hawa's preference (something she mentioned when she got to share this recipe with *Bon Appétit*). Either way, serve it with bananas alongside for the most authentic Somali experience. The combination is not well known in the United States, but you can help it become known—it's great.

SERVES 4

- 2 medium vine-ripened tomatoes, coarsely chopped
- 1 jalapeño, stemmed and coarsely chopped (use less or leave out if you don't want things too spicy)
- 1 red bell pepper, stemmed, seeded, and coarsely chopped
- 1 tablespoon tomato paste
- ½ cup plain yogurt
- 2 tablespoons Xawaash Spice Mix (page 74)
- 2 teaspoons kosher salt, plus more as needed
- ¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil or canola oil
- 1 large red onion, finely chopped
- 2 large garlic cloves, minced
- 1 tablespoon minced ginger
- 1 baking potato, cut into bite-sized pieces
- 2 carrots, cut into thin coins
- 1 pound boneless, skinless chicken thighs, cut into bite-sized pieces
- 1 cup full-fat unsweetened coconut milk
- Large handful of cilantro leaves, finely chopped
- Cooked rice and bananas, for serving

In the jar of a blender, combine the tomatoes, jalapeño, bell pepper, tomato paste, yogurt, xawaash, and salt and puree until smooth. Set aside.

Warm the oil in a large Dutch oven or other heavy pot set over medium heat. Add the onion, garlic, and ginger and cook, stirring occasionally, until just beginning to soften, about 5 minutes. Stir in the blended tomato mixture, bring the mixture to a boil, then immediately lower the heat, cover, and cook until very fragrant, about 10 minutes. This initial cooking forms the base of the sauce. Stir in the potato, carrots, chicken, and coconut milk. Cover the pot and cook, uncovering it to stir occasionally, until the vegetables are tender and the chicken is cooked through, about 30 minutes. Season the stew to taste with salt. Serve hot, sprinkled with the cilantro, over cooked rice, and with bananas alongside (don't slice the bananas, just serve them whole and take a bite as you eat the stew). Leftovers can be stored in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to a few days and rewarmed in a heavy pot set over low heat (stir while you heat).

Xawaash Spice Mix

Xawaash (pronounced *HA-wash*) comes from the Arabic word *hawajj*, which is used to describe Yemeni spice blends. Xawaash touches just about every Somali dish. It's like the garam masala of Somalia, and the mix of flavors is truly the flavor of the Indian Ocean. Each Somali home cook prepares hers differently. This is how Hawa prepares hers. She always makes a large batch so she has it on hand to add to dishes as she cooks, adding layers of deep, warm flavors to everything from Digaag Qumbe (Chicken Stew with Yogurt and Coconut, page 73) to Bariis (Basmati Rice Pilaf with Raisins, page 87), Suugo Suqaar (Pasta Sauce with Beef, page 90), and Somali Beef Stew (page 93). You can also toss it on vegetables or chicken before roasting or use it as a dry rub on any type of meat before grilling.

MAKES ABOUT 1½ CUPS

One 2-inch piece cinnamon stick
½ cup cumin seeds
½ cup coriander seeds
2 tablespoons black peppercorns
6 cardamom pods
1 teaspoon whole cloves
2 tablespoons ground turmeric

Place the cinnamon stick in a small zip-top plastic bag, seal it, and bang it a couple of times with a rolling pin, skillet, or mallet (anything firm and heavy) to break it into small pieces.

Place the cinnamon pieces, cumin, coriander, peppercorns, cardamom, and cloves in a small heavy skillet set over medium heat. Cook, stirring constantly, until the smell is very aromatic and the spices are lightly toasted, about 2 minutes. Let cool. Transfer the mixture to a clean coffee grinder and grind into a fine powder (or use a mortar and pestle and some elbow grease). Transfer the ground spices to a fine-mesh sieve set over a bowl and sift. Regrind whatever large pieces remain in the sieve and add them to the bowl with the ground spices. Add the turmeric. Whisk well to combine and transfer the mixture to an airtight jar. Store in a cool, dark place for up to 6 months.



Sabaayad

(SOMALI FLATBREADS)

Ma Halima suggests serving these flatbreads with any type of stew or cooked meat, such as her Beef Suqaar (page 84), a sauté of beef and onions. She makes her sabaayad quite large and in huge quantities, since she makes them at the restaurant where she works, but we scaled the recipe down to manageable pieces that can be cooked and flipped easily. Folding the dough repeatedly with oil makes them like a laminated pastry with distinct layers that flake apart when you eat them (um . . . yum). You can make them up to 3 days ahead and refrigerate. Before serving, wrap them in aluminum foil and warm in a 250°F oven for just a few minutes, or reheat in a dry skillet.

MAKES 8 FLATBREADS

3 cups all-purpose flour, plus more for rolling out the dough

1 cup whole wheat flour

1 teaspoon baking powder

2 tablespoons granulated sugar

1 teaspoon kosher salt

1½ cups whole milk

Large handful of cilantro leaves, chopped

4 tablespoons canola oil, plus more as needed

Place the all-purpose flour, whole wheat flour, baking powder, sugar, and salt in a large bowl and whisk together. Warm the milk in a saucepan set over medium heat (or in the microwave) until small bubbles appear around the edges, about 2 minutes. Add the milk, cilantro, and 2 tablespoons of the oil to the flour mixture and stir with a wooden spoon until a shaggy dough forms (this might take a couple of minutes). If the dough is too dry to come together, add warm water a tablespoonful at a time, until it comes together (alternatively, if the dough is too wet, add more all-purpose flour a tablespoonful at a time until it comes together).

Sprinkle a clean work surface lightly with flour. Transfer the dough to it and knead, pushing the dough away from you and pulling it back quickly, until it is quite elastic and springy. It will take a solid 10 to 15 minutes of kneading (you can also knead for 5 minutes in a stand mixer fitted with the dough hook if you prefer).

Use your hand to coat a clean large bowl with 2 tablespoons of the oil and transfer the dough to it, turning the dough to coat with the oil. Cover the bowl with a clean kitchen towel or plastic wrap and let it sit in a warm spot in your kitchen (the inside of a microwave or an oven—neither of which



should be turned on—is a good bet) until the dough is a bit puffy and soft, about 45 minutes.

Transfer the dough to a flour-sprinkled work surface and cut it into eight equal pieces. Working with one piece of dough at a time, use a rolling pin to roll the dough into a $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch-thick oval measuring about 8 inches long at its widest point. Use a clean pastry brush or your hands to brush a thin layer of oil (about 1 teaspoon) on the surface of the dough and then fold it in half, brush with a little bit more oil (about 1 teaspoon), and fold it in half one more time. Use your rolling pin to flatten the dough one final time into a $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch-thick oval measuring about 8 inches long at its widest point. Repeat the process with the remaining pieces of dough.

Line a serving basket or dish with a cloth napkin and set aside. Set a large cast-iron skillet or other heavy skillet over medium heat and let it warm up for 2 minutes. Place one sabaayad in the skillet and cook until bubbles start to form on the surface and the underside is brown, about 2 minutes. Flip the sabaayad, reduce the heat to low, and, using a spatula, press the sabaayad down in the skillet to make sure all of the edges are in contact with the skillet, then cook until the second side is golden brown, about 2 more minutes. Transfer the sabaayad to the prepared serving basket or dish, cover with another napkin, and repeat the process with the remaining pieces of dough. Serve warm. Leftover breads can be stored in a plastic bag at room temperature for a day and rewarmed in a skillet set over low heat before serving.

Somali Cilantro and Green Chile Pepper Sauce

Hawa's company, Basbaas, is named for the Somali term for chile pepper, and her ready-made sauces are just like this one—an everyday condiment that makes everything it touches better. In fact, this cilantro and green chile pepper sauce that delivers spice and acid in big doses is a version of Basbaas's green sauce. Serve it on . . . anything. From scrambled eggs to grilled fish, tacos to roast chicken, a bowl of rice to a grilled steak, it's one of the most versatile recipes in the book.

MAKES ABOUT 1 CUP

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup full-fat unsweetened coconut milk

3 tablespoons freshly squeezed lime juice, plus more as needed

2 tablespoons white vinegar or white wine vinegar

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup packed cilantro leaves

2 jalapeños, stemmed and coarsely chopped

2 large garlic cloves, minced

2 teaspoons granulated sugar

1 teaspoon kosher salt, plus more as needed

In the jar of a blender or in a food processor, combine the coconut milk, lime juice, vinegar, cilantro, jalapeños, garlic, sugar, and salt and puree until smooth. Season the sauce to taste with more lime juice or salt if needed. Serve immediately or place in a jar and store in the refrigerator for up to a week.





Canjeero

(SOURDOUGH PANCAKES)

Canjeero, sometimes also called lahoh, are thin pancakes made from a fermented batter. They are similar to Ethiopian injera but lighter in flavor, smaller, and faster and easier to make. The pancakes are typically enjoyed for breakfast. You can spread canjeero with a little butter, ghee, or sesame oil and sprinkle with sugar, if you'd like. Serve with hot tea or, for a special treat, alongside cups of Shaah Cadays (Somali Spiced Tea with Milk, page 94). You can also serve canjeero with savory foods in the morning or alongside lunch or dinner. They're also great for scooping up stewed meats like Somali Beef Stew (page 93).

MAKES 12 PANCAKES

1 cup finely ground white cornmeal (see page 18)
1 teaspoon active dry yeast
5 cups warm water
3 tablespoons granulated sugar
2 teaspoons baking powder
1 teaspoon kosher salt
4 cups all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon unsalted butter or canola oil

Place the cornmeal, yeast, and 2 cups of the water in a large bowl and stir together vigorously with a spoon. Cover the bowl with a clean kitchen towel or plastic wrap and let it sit at room temperature until small bubbles appear on top and the mixture has risen slightly, about 1 hour.

Add the remaining 3 cups water, the sugar, baking powder, and salt to the bowl and stir well to combine. Whisk in the flour until the mixture is smooth. Cover the bowl with the kitchen towel and let it sit at room temperature for at least 4 hours and up to 24 hours; the longer it sits, the more flavor it will develop. The mixture will have some bubbles on the surface.

When you're ready to cook the pancakes, place the butter in a large nonstick skillet over medium heat. Once the butter has melted and the skillet is hot, stir the batter well and ladle enough into the skillet to form a thin, even layer across the bottom, tilting the pan to coat the surface (the exact amount will depend on the size of your skillet but figure about $\frac{1}{2}$ cup). Use the rounded base of your ladle to swirl batter to make some circular grooves on the surface. Cover the skillet with a lid and cook until no liquid remains on the surface and the underside is barely golden brown, about 2 minutes. Transfer the pancake to a plate and repeat with the remaining batter (no need to add more butter after the first pancake). Stack the pancakes as you make them and serve them warm as they are or rolled up as in the photo.

Beef Suqaar

Roughly translated from Arabic, *suqaar* means "small ones" and the dish is basically a quickly cooked mixture of small pieces of meat and vegetables. Think of this as a Somali stir-fry. Suqaar is a very flexible dish and can be made with any type of meat. Goat is the most traditional, but here we opt for beef. Serve it just as Ma Halima does, with cooked rice or Bariis (Basmati Rice Pilaf with Raisins, page 87), chopped lettuce, and big pieces of lemon to squeeze on top of everything.

SERVES 4

- 2 tablespoons canola oil
- 1½ pounds boneless beef chuck or other stew meat, cut into bite-sized pieces
- 1 large yellow onion, coarsely chopped
- Kosher salt
- 2 large carrots, thinly sliced
- 1 tablespoon ground cumin
- 1 tablespoon ground turmeric
- ¼ cup water
- 1 small green bell pepper, stemmed, seeded, and thinly sliced
- 2 tablespoons freshly squeezed lime juice
- Large handful of cilantro leaves, coarsely chopped

Warm the oil in a large Dutch oven or other heavy pot set over medium-high heat. Add the beef and onion and sprinkle with a large pinch of salt. Cook, stirring occasionally, until the beef is browned in spots and the onion is beginning to become tender, about 10 minutes. Add the carrots and sprinkle the cumin and turmeric over everything, along with another large pinch of salt. Stir in the water, cover, and cook until the carrots are beginning to get tender, about 5 minutes. Stir in the bell pepper, cover the skillet again, and cook until the carrots and peppers are just barely tender, about 5 minutes. Turn off the heat, stir in the lime juice, and season to taste with salt. Sprinkle with the cilantro and serve immediately. Leftovers can be stored in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to a few days and rewarmed in a skillet set over low heat (stir while you heat).





Bariis

(BASMATI RICE PILAF WITH RAISINS)

Bariis is a rice pilaf that Somalis often serve with cooked meat like Somali Beef Stew (page 93) or stewed chicken. The mix of savory and sweet, more specifically the combination of cooked onions, warm spices, and sweet raisins, is very typical of Somali food. Bariis even makes for a wonderful breakfast with a fried or soft-boiled egg on top. Rinsing and soaking the rice ahead of time really helps the grains let go of their dusty coating and also cook more quickly and evenly. A pot of bariis helps Hawa feel at home and connected to her Somali family and roots even when she is very far away from both of those.

SERVES 4

- 1 cup basmati rice
- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil or canola oil
- 1 small red onion, thinly sliced into half-moons
- One 2-inch piece cinnamon stick
- 2 whole cloves
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- Pinch of ground cardamom
- 1 small tomato, finely chopped
- Kosher salt
- 3 tablespoons golden raisins or regular raisins
- 1 tablespoon Xawaash Spice Mix (page 74)
- 1½ cups boiling water

Place the rice in a fine-mesh sieve and rinse with cold tap water, stirring the rice gently with your hands, until the water runs clear. Place the rinsed rice in a bowl, cover with cold water, and let it soak for at least 10 minutes and up to 30 minutes.

Warm the oil in a medium saucepan set over medium heat. Once the oil is hot, add the onion and cook, stirring, until it begins to soften, about 5 minutes. Add the cinnamon and cloves and cook, stirring, until the mixture smells very fragrant, about 5 minutes. Stir in the garlic and cardamom and cook, stirring, until they're also quite fragrant, about 30 seconds. Add the tomato and a large pinch of salt, then increase the heat to high. Cook, stirring, until the juice from the tomato has evaporated and the mixture is like a thick paste, about 2 minutes. Drain the rice and add it to the pot, along with another large pinch of salt. Reduce the heat to low, cover, and cook, stirring, until the mixture is quite dry and the rice smells nutty and is opaque, about 5 minutes. Stir in the raisins, spice mix, and boiling water. Reduce the heat to low, cover, and cook until the rice has absorbed the liquid and is tender, about 15 minutes. Turn off the heat and let the rice sit, covered, for at least 10 minutes before fluffing with a spoon or fork. If you can find the cinnamon stick and cloves, fish them out and discard them (otherwise, just warn your guests to avoid eating these). Serve the rice immediately, while hot. Leftovers can be stored in an airtight container in the refrigerator and rewarmed in a 300°F oven or in a skillet over low heat.

Spiced Chicken and Onion Samosas

"Don't be in a hurry," Ma Sahra says about cooking samosas, the crispy fried triangular pastries that can be filled with anything from spiced chicken and onions (like these) to every kind of vegetable, goat meat, or even fish. Anything can be a samosa! Samosas are also found in Indian cooking, and it's no surprise that they found their way across the Indian Ocean to Somalia and neighboring countries. They're sometimes called sambusas, and in Mozambique, you'll find them referred to as chamussas (Mozambique is home to one of the largest Indian populations in Africa, because the Indian state of Goa and Mozambique were once part of the Portuguese empire).

MAKES 8 SAMOSAS

- 1 cup all-purpose flour, plus more for dusting
- $\frac{1}{3}$ cup warm water
- 3 tablespoons canola oil, plus more for frying
- Kosher salt
- 1 large baking potato, coarsely chopped
- 1 small yellow onion, finely diced
- 1 small red bell pepper, stemmed, seeded, and finely diced
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 tablespoon Xawaash Spice Mix (page 74)
- $\frac{1}{2}$ pound boneless, skinless chicken thighs, finely chopped

Put the flour, water, 1 tablespoon of the oil, and a large pinch of salt in a large bowl and stir with a wooden spoon until a dough forms. Transfer the dough to a lightly floured work surface and knead until it is smooth, elastic, soft, and doesn't stick to your fingers, about 5 minutes. Return the dough to the bowl you mixed it in, lightly dust the dough with flour, and cover with a clean kitchen towel or plastic wrap. Set it aside to rest until soft and slightly risen, about 30 minutes.

While the dough rests, place the potato and a large pinch of salt in a small saucepan and cover with cold water. Set the saucepan over high heat and bring the water to a boil. Lower the heat to maintain a simmer and cook until the potato is tender, about 15 minutes, then drain and set aside.

Meanwhile, warm the remaining 2 tablespoons oil in a large skillet set over medium heat. Add the onion, bell pepper, garlic, and Xawaash. Cook, stirring occasionally, until the onion begins to soften, about 5 minutes. Add the chicken and sprinkle with a large pinch of salt. Cook, stirring occasionally, until the chicken is cooked through, about 10 minutes. Turn off the heat and stir in the potato. The whole mixture should be like a rough mash. Let the filling cool to room temperature, then season it to taste with salt.



Transfer the dough to a lightly floured work surface and divide it in half. Use a floured rolling pin to roll each piece into a thin 12-inch square (or as close to a square as you can get). If the dough resists as you're rolling it, just let it rest for a few minutes before proceeding.

Cut each square into four even strips. Divide the filling among the strips, placing it in a mound at one end of each strip, about 1 inch from the edge. Working with one strip at a time, fold the outer inch of the dough up and over the filling to form a triangle. Take the outer end and fold it down to add another layer of dough onto the triangle. Continue folding up and down in a zigzag to continue encasing the filling in more layers of dough until you reach the end of the strip. Repeat the entire process with the remaining dough and filling. You will have eight triangles by the time you're done.

Line a plate or tray with paper towels and set aside. Heat 1 inch of oil in a Dutch oven or other heavy pot set over medium-high heat until it reaches 375°F on an instant-read thermometer or until the edge of a samosa dipped into the oil sizzles on contact. Fry the samosas, in batches if necessary, depending on the size of your pot, until they are browned on all sides, about 5 minutes per samosa. It's better to fry in batches rather than crowding the pot. Note that as you add the cold samosas to the hot oil, the oil temperature will drop, so you might have to adjust your heat as you fry. Home frying is a bit of a dance of adjusting the temperature and being patient while things brown evenly. Trust your instincts! Transfer the browned samosas to the prepared plate or tray to drain. Serve immediately, while they're hot (but truthfully, they're good at room temperature, too). Leftovers can be stored in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to a few days and rewarmed on a baking sheet, uncovered, in a 350°F oven for about 10 minutes before serving.

Suugo Suqaar

(PASTA SAUCE WITH BEEF)

Italy's colonization of southern Somalia during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries had a lasting impact on Somali cuisine. Pasta is just as popular as Canjeero (Sourdough Pancakes, page 83). Suugo is the most popular of Somali pasta sauces and resembles an easy weeknight meat sauce but the added flavor of Xawaash Spice Mix makes it distinctly Somali (and distinctly tasty). You can substitute ground turkey or ground chicken in place of the beef if you'd like. Serve with cooked pasta (any shape will work, whether it be a strandlike spaghetti or a shorter cut like penne). If you're gluten-free, try serving it over Ma Maria's Xima (Smooth Cornmeal Porridge, page 182) or roasted sweet potatoes instead of pasta.

SERVES 4

3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil or canola oil

2 garlic cloves, minced

1 small green bell pepper, stemmed, seeded, and finely chopped

1 small red onion, finely chopped

1 pound ground beef

3 tablespoons Xawaash Spice Mix (page 74)

1 teaspoon kosher salt, plus more as needed

2 tablespoons tomato paste

One 28-ounce can diced tomatoes, with their juices

Cooked spaghetti (or whatever shape pasta you like) and coarsely chopped cilantro, for serving

Place the oil in a large skillet set over medium-high heat.

Once the oil is hot, add the garlic, bell pepper, and onion.

Cook, stirring occasionally, until the vegetables begin to soften, about 8 minutes. Add the beef, Xawaash, and salt and cook, stirring occasionally to break up the beef, until the meat is browned, about 15 minutes.

Add the tomato paste and diced tomatoes (and their juices).

Fill the tomato can halfway with water and add it to the pot. Stir well to combine, being sure to scrape up any bits stuck to the bottom of the skillet. Increase the heat to high and bring the sauce to a boil, then decrease the heat to low and simmer, stirring occasionally as the sauce cooks, for 30 minutes. Season the sauce to taste with salt. Serve hot over cooked spaghetti, with the cilantro sprinkled on top. Leftovers can be stored in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to a few days and rewarmed in a heavy pot set over low heat (stir while you heat).





Somali Beef Stew

This stew is a wonderful way to stretch a little meat into a large, satisfying pot of food. The combination of Xawaash Spice Mix and tomato paste is particularly great, a match made in flavor heaven. Serve over plain rice with hot sauce and cilantro for topping, lime wedges for squeezing over, and bananas for eating alongside (this is very typical in Somalia—a bite of stew and rice followed by a bite of banana and so on). You can make the stew up to a week in advance and refrigerate it in an airtight container (it gets even better the longer it sits) or freeze it in an airtight container for up to 2 months (defrost in the refrigerator for up to a day before serving). Gently reheat the stew in a heavy pot set over low heat before serving.

SERVES 6 TO 8

- 2 tablespoons canola oil
- 1 red onion, thinly sliced
- 3 garlic cloves, minced
- 2 tablespoons Xawaash Spice Mix (page 74)
- 2 tablespoons tomato paste
- 2 teaspoons kosher salt, plus more as needed
- 2 cups water
- 2 pounds boneless beef chuck or other stew meat, cut into bite-sized pieces
- 2 baking potatoes, cut into bite-sized pieces
- 2 large carrots, cut into thin coins
- 1 red bell pepper, stemmed, seeded, and cut into thin strips
- Cooked rice, hot sauce (such as Somali Cilantro and Green Chile Pepper Sauce, page 80), cilantro leaves, lime wedges, and fresh bananas, for serving

Warm the oil in a large Dutch oven or other heavy pot set over medium heat. Add the onion and garlic and cook, stirring occasionally, until just beginning to soften, about 3 minutes. Stir in the Xawaash, tomato paste, and salt and cook until aromatic, about 1 minute. Stir in the water and increase the heat to high. Bring to a boil, reduce the heat to low, then stir in the beef and potatoes. Partially cover the pot (leave the lid slightly ajar so steam can escape) and simmer until the beef and potatoes are just cooked through, about 45 minutes. Stir in the carrots and bell pepper and cook, covered, until the beef and vegetables are all very tender, an additional 30 minutes. Season the stew to taste with salt and serve over rice with hot sauce and cilantro for topping, lime wedges for squeezing over, and bananas for eating alongside. Leftovers can be stored in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to a few days and rewarmed in a heavy pot set over low heat (stir while you heat).

Shaah Cadays

(SOMALI SPICED TEA WITH MILK)

Essentially Somali chai, this spiced tea with milk is served most often during the Somali afternoon tea tradition known as casariya. The most important things to serve with shaah cadays are sheeko, which is the Somali term for stories. Just like Ma Gehennet's Buna (Eritrean Coffee, page 54), shaah is as much about whom you're sharing it with as it is about what's in your teacup. It's all about community and conversation. Shaah cadays is also enjoyed in the morning for breakfast with Canjeero (Sourdough Pancakes, page 83).

SERVES 4

- One 1-inch piece ginger
- Two 2-inch pieces cinnamon stick
- 5 green cardamom pods
- 5 whole cloves
- 1 teaspoon black peppercorns
- 2 cups cold water
- 3 tablespoons loose black tea (or 4 black tea bags)
- 3 tablespoons granulated sugar, plus more as needed
- 2 cups whole milk

Crush the ginger with the bottom of a heavy pot or the blunt edge of a knife and set aside. Place the cinnamon, cardamom, cloves, and peppercorns in a mortar and crush with a pestle until coarsely ground (or crush on a countertop or on a cutting board with the bottom of a heavy pot). Transfer the spices to a medium saucepan set over medium heat and cook, stirring, until very fragrant, about 1 minute. Add the ginger, water, tea, and sugar and increase the heat to high. Once bubbles form around the edge, immediately reduce the heat to low and let the mixture simmer for 5 minutes. Stir in the milk and let it cook for just 1 minute to warm the milk, then turn off the heat. Strain through a fine-mesh sieve into a teapot, pitcher, or straight into tea mugs. Serve immediately while hot and add more sugar to taste if you'd like.

