

Villascapes Top 10 Beaches in the Algarve

The Algarve is world renowned for its beaches and is often voted Europe's top beach destination. With its stunning coastline of over 100 beaches, it is easy to see why! From gentle coves, to long endless stretches of sea washed sand and interesting rock formations, there is a beach for everyone, families, sun-seekers and surfers alike.

For the purposes of this guide, we've chosen our favourites amongst the many contenders.



Praia da Marinha, Benagil.

Listed in the top 10 best beaches in Europe (Michelin Guide), and amongst the **100 most beautiful beaches in the world**, this beach with its iconic rock formations is located near Lagoa. Like the majority of the Algarve's beaches, it's a Blue Flag beach. Accessed by steep steps hewn into the rock, the lovely clear water and golden sands are worth the descent. Otherwise enjoy the view from the cliffs or from a boat tour.

Great for: Snorkelling and Boat Trips around the caves
Facilities: Snack Bar, toilets, life-guard

Vale do Lobo, Praia do Ancao, Praia de Garrao, Quinta do Lago, Almancil

This uninterrupted long stretch of sandy beach with ochre cliffs stretches along the front of these popular family resorts in the so-called 'Golden Triangle' of Vale do Lobo, Dunas Douradas and Quinta do Lago.

Great for: Long Walks, Water Sports, and some great beach restaurants and cafes to enjoy, including Dos Passos, Marias, Sandbanks & Breeze

Facilities: Life-guard, sunbeds, sun umbrellas.



Praia da Falésia Beach, Albufeira.

This lovely beach with its stretch of golden sands backed by dramatic red cliffs, is centrally located near Olhos d'Agua, itself another great beach.

Great for: Long Walks & Glorious Sunsets
Facilities: Restaurant & toilets



Praia da Galé, Armação de Pêra

A continuation eastwards of the huge beach of Armação de Pêra, this beach with its white sands and shallow waters is great for families with younger children.

Great for: Families & water-sports enthusiasts

Facilities: Sunbeds, parasols, pedaloes and water ski-ing all available for hire. Various cafes & restaurants in the vicinity.



Praia da Dona Ana, Lagos

Approximately 25 minutes walk from the centre of the popular town of Lagos, this lovely beach, very popular in summer, is backed by huge sandstone outcrops.

The intrepid can explore caves and grottoes on a boat trip, at the famous Ponta da Piedade nearby.

Great for: Exploring

Facilities: Life guard on patrol, various bars and restaurants



Praia do Martinhal, near Sagres.

Backed by the Costa Vicentina Natural Park, this lovely flat swathe of sandy beach is located to the east of Sagres, close to the Martinhal resort and hotel. Good for swimming, especially for those with children, as its sheltered bay has calm waters. However the sea breeze further out, means that wind surfing is also particularly good from this beach, and there are various other activities to be enjoyed too including seabird-watching and dolphin spotting boat trips.

Great for: Family picnics and wind-surfing.

Facilities: Beach bar and Martinhal hotel.



Meia Praia, Lagos

This curve of sandy beach stretches for 2 miles along to the Alvor estuary, and as such is the longest beach in the Algarve. There is plenty of room for everyone, from those looking to soak up the sun or go for long walks, to those wanting to enjoy some water skiing, windsurfing and jet-skiing.

Great for: Everybody.

Facilities: Various restaurants and beach bars.



Praia da Sao Rafael, Albufeira.

The shallow waters and soft white sand of this pretty bay mean it is a great favourite with families. An extra draw are the extraordinary rock formations protruding from the sea, which are pocketed by some interesting caves. Quite stunning even on a slightly more unsettled March day like this one!

Great for: Families & Snorkellers

Facilities: Parasols & sunbeds for hire. Beach restaurant. Life guard in the main season.



Praia de Figueira, Salema

This beach lies right in front of the colourful fishing village of Salema and is popular with families looking for a day out on the beach and lunch in one of the popular beach front restaurants like Boia. The beach is also popular with windsurfers and divers, as there are some excellent nearby dive sites, such as Boco do Rio to the east where an 18th century French wreck lies in shallow water.

Great for: Windsurfing, diving, & good beach restaurants
Facilities: Bars & restaurants, toilets.

Praia do Armado, Carrapateira, West Coast

A mention must be made for the more remote beaches on the west coast of the Algarve, of which this is a great example. Home to a surf school, frequented by international surfers, and the venue for surf championships, it is one of the prime surfing beaches in Portugal. Typical of this wilder windwept and unspoilt coast, it was once almost exclusively the destination of surfers, but these beautiful expanses of beach are becoming more and more popular. Waters are a little cooler than along the south coast, and there can be stronger currents, but with great rock pools to explore at low tide, they are a hit with families looking for something a bit different.

Great for: Rock pools, long walks & surfing!

Facilities: Restaurant & Snack Bar. Life-guard during main season.



Most of these beaches are easily accessible by car from the main N125 road that runs the length of the Algarve. Please note that restaurants and facilities may be closed outside the main holiday periods.

We hope you enjoy exploring these truly gorgeous beaches!

For information on holiday villa rentals in the vicinity of these lovely beaches, see www.villascap.es.com