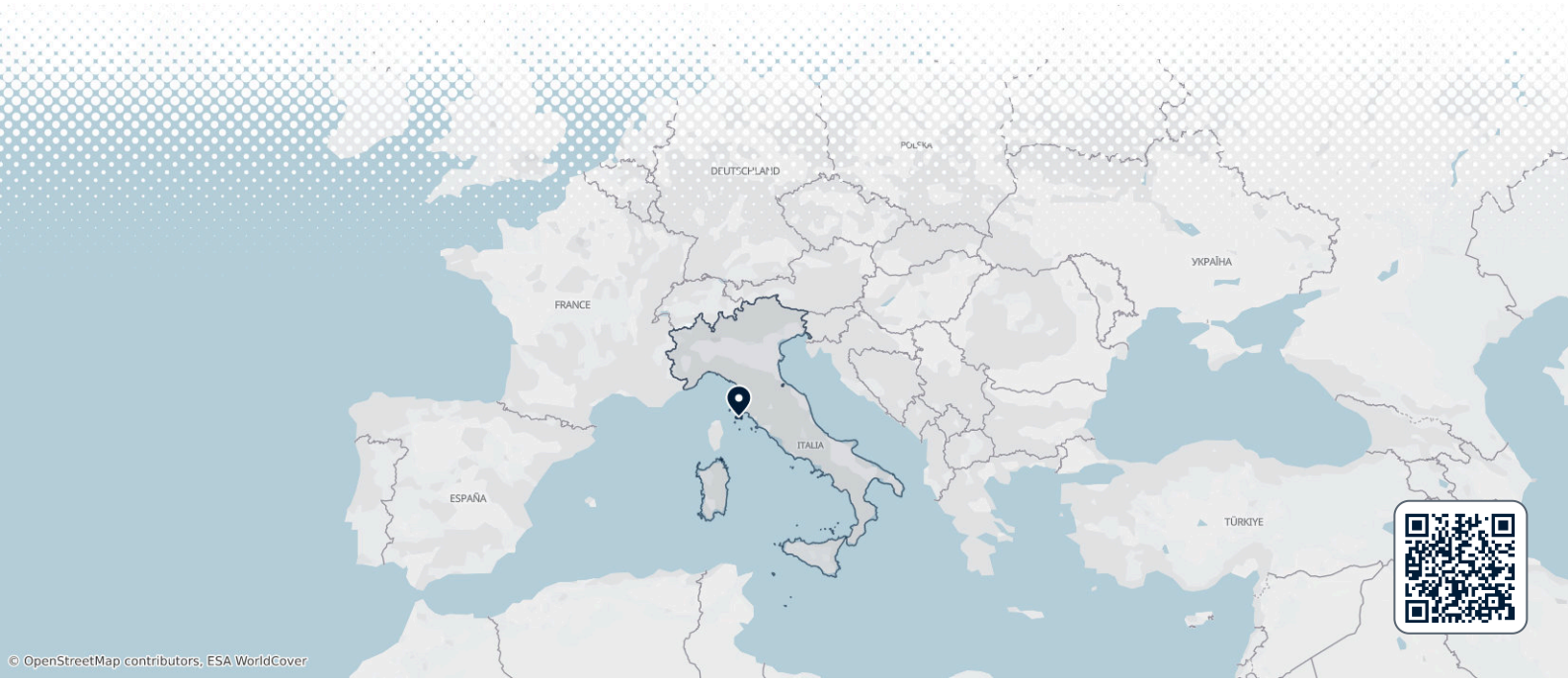


Elba

Tuscany · Italy

TRAVEL GUIDE

Tripomatic



Overview

Elba is the largest island of the Tuscan Archipelago and the third largest island in Italy. It lies about 10 km off the Tuscan coast. The island has granite mountains in the west, old iron mines in the east, and many small beaches and coves. Large parts of it are protected inside Parco Nazionale Arcipelago Toscano.

Elba suits beach holidays, hiking, cycling and snorkelling, with some easy history on the side. Napoleon lived here in exile in 1814 and 1815. Plan three to seven nights, and expect a slow pace. A car or scooter makes the island much easier to explore.

When to visit

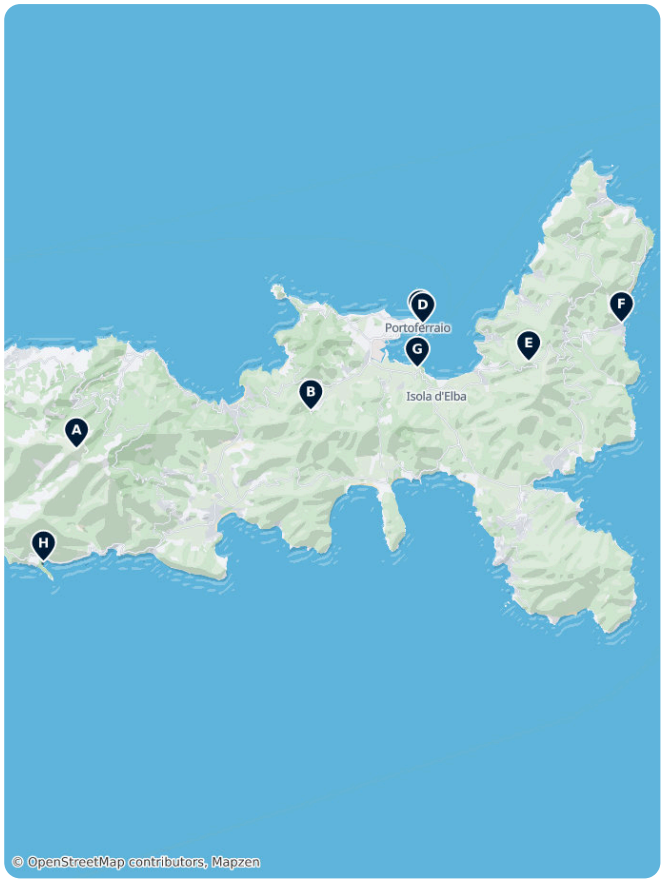
Late spring and early autumn are the best times: warm, sunny and less crowded. July and August are hot and dry, and also the busiest and most expensive months. The sea is warm enough for swimming from about June to October. Winters are mild and wet, and many hotels and restaurants close.

MONTH	CONDITIONS	DAY °C avg / max	NIGHT °C avg / min	
January	Fair Fair for cycling	11° / 14° Feels like 6°	8° / 4°	Dry air
February	Good Good for hiking	11° / 14° Feels like 6°	8° / 3°	Dry air
March	Good Good for hiking	13° / 15° Feels like 8°	9° / 5°	Dry air
April	Great Great for hiking	15° / 17° Feels like 11°	12° / 9°	Dry air
May	Great Great for sightseeing	18° / 22°	15° / 12°	Dry air
June	Great Great for sightseeing	23° / 26°	19° / 16°	22 sunny days · Humid air
July	Great Great for sightseeing	25° / 28°	22° / 19°	27 sunny days · Muggy, humid air · UV 8 (Very high)
August	Great Great for watersports	26° / 28°	22° / 20°	25 sunny days · Muggy, humid air
September	Great Great for sightseeing	22° / 25°	19° / 16°	
October	Good Good for hiking	19° / 22°	16° / 13°	
November	Good Good for cycling	15° / 19° Feels like 11°	13° / 8°	14 rainy days · Dry air
December	Fair Fair for hiking	12° / 15° Feels like 7°	10° / 5°	12 rainy days · Dry air

Best months: May, June, July, August, September

Climate data: NASA POWER + Copernicus ERA5-Land and ERA5 · 1996–2025

Top sights



- A Monte Capanne is the highest point on the island, at about 1,018 m. The summit has wide views over the coast and, on clear days, towards Corsica. Walking trails lead to the top, and a cable car also runs from near Marciana.
- B Museo nazionale delle residenze Napoleoniche Villa di San Martino was Napoleon's country house near Portoferraio. It is now a museum of his time on the island.
- C Palazzina dei Mulini was his town residence in the upper part of Portoferraio. It is the other Napoleonic house, with sea views.
- D Forte Stella is a star-shaped fort above Portoferraio harbour. Walk the walls for views of the bay.
- E Castello del Volterraio is a ruined castle on a rocky peak in the east. A steep path leads up. The views over the island are worth the climb.
- F Parco Minerario dell'Isola d'Elba - Museo Dei Minerali e dell'Arte Mineraria in Rio tells the story of Elba's iron and mineral mining. Guided visits to the former Rio mine leave from the museum; book ahead.
- G Villa romana delle Grotte are the ruins of a large Roman villa by the sea near Portoferraio.
- H Spiaggia di Fetovaia is a sandy beach on the south-west coast, popular for its clear water.

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What to experience

- **Beach days**: sandy beaches include Spiaggia della Biodola and Spiaggia di Cavoli. Pebble coves such as Spiaggia Sansone and Enfola have clear water for snorkelling.
- **Walk to the sanctuary**: a path with shrines leads from Marciana up to Madonna del Monte. It is a short climb.
- **Dive or snorkel**: diving schools and snorkel trips run in summer along the rocky coast.
- **Ride the hills**: rent a mountain bike and follow the coastal and mountain tracks. Spring and autumn are the most comfortable seasons.
- **Boat trip around the coast**: summer boat tours show coves that roads do not reach.

Day trips

Elba is an island, so most day trips need a boat. These are the best options:

- **Pianosa**: a flat, quiet island south-west of Elba. You can only visit with a park guide, and daily numbers are limited. Boats leave from Marina di Campo in season. Book ahead.
- **Baratti and Populonia**: an Etruscan burial ground and hilltop town on the mainland coast. Take the ferry to Piombino (about 1 hour), then drive about 20 minutes. The Etruscans worked Elba's iron ore.

Where to explore

- **On Elba**: Portoferraio is the main town and port. Other bases include Porto Azzurro, Marciana, Marciana Marina, Capoliveri and Marina di Campo.
- **Other islands**: Isola del Giglio is another island of the Tuscan Archipelago. Ferries to it leave from the mainland, not from Elba.
- **On the mainland**: Castiglione della Pescaia is a beach town on the Maremma coast. Livorno is a port city on the way from Pisa.

Getting there

- **By ferry**: this is the main way to arrive. Ferries run from Piombino on the mainland to Portoferraio in about 1 hour. Faster passenger-only boats take about 40 minutes. There are also crossings to Rio Marina (about 45 minutes) and Cavo (about 20 minutes). Book car space early for summer. Toremar is one of the operators.
- **By train**: regional trains from Pisa and Livorno reach Piombino Marittima station. The station is next to the ferry port.
- **By air**: the main gateways are Pisa Galileo Galilei Airport (PSA) and Florence Airport (FLR). Pisa is the easier choice. From either, continue by train or car to Piombino. Elba has a small airport at Marina di Campo with a few seasonal flights.

Getting around

- **Bus**: buses connect Portoferraio with the main towns and many beaches. Some lines run only from mid-June to mid-September. A multi-day Elba pass is sold in the at bus app. See Elba buses.
- **Car or scooter**: the most flexible option. Rental is easy in Portoferraio and the larger resorts.
- **Cycling**: possible, but hills are steep.

Getting around on foot & by bike

WALKABILITY

Moderate

Island towns such as Portoferraio and Marciana Marina are easy to walk. Distances between towns and beaches are too long on foot.

CYCLING INFRASTRUCTURE

Moderate

Popular with road and mountain bikers, but hills are steep and mountain roads are narrow.

Driving

- **Is a car worth it?** Yes, for most stays. Buses are limited, and the best beaches and villages are spread across the island.
- **Bringing a car**: ferry space for cars is limited and expensive in July and August. Renting on the island is often easier.
- **Roads**: mountain roads are narrow and winding. Allow extra time.
- **Parking**: beach and village car parks fill by late morning in summer. Paid parking is common.

Food & drink

Seafood is the base of local cooking. Look for salted anchovies, octopus salad and *stoccafisso alla riese*, a dried cod dish from Rio. For dessert, try *schiaccia briaca*, a sweet cake made with Aleatico wine. Elba also makes its own wines, including Ansonica white and Aleatico dessert wine.

For a meal, go to the harbour fronts of Portoferraio, Marciana Marina, Porto Azzurro and Rio Marina. In the hill villages such as Capoliveri, small restaurants cluster around the main squares.

What to eat & drink

LUNCH

Pizza Margherita
Thin-crust pizza topped with tomato, mozzarella, and basil, invented in Naples and still best there.

DINNER

Spaghetti alla Carbonara
Pasta with egg, cured pork cheek (guanciale), pecorino cheese, and black pepper, a Roman classic.

Risotto alla Milanese
Creamy saffron-infused rice dish from Milan, often served alongside braised veal shank.

Lasagna · Lasagne al Forno
Layered baked pasta with ragu, bechamel, and cheese, a staple of Emilia-Romagna cooking.

SNACKS & STREET FOOD

Prosciutto and Cheese · Prosciutto e Formaggio
Cured ham paired with regional cheeses, a common antipasto plate found nationwide.

SWEETS & DESSERTS

Gelato
Dense, slow-churned Italian ice cream, traditionally lower in fat and air than American-style ice cream.

Tiramisu · Tiramisù
Layered dessert of coffee-soaked ladyfingers and mascarpone cream, dusted with cocoa.

DRINKS

Espresso · Caffè
A short, strong shot of coffee drunk quickly, usually standing at a bar counter.

Wine · Vino
Italy is one of the world's largest wine producers, with regional styles from Piedmont's Barolo to Tuscany's Chianti.

Aperol Spritz
A bittersweet orange aperitif mixed with prosecco and soda water, a staple of the early-evening aperitivo.

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Safety & health

Elba is very safe for visitors. Do not leave valuables in a parked car at a beach.

- **Sun and heat**: summer sun is very strong. Carry water on hikes and start early.
- **Sea**: currents can be strong on exposed beaches. Jellyfish and sea urchins occur on rocky shores.
- **Fire**: dry summer weather brings a risk of forest fires. Follow local rules in the woods.
- **Weather and ferries**: strong wind can cancel boats, especially the fast ones. Leave a buffer before flights.
- **Medical care**: the main hospital is in Portoferraio, and every town has a pharmacy. Serious cases may go to the mainland.

History

Iron made Elba famous. The Etruscans and Romans mined it, and mining continued until 1981. Today you can learn about it at Parco Minerario dell'Isola d'Elba - Museo Dei Minerali e dell'Arte Mineraria.

In the Middle Ages the island was ruled by Pisa and later by the Appiani family of Piombino.

In 1548 Cosimo I de' Medici founded the port town of Cosmopoli, now Portoferraio. The Medici built Forte Stella and Forte Falcone to guard it.

Napoleon arrived on 4 May 1814 and left on 26 February 1815. He governed Elba as a small sovereign state. You can still visit his two homes, Palazzina dei Mulini and Museo nazionale delle residenze Napoleoniche Villa di San Martino.

Country facts

Quick practical facts for Italy at a glance:

CURRENCY
EUR €

EMERGENCY
112

ELECTRICITY



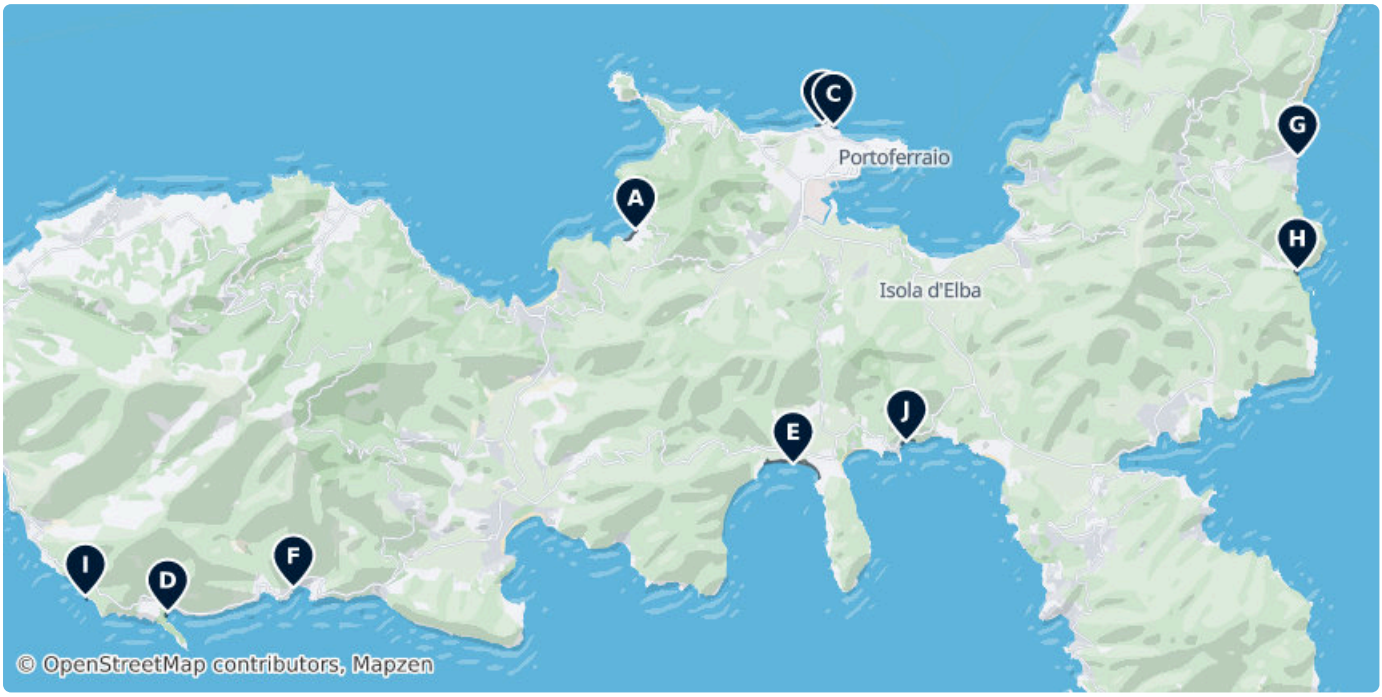
Type C / Type F / Type L
230 V · 50 Hz

LANGUAGES
Italian

TAP WATER
Safe to drink

Top Beaches of Elba

Elba's top beaches showcase a variety of coastal landscapes, from fine white sands and crystal-clear waters to secluded coves protected by natural land formations. The list includes well-equipped beaches with bars and watersports, alongside unique naturist spots that offer privacy and tranquility amid Mediterranean scenery.





A Biodola Beach

One of the finest beaches Elba has to offer. Shallow blue waters, white sand and plenty of bars, that's the recipe for happiness!

Scaglieri 57037, Italy (42.80135, 10.26783)



B Spiaggia di Capo Bianco

A small sandy beach known for its natural rocky surroundings and clear waters.

Portoferraio 57037, Italy (42.82044, 10.31357)



C Spiaggia della Padulella

A quiet, sandy beach located near Capo Bianco, featuring typical Mediterranean vegetation.

(Unnamed Road), Portoferraio 57037, Italy (42.82004, 10.31622)



D Fetovaia Beach

A beautiful clear beach protected by a narrow land tongue makes itself a very relaxing holiday destination.

Fetovaia, Via Fetovaia, Campo nell'Elba, Tuscany 57034, Italy (42.73272, 10.15339)

fetovaia.it/island-elba/fetovaia.html

E Lacona Beach

This beach is perfect for pleasure seekers who demand the finest sand, crystal clear water and a wide choice of watersports opportunities.

Italy (42.75931, 10.30637)



F Spiaggia di Cavoli

A sandy beach with pine tree shade and calm waters suitable for swimming.

24 Via Cavoli, Cavoli 57034, Italy (42.73709, 10.18411)



G Spiaggia La Torre

Pebblestone beach situated near a historic tower, offering scenic views.

46 Calata dei Voltoni, Rio Marina 57038, Italy (42.81445, 10.42974)



H Spiaggia di Ortano

Secluded beach surrounded by rocky cliffs and Mediterranean scrub.

(Unnamed Road), Ortano 57038, Italy (42.79406, 10.42969)

I Naturist beach Le Tombe

Clothing-optional beach known for its natural setting and privacy.

(42.73556, 10.13324)

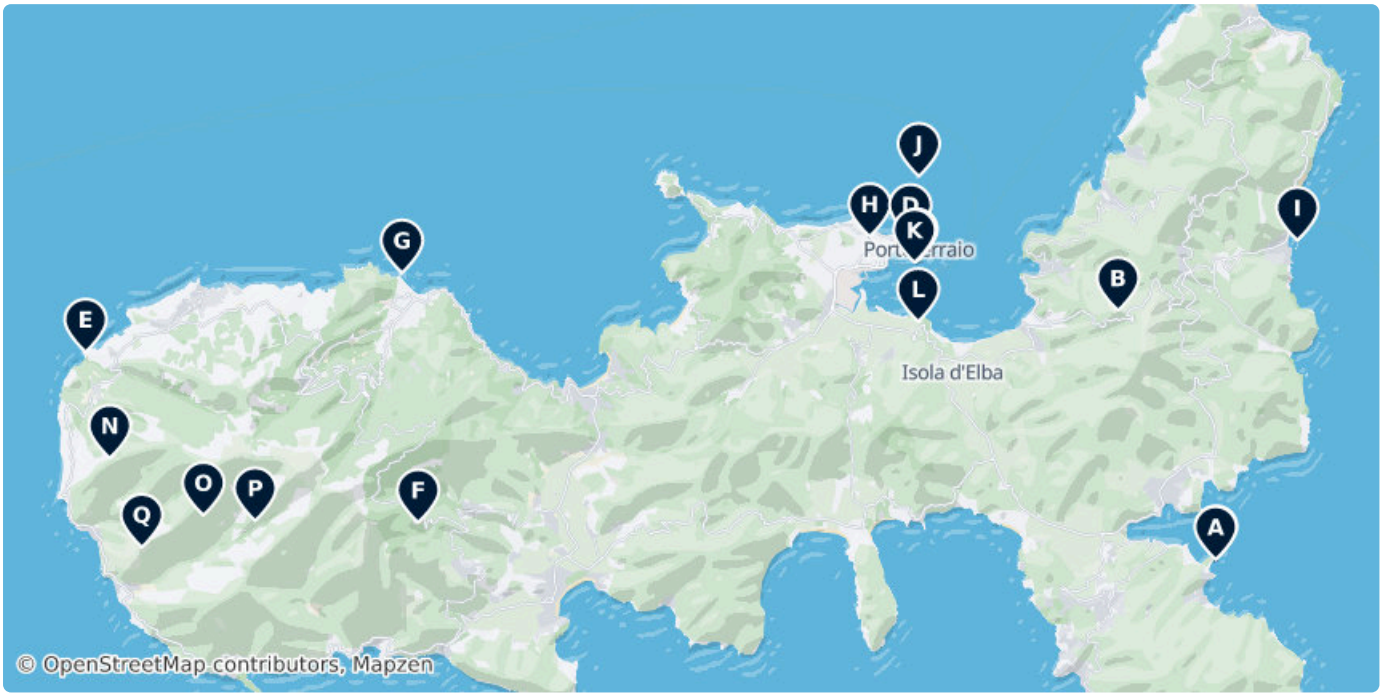
J Aquarilli Naturist Beach

Naturist beach accessible via a short hike, featuring rocky and sandy areas.

57031, Italy (42.76333, 10.33403)

Historic Treasures of Elba

Discover Elba Island's historic landmarks including medieval fortresses perched on cliffs, archaeological museums housing artifacts from 800 BC to Roman times, and centuries-old churches showcasing Roman Pisa architectural style. The list features active and decommissioned lighthouses that guided maritime navigation and coastal towers built for defense and observation, reflecting Elba’s strategic importance through the ages.





A Forte Focardo

Coastal fortress located in Capoliveri, built to defend the island’s shores.

57031, Italy (42.75419, 10.40964)



B Volterraio Fortress

Visit this coastal fortress dating back to 1000 AD and sitting on a mountain above Portoferraio. It was reconstructed many times.

57037, Italy (42.80254, 10.38380)

Mo–Su 17:30–20:30

infopark.sl3.eu/book-now/1-elba/1-fortezza-del-volterraio...

C Portoferraio Archaeological Museum

The exhibitions cast a clever eye on the history of Elba dating from 800 BC to the Roman Era. The collections of artifacts are marvellous.

Calata Buccari, La Linguella, Protoferraio 57037, Italy (42.81202, 10.33047)

+39 565 937 241



D Falcone Fort

This coastal fort dating from 1548 is Portoferraio's star attraction. It's a favorite meeting place and a cultural venue.

2 Via Falcone, Portoferraio 57037, Italy (42.81672, 10.32878)

E Faro di Punta Polveraia

Active lighthouse on a promontory near Patresi, marking coastal navigation.

Via Il Faro, 57030, Italy (42.79448, 10.11047)



F Pieve di San Giovanni in Campo

Dating to 1298, this ancient parish house is a prime example of the early "Roman Pisa" architectural style. Must-see.

Via Monte Perone, 57034, Italy (42.76137, 10.19849)



G Torre degli Appiani

Ancient coastal watchtower near Marciana Marina's marina.

Italy (42.80984, 10.19421)

H English Fort

Fortification combining features of a castle and fort.

2 Via Forte Inglese, Portoferraio 57037, Italy (42.81689, 10.31805)



I Faro di Rio Marina

Decommissioned maritime lighthouse formerly guiding vessels in the Piombino Channel.

Pianosa - Rio Marina, Italy (42.81614, 10.43126)

J Scoglietto Lighthouse

Scoglietto Lighthouse Italian: Faro dello Scoglietto is an active lighthouse located on the summit of a rocky islet without vegetation...

Italy (42.82858, 10.33106)

K Torre del Martello

Coastal watchtower used historically for surveillance and defense.

Pianosa - Portoferraio, Italy (42.81184, 10.32990)



L Roman villa of the Grottos

History buffs should not miss the ruins of an ancient Roman villa built in 100 BC.

57037, Italy (42.80041, 10.33089)

Mo–Su	10:00–12:30, 17:00–20:00

M Capo Focardo Lighthouse

Capo Focardo Lighthouse is an active lighthouse located at the south eastern tip of the gulf of Porto Azzurro on the island of Elba in the...

57031, Italy (42.75433, 10.40975)

N Semaforo di Campo alle Serre

Decommissioned maritime semaphore station overlooking the Corsica Channel.

57030, Italy (42.77389, 10.11688)

O Chiesa di San Benedetto

12th-century church located in Marciana representing medieval religious architecture.

57030, Italy (42.76277, 10.14169)

P Chiesa di San Biagio

12th-century church in Marciana reflecting historic ecclesiastical construction.

57030, Italy (42.76172, 10.15538)

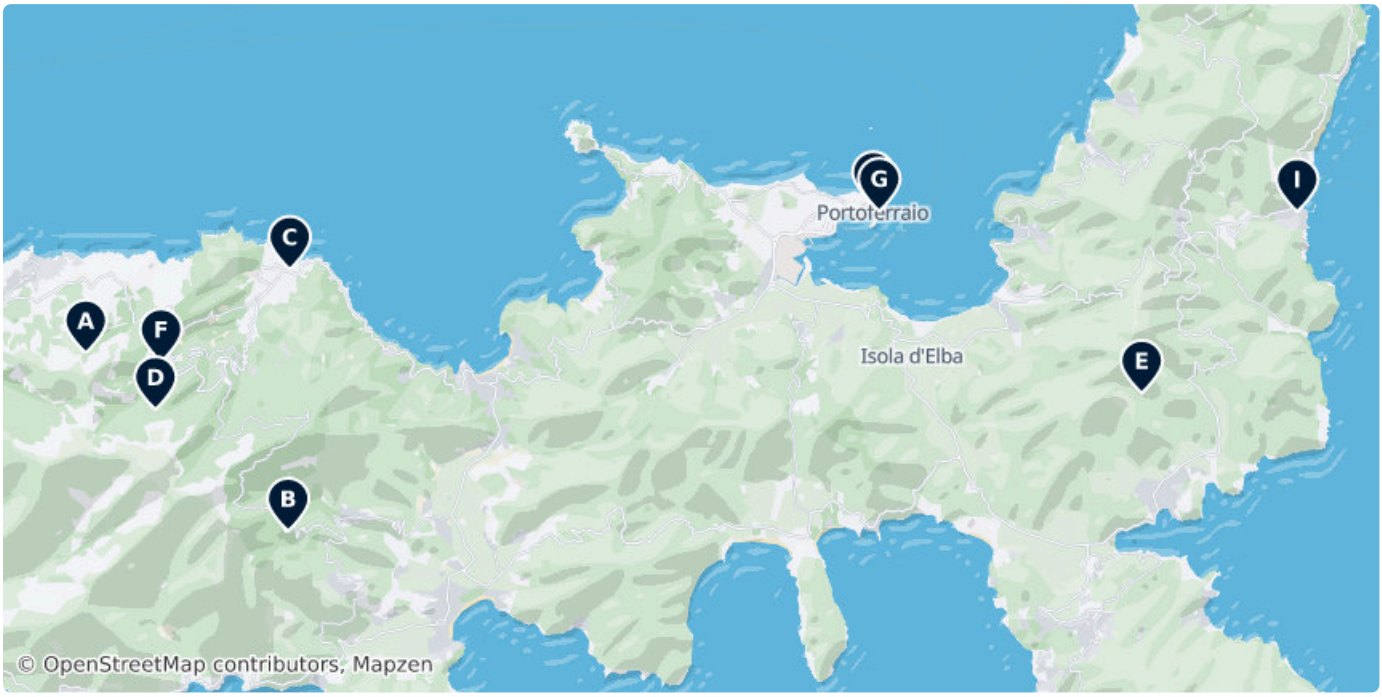
Q Chiesa di San Bartolomeo

12th-century former religious building in Pomonte hamlet.

57030, Italy (42.75657, 10.12534)

Historic Churches of Elba

Explore historically and architecturally significant churches and sanctuaries on Elba Island, featuring stunning frescoes, ancient Romanesque styles, and notable pilgrimage sites. This collection includes 13th-century Roman Pisa architecture, 16th and 17th-century churches adorned with frescoes, and sacred sites that reflect the island's rich religious heritage.





A Madonna del Monte Sanctuary

Walk up the steep hill decorated by the Stations of the Cross and visit this extraordinary 16th century church with amazing frescoes.

57030, Italy (42.79101, 10.15258)



B Pieve di San Giovanni in Campo

Dating to 1298, this ancient parish house is a prime example of the early "Roman Pisa" architectural style. Must-see.

Via Monte Perone, 57034, Italy (42.76137, 10.19849)



C Santa Chiara

Located in Piazza Vittorio Emanuele, this church features traditional Catholic architectural elements typical of the region.

10 Via Santa Chiara, Marciana Marina 57033, Italy (42.80494, 10.19884)

D Romitorio di San Cerbone

A historic hermitage situated on Crino delle Puntate, reflecting the island's religious solitude traditions.

(Unnamed Road), 57030, Italy (42.78160, 10.16837)

E Monserrato Sanctuary

Earlier, this 17th century church used to be a popular pilgrimage site, but nowadays, it is open to public for prayers and visits only.

Località Monserrato, 57036, Italy (42.78433, 10.39206)

F Santa Caterina

A Roman Catholic church located in Marciana, notable for its local religious significance.

5 Piazza San Sebastiano, Marciana 57030, Italy (42.78956, 10.16966)

G Propositura della Natività di Maria

Situated in Piazza della Repubblica, Portoferraio, this church serves as a central place of worship.

4 Piazzetta Solferino, Portoferraio 57037, Italy (42.81459, 10.33254)

H Chiesa del Santissimo Sacramento

Located on Via Garibaldi in Portoferraio, this church is dedicated to the Blessed Sacrament.

6 Via Camerini, Portoferraio 57037, Italy (42.81569, 10.33120)

I Chiesa evangelica valdese

A Protestant place of worship representing the Waldensian Evangelical tradition on Elba Island.

(42.81452, 10.42733)

casariomarina.it, +39 055 212576

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