

Our top list of the most beautiful sea caves to visit in the
Algarve



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By Floriane

The Algarve and its sea caves are among the images that immediately spring to mind when you think of southern Portugal. If you search for **“Algarve grotte”** before you leave, it’s not by chance: the Algarve’s sea caves are among the most spectacular in Europe.

Carved by erosion, sculpted by the Atlantic and bathed in an almost unreal golden light, they transform a simple sea trip into a true experience.

Some caves have become iconic, while others remain more discreet and wild. You can discover them by kayak, boat or sometimes on foot from the cliffs. Here are our top 4 most beautiful caves in the Algarve.

Note that there are many caves and rock formations mainly in the west of the Algarve, so you won’t want to miss them during your stay!

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Where are the caves in the Algarve?

Caves in the Algarve are concentrated mainly along Portugal's southern coast, between [Lagos](#) and **Armação de Pêra**. It's on this stretch of coastline that the limestone cliffs, sculpted by erosion over thousands of years, have given rise to the region's most beautiful sea caves.

The best-known area is around **Algar de Benagil**, between Carvoeiro and Armação de Pêra, but there are also numerous caves around Portimão, Praia da Marinha and Lagos.

How to visit the caves in the Algarve?

The vast majority of caves are dug at the base of cliffs and are mainly accessible by boat. Several options are available, depending on your budget and desired experience.

- **Kayaking** is one of the most popular options, especially around the famous Benagil cave: you can enter certain caves when conditions are right, and explore at your own pace.
- **Boat excursions**, departing from [Albufeira](#), Portimão or Lagos, are ideal if you prefer a supervised, effortless outing, with explanations of the formation of the cliffs and the local fauna.
- Last but not least, many of the formations and caves can **be explored on foot**, following the paths along the coastline or from the beach, usually at low tide.

Benagil cave: the Algarve's must-see cave

This is certainly **the most famous cave in the Algarve**. Located between Carvoeiro and Armação de Pêra, it is recognizable by its **circular opening in the ceiling**, which lets in a spectacular beam of light. Inside, a **small beach nestles beneath the rock**, surrounded by rounded ochre walls.

The cave can only be reached from the sea, by kayak or boat. Swimming to reach the cave is not recommended for safety reasons.

□ **Even Hanging Valleys** hiking trail allows you to see the cave from the ground
□ **Accessible only by sea** (kayak or boat) from the village of Benagil as well as from the main villages of the Algarve

It's a must-see if you're visiting a cave in the Algarve for the first time, but you should be aware that it's very busy in high season.

We recommend going early in the morning, when the light is soft and the crowds have not yet arrived.

- [Visit the Benagil cave + 15 other caves from the village of Armação de Pêra:](#)
~10 km
- [Book a 2h30 boat trip from Albufeira to see dolphins and geological formations](#)

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[including Benagil](#): ~30 km

- [Book a kayak trip to the Benagil cave \(FR guide\)](#)

[*Read our full article on the Benagil cave*](#)

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The caves around Praia da Marinha: a picture-postcard setting

Around **Praia da Marinha** (located right next to the Benagil cave), you can discover several lesser-known but equally impressive sea caves. This beach, often ranked among the most beautiful in Europe, hides caves and natural arches below the golden cliffs, accessible by kayak or boat.

Here, the water is limpid, almost turquoise, and the rock formations are particularly photogenic, including a **huge boulder in the middle of the water** and **two pretty natural arches next to each other**. The caves are not as large as those at Benagil, but the atmosphere is often wilder. This is an excellent alternative if you're looking for caves in the Algarve that are a little less crowded, but still offer spectacular scenery.

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□ Access to the beach by stairs

□ Several boat tours going to Benagil pass by like this one from [Armação de Pera](#)

The sea caves at Armação de Pêra: more confidential

To the west of [Armação de Pêra](#), one of the paths leads along the coastline, with several impressive sea caves.

These include the caves around **Praia da Cova Redonda** and **Praia da Senhora da Rocha**, where erosion has carved tunnels and small natural arches into the rock.

Some are modest, others deeper, but all offer a magnificent play of light when the sun shines inside. The good thing is that we were virtually alone on our walk.

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Algar Seco in Carvoeiro: caves and formations accessible on foot

In Carvoeiro, the **Algar Seco** site offers a different approach. Some of the caves are accessible on foot via **walkways built along the cliffs** (although you'll need good shoes). There are caves **opening onto the ocean, natural windows in** the rock

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and **tunnels sculpted by erosion**.

The advantage here is ease of access: even without a boat trip, you can already admire some impressive structures.

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