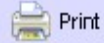


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## How to Make Quince Jam or Preserves!

Quince jam is easy to make. And that's a good thing, considering how hard it is to find quinces or quince preserves in the grocery stores! Quinces are an old time fruit, related to apples and pears, and like them has a fruit which is bright golden yellow when mature, pear-shaped, 3 to 5 inches long and 4.5 inches wide (7-12 cm long and 6-9 cm wide).

Most varieties of quince are too hard, astringent and sour to eat raw unless ripened on the tree and softened by frost and subsequent decay. But they are used to make jam, jelly and quince pudding, or they may be peeled, then roasted, baked or stewed. The flesh of the fruit turns red after a long cooking time. The very strong perfume means they can be added in small quantities to apple pies and jam to enhance the flavor. Adding a diced quince to apple sauce will enhance the taste of the applesauce with the chunks of relatively firm, tart quince.

So, see below to make quince preserves!

### Other quince trivia

In Iran and other parts of the Middle East, the dried pits of the fruit are used to treat sore throat and to relieve cough. The pits are soaked in water; the viscous product is then drunk like cough medicine. It is commonly used for children, as it is alcohol free and 100% natural. A variety of quince which is grown in the Middle East, does not require cooking and is often eaten raw.[citation needed]

In Europe, quinces are commonly grown in central and southern areas where the summers are sufficiently hot for the fruit to fully ripen. They are not grown in large amounts; typically one or two quince trees are grown in a mixed orchard with several apples and other fruit trees.

## Ingredients

Yield: about 4 pints

- 7 cups of peeled, quartered, cored quince slices (about 3 lbs of prepared quinces)
- 3 cups of sugar or other sweetener: sugar, no-sugar, Splenda, mix of sugar and Splenda or fruit juice - see step 5
- Cinnamon (optional!) I like 1/2 teaspoon per batch
- Quinces are naturally high in pectin, so you should not need to add any pectin. If for some reason you find your batches are not tick enough, you can add 1/2 packet of dry pectin to each batch; mix it with the sugar in step 5.

## Equipment

- Ball/Kerr jars - 4 ounce, 8 ounce or pint size (Publix, Kroger, other grocery stores and some "big box" stores carry them - about \$8 per dozen quart jars including the lids and rings)
- 1 Water Bath Canner (a huge pot with a lifting rack to sterilize the jars of apple jelly after filling (about \$30 to \$35 at mall kitchen stores and local "big box" stores, but it's usually cheaper online from our affiliates) You CAN use a large pot instead, but the canners are deeper, and have a rack top make lifting the jars out easier. If you plan on canning every year, they're worth the investment.
- Vegetable / fruit peeler (\$1.99 at the grocery store)
- Jar grabber (to pick up the hot jars)
- Jar funnel (\$2 at mall kitchen stores and local "big box" stores, but it's usually cheaper online from our affiliates)
- At least 1 large pot
- Jelly strainer (see step 6) or cheesecloth
- Large spoons and ladles

## Directions - Step by Step

### Step 1 - Get the jars cleaning and canner heating up



Now's a good time to get the jars ready, so you won't be rushed later. The dishwasher is fine for the jars; especially if it has a "sterilize" cycle, the water bath processing will sterilize them as well as the contents! If you don't have a dishwasher with a sterilize cycle, you can wash the containers in hot, soapy water and rinse, then sterilize the jars by boiling them 10

minutes, and keep the jars in hot water until they are used.

NOTE: If unsterilized jars are used, the product should be processed for 5 more minutes. However, since this additional processing can result in a poor set (runny jam), it's better to sterilize the jars.

Put the lids into a pan of hot, but not quite boiling water (that's what the manufacturer's recommend) for 5 minutes, and use the magnetic "lid lifter wand" to pull them out. Leave the jars in the dishwasher on "heated dry" until you are

ready to use them. Keeping them hot will prevent the jars from breaking when you fill them with the hot jam.

Now is also a good time to get your canner filled (about 2/3 full) of water and heating up. You'll need it going at a full boil when you put the sealed jars in later!



## Step 2 - How many quince and where to get them

As mentioned at the beginning, quince are not a common fruit these days, but they can be found! You can pick your own: I have found orchards in Arizona, New Jersey, Oregon, Washington and Ontario that have quince. In the Fall, you can often find them at farmer's markets and specialty stores, like Whole Foods. It takes about 5 or 6 pounds of fresh quince to make this batch of preserves.

## Step 3 - Wash and peel the quince!

I'm sure you can figure out how to wash the quince in plain cold water and remove any stickers or labels on them. Using a vegetable peeler or a paring knife, peel the quince.

## Step 4 -Chop the quince!



Chopping them is much faster if you use one of those apple corer/segmenters - you just push it down on an apple and it cuts it into segments.

Using a paring knife, be sure to remove any seeds, gritty parts, and any mushy or dark areas.



## Step 5 - Measure out the sweetener and heat with water

Depending upon which type of jam you're making (sugar, no-

sugar, Splenda, mix of sugar and Splenda or fruit juice) you will need to use a different amount of sugar and type of pectin. The precise measurements are found in directions inside each and every box of pectin sold (every brand, Ball, Kerr, Mrs. Wages, etc. has directions inside). I haven't seen a jelly recipe that uses only Splenda, and I haven't yet tried it; I suspect it would taste bland.



Type of jam	Type of pectin to buy	Sweetener
regular	no-sugar or regular	3 cups of sugar
low sugar	no-sugar	1.5 cups of sugar
lower sugar	no-sugar	1 cups sugar and 1 cups of Splenda
no sugar	no-sugar	3 cups of Splenda
natural	no-sugar	3 cups fruit juice (grape, peach, apple or mixed)- and add less water!

Mix the sweetener and 2 quarts of water in a pot and start it heating up. (If you use fruit juice as the sweetener, then add only 1 quart plus 1 cup of water). Boil for 5 minutes, until the sweetener is dissolved.

## Step 6 - Cook the Quince

Pretty simple! Add the quinces and cook until the flesh is transparent and the syrup (the liquid) is almost to the jelling / gelling point. You can tell because it will start to thicken and look like a syrup! But as it thickens be careful to stir constantly to prevent sticking to the sides of the pot and burning!



## Step 7 - Testing for "jell" (thickness)



I keep a metal tablespoon sitting in a glass of ice water, then take a half spoonful of the mix and let it cool to room temperature on the spoon. If it thickens up to the consistency I like, then I know the jam is ready. If not, I mix in a little more pectin (about 1/4 to 1/2 of another package) and bring it to a boil again for 1 minute.

## Step 8 - Turn off the heat, fill the jars and put the lid and rings on



Skim any foam off the surface with a ladle, then fill the jars to within  $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch of the top, wipe any spilled jam off the top, seat the lid and tighten the ring around them. Then put them into the boiling water canner!

This is where the jar tongs and lid lifter come in really handy!



## Step 9 - Process (heat) the jars in the boiling water bath

Keep the jars covered with at least 2 inches of water. Keep the water boiling. In general, boil them for 15 minutes. I say "in general" because you have to process (boil) them longer 5 minutes at higher altitudes than sea level, or if you use larger jars, or if you did not sterilize the jars and lids right before using them.

**Note:** Some people don't even boil the jars; they just ladle it hot into hot jars, put the lids and rings on and invert them, (this is called "open kettle" processing). Open kettle process is universally condemned by all of the authorities (USDA, FDA, Universities - Clemson, UGa, Minnesota, WI, Michigan, etc..) as being inherently dangerous and conducive to botulism. It does not create a sterile environment; it does create the ideal environment for botulism to grow.

Putting the jars in the boiling water bath REALLY helps to reduce spoilage! To me, it makes little sense to put all the working into making the jam and then not to process the jars to be sure they don't spoil or risk your family's health.!



## Step 10 - Remove and cool the jars - Done!

Lift the jars out of the water and let them cool without touching or bumping them in a draft-free place (usually takes overnight) You can then remove the rings if you like. Once the jars are cool, you can check that they are sealed verifying that the lid has been sucked down. Just press in the center, gently, with your finger. If it pops up and down (often making a popping sound), it is not sealed. If you put the jar in the refrigerator right away, you can still use it. Some people replace the lid and reprocess the jar, then that's a bit iffy. If you heat the contents back up, re-jar them (with a new lid) and the full time in the canner, it's usually ok.



Once cooled, they're ready to store. I find they last up to 12 months. But after about 6 to 8 months, they get darker in color and start to get runny. They still are safe to eat, but the flavor and texture aren't as good. So eat them in the first 6 months after you prepare them!

### Other Equipment:

From left to right:

1. Jar lifting tongs - helpful to pick up hot jars
2. Lid lifter - to remove lids from the pot of hot water
3. Lid - disposable - you may only use them once
4. Ring - holds the lids on the jar until after the jars cool - then you don't need them
5. Canning jar funnel - to fill the jars

