

Have You Ever Saved Earthworms After It Rained?

& no, before anyone panics, this is not a recipe post.



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Did you ever run around saving earthworms after a storm, flinging them off of driveways, sidewalks, & roads?

I most certainly did. I remember this one time when I was maybe six years old & running along the sidewalk outside my father's house. We'd just had a record-breaking storm & flooding in the area, & the sidewalk was still soaked, covered in wriggling earthworms. I ran along, gently grabbing them & placing them in the dirt. I've always had this problem, though, that when I get excited, I try to do whatever I'm excited about EVEN FASTER, so I started rushing myself: rushing to run, to bend, to scoop, to tosh, to run again, & I stumbled, right off the sidewalk into a sopping pile of fall leaves... which, of course, led to an allergic reaction, because I'm allergic to mold, so I went from my rescue mission to sneezing & itching for days.

My mother was full of reprimands for my dirty clothes, but I felt it was worth it. I never stopped saving earthworms when I saw them; they're part of my Midwestern heart.

Now that I live in Croatia, I've yet to come across an earthworm on a sidewalk. Though I'm sure there's a Croatian, clay-inhabiting variety somewhere beneath the topsoil, I find myself rescuing something very different after storms.

Snails!

(& no, before you panic, this post isn't going to turn into some kind of *escargot* (or "puž" in Croatian, which rhymes with "rouge") situation. This is just a fun *the-more-you-know* post.

Here's what the little beauties in my neck of the woods look like, as modeled by my wonderfully curious father-in-law, who saved them with a few leaves:



These garden-variety snails are a light leather-brown color with gorgeous, striped brown shells. Like the far left one in the above picture, sometimes they're a lighter brown with very faint lines, but

usually, their stripes come in a traditional swirl pattern. I most commonly have seen them in our gardens, on driveways, & on sidewalks, but I've also discovered them in our "bio" recycling bin (the bin specifically for biodegradable items, like food waste & trimmed plants), sticking to the lid of the can! In the three years I've lived here, I've also seen a few down by the riva (the river walk by the sea) who had discovered & moved into seashells.

Though this is the only variety I've witnessed in person, there are a wide variety of snails throughout Croatia & across its 1200+ islands, as detailed on this list by the [Zagreb Department of Zoology](#), which has my [Lit Shark-obsessed mind](#) spinning in excitement—though not (yet) including this [new **translucent** variety](#) that was recently discovered!

Anyway! The more you know! Even if learning about snails wasn't on your 2024 Bingo card or isn't what you think of when you imagine "important information about Croatia," it's still great to know, because it gives you one more little way to be kind. Though saving a snail's life may not feel like the most valiant act, it certainly makes a big difference to them & their branch of the ecosystem.

Until next time! Vidimo se u Petak! (See you Friday!) I'm going to try to recreate one of my top-favorite Croatian desserts with gluten-free & lactose-free ingredients... 🥰



P.S. I just realized I didn't know & thought you might be curious: the Croatian word for "snails" is puž, & the Croatian word for "earthworms" is kišna glista (keyz-nah glee-stah). They sound so pretty!

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