

A Day at the Seaside – Marinella di Sarzana



Unlike the UK where the zone between low and high tide is the property of the Crown and is (with certain exceptions) open to all, in Italy seaside beaches are generally privately owned and access involves payment to the beach owner. Each comune must, however, maintain at least one free beach (spiaggia libera) – these are usually small, poorly located and packed with people.

Fortunately, Marinella at the mouth of the Magra River has a large “spiaggia libera” which is clean, pleasant and patrolled by

lifeguards (salvataggi - red shirted and equipped with a whistle!). The sand quality is good, though there is a band of shingle at the water’s edge. As the sand gets very hot in high summer it’s a good idea to take flip-flops to protect your feet. The beach has several facilities providers (we have used “Il Tramonte”) who provide toilets, changing rooms, showers and a cafe. These will rent out umbrellas (vital on a hot day) at 3 euro per session and deckchairs (sedie a sdraio) at 3 euro. Sun beds (lettini) can also be hired if required.

You are best advised to avoid the coastal beaches at weekends, especially during the peak months of July and August. Go to VillaSport at Villafranca instead. When on the beach you will regularly be approached by vendors trying to interest you in sunglasses, swimsuits, jewellery etc. They a nuisance but are generally polite and will move on when requested to do so.

How to Get There

The “official” route involves driving South along the A12/E80 motorway towards Pisa, taking the Sarzana exit, then following the signposts to Marinella. We prefer to exit at Carrara, keep right after the toll booths and follow the SP3 route to the coast (Marina di Carrara), finally turning right to follow the coastal road to Marinella di Sarzana. Either way the journey takes about an hour. See map in pocket behind this sheet.

Car Parking

Car parking is available from several operators – we have used Cooperativa Sociale “Olmo” – but the charges are identical at 3.50 euro for stays lasting until 1400hrs (solo la mattina) and 6 euro for all day (tutto il giorno). Keep your ticket as you must show it to the attendant on departure. Free on-street parking is available if you get to Marinella before 9.30am (!).



