“Autism on the Seas”
Past Guest Excursion Reviews
St Maarten

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St. Maarten Beach Day
Cruise Line: RCL
Date of Cruise: Aug, 2019
Booked through Ship: No
Duration (approx): 4 hrs
Would recommend to other Special Needs Families?: No
Comments: This was the staffed excursion. The being on the beach part is fine. But the St. Maarten water taxis are not really accessible. Even the ramps, when a boat has one, is a full step up. It would have been less arduous for us to just walk. I wasn't so comfortable with someone lifting the wheelchair over a water gap between the dock and the boat.

Beach day with AOTS
Cruise Line: RCL
Date of Cruise: Jun, 2019
Booked through Ship: No
Duration (approx): 3-4 hrs
Would recommend to other Special Needs Families?: Yes
Comments: It was great. We usually book an excursion through the ship, but this time we went with ATOS. It was perfect. We took a ferry to the dock, met up with a local guide who walked us over to some beach chairs and an umbrella. We played with the staff in the water and had a snack just behind out section of the beach. It was a really nice day!

St Marteen Beach
Cruise Line: RCL
Date of Cruise: Jun, 2019
Booked through Ship: No
Duration (approx): 3 hrs
Would recommend to other Special Needs Families?: Yes
Comments: Kids had a great time in the water. Well staffed and fun by all

Beach Excursion
Cruise Line: RCL
Date of Cruise: Jun, 2019
Booked through Ship: No
Duration (approx): 4 hrs
Would recommend to other Special Needs Families?: Yes
Comments: It was a nice excursion and a positive experience but our family wasn't informed that there would be beach chair rental for $10 per chair. Luckily we brought money, but not enough to then rent jet skis. I had always wanted to bring my boys on the water to jet ski, but we couldn't do it on this trip as a result of needing chairs. We had a credit card but the person that dealt with the AOTS group wouldn't take credit cards. Had we known prices and things that could be rented, we would have brought more cash on to the beach that day. Communication lacking in that regard. We rented a trampoline for $10 per kid for the day & made a great day of it, but I walked away regretting not renting the jet skis as I watched other families enjoy the experience.

Staff Assisted St. Martin Beach Day
Cruise Line: RCL
Date of Cruise: Mar, 2019
Booked through Ship: No
Duration (approx): 3 hrs
Would recommend to other Special Needs Families?: Yes
Comments: The staff were wonderful and very supportive.
I do wish there were less sales people bothering us. One woman came up and touched my daughter. Not anything AOTS can really do to stop that though.
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Excursion</th>
<th>Cruise Line</th>
<th>Date of Cruise</th>
<th>Booked through Ship</th>
<th>Duration (approx)</th>
<th>Would recommend to other Special Needs Families?</th>
<th>Comments</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Beach Rendezvous</td>
<td>RCL</td>
<td>Feb, 2019</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>4 hrs</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Poor. No accommodations. Beach was not all that pretty and restaurant had limited offerings not suitable for special needs and was not clean.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rhino Riders</td>
<td>RCL</td>
<td>Jul, 2018</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>4 hrs</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>We have done this tour in the past and it was great. This time, the first half was great, but when we stopped to snorkel and swim, it took a very long time for the group to re-convene back onto the water crafts. The ocean was choppy and my son wound up getting sea sick. But overall it was a good trip</td>
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<tr>
<td>Beach Excursion</td>
<td>RCL</td>
<td>Jul, 2018</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>3 hrs</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Comments</td>
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<tr>
<td>Beach</td>
<td>RCL</td>
<td>Jun, 2018</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>3 hrs</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Beach day w/AotS</td>
<td>RCL</td>
<td>Apr, 2018</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>5 hrs</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<td>Comments</td>
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<tr>
<td>Afternoon beach excursion to orient beach</td>
<td>RCL</td>
<td>Aug, 2017</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>4 hrs</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>The excursions had an aircondition bus pick us up and brought us to orient beach for a few hours. We asked the tour guide to not speak to loudly on the speaker because our son can not tolerate it. She was VERY rude about our request stating that patrons paid for information. They only reason we pick</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
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this specific excursions was because it was not a tour. Just a bus ride to the beach. We took the last row in the bus hoping the bus noise would drowned out her voice. Once on the beach, chairs were lined up as promised but they wanted everyone to stay in one section and we were not to over flow to the next section. One whole bus load of people had no chairs so we overflowed to the next section because we didn't have a choice. This also made the rude tour guide upset. Once back on the bus she began her guided tour again over the loud speaker with a much louder voice which caused a meltdown from our son. Thankfully the ride was over. The excursion itself was fine, beach full of sea weed but beautiful. There were bathrooms and outdoor showers and small gift shop. There was a bar and an a buffet for $18 or food for purchase.

**Explore Old Town Philipsburg by Trolley Train**
Cruise Line RCL
Date of Cruise Aug, 2017
Booked through Ship Yes
Duration (approx) 2-4 hrs
Would recommend to other Special Needs Families? Yes
Comments On the up side, our son loves trains and he was very excited to ride around in the open carriage and seeing the sights. On the down side, it was packed and we weren't able to sit together, the guide didn't have much to say, and the tour focused entirely on the points where the trolly would drop you off to do some shopping. We didn't learn much about the island or Old Town, but our son had a great time anyway.

**Captain Alan Three Island Snorkeling Adventure**
Cruise Line RCL
Date of Cruise Aug, 2017
Booked through Ship No
Duration (approx) 4 hrs
Would recommend to other Special Needs Families? Yes
Comments The excursion was very accommodating to all. Instructions were clear and the boat took 12 so it was a small group. We were able to travel with three AOTS families and 2 staff. The guide changed the excursion to suit our needs and was very patient and fun!

**Maho Beach Experience**
Cruise Line RCL
Date of Cruise Jun, 2017
Booked through Ship Yes
Duration (approx) 5 hrs
Would recommend to other Special Needs Families? Yes
Comments We rode in an air conditioned tour bus for about 35 to our destination, with a tour guide talking along the way. We were dropped off a short walk from the beach. The beach was a bit difficult to swim at- it was a steep slope, deep drop off in the water, and rough waves. (So, not wheelchair friendly at all.) This beach is at an airport landing strip.... the planes are VERY CLOSE above you and jet-blasts can be experienced when they're taking off. This is the reason to go to this beach. So be advised that it's very loud! The one bar/restaurant there is very crowded and loud, but decent. Our higher functioning 8 yr old did fine on this trip.

**Airplane Beach**
Cruise Line RCL
Date of Cruise May, 2017
Booked through Ship Yes
Duration (approx) 4 hrs
Would recommend to other Special Needs Families? No
Comments Beach was too crowded, too noisy, and excursion lasted too long.

Buterfly Farm
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Cruise Line | RCL
--- | ---
Date of Cruise | May 2017
Booked through Ship | Yes
Duration (approx) | 3 hrs
Would recommend to other Special Needs Families? | No
Comments | The experience was ok for those on the spectrum, but the heat and humidity in the butterfly enclosure made the experience very difficult. The bus was air conditioned so that helped. We ended up getting back on the boat as soon as we returned because the heat of the day was too much.

**Beach Excursion with AotS Staff**

Cruise Line | RCL
--- | ---
Date of Cruise | Apr 2014
Booked through Ship | Yes
Duration (approx) | 3 hrs
Would recommend to other Special Needs Families? | Yes
Comments | Awesome! We had a fabulous time at the beach!

**Billy Bones Excursion**

Cruise Line | RCL
--- | ---
Date of Cruise | Jul 2015
Booked through Ship | No
Duration (approx) | 7 hrs
Would recommend to other Special Needs Families? | Yes
Comments | An incredible all day private boat charter. We got to snorkel with sea turtles, snorkel with tropical fish, swim at three difference beaches, watch planes at Maho Beach, and a delicious lunch. Captain Balazs worked with us when we booked to ensure we did what we wanted to do. Best yet, he and his staff were WONDERFUL with our Autistic son. The highlight of the cruise that cannot come more highly recommended.

**Butterfly Farm And Beach**

Cruise Line | RCL
--- | ---
Date of Cruise | Oct 2011
Booked through Ship | Yes
Duration (approx) | 3 hrs
Would recommend to other Special Needs Families? | Yes
Comments | There were no special accommodations. I don't see that there was any need for any. Again more beach time and a meal would have made it a more enjoyable day. Our kids love the water.

**Butterfly Farm And Scenic Drive**

Cruise Line | Disney
--- | ---
Date of Cruise | Oct 2013
Booked through Ship | Yes
Duration (approx) | 3.5 hrs
Would recommend to other Special Needs Families? | No
Comments | I would not recommend this excursion again. The drive was an hour to get to the farm and we only spent 45 mins at the actual farm with 25 minutes being a lecture on the butterflies which my SN son could not tolerate. The farm is very muddy and my son loves mud so we spent most of the time making sure he wasn't digging and getting dirty. After the farm, you are dropped off in a town for 45 min of shopping. We didn't want to shop so there wasn't much for us to do, leaving my SN son agitated and annoyed.

**Jet Skis**

Cruise Line | RCL
--- | ---
Date of Cruise | Jul 2013
### Lord Sheffield
- **Cruise Line**: RCL
- **Date of Cruise**: Jun 2011
- **Booked through Ship**: Yes
- **Duration (approx)**: 4 hrs
- **Would recommend to other Special Needs Families?**: Yes
- **Comments**: We cruised to a snorkeling area and then sailed a bit. The trip was charming and the staff really made an effort. They cooked barbecue ribs and chicken and passed out drinks. They also served interesting fruit and vegetables. The boat was relatively big and comfortable. Only 17 passengers on board. The kids got to see a submarine. On the way back, my typically developing son was able to stand on the bow sprit in the front. The boat also had plenty of shade. I would recommend it to special needs families.

### Maho Beach Tour
- **Cruise Line**: Disney
- **Date of Cruise**: Oct 2013
- **Booked through Ship**: No
- **Duration (approx)**: 6 hrs
- **Would recommend to other Special Needs Families?**: Yes
- **Comments**: This was a great trip and one we arranged privately. We took a tour of the island on a private bus (although there were 80 people on the tour) and because there was do much to see and do our children were happy. The beach can be loud with the planes landing and taking off but the water was very warm and we could snorkel and see the fish. The beach was not very accessible for those in wheelchairs though.

### Orient Bay Beach Rendezvous
- **Cruise Line**: RCL
- **Date of Cruise**: Jun 2011
- **Booked through Ship**: Yes
- **Duration (approx)**: 4 hrs
- **Would recommend to other Special Needs Families?**: Yes
- **Comments**: A short bus trip and a beautiful beach. Lunch and drinks were included. No stress.

### Rhino Rider and Snorkel
- **Cruise Line**: Disney 2013
- **Date of Cruise**: Oct 2013
- **Booked through Ship**: Yes
- **Duration (approx)**: 3.5 hrs
- **Would recommend to other Special Needs Families?**: Yes
- **Comments**: The staff was support and accommodating

### Robinson’s Speed Boat Tour
- **Cruise Line**: RCL
- **Date of Cruise**: Mar 2015
- **Booked through Ship**: No
- **Duration (approx)**: 6 hrs
- **Would recommend to other Special Needs Families?**: Yes
- **Comments**: Very active trip with snorkeling, lunch, and watching the planes land at the airport. The boat goes very fast and can be bumpy—which our kids loved. The boat is small but not too crowded but there would be no place to "escape" if needed. Highly recommended for active families for whom speed and noise
is not an issue. The tour was a perfect length for us but could be long for some. The company is great to deal with.

**Shipwreck snorkeling excursion**

- **Cruise Line**: RCL
- **Date of Cruise**: Aug 2013
- **Booked through Ship**: Yes
- **Duration (approx)**: 3 hrs
- **Would recommend to other Special Needs Families?**: Yes
- **Comments**: The boat was a large catamaran with plenty of space. The staff was wonderful and one of them even offered to watch our son on the boat so we could venture off by ourselves and snorkel. (we didn’t) Our son threw his goggles somewhere to the bottom of the reef & staff went looking for and found them!

**St. Martin Jeep Safari Tour**

- **Cruise Line**: RCL
- **Date of Cruise**: Jun 2011
- **Booked through Ship**: Yes
- **Duration (approx)**: 6 hrs
- **Would recommend to other Special Needs Families?**: Yes
- **Comments**: We Loved this one as well. Luke really liked it. They give you the option of the top on of off the Jeep. It was hot so we kept ours on with air conditioning. This tour took us ALL over the island. We saw both the Dutch and French side. It took us off road a bit as well which Luke loved and said roller coaster etc. If a child loves cars and rides, this is a great tour. They narrated through a walki talki about the island. We stopped in Margot but it was pretty far where we parked to the stores etc. That could be better. Luke did get to “shop” a bit and got a few items. He likes to find odd objects. :) They also took us to Orient beach where we had a couple of hours to get lunch (great restaurant there that has things for special needs like Luke) and we also swam on the beach. They also stopped at the airplane beach so you can see the planes come in and out right on the beach. This was a really great tour. ON the longer side but with the Jeep you can always take alone time in the car. Luke took a DVD player in case he needed his alone time in the car. He never used it at all. He loved the entire trip.

**Tour of St. Maarten**

- **Cruise Line**: RCL
- **Date of Cruise**: May 2014
- **Booked through Ship**: Yes
- **Duration (approx)**: 2 Hrs
- **Would recommend to other Special Needs Families?**: Yes
- **Comments**: WONDERFUL!!! The transportation was air conditioned, the driver had a microphone and you could easily hear him. He was knowledgeable and he explained everything in a calm and even toned manner.

**Wave Runner**

- **Cruise Line**: RCL
- **Date of Cruise**: Jun 2011
- **Booked through Ship**: No
- **Duration (approx)**: 30 min
- **Would recommend to other Special Needs Families?**: Yes
- **Comments**: Yes, I would recommend this to other families with someone on the spectrum. We mainly hung out on the beach off the port in St Maarten. There were wave runners to rent right off the beach. All three of my kids got a chance to go for a ride with me on the wave runner. My two sons, 5years old and 13 years old, had a lot of fun going for a ride on the wave runner! My 5 year old Aspie was even cheering on the ride!