

Published based on [Write-ups: Quince Restaurant \(Toronto\)](#).

# **Write-ups: Quince Restaurant (Toronto)**

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 bistro with reasonable prices and a reputation for fresh, innovative flavours. Formerly of the acclaimed Stork on the Roof, the husband and wife team of Jennifer Gittins and Michael van den Winkel came back in fall of 2006 with this new midtown digs, just a couple blocks south of the busy intersection at Yonge and Eglinton.

Enclosed by a pretty patio graced with teak furniture and plenty of cushions in bright, primary colours, Quince is directly across the street from the abandoned hulk that was once Cheaters, an infamous nudie bar. Don't be surprised by the neon sign proclaiming "Adult video & Novelties" just two doors down from Quince and next to the popular restaurant Coquine, however inappropriate it may look in a neighbourhood touted for its blossoming business district and family-friendly parks. But this part of Yonge Street between Eglinton and Davisville has always had, at least for the last twenty-five years, an eclectic selection of shops. You may find pretty much anything, starting from clothing boutiques to bead and paper shops, home decor to adult places.

We are kindly welcomed at Quince's door by the hostess, who offers us a spot near the bar on low, cushioned banquettes. Pleading excessive height, we're offered a selection of tables, which is a pleasant surprise for a Saturday night in this lively neighbourhood. I ask: "What's downstairs?" We get an answer from our hostess: "Oh, that's our private dining room." You can enjoy lunch or dinner there. The space has its own bar and lounge and all is nicely decorated, though the tile floor reveals it's in the basement. It's off limits to couples tonight; the room is reserved for corporate or private groups of diners up to 40 people and cocktail receptions of up to 70 people, where suggested menus are paired with matching wines so that all the details are taken care of.

Just a moment after we choose our table, a waiter arrives with a short list of specials. A brief list of specials is completed with a long explanation of ingredients and how the meals are made and how they are going to work together. He apparently knows his stuff, not referring to his notebook as he pauses to tell us what is a garnish vs. what is actually on the side. The waiter could be best described as neat, friendly and efficient. While I can't make up my mind whether I should order a whole sea bream ("Most people order a side with it, it's just the fish," our waiter warns me apologetically), we can look around a bit. Enhanced by clever lighting that adds beautiful warmth to the airy dining room, the space is deceptively large while maintaining a pleasant level of intimacy. The volume level is very comfortable too – despite almost all the tables around us being full, we can easily hear each other and the background music (think D'Angelo and Stevie Wonder). Modern art in earthy colours decorates the loft-style exposed brick walls and adds balance to the exposed ductwork, which has been painted in chocolate browns to remove 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 [original article](#).

You can also find this article published on [Write-ups: Quince Restaurant \(Toronto\)](#), and on the tag pages [Quince](#), [restaurant review](#), [Toronto](#).