

GROUNDWORK ORGANICS



October 20, 2021

In your box

Salad mix
Red Kitten spinach
Green cabbage
Rainbow carrots
Radishes
Yellow onions
Fresh dill
Sweet potatoes
Quince

These big lovely **cabbages** could be happily transformed into cabbage rolls this week. The Portland based Russian restaurant Kachka put out a beautiful cookbook I've been diving into, and while I think you can easily freeform a recipe to your liking with a mix of ground meat or vegetables, cheese and rice or breadcrumbs, I got two useful takeaways from her. The cabbage can be cooked whole, placed in a stockpot covered with water and brought to a rolling boil for about 10 minutes, after which you can separate the large leaves for rolling. She also calls for you to pan fry the little burrito shaped rolls once filled in a hot pan with a little oil, seam-side down to help seal them closed, and to caramelize them a bit, after which they bake in a casserole dish or dutch oven for another hour or more, with tomato sauce if you like.

Quince are a tart, firm fruit that require cooking - most recipes will call for poaching them in a syrup of sugar or honey before combining with apples or pears in tarts or cakes. They take on a beautiful rosy hue when you poach them, and the resulting syrup is a treat in itself, delicious mixed with bubbly water or in a cocktail. This recipe for Membrillo comes from a long time farm stand customer, who made my week dropping it off with this note: "This is my favorite recipe for membrillo. When I was a child before food processors, we peeled, cored grated and then used the quince. Works great too. The peels and cores became jelly."

Dulce de Membrillo (quince paste)

Sweet and slightly tangy, this quince paste is a solid, sliceable jelly made from the quince fruit. It pairs deliciously with cheese. *Note – you should have enough quince to halve this recipe, or stop by and pick up a few more at market or the farm stand if you'd like to make a bigger batch. This stores well for a few months in an airtight container in your fridge .*

1 kg quince, around 4 fruits
1 kg sugar (can use white, brown or a combination)
1 lemon

Rinse the quinces, and clean the fuzzy layer off of their skin. Rubbing the fruit with a clean cloth while rinsing helps make the removal easier. You can also peel the fruit if you prefer. Cut into small pieces, removing the core and seeds. Weight the cut fruit. You'll be adding an equal amount of sugar by weight.

Pour the fruit pieces into a powerful food processor with the juice of the lemon. Process into a puree.

Pour the quince puree into a heavy bottom pot and add the sugar (use enough sugar to equal the weight of the cut quince pieces.)

Cook the mixture over low heat for several minutes, stirring occasionally, allowing the fruit to release its moisture.

Raise the temperature to medium heat. Keep simmering, uncovered, for around an hour. Keep an eye on the mixture, stirring as needed to make sure it doesn't burn. If it begins to bubble up and spatter, you can try lowering the heat slightly or just stir it more constantly until the moisture is released. (once this happens it will no longer spatter.)

Once the mixture is thick enough to hold a wooden spoon firmly upright, you are ready to pour it into molds. It should also stay in place when moved to one side of the pan. For a small batch, a loaf pan filled only an inch or two deep would work well, or an 8x8 square pan for a larger batch. You can prepare the molds with parchment paper for easier removal before pouring the mixture into them. Once you have the quince paste poured into molds, let cool to room temperature, then place in the refrigerator for 8-12 hours to set. Slice and serve!

Notes:

-You can also cook the raw quince pieces briefly in a small amount of water before processing them into puree in the food processor, cooking the mixture long enough that the liquid evaporates, so as not to lose the natural pectin. If you don't have a powerful food processor, you can also bake the quince pieces first at around 275 degrees until the fruit has softened, before processing them in a food processor.

-If you aren't happy with the final consistency of the membrillo, you can bake it in the oven at 275 for 20-30 minutes or so until it firms up.

-You may reduce the amount of sugar, but I don't recommend going below 80% of the weight of the fruit.

-At the beginning of cooking, it may start to form large bubbles and spatter out. To avoid this, reduce the heat slightly and continue to mix it, allowing the vapor to escape. Once it gets thicker, it will no longer do that and you can leave it alone for longer periods of time without issues, making sure it doesn't burn.

-Store well covered in a cool dry place or in the refrigerator for up to several months. For longer storage, wrap it well and freeze it.