TOMATO, CUCUMBER AND COCONUT YOGURT RAITA
Prepared by Chitra Agrawal of Brooklyn Delhi
Yield: 3 cups

Ingredients
- ¼ cup unsweetened grated coconut (fresh, frozen or dried)
- 1 tablespoon mild-flavored oil such as canola
- ½ teaspoon black mustard seeds
- Pinch asafetida (hing) powder
- 4 fresh curry leaves
- 1 small plum tomato
- ½ cucumber, peeled, seeded and diced
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 2 cups plain whole-milk yogurt, lightly beaten by hand
- 3 tablespoons chopped cilantro leaves, plus more for garnish
- Paprika for sprinkling
- 2 tablespoons chopped cilantro leaves, plus more for garnishing

Instructions
Thaw frozen coconut or place dried coconut in a little hot water to plump it up.

In a medium bowl, stir together the tomato, cucumber, coconut, chopped cilantro and yogurt.

Put the oil in a tempering pot or a little pan over medium heat. When the oil is hot and shimmering, add one black mustard seed. When the seed sizzles and pops, add the rest of the mustard seeds and the asafetida. Keep a lid handy to cover the pan while the mustard seeds are popping. When the popping starts to subside (a few seconds), turn the heat to medium-low. Rub the curry leaves between your fingers a little to release their natural oils, and drop them into the oil. Cover immediately, as moisture from the curry leaves will cause the oil to spatter. Immediately pour the oil mixture over the raita. To get all of the oil out of the pan, put a spoonful or two of the raita into the pan, stir and spoon it back into the bowl.

Sprinkle the top of the raita with paprika and additional chopped cilantro.

Serve with flatbread chips or veggies for dipping or spoon raita over crostini for an appetizer.