

## Quince Upside-down Cake

3 medium quinces  
4 cups water  
1-1/3 cups sugar  
1 cinnamon stick  
6 pieces of star anise  
6 whole cloves  
1 lemon, thickly sliced  
2/3 cup brown sugar  
1/2 cup butter  
2/3 cup flour  
1/2 cup plus 1/3 cup sugar,  
divided  
3/4 teaspoon baking powder  
1/2 teaspoon baking soda  
3 eggs, separated  
1/3 cup vegetable oil  
1 Tablespoon cider vinegar  
Juice of one lemon

**1** First, poach the quince. Peel each quince and cut them into quarters. Cut out the seeds from each piece. Meanwhile, bring the water, sugar, spices and lemon to a boil. Add the quince, cover and reduce heat to a simmer. Simmer the quince until they have darkened several shades to a deep pink or red. Remove from the cooking liquid and set aside.

**2** Now prepare the topping. Butter the sides of a 9-inch cake pan generously. Melt the butter in a small skillet. Whisk in the brown sugar and continue to cook for about 30 seconds. Pour into the bottom of the prepared cake pan and set aside to cool for a few minutes. Now, slice the cooked quince into 1/4-inch slices and arrange decoratively in concentric circles on top of the brown sugar topping. Make sure to cover the entire pan.

**3** Now prepare the cake batter. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Mix the flour, 1/2 cup sugar, baking soda and baking powder together in a bowl. Beat in the egg yolks, oil, lemon juice and vinegar. Beat the egg whites separately with the remaining 1/3 cup sugar until they hold soft peaks. Fold a small amount of the whipped egg whites into the flour mixture to soften it, then fold in the remaining whites. Pour into the cake pan over the quince. Bake in the preheated oven for about 45 minutes, or until the center of the cake has risen and feels noticeably firm to the touch. This is a very soft batter and it is important to cook it completely. Cool the cake for 30 minutes or so, to give the topping a chance to solidify a bit. Run a small knife around the edge of the cake so that it doesn't stick to the pan. Now, carefully flip it over onto a serving plate big enough to hold it comfortably. Slice and serve whenever you are ready.