

[Marmalade is not an English Invention!](#)

You might be surprised to learn that marmalade is not an English invention, although we tend to think of it as a typically English breakfast treat. Marmalade goes back at least to the ancient Romans, who created a concoction out of quinces and honey that they called "marmelo", from the Latin word for quince, which could be roughly translated as "honey fruit." Quinces were too sour to be eaten without sweetening.



Marmalade began more than 2,000 years ago as a solid cooked quince and honey paste similar to today's "membrillo", the Spanish quince paste that is typically served with sheep-milk cheeses. Known as "melomeli" in ancient Greece and "melimela" in Latin, it was used both as a preserve and a reputed remedy for digestive complaints. The Portuguese took up the product, perhaps via the Arabs, substituting sugar for the honey, around the 10th century. They called it "marmelada," which derives from the Portuguese "marmelo", or quince.