

# 50 secret beaches in Europe



## 4 Villa Siva Beach Skiathos

Given that there's no road access to this unnamed beach on Skiathos, it might as well be a private affair belonging to Villa Siva, a lovely seven-bedroom property that is a ten-minute drive from Skiathos Town. With a fine stretch of sand and edged by a pine forest, the beach is a short walk down a path from the villa.

**Details** Seven nights' self-catering costs from £8,984 for 14 people (020 3355 6077, edgeretreats.com). Fly to Skiathos

## 5 Achlas Beach Andros

Andros is the northernmost of the Cyclades islands, so it is a two-hour ferry trip from Athens. Among its many fine beaches is Achlas, a little more rugged and wild than most, and harder to get to thanks to access via a winding 8km dirt track (drive or walk). It's worth the effort, though, because what you get is a beach of shiny white pebbles and coarse sand, backed by a tiny chapel and lighthouse. A few minutes' walk away are Onar Cottages, nine traditional homes set in a garden. There is also a restaurant with food by the chef Ilias Kariotoglou, who trained under Michel Roux.

**Details** B&B triples cost from £160 a night, with a five-night minimum stay (i-escape.com). Fly to Athens and take a ferry from Rafina

## 6 White Orchid Beach Sivota

Sivota's location on the northwest coast and across from the island of Corfu means it's far from the madding crowds that gather across the water. Just outside the town is White Orchid, a small white-sand bay bordered by rust-coloured cliffs and with views of a string of islets. A two-minute walk away is the adult-only White Orchid Hotel, which is exclusive to Simpson Travel and has eight suites and an infinity pool.

**Details** Seven nights' B&B costs from £1,136pp, including flights and car hire (020 8003 6557, simpsontravel.com)

## 7 Italdia Ano, Koufonisi

The two Koufonisi islands (Ano and Kato, or upper and lower) are usually blissfully quiet outside peak season because they lie on a low-frequency ferry route that makes them difficult to get to. They are home to tiny fishing villages and beautiful beaches, including this one named after a former Italian local resident. There's no beach bar or shade, so it's worth packing lunch, drinks and an umbrella, as well as an open mind — it's a favourite with nudists. Portes Houses in the main town of Chora is a great place to stay.

**Details** B&B doubles cost from £78 a night. Fly to Paros, then take a ferry to Naxos and another to Koufonisi (00 30 22850 74495, porteshouses.com)

## 8 Agios Georgios Antiparos

This long, sandy beach on the opposite side of Antiparos island to the main port town has shallow waters protected by the uninhabited island of Despotiko across the bay. Agios Georgios is home to a great fish taverna, Captain Pipinos, and a smattering of hotels and pension-style rooms. Studios Antiparos Beach are a short walk from the sand and have typically Cycladic decor.

**Details** Room-only studios cost from £59 a night (booking.com). Fly to Paros, then take a 45-minute ferry ride

## Spain

## 9 Playa las Galgas Tenerife

You'd think there are few secret beaches in Costa Adeje, one of Tenerife's most popular resorts, but with most visitors heading for the popular Fañabe and Torviscas, Playa las Galgas remains resolutely quiet. The small arc of volcanic sand is tucked away between cliffs and can be reached via private cave access from the five-star Roca Nivaria Gran Hotel. It has stylish rooms and an infinity pool area with chill-out beds.

**Details** B&B doubles cost from £126 a night (00 34 922 71 33 69, hotelrocanivaria.com)

## 10 Caños de Meca Cadiz

Los Caños de Meca is a small seaside village east of Cape Trafalgar on the lesser-known Costa de la Luz. The town's 'Atlantic Ocean beach is a wide expanse of sand dunes that lead to the cape and its eponymous lighthouse, and the area is great for swimming, sunbathing and beachcombing. A ten-minute walk away is Casas Karen, with a boho-chic feel thanks to rooms with bright, flowing fabrics and fireplaces.

**Details** B&B doubles cost from €40 a night (01172 047810, sawdays.co.uk). Fly to Jerez

## 11 Praia das Rodas

### Cies Islands, Galicia

The three Cies Islands off the Galician coast are home to one of Spain's best beaches, a long stretch of Indian Ocean-style white sand, fringed with palm trees and joining the islands of Monteagudo and do Faro. The isles are part of a national park and the only accommodation is a summer campsite, where visitor numbers are strictly regulated. However, you can stay on the mainland in Vigo; Pazo Los Escudos is a high-end, stone-built hotel with a spa and its own lovely beach. Ferries go to the islands regularly, taking 40 minutes.

**Details** Room-only doubles cost from €100 a night (00 34 986 820 820, pazolosesculos.com). Fly to Santiago de Compostela

## 12 Playa Cala Pedrosa Costa Brava

Between the high-end Costa Brava resort towns of Tamarit and Llafranc is this small beach of almost perfect white pebbles, lined by tree-topped cliffs. Despite having a small beach bar, it's relatively remote, a five-minute walk from the coastal road and 3km from El Far, a small, boutique hotel overlooking a lighthouse and the craggy coastline. El Far has nine bright, airy rooms with coastal design accents; all surround an elegant courtyard.

**Details** B&B doubles cost from £150 a night (00 34 972 30 16 39, hotelelfar.com). Fly to Girona

## 13 Torrent de Pareis Majorca

Head over the Serra de Tramuntana mountains and dip down through pine forests to the tiny fishing village of Sa Calobra on the north coast. Here you'll find a tiny cliff-edged bay with a smattering of cafés and bars. There are many coastal paths that lead to even more remote and secluded coves, the best of which is Torrent de Pareis, a slim stretch of sand protected by sentinel-like rocks. The nearest hotels are to the south in Port de Soller, where you can find everything from utilitarian two-stars to the super-luxe Jumeirah Port Soller Hotel & Spa, which has cliff-top views over the bay.

**Details** B&B doubles cost from €300 a night (0800 0828000, jumeirah.com)

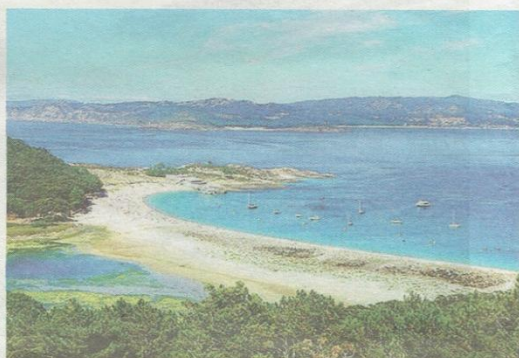
## 14 Cala Raja Almeria

Cabo de Gata-Nijar is a protected nature park with a wild and isolated landscape thanks to its desert climate, which makes it the driest location in Europe. Where better to cool off than at one of the many coves that dot its southern edge — small stretches of beach leading to clear waters that are perfect for snorkelling. Cortijo el Sotillo on the edge of the park is a hotel in a converted 18th-century ranch. It has simple, country-style rooms and an activity programme, including hiking and horse riding.

**Details** Room-only doubles cost from €58 a night (playascortijos.com). Fly to Almeria

## 15 Cala Macarelleta Minorca

Assessible only by a narrow snaking path, Cala Macarelleta, with its green ravines and hidden coves, is a great spot on the south coast of Menorca. Bring snorkels to spy fish in the clear waters, or hire kayaks from neighbouring Cala Macarella and paddle round to the beach. The beach is about an hour's drive



from Cugo Gran, a stylish, fully staffed villa that has a pool and landscaped gardens. A nearer beach is Cala de Binidali, which is just a short drive away.

**Details** B&B doubles cost from €325 a night (01749 812721, scottwilliams.co.uk)

## 16 Agua Amarga Almeria

Agua Amarga Beach is a lovely stretch of yellow sand dotted with trees, flanked by cliffs and with a number of bars and restaurants leading to the town. It can be quite busy, so hire a kayak and head for the cliffs on the western edge, where there are several sandy coves. Inland is Cortijo Los Malenos, a converted ranch in a wild setting with a garden of cacti. The bedrooms are in several buildings dotted around a courtyard, and there's a patio with a saltwater pool.

**Details** B&B doubles cost from €80 a night (01172 047810, sawdays.co.uk). Fly to Almeria





## 5 Achlas Beach Andros

Andros is the northernmost of the Cyclades islands, so it is a two-hour ferry trip from Athens. Among its many fine beaches is Achlas, a little more rugged and wild than most, and harder to get to thanks to access via a winding 8km dirt track (drive or walk). It's worth the effort, though, because what you get is a beach of shiny white pebbles and coarse sand, backed by a tiny chapel and lighthouse. A few minutes' walk away are Onar Cottages, nine traditional homes set in a garden. There is also a restaurant with food by the chef Ilias Kariotoglou, who trained under Michel Roux.

**Details** B&B triples cost from £160 a night, with a five-night minimum stay ([i-escape.com](http://i-escape.com)). Fly to Athens and take a ferry from Rafina