

15 best Med villas to rent from £500 a week

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If you want sun, sea and sunshine this summer, we've picked our favourite villas – from just £500 a week – in the Mediterranean. Time to plan your getaway...



BEST VILLAS IN... SPAIN & PORTUGAL

SPECIAL OCCASION: CASA SOLLER, MALLORCA

A beautiful house in a stunning setting, Casa Soller will appeal to family gatherings of all ages or groups of friends, particularly for a big birthday or anniversary celebration. An elegant town house situated in the centre of Soller (a small, quiet, yet picturesque town ringed by imposing mountains), it's located over four floors, so noisy kids can have their own space upstairs (and you can have peace downstairs!). There

are six double bedrooms all with their own bathrooms, plus a gym room, a home cinema and an outdoor pool. The house was recently renovated to bring its Art Nouveau style back to life, which means you may not wish to leave its elegant rooms or leafy garden, but it's easy to take the train into Palma, 30 minutes away.

✦ **Sleeps 12; Casa Soller costs from £6,950 for a week, or £579 per person; book via sjvillas.co.uk**



BEST FOR MULTI-GENERATIONAL HOLIDAYS

the best villas



AFFORDABLE LUXURY: CASA CRISTAL, IBIZA

On the outskirts of Ibiza Town you'll find Casa Cristal, a slick, modern, steel-and-glass building decorated throughout in cool white, grey and blue tones. Set over two floors, the master bedroom suite dominates the upper level, and downstairs you'll find two further bedrooms (also en suite) and an open-plan kitchen and dining area. From the roof terrace you can see out to neighbouring island, Formentera.

Ibiza Town is steps away; don't miss a stroll around

the atmospheric Dalt Vila, or old town, a UNESCO World Heritage Site entered by a huge, Roman stone portal, and walk around the battlements. There are plenty of beautiful beaches nearby to choose from, such as Playa D'en Bossa or Las Salinas. And catch a spectacular Ibizan sunset from a viewpoint like Hacienda Na Xamena, on the northernmost tip of the island.

✦ **Sleeps 6; Casa Cristal costs from around £2,255 for a week, or £376 per person; book via chicibiza.com**

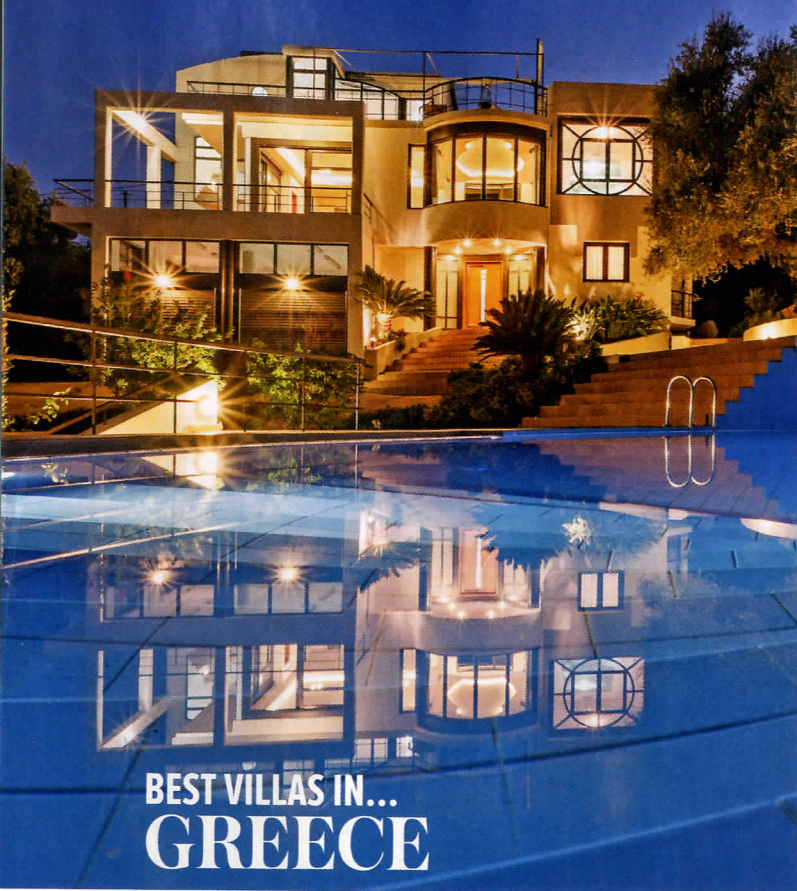
AROUND £500: VILLA PRAINHA ALVOR, ALGARVE, PORTUGAL

The fishing village of Alvor has a Moorish past, and you can still see this reflected in its architecture. Not far from the seafloor is this light and airy two-bedroomed villa with access to a stretch of private beach. The decor is simple with splashes of colour, but you won't be spending much time inside – as well as a garden, patio and roof terrace, you have access to a shared pool.

Keen golfers are catered for, as the nearest course is less than two miles away, or you can spend shady afternoons strolling the streets of Alvor. A popular family resort, it has all you could need, from supermarkets if you want to cook yourself, to seafood restaurants when you want to eat out. A short drive away is the town of Lagos, a historic location surrounded by medieval walls, an old fort by the harbour and the "Golden Church" of St Antony, an impressive place of worship covered in gilded wood. Kids will love the Slide & Splash waterpark in nearby Lagoa, the Zoomarine sealife park near Albufeira, or Lagos Zoo.

✦ **Sleeps 4-6; a week at the Villa in Prainha Alvor costs from £525, or from £87.50 per person; book via homeaway.co.uk >>**





BEST VILLAS IN... GREECE

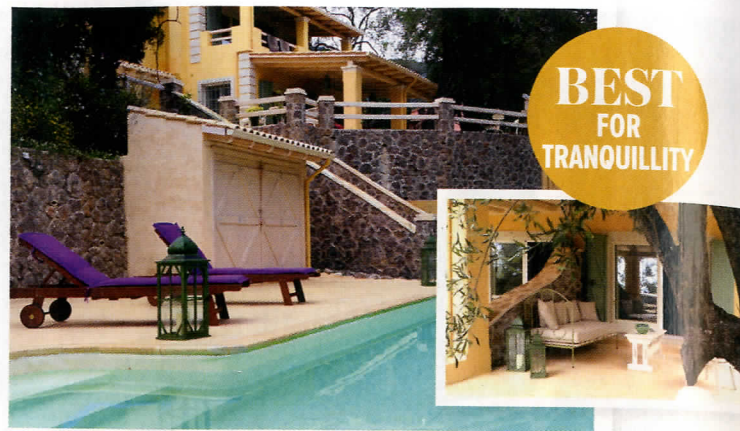
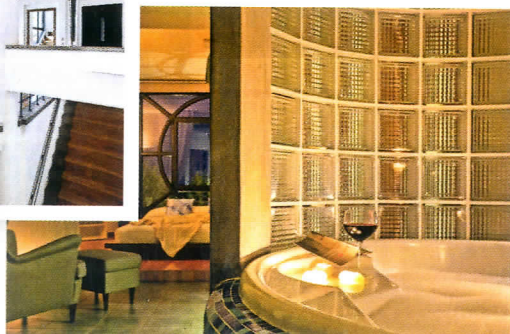
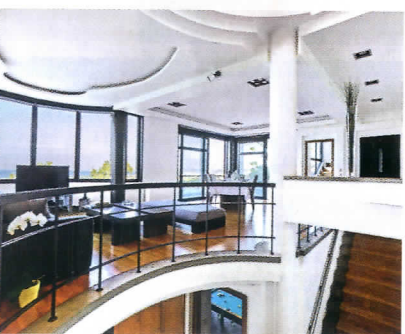
AFFORDABLE LUXURY: VILLA ZAIMIS, CRETE

Chania Old Town is one of Crete's most evocative cities, with a pretty Venetian quarter, mazes of narrow streets and a busy harbour. Perched above it, on a steep hill, is a sleek and polished architectural gem, Villa Zaimis. This five-bedroom, multi-level property has a large private pool, a lovely terrace overhung with olive trees, plenty of garden space to relax or dine in, and, of course, incredible views. There's a games room with pool table, baby and

toddler equipment, an on-site concierge, and you can also arrange for a private chef to cook for you.

Exploring Chania will reveal its history as a city inhabited by Romans, Byzantines and Ottomans among others. It has plenty of charming cafés and restaurants, but a must do is to watch the sunset by the old lighthouse. The more adventurous can take a trip into the mountains, or discover sleepy fishing villages on a drive around the island.

✦ **Sleeps 10; Villa Zaimis costs from £1,802 per week, or £180 per person; book via oliverstravels.com**



BEST FOR TRANQUILLITY

AROUND £500: VILLA PUCK, CORFU

A few miles away from Corfu Old Town, and a five-minute walk from the beautiful beach of Ipsos Bay, is an elegant mansion house situated in an olive grove, called Il Giardino Segreto di Prospero. The property is divided into four residences. For a couple seeking a mix of tranquillity and beauty, Puck is the best choice. It consists of an open-plan area with kitchen (there is also a BBQ outdoors), spacious living room, bedroom and bathroom. The large terrace looks out onto the sea and Pantokrator mountain. You can go horse-riding around the island or on a boat trip.

✦ **Sleeps 2; Villa Puck costs from £525 per week, or £262.50 per person (for larger groups, the whole house can be rented from £3,500 per week); book via prosperos.co.uk**



SPECIAL OCCASION: VILLA JURA, SPORADES

The Sporades is a group of islands along the east coast of Greece, which includes Skiathos and Skopelos. Alonnisos is one of the smaller islands, only 13 miles long, with fewer than 3,000 inhabitants. Villa Jura is a bright, airy, modern property located above the charming fishing village of Steni Vala, with four bedrooms, four bathrooms and an open-plan living area over two levels (not suitable for children under

12 due to stairways without bannisters). It's furnished in contemporary style, and features a terrace with views over the village, and a welcoming pool. You're a short stroll away from harbour-front bars and tavernas, and a 20-minute drive from the historic capital, Alonnisos Town. ✦ **Sleeps 8; a week at Villa Jura costs from £4,622 per week, or £577.75 per person; book via thethinkingtraveller.com**



BEST VILLAS IN... FRANCE

SPECIAL OCCASION: VILLA SANTA GIULIA, CORSICA

If you've never been before, you'll be amazed by the rugged beauty of this island to the southeast of France. And this stylish, four-bedroom villa is in one of the most sought-after locations in the area. Overlooking the bay of Santa Giulia, its sleek, modern architecture ensures it feels open, light and spacious. The blond-wood deck houses a beautiful infinity pool, with views across the mountains. The town of Porto Vecchio, a fashionable resort, is just ten minutes' drive away, boasting two beautiful beaches, while the watersports, bars and restaurants of Santa Giulia beach are even closer.

✦ **Sleeps 8; a week at Villa Santa Giulia costs from £2,600, or £325 per person; book via simpsonexclusive.com**



BEST FOR ROMANCE

QUIRKY LUXURY: THE TREE HOUSE, LE CLOS SAINT-AMAND, HERAULT

In the middle of a grove of almond trees, near the beaches of Valras, is a delightful treehouse built for two. Its huge windows and sliding doors mean it's very light and airy, with a terrace that nestles in the treetops. The decor is stylish throughout, with an open-plan design, walk-in shower, cosy living space and, perhaps best of all, your own outdoor Jacuzzi. Breakfast is delivered by rope and pulley so

you don't even have to venture back down to the ground. Visit the historic city of Agde, or the elegant university town of Montpellier; its vast Place de la Comédie is the perfect place to park up in a café, order a Chocolat Liégeois (the local ice cream sundae) and people watch to your heart's content. ✦ **Sleeps 2; The Tree House costs from £1,400 per week, or £700 per person; book via holidaylettings.co.uk**

AROUND £500: ROOF TERRACE APARTMENT, NIMES, LANGUEDOC-ROUSSILLON

Located between the Mediterranean Sea and the Cevennes mountains, the former Roman city of Nimes, in the spectacular Languedoc-Roussillon region, is an elegant town with plenty of history. Base yourself in this stylish apartment in a classical mansion, which has its own roof terrace and access to a lovely pool. If you're bored of the beaches (which are half an hour from the city centre), visit Nimes's own version of the Colosseum, the Roman Arena, or the

famous Pont du Gard, an impressive aqueduct towering 49m high across the Gardon River. ✦ **Sleeps up to 4; the roof terrace apartment costs from £441 per week, or £110.25 per person; book via airbnb.co.uk >>**





**BEST
SEA
VIEWS**

BEST VILLAS IN... ITALY

SPECIAL OCCASION: **VILLA BLANCA, PUGLIA**

The Salento is the southernmost part of Italy's "heel"; and one of its most beautiful areas. Near the seaside town of Santa Maria di Leuca sits Villa Blanca, a show-stopping property with ten acres of lush, green grounds, featuring a huge

swimming pool looking out onto the sea and olive groves below. There is a spacious living room, a drawing room, a modern kitchen, and four of the five bedrooms are en suite. You can have breakfast prepared by a personal chef every day, or call on one for a big celebration

meal. There are good beaches nearby, while some stretches of rocky coastline feature cliffs peppered with grottoes, which you can visit by boat.

✦ **Sleeps 10; a week at Villa Blanca costs from £4,118 per week, or £411 per person; book via thethinkingtraveller.com**



AFFORDABLE LUXURY: **VILLA ALESSANDRA, SICILY**

The town of Scicli is one of the UNESCO-listed Baroque towns of south-eastern Sicily, but feels very off-the-beaten-track. Studded with beautiful, ancient buildings, its picturesque setting served as a main location to Italian detective drama *Inspector Montalbano*. Villa Alessandra is a lovely, four-bedroomed property situated in the hills. It combines traditional stone features with modern architecture, and features jaw-dropping details, such as an infinity pool with a

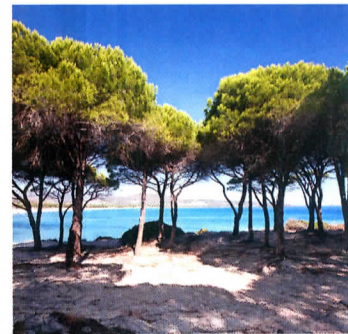
phenomenal view, an indoor wellness area with a whirlpool bath and sauna, and a glass-floored kitchen and dining area.

Scicli shares its architectural heritage with other towns, such as Ragusa and Modica, but it also has some unique attractions of its own, including a neatly kept centre, fine clean stonework, and a dramatic situation in a basin overhung by churches and monasteries on high crags. Don't miss the Palazzo Beneventano, a wonderful Baroque palace.

✦ **Sleeps 8; a week at Villa Alessandra costs from £2,200 a week, or £275 per person; book via villaselect.com**



**BEST
PRIVATE
POOL**



AROUND £500: **VILLA ALBA, SARDINIA**

Sardinia can be one of the most expensive islands in Italy, attracting glitzy yachts in the summer season – but the good news is, you don't need to break the bank to enjoy its stunning scenery, aqua blue waters and relaxed pace of life. The small, beachside village of Baia Sant'Anna is situated on a hillside overlooking the sea, and studded with scented pines; Villa Alba is a simple yet comfortable property featuring two bedrooms, a sitting room, dining area and sundeck. You also have access to a large pool, and tennis courts.

It's a 20-minute walk along the pretty coastal path from the villa to the nearest restaurant and a five-minute drive to the nearest town, Tanaunella, where you'll find a greater choice of restaurants, cafés and nightlife.

✦ **Sleeps 4; a week in Villa Alba costs from £441, or £110.25 per person; book via freelanceholidays.co.uk >>**



BEST VILLAS IN... CROATIA

QUIRKY LUXURY: OLD TOWER, HVAR

The island of Hvar is one of the loveliest on the Dalmatian coast. It has a rich cultural heritage and is also known for its production of wine and olive oil. Stay somewhere with a difference, in a former windmill that was built by Franciscan monks in 1761. The four-storey building has been beautifully restored, and combines traditional materials with eco-technology – it has its own water supply and heating system. There's a cosy living area, dining room and garden, and the views over Hvar Old Town are impressive.

Stroll down the marble streets of the walled Old Town, stop for coffee – or a glass of local wine – in the lovely, wide main square, or take a boat out to the nearby Pakleni Islands, which offer fabulous, sheltered beaches.

✦ Sleeps 4-6; a week in the Old Tower costs from £938, or from £156 per person; book via airbnb.co.uk



**BEST
IN A CITY**

LUXURY: SUN GARDENS, DUBROVNIK

Croatia's breathtaking walled city on the Med (where parts of *Game of Thrones* are filmed) is the jewel in the country's crown. Treat yourself to a stay in a residence at the Sun Gardens five-star resort, which means you have access to all the facilities of its hotel, but all the benefits of a private property. Ranging in size from one to three bedrooms, the villas here all boast spectacular views from the terrace over the Elafiti archipelago, and are beautifully furnished with a dining area, kitchenette and en suite bathrooms.

Walk the magnificent 12th-century city walls, which will give you a great bird's eye perspective over the elegant red rooftops. Other must dos include the Rector's Palace and the Maritime Museum.

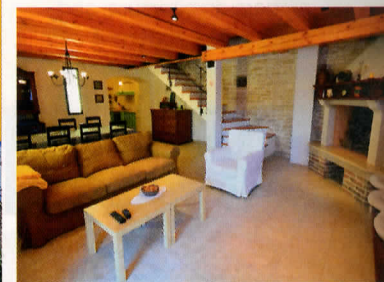
✦ Sleeps 4; seven nights in a two-bedroom seaview residence costs from £2,407, or £602 per person; book via dubrovniksungardens.com

AROUND £500: VILLA IVANKA, PULA, ISTRIA

Pula is a beautiful historic city on the tip of the Istrian peninsula, occupied in the past by Romans and Venetians, hence its fascinating architecture, including a well preserved amphitheatre. Set just outside Pula is Villa Ivanka, a three-storey, four-bedroomed stone-built house, decorated simply but comfortably. It has a small pool in the garden, and a lovely outdoor patio with built-in BBQ.

Visit the Roman ruins of the city, including the elegant Temple of Augustus. A half-hour drive away is Rovinj, another stunning city on the peninsula, known best for its Church of St Euphemia.

✦ Sleeps 8; a week at Villa Ivanka costs from £575, or £72 per person; book via interhome.co.uk w&h



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