How to Dry Quince, Making Quince Tea, and Making Quince and Apple Tea

Preparing Dried Quince for Tea (instructions for drying quince below)

One traditional method of preparing quince tea involves toasting the dried quince before brewing it. This deepens its colour and gives the tea a richer, roasted aroma.

Toasting the Dried Quince

1. Place a clean, dry frying pan over low heat.
2. Add the dried quince. Do not overcrowd the pan; work in batches if necessary.
3. Stir frequently to prevent the pieces from burning.
4. Toast for approximately 10–15 minutes, or until the quince becomes noticeably darker and develops a deeper aroma.
5. Remove from the heat.
6. Spread the toasted quince on a tray and allow it to cool completely before storing or brewing.

Take care not to burn the quince. It should become darker and aromatic, but not black.

Traditional Quince Tea

- Place the toasted dried quince in a teapot and cover with boiling water.
- Allow it to steep over indirect heat—for example, on top of a kettle or samovar—for approximately 15 minutes.
- The amount of quince can be adjusted according to taste.

Quince Tea with Cardamom, Cinnamon & Saffron

For a more aromatic version, add some of the following while the tea is steeping:

- Cardamom pods
- Cinnamon
- Saffron
- Rosewater

- Honey or nabat (Persian rock candy)

Quince & Apple Tea

Quince can also be combined with dried apple.

1. Dry the quince and apple separately.
2. Place 2 tablespoons of dried quince and 1 tablespoon of dried apple in a teapot.
3. Add 2 cardamom pods.
4. Pour in boiling water.
5. Cover and allow the tea to steep over gentle indirect heat.

Drying Quince

Because fresh quince is seasonal, drying is a traditional way of preserving it for use throughout the year.

Preparing the Quince

1. Choose fresh, firm quince without bruises, blemishes or damaged areas.
2. Wash the quince thoroughly, making sure to remove the fine fuzz from the skin.
3. Quince does not need to be peeled. The skin can be left on.
4. Allow the fruit to drain and dry before cutting.
5. Cut the quince into thin, evenly sized slices or strips, approximately 3–6 mm thick. You can also coarsely grate the quince.
6. To help prevent the quince from darkening, you can soak the pieces for a few minutes in water with a little lemon juice, or in a weak salt-water solution.
7. Arrange the pieces in a single layer, without overlapping, so that they can dry evenly.

Methods of Drying Quince

1. Drying Quince on a Radiator or Heater

This is a traditional and simple method, particularly useful during the colder months.

1. Place the sliced or grated quince on a heat-safe, non-plastic tray.

2. Arrange the pieces in a single layer, leaving a little space between them.
3. Place the tray on top of a radiator or heater.
4. Turn or rearrange the quince every few hours so that it dries evenly and does not develop mould.
5. Drying usually takes 1–2 days, depending on the temperature and humidity of the room.
6. The quince is ready when it is dry but still slightly flexible and leathery rather than completely brittle.

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2. Drying Quince in the Sun

Sun-drying is a traditional, though slower, method.

1. Arrange the quince pieces in a single layer on a mesh tray or rack, leaving space between them for air to circulate.
2. Place the tray in direct sunlight.
3. Cover the quince loosely with a clean, breathable cloth or mesh to protect it from dust and insects.
4. Turn the pieces regularly during the day to ensure even drying.
5. Bring the quince indoors at night and return it to the sun the following morning.
6. Sun-drying usually takes 2–4 days, depending on the weather, humidity and thickness of the slices.
7. The quince should be dry but retain a little flexibility.

If you live in a humid climate, sun-drying may encourage mould. In that case, use a radiator, oven or food dehydrator instead.

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3. Drying Quince in the Oven

1. Preheat the oven to approximately 50°C / 122°F.
2. Arrange the quince in a single layer on a baking tray lined with baking paper or foil.
3. Leave some space between the pieces.
4. Place the tray in the oven.
5. If your oven allows it safely, keep the door slightly ajar to allow moisture to escape. This helps the fruit dry rather than cook.

6. Turn and rearrange the pieces occasionally.
7. Drying generally takes around 6–8 hours, depending on the thickness of the pieces and the oven.
8. Check regularly towards the end to make sure the quince does not become too dry or burn.
9. Remove from the oven and allow the quince to cool completely.

The finished quince should be slightly flexible and leathery, rather than completely brittle.

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4. Drying Quince in a Food Dehydrator

1. Arrange the quince slices or strips on the dehydrator trays, leaving space between the pieces.
2. Set the dehydrator to approximately 57°C / 135°F.
3. Turn or rearrange the pieces regularly so that they dry evenly.
4. Drying can take approximately 30 hours, depending on the machine, thickness of the fruit and moisture content.
5. Allow the quince to cool completely once dried.

Storing Dried Quince

- Make sure the quince is thoroughly dry before storing it.
- Properly dried quince slices should remain slightly flexible and leathery, rather than completely brittle.
- After drying, you can leave the pieces in an uncovered container for 4–5 days. This allows any remaining moisture to evaporate.
- Once completely dry, transfer the quince to an airtight container.
- Store in a cool, dry place.
- Properly dried quince can be kept for approximately 10 months.
- For longer-term storage, place the dried quince in a sealed bag or container and keep it in the freezer.