

GINSENG AND BEEF

- 1 tablespoon soy sauce
- 1 tablespoon wine or sherry
- ½ teaspoon sugar
- ½ pound tenderloin, cut into narrow strips
or chunks
- 3 cloves garlic, finely chopped
- Vegetable oil
- Up to ½ cup ginseng root, fresh or
dried, thoroughly cleaned and thinly sliced
- ⅛ teaspoon ground black pepper
- 3–4 scallions

Mix together the soy sauce, sherry, and sugar. Marinate the beef in the soy sauce mixture in a bowl; cover and refrigerate for 2 hours. Remove the meat and reserve the marinade. Stir-fry the garlic and meat in oil until cooked through. Add the ginseng and sauté briefly while adding the soy sauce marinade and pepper to taste. Add the scallions and cook for 1–2 minutes. Makes 4–6 servings.

Adapted from www.hsuginseng.com.

WINTER-MELON SOUP

- 2 pounds winter melon (*dong gua*, a melon with pale,
sweet flesh found in Asian groceries)
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 6 cups chicken stock
- 1 small ginseng root
- 4 ounces straw mushrooms
- ⅓ cup shredded, cooked chicken breast
- 2 slices fresh ginger, peeled
- ¼ cup cooked or canned crabmeat
- ¼ cup canned asparagus tips, drained
- 6 dried lotus nuts, soaked and peeled,
with the hard core removed
- Cilantro leaves

Look for a winter melon that will hold at least 6 cups of liquid. Cut off the top. (If the melon is very large, slice it in half so that half will hold the soup.) Remove the melon's central fiber and seeds. Scrape out some of the flesh, leaving a layer about ¾-inch thick still clinging to the inside. Sprinkle the inside with salt and put the melon in a large deep pan with enough boiling water to cover it. Simmer for 30 minutes, drain, and place it in a large steamer; steam for another 30 minutes. Bring the stock to a boil and pour it into the melon; cover and steam for 25 minutes. Add the ginseng and other ingredients and serve. Add some of the winter-melon flesh, scraped out with a spoon, when ladling the soup into individual bowls. Garnish with cilantro. Makes 6 servings.

Adapted from *The Food of Asia* by Kong Foong Ling, 2002.