

A photograph of four yellow quinces with green leaves, resting on a dark wooden surface. The quinces are arranged in a cluster, with one in the foreground and three behind it. The lighting is soft, highlighting the texture of the fruit and the veins on the leaves.

QUINCE: THE HISTORY USES AND CULTIVATION

WITH LAURA SWEANY

HISTORY

- One of the oldest tree fruits in cultivation
- Common among early American colonists
- Found in Middle Eastern cultures in pre-biblical time
- Garden of Eden apple was almost certainly Quince
- Latin name derived from city of Kydonia on the island of Crete
- Quince recipes found all over - including in the writings of Nostradamus
- Fruit often represented wealth, good luck, fortune, and high status

CULTIVATION

- Bred throughout the world: Middle East, Europe, China, and later the United States
- Two general separate strains of Quince: Hot climate and temperate climate
- Not prone to many diseases, tends towards common pear diseases if any
- Tip bearing – requires special pruning if pruned
- Common rootstocks used for propagation can be Quince or Pear
- Quince rootstocks will naturally dwarf pears
- 3 Types: Ornamental, Chinese upright bush, and Common tree form
- Great landscape interest: large showy white flowers and clear yellow fall leaf color

QUINCE LEAF - FALL COLOR

CYDONIA OBLONGA



QUINCE FLOWERS

CYDONIA OBLONGA



QUINCE FRUIT

CYDONIA OBLONGA



CULINARY USES

- Not typically for fresh eating (in the Pacific Northwest United States)
- Exceptionally firm flesh even when fully ripe
- Aromatic when cooked – usually poached or baked
- Lends itself to pastes, purees, and good shredded fresh (like Membrillo)
- High in pectin – cores and seeds can be used to gel jams and jellies
- Strong lemon-citrus flavor, sweeter when cooked
- Can be used like apples in many recipes including apple pie
- Stores very well without refrigeration

MEDICINAL USES

- As with cloves to create pomanders – used to freshen storage areas and spaces
- Greeks use seeds and cores to make tea to treat sore throat
- Chinese quince tea is used to treat cough
- Powdered quince (whole fruit) or extract used for GI inflammation and diarrhea
- Antioxidant, anti-inflammatory (mild), anti-microbial, anti-ulcerative
- High in fiber, vitamins, and minerals



EVERY HOME
ORCHARD NEEDS
A QUINCE!

- LAURA SWEANY