

JUST FRUITS

AND EXOTICS

QUINCE

INTRODUCTION

Quinces (*Cydonia oblonga*) used to be in every yard. The flowers were one of the early signs of spring and the fruit was used in a variety of savory and sweet recipes. Having lost popularity due to no fault of their own, we're pleased to offer some great varieties. All quinces are self-pollinating.

USES IN THE LANDSCAPE

Uniquely gnarled and twisted in form, the quince makes an unusual tree to add to the shrubbery border. Delicate, large pale-pink blooms resemble apple blossoms and are sweetly fragrant, as is the ripe fruit. If grafted trees grow as a single trunk. Ungrafted trees may be allowed to sucker and planted closely together, growing a fabulous hedge. Low-growing flowering quince makes a show when interplanted with spring-flowering bulbs.

PLANTING + CULTURE

SITE SELECTION

Quinces produce best on deep, heavy loam, but they will grow on many soil types. Trees will grow more vigorously and produce more fruit in full sun.

SOIL PREPARATION + PLANTING

Quinces prefer slightly alkaline soil (pH 6.5 to 7.0 or higher). If you are in doubt about the pH of your soil, take a soil sample to the Cooperative Extension Agent in your county for a soil test. Adjust soil pH as necessary. A soil pH of 7.0 or higher releases extra calcium, preventing bitter rot on ripening fruits.

Dig a planting hole approximately three times the width of the pot and at the same depth as the root ball. Set that soil aside and mix it 50/50 with either aged mushroom compost, aged manure, or rotted pine bark & aged manure/compost. Remove the plant from the pot, gently loosen the root ball and place in the planting hole. To avoid burying too deep, make sure plant is positioned with the top most roots at the soil line. Fill the planting hole with the mix of soil and organic matter; gently tamp it in. Water thoroughly to settle the roots and eliminate air pockets. Do NOT put fertilizer in the planting hole. Only apply fertilizer if it is the correct time of year (see Fertilization section below).

If desired, construct a water basin around the base of the tree approximately 36 inches in diameter. Mulch in spring and summer with approximately 4-6 inches of mulch. Pull mulch a couple of inches away from the trunk for good air circulation.

FERTILIZATION

The type of fertilizer you choose may be chemical or organic. Make sure that the fertilizer contains iron, zinc, manganese, magnesium, molybdenum, copper and boron. These minor elements are very important to plants and most soils are low in these elements. Application rates vary according to age of plant. See chart below:

| Starter Fertilizer & Soil (Apply at Planting) | Fertilizer to Maintain (Apply Early March, Late May, & Late July) |
|--|--|
| Espoma Bio-tone® Starter Plus Mix Mushroom Compost in Soil | Espoma Tree-tone® |

Notes:

- Follow Instructions on Bag for how much to apply each time.
- Months to Fertilize vary based on your zone. Fertilize 3 times per year. We recommend the 1st fertilization starting after the last Freeze of the winter (Late February/Early March in zone 8) & the last Fertilization being no later than August or even June/July in some of the colder zones 7 & below.)
- Fertilizing too late in the year in colder climates will promote new growth, which will be subject to freeze damage.

See our “Planting a Tree Correctly” Guide & Espoma Bio-tone® and Tree-tone® Fact Sheets on our website for more info.

WATER

The first year is a critical time for the establishment of a new quince. Water thoroughly twice a week on light soils and once a week on clay soils. Soak the entire root system deeply – this usually takes 40-50 minutes. Quinces should receive at least 1 inch of water each week for best growth and fruit production. Water regularly, especially during dry periods. Fruit may drop prematurely if insufficiently irrigated during dry spells.

PRUNING + CARE

Quinces tend to be bushy and ungrafted quince will sucker to form a hedge if left unpruned. Quinces can be trained to a single trunk by frequent removal of suckers while grafter trees do not sucker. The open center pruning style is best in hot, humid climates like the Deep South. Light annual pruning of established trees encourages fruit production. Remove dead and damaged wood during late winter and remove sprouts and suckers as they appear.

HARVEST

Quinces are ripened like pears off the tree. Ripe fruit are highly fragrant. Most quinces are used for cooking, but AROMATNAYA and PINEAPPLE can also be eaten fresh.

VARIETIES

A detailed Variety List can be found on our website: justfruitsandexotics.com