



Indagare Matchmaker: Italian Beach Destinations



Courtesy Hotel Splendido, Puglia, Villa d'Este

Italy's eternal allure has beckoned travelers for centuries with its dramatic coastline and sophisticated isles. From charming, cliffside villages with dramatic sea views to islands brimming with untamed beauty and secluded coves, Italy plays host to some of the world's loveliest beach destinations. Here, Indagare reports on our Italian seaside favorites, as well as the iconic lake region, and offers tips on how to see the Italian coast by boat. **Contact Indagare for assistance planning your next trip to Italy. Our specialists can match you with just the right destination and design a custom itinerary.**

Amalfi Coast



The [Amalfi Coast](#) is a place where land, sea and sky combine in otherworldly perfection. Located in Italy's Campania region, the Amalfi Coast region begins some 30 miles south of Naples and its first major town is also its most famous: Positano, the alluring honeymoon destination par excellence, which is unrecognizable from its days as a humble fishing port. Continuing east along the road after Positano, the teeny coastal villages line up like pearls on a string: Praiano, Conca dei Marini, Amalfi, Atrani, Cetara. Wherever you stay, you can't help but be amazed at the steep landscapes and the villages carved out of brute rock face centuries ago by a resilient people who knew that this perch afforded them the ultimate lookout for invaders.

What Makes it Unique: The cliffside towns with romantic hotels and unsurpassed views

Top Activities: Hiking, leisurely lunches, boating, lounging at beach clubs, cooking classes, visits to Pompeii

Who Should Go: Honeymooners, couples

Where to Stay: The elegant [Le Sirenuse](#) in Positano or the peaceful [Monastero Santa Rosa](#).

Forte dei Marmi



[Forte dei Marmi](#) is uniquely positioned between the Apuan Alps and the glistening Tyrrhenian Sea. Prosperous from maritime trade, wealthy and noble families of Tuscany and northern Italy took up summer residence here in the 19th century. Now, prestigious hotels and glamorous villas host famed celebrities, artists and diplomats, creating an affluent and tranquil environment of flower-filled gardens, lush parks and famous fashion houses.

What Makes it Unique: A hidden (but not-so-secret) gem of a resort that draws well-heeled Italian families with its high-end shopping, bike-able terrain, plethora of beach clubs and access to nearby towns

Top Activities: Days at the beach, shopping, visiting the marble quarries in Cinque Terre, the art galleries in San Pietro and the medieval towns of Pisa and Lucca

Who Should Go: Families who want a relaxed yet refined beach getaway

Where to Stay: The elegant and old-school resort [Augustus](#).

Capri



Despite its jet-set status, Capri is also an ethereal, soulful island with especially stunning, fragrant landscapes. Surrounded by the Bay of Naples and Tyrrhenian Sea, the island of Capri lies some 17 miles off the [Amalfi coast](#) of southern Italy. It's just four square miles and has two townships: the bustling Capri town, near the Marina Grande where the ferries arrive, and the more serene Anacapri, in the west. Here, Italian rhythm is on full display, which includes days spent pool-, or lido-, side, with the occasional shopping afternoon or spa treatment thrown in.

What Makes it Unique: A storied island with glamorous shopping and dining and dramatic landscapes

Top Activities: Spending afternoons poolside or beachside, shopping, boating, hiking, visiting the [Blue Grotto](#)

Who Should Go: Jet-setters, fashionistas, couples

Where to Stay: The romantic [La Scalinatella](#) in Capri town or outside of town at the designer [JK Place](#).

Related: [Indagare Matchmaker Capri](#)

Sardinia



[Sardinia](#), the second largest island in the Mediterranean (after [Sicily](#)), is about the size of New Hampshire. The glamorous Costa Smeralda (Emerald Coast) is a relatively small area on the island's northeast side, which is today a European summer destination on par with [St.-Tropez](#). The rest of the island boasts a rugged, mountainous interior, hidden beach coves and lunar-like landscapes dotted with charming towns.

What Makes it Unique: Sardinia boasts a wild, natural beauty alongside a glitzy, yachting scene

Top Activities: Boating to undiscovered beaches, shopping the weekly market, hiking, visiting vineyards

Who Should Go: Yachters, couples, families

Where to Stay: [Hotel Romazzino](#), a beachfront family resort property, [Hotel Pitrizza](#) for couples or [Hotel Cala di Volpi](#), the ultimate see-and-be-seen resort

Related: [The Two Sides of Sardinia](#)

Sicily



Nearly the size of Massachusetts, [Sicily](#) is the Mediterranean's largest island. Its many different regions offer a wealth of exploration, from the vibrant city of Palermo to the bucolic corners of the southeast. Because the island has not been overly developed for tourism, exploring is still unscripted, making it a destination for travelers who can go with the flow. The island is unapologetically set in its ways, as universally sighed over by many of today's movers and shakers who want to stir up some lasting changes, especially in the hospitality industry. But for visitors this means a preserved slice of old-world travel that is hard to find these days.

What Makes It Unique: With a melting pot of culture and dramatic landscapes, Sicily is uniquely undeveloped and boasts six UNESCO World Heritage sites

Top Activities: Hiking, road trips to Baroque towns, climbing Mount Etna, shopping at local markets, cooking classes, visits to beach coves

Who Should Go: Adventurous travelers seeking authenticity, beautiful landscapes and historic sites

Where to Stay: [Belmond Grand Hotel Timeo](#) in Taormina town or the seaside [Villa Sant'Andrea](#)

Related: [Sicily Sojourn](#)

Portofino



Fine wine, unforgettable dining, long summer days on the sea, hiking among lush flora and fauna and elegant coastal hotels where glamorous international travelers summer each year define the picturesque port town of [Portofino](#). Located on Italy's northwest coast, between the Ligurian capital of Genoa and the towns of Cinque Terre, the idyllic seaside village encapsulates the true Italian Riviera. Portofino offers medieval architecture, botanical gardens and a variety of scenic hiking paths through the promontory's protected nature reserve, and its location makes day trips to [Cinque Terre](#), Pisa and Lucca convenient for those with more time.

What Makes it Unique: The enchanting seaside village offers lavish villas and medieval architecture

Top Activities: Excellent shopping and dining, day trips to medieval towns, touring gardens, hiking, lounging on beaches

Who Should Go: Couples and families who want a relaxing seaside vacation.

Where to Stay: The elegant, grand-dame [Belmond Splendido](#) or the boutique [Belmond Splendido Mare](#).

Lake Como



[Lake Como](#) is surrounded by the pre-Alps, which plunge from 5,000 feet into the water. It is deep (at 1,300 feet the deepest in Europe,) and the cliffs are so steep that the vast majority of development is in the form of small towns that wind along the foothills close to the shore. Above, the mountains are wild, unspoiled and thickly forested.

What Makes it Unique: This iconic retreat is known for its grand hotels, a big celebrity fanbase (George Clooney and Richard Branson have homes here) and one of the most stunning landscapes in the world

Top Activities: Boating (swimming is not always an option because of pollution), relaxing poolside, fine dining, visiting immaculate gardens like [Villa Balbianello](#)

Who Should Go: Those who want to stay in one of the finest resorts amidst a stunning lakeside landscape

Where to Stay: The grand, old-world [Villa d'Este](#) or the modern [Il Sereno](#)

Note: The lake can be unswimmable at times due to pollution

Related: [Spotlight: Villa Pliniana](#)

Puglia



Courtesy Freddy Ballo

The region of [Puglia](#) comprises the heel of Italy, a peninsula facing three seas: the Mediterranean, Ionian and Adriatic; the province was once ruled by Greek, Turkish, Roman and Saracen invaders and displays its ancient history in elaborate Baroque churches, signature trulli houses and exquisite meals perfected through generations of multi-cultural cuisine. With a warm Southern Italian climate, miles of white-sand beaches, and quaint villages, it is surprising that there remain pockets of the region so blissfully undeveloped and unexplored.

What Makes it Unique: Beautiful, historic towns that boast an undeveloped feel

Top Activities: Day trips to the villages, going to the beach, biking, olive oil and wine tasting

Who Should Go: Those who want to explore a pristine, undeveloped part of Italy dotted with charming towns

Where to Stay: For more of a country experience, stay at [Borgo Egnazia](#), a family-friendly, five-star resort or for a city stay, [La Fiermontina](#) in [Lecce](#).

Related: [Italian Getaway: Puglia](#)

Il Pellicano, Tuscany



A rarity among luxury hotels, [Il Pellicano](#) is a singular spot that continues, year after year, to merit its venerable reputation, particularly among romantics. Carved into the rocky coastline of Tuscany's Monte Argentario peninsula, the deep orange colored, 50-room hotel showcases its startling sea views with old-world pomp. White umbrellas encircle the squiggle-shaped pool like daisy petals while linen tablecloths reflect the sun from various rocky terraced perches. During the day, the most taxing decision a guests have to make is whether to lounge by the pool or take a dip in the sea. Afterwards, enjoy an exquisite dinner at the *Michelin*-starred restaurant.

What Makes It Unique: The hotel's exquisite cliffside location and retro glamour

Top Activities: Lounging poolside or seaside, swimming, boating

Who Should Go: Couples and sophisticates looking to relax in style

Room to Book: The deluxe suites with sea views and terraces.

Private Charter



The best way to tour the Italian coast is on your own yacht. Moored off the shores of the country's spectacular islands, those on yachts can take advantage of the shopping, dining and nightlife scenes but then escape when the crowds become too intense. Traveling on a private charter allows passengers to hop between such destinations as [Capri](#), [Sicily](#), the [Aeolian Islands](#), [Sardinia](#) and more, as well as access secluded coves and top beach clubs (like Capri's [La Fontelina](#)) that are only reachable by boat.

What Makes It Unique: The ability to visit multiple islands and seaside villages, and enjoy breathtaking views of the coast

Top Activities: Trips to isolated beaches, snorkeling, swimming, jet skiing, water skiing

Who Should Go: Groups of friends, families with older children

Where to Port: [Aeolian Islands](#), [Capri](#), [Sicily](#), [Sardinia](#), [Forte Dei Marmi](#), [Portofino](#)

Contact [Indagare](#) for assistance planning your next trip to Italy. Our specialists can match you with just the right destination and design a custom itinerary.

