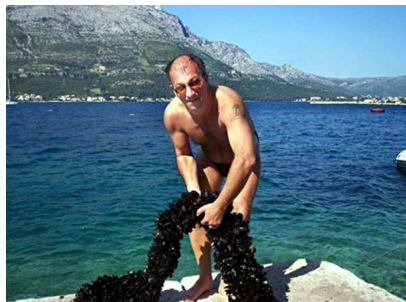


BECOME A FISHERMAN AND CATCH YOUR OWN DINNER



Do you want to become a professional fisherman and find out how mussels are caught and bred? Then travel to Galicia in Spain where you will be shown. Local mussels based tourism lured 1.200 tourists last year and it is still growing.

Fishermen in Galicia breed mussels on farms. As Ihned.cz informs, such a farm composes of a fishing boat and two floating platforms made of eucalyptus wood. The breeding of the mussels begins with picking up eggs of 1mm in diameter that can be found on cliffs. That is usually women's work. The picking, however, is allowed only in the first half of the year so that the population of the creatures is not damaged.

The small mussels then stick to 12 meter long ropes that are attached to the wooden platforms. After 6 months the ropes must be separated to give more space to the growing creatures. **It takes one and a half year till the mussels are big enough to sell.** There are many such farms in Spanish Galicia. They usually occupy 500 square meters. The eucalyptus platforms usually last in water for 12 years but then it is necessary to buy a new one, which costs some 15 000 EUR. Some 'farmers' can afford plastic platforms but they are much more expensive.

The best mussels are bred in ría Arousa, the biggest bay on the northwestern shore of Spain. Rivers that flow in create lake where fresh water mixes with salt sea water. Mussels from the area are served all around Europe. The bigger the mussel the higher the price. Italian gourmets are huge fans of big mussels; the French on the other hand prefer the smaller ones. The average price is about 3 euros per kilogram but the end consumer naturally pays more.

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