

Published based on [Torontonians Restaurant Reviews: Quince Restaurant](#)

Torontonians Restaurant Reviews: Quince Restaurant

Rated by Eye Magazine as 'outstanding', but receiving mixed reviews from Toronto Life who ultimately rated it one of Toronto's Best New Restaurants in 2007, Quince falls into the group of a must-try – a Mediterranean-inspired place with reasonable prices and a reputation for fresh, innovative flavours. The founders of Quince are Jennifer Gittins and Michael van den Winkel, a husband and wife formerly known from the acclaimed Stork on the Roof. Their new place, started in fall of 2006, is located just a couple blocks south of the busy intersection at Yonge and Eglinton.

Quince is surrounded by a nice patio decorated with teak furniture and a plenty of bright-coloured cushions, but still placed directly across the street from the abandoned hulk where an ill-famed nudie bar named Cheaters was once placed. Don't be alarmed by the neon sign proclaiming "Adult video & Novelties" just two doors down from Quince and next to the famous place Coquine, however shocking it may seem in a neighbourhood touted for its thriving business district and family-friendly parks. But in the latest twenty-five years, there has always been an eclectic mix of shops on this stretch of Yonge Street between Eglinton and Davisville. You can find pretty much anything, starting from clothing boutiques to bead and paper shops, home decor to adult places.

A hostess kindly welcomes us at Quince's door and offers us a place close to the bar on low, cushioned banquettes. Even on a Saturday night and in this busy neighbourhood, we are offered a selection of tables, pleading excessive height. I ask: "What's downstairs?" "Oh, that's our private dining room," our hostess replies. It is open for lunches and dinners and it has its own bar and lounge, all elegantly decorated (though the tile floor will tell you it's located in the basement). This space can host corporate or private groups of diners up to 40 people or cocktail receptions of up to 70 people. You can get a suggested menu along with matching wines, proving that the staff takes care of all the details.

We choose our table and almost instantly, our waiter appears with a short list of specials. I want to say a brief list of specials consisting of a long explanation of ingredients and preparation methods, and how the meals go together. The waiter obviously has a very good knowledge of his field, explaining to us what is a garnish compared to a side dish. He's personable, friendly and efficient. As I can't decide whether I should order a whole sea bream ("Most people eat a side with it, it's just the fish," our waiter warns me apologetically), we can look around a bit. I appreciate the smartly designed lighting that enhances the whole space of the dining room and adds lovely warmth to it. The space seems to be quite large but still somewhat intimate at the same time. I also appreciate the comfortable volume level - although nearly all the tables around us are full, we can still talk easily and listen to the ambient music - probably D'Angelo and Stevie Wonder. Modern art in earthy hues graces the loft-style exposed brick walls and brings balance to the exposed ductwork, which has been painted in chocolate browns to ease off any trace of sterility. Amazing for voyeurs, a semi-open kitchen offers a glimpse of the wood-fired oven behind the bar. If you want to see the rest of our review, see the full [Quince restaurant](#) review.

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