



Water sports are popular at Poetto Beach.—Stefano Garau / Shutterstock

Beach lovers reckon this to be one of Elba's best beaches. A steep footpath links it with Spiaggia di Sorgente. Park by the roadside or - assuming you rose with the larks - in the tiny car park.

8. Poetto Beach - Cagliari

An easy bus ride from the center, Cagliari's fabulous Poetto Beach extends for 7km (4.3 miles) beyond the green Promontorio di Sant'Elia, nicknamed the Sella del Diavola (Devil's Saddle). In summer, much of the city's youth decamps here to sunbathe and party in the restaurants and bars that line the sand. Water sports are big and you can hire canoes at the beach clubs. To get to the beach, take bus PF or PQ from Piazza Matteotti.

9. Spiaggia di Cefalu - Cefalu's

Cefalu's crescent-shaped beach is one of the most popular along the whole Sicilian

coast. In summer it is packed, so be sure to arrive early to get a good spot. Though some sections require a ticket, the area closest to the old town is public and you can hire a beach umbrella and deckchair.

10. Urban Beach - Boboli & San Miniato al Monte

Be it relaxing beneath a parasol on a sun-lounger, playing beach volleyball or joining a sunset yoga class, Florence's sandy riverside beach is the place to be in summer. Run by the creative folks behind the neighboring Easy Living kiosk, Urban Beach rocks with a buoyant crowd quaffing cocktails at the bar and snacking on salads and panini using organic products. On sultry summer evenings, watch for DJ sets, dance parties and other fun soirées and cultural happenings.

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Spiaggia Capriccioli is a beautiful half-moon bay in Sardinia. Getty Images / iStockphoto



Italy offers a treasure trove of picturesque beaches.— Balate Dorin/ Shutterstock