Property Accessibility for people with mobility issues.

The Beachcomber Cottages are a cluster of four separate homes, two of which have been raised to accommodate for coastal flooding. The Sandpiper Suite (Room 91) is an oceanfront vacation rental on the first floor, and it is accessible. Its parking space is in front of the house, on a sturdy, paved driveway. A paved sidewalk goes from the parking space on the west side of the house to the doorway on the east side (that is the side facing the ocean). The Sandpiper Suite is on the first floor of the house. It has a roll in shower, assistive handgrips, wide bathroom door, and rollunder sink with tilting mirror. If you require other items, such as a shower bench, or a low entry bed, please inform us prior to your stay, and we will be happy to work with you to assure a pleasant and comfortable visit.

If you have accessibility issues, please call us and inquire about accommodations that will suit your needs. You can reach us 24 hours a day at 904.640.1863, or by emailing beachcomber@bayfrontmarinhouse.com.

In addition, if you have mobility questions, we have written two blogs outlining mobility tips for St. Augustine, Florida. One outlines general information, such as parking (you can park free in any city owned space with a handicapped license plate or hang tag), beach usage (you can borrow beach-access wheelchairs from the county, available on a first-come first served basis), handicapped accessible restroom locations throughout the city, and sources to rent medical equipment in town. The second blog details accessibility of the town's many historic attractions. You can download them in a pdf file below.

We are committed to making your visit to St. Augustine as special and stress free as possible. If there are any other questions, please let us know. If we don't know the answer, we'll find it for you.

For accessibility questions, contact

Mike and Sandy Wieber
Beachcomber Cottages on Vilano
904.495.4245
beachcomber@bayfrontmarinhouse.com

Wheelchair Accessibility Tips

St. Augustine gets a lot of press for its charms as one of America's most walkable cities, but what if accessibility is a problem for you? Can guests with mobility challenges still enjoy the city?

You bet they can! My grandmother is in a wheelchair, and I was surprised how many wheelchair accessible accommodations there were in town. I also was surprised how difficult it is to get some of this information online, so I thought I would share it with everyone in case you are traveling with someone who is in a wheelchair, a walker, or who just has difficulties walking distances.

Here are a couple of my tips to make your trip to St. Augustine awesome and accessible:

Parking

Parking a car can be difficult in St. Augustine, but our city really tries to roll out the welcome mat for visitors with accessibility issues. If you have a valid wheelchair hang tag on your car, or a designated license plate, you can park at *any* metered space in town (be careful not to park in the spaces reserved for residents–they are marked with RESERVED painted on the space). And no, you don't need to feed the meter. If a meter reader misses your license plate, and you do get a ticket (hey…even meter readers make mistakes), you can call the parking authority and tell them that you have a valid wheelchair pass. They will check the photo they took of your car, and if they see that they simply missed the tag, they will tear the ticket up.

Restaurant Access

Although many of our restaurants are in historic buildings, a lot of them are accessible. For my grandmother's visit, we chose restaurants that had parking lots connected to them to make getting in and out easier.

The Raintree is an upscale restaurant in an old Victorian House. It has a large parking lot, and the handicapped space is right next to their brick sidewalk. The parking lot itself is stone, which can be hard to navigate with a wheelchair (and almost impossible with a walker), so try to park as close to the sidewalk as possible. You can sit outside on the lit patio or inside the charming dining room. The dining room has several levels (it is an old house, remember), so talk to a staff member about your needs when you make reservations. The staff was *exceptionally* easy to work with when we visited. Once inside, try the beef wellington, a local favorite. This local, however, likes an all lobster meal–starting

with the lobster and red pepper bisque, and then the Veal San Marco, a veal dish with shrimp and mushrooms in a lobster infused sherry sauce. Not a shellfish fan? The pork schnitzel is really good too. 102 San Marco Avenue. www.raintreerestaurant.com. 904.824.7211.

LaNouvelle is one of St. Augustine's newer restaurants, and it has easy mobility ramps right into the dining room–plus extra easy points for a paved parking lot! One of Michael Lugo's restaurant concepts, LaNouvelle offers a very elegant service, and the food is beautiful. They serve a lovely brunch on Sundays as well—the quiche is exceptional. 102 Bridge Street. www.preservedrestaurant.com 904.679.4940.

The Ice Plant. Located in St. Augustine's old ice plant, this restaurant has a stone lot, cement access ramps, and a large elevator inside. The Ice Plant is designed with a 1920's vibe, and the friendly wait staff plays along with period clothing (and even facial hair!) There is a gift shop on the first floor for the St. Augustine Distillery, and it's aisles are nice and wide, making it easy to browse. The Ice Plant menu changes frequently, but their fish sandwiches are always great, and their shrimp and grits (served in a cast iron pan) are some of my favorite in town when they are on the menu. Plus, they have a great drink menu (remember the distillery right next door?) and they even have house-made sodas. The lemon/lime is my fave! 904.829.6553.

The Reef. Located on Vilano Beach—just north on A1A--the Reef has a conveniently located parking lot, as well as a ramp into the restaurant. Again, the restaurant is on multiple levels–there is a step down into tables near the bar, and another step to the outside seating, so ask for the dining room to the left when you first walk in (again, I would make a reservation directly with the restaurant and make your preferences clear). We ate there and had a wonderful view of the ocean, plus the room seemed a little more formal since it was away from the bar (the more formal the better for my grandmother). I love anything that comes with their datil pepper sauce, so I often find myself just having shrimp cocktail for lunch, and their shrimp and grits are excellent. The hub and his entire family love the shrimp and lobster risotto–a rich and creamy dish that tastes like a special occasion! 4100 Coastal Highway. www.thereefstaugustine.com 904.824.8008.

Café Alcazar is a great lunch spot in the Lightner Museum. The Lightner is housed in the old Alcazar Hotel, and the café is located in the hotel's old indoor pool. As a bonus, this casual eatery typically has a musician of some kind, either a pianist or a guitarist…and nothing sounds as beautiful as a song played inside a cement pool! Café Alcazar has a parking *space* on the east side of the building, as well as a city lot behind it. We parked in the handicapped space on the side and entered the café through the back (you usually enter through the pool). It was super easy to get there, and a great place to have lunch. Grandmom

and I had salads, but their brick oven pizzas are a great option too. 25 Granada Street. www.thealcazarcafe.com. 904.825.9948.

Delivery

We didn't eat at too many lunch spots, mostly because it was easier to spend lunch at the cottage. But that doesn't mean that we cooked! Vilano has a great take-out option–the 180 Vilano Grill (904.827.1009). At 180 (as we fondly call it), we like the blackened fish sandwich, the eggplant rollatinis, and they have some of the best pizza in town.

PLEASE NOTE: There are lots of other handicapped accessible restaurants in town. I have only included the ones where I physically navigated the wheelchair through the space. This is definitely not a comprehensive list! If there is a restaurant you're interested in, feel free to contact us–I'm happy to go check out anything specific for our guests…whether that means checking the parking, measuring openings, or whatever.

Getting Around

If you are mobile, but just can't walk for long distances, there are lots of great ways to get around town. There are pedicabs, and golf carts, and of course cabs and Uber. We also have two trolley companies–the Green Trolley and the Red Train. Both of them run a loop through town, stopping at many area attractions. If you're a first time visitor to St. Augustine, I often suggest riding the entire loop to get a feel for the town's layout, then using the trolley as transportation between stops (you can get on and off as often as you like). The Green Trolley has several trolleys with wheelchair lifts. One thing to remember: both trolleys stop at 5:00pm, so while it's a great way to get around, you'll need another plan for evening travel. Once the sun goes down, I recommend the pedicabs–the drivers are all friendly and funny, and it's a fun way to zip around our narrow streets!

One of our favorite guests is paralyzed from the neck down; he and his wife have come about five times now and she always comments on how all of the sidewalks have cut ins for the wheelchair. She also shared with me that even the brick streets aren't too bad for pushing the chair because the bricks are very close together. And going up and down the streets is such a great way to see St. Augustine!

Hitting the Beach

With over 40 miles of beaches in St. John's County, there are lots of great places to enjoy the Vitamin Sea. Of course, walking in the sand can be challenging! Our county has three wheelchairs specially designed to roll on the sand…they are fat,

plastic wheels. Rentals are free and they will even drop the chair off to you on the beach. Just call the St. Johns County Beach Services Department at (904) 209-0752 to request one of the three available chairs for your visit. They are given out on first come, first serve basis. You can choose delivery (applies to any beach in St. Johns County) or pick one up at 901 Pope Road, St. Augustine, FL 32080.

If you can get to the beach yourself, but don't have the muscle needed to plant an umbrella, you can rent them from Barney's Beach Service on St. Augustine Beach. Just head over to St. Augustine Beach, then give them a call with your location. They'll set up beach chairs, umbrellas, and even deliver bikes and surfboards. And they usually can set you up within the hour. www.barneysbeachservice.com. 904.461.1422.

Rent Medical Equipment

If you require specific medical equipment, and don't want to travel with it (or if you're not able to travel with it), we recommend Ward Medical Services. They offer wheelchairs, walkers, lifts, benches, and other home medical supplies. www.wardmedicalservices.com. 904.794.9600.

Other Rentals

Both my grandmother and my husband's grandmother need power recliners to sleep. We found that we could rent accessible accommodations from the local Rent-A-Center. Unfortunately, we had to rent them for a full month no matter how long we actually needed them, but spending a couple hundred dollars was totally worth it as it allowed them both to enjoy their stay and get a good night's sleep! 904.797.6866.

If you have mobility issues, and you're planning a trip to our inn, please call us at 904.824.4301 or email us at info@bayfrontmarinhouse.com. We're happy to answer any specific questions, or help you plan your trip.

Wheelchair Accessible Attractions

Using a wheelchair or scooter doesn't mean you can't enjoy lots of the attractions in St. Augustine! Although many of our buildings are historic, a surprising number of attractions are wheelchair accessible…and many even offer discounted admission prices.

If you want to drive to an attraction, remember that you can park almost ANYWHERE in the downtown area for free with a handicapped license plate or hang tag. That includes all city meters, and city parking lots. The only exclusions are spots marked "Residential Parking Only" and privately-owned lots. Privately owned lots are typically marked with a sign at the entrance.

NOTE: Prices, hours, and current policies for the attractions listed below have been included for your convenience. Please check all the details before you go—we've included a phone number to make it easy to confirm any of the information included on this page. Thank you—have a great time!

Alligator Farm. The Alligator Farm is all on one level (or connected with ramps), and is accessible to guests in wheelchairs and scooters. There is handicapped parking in their lot, marked with signs and right next to the entrance. People in wheelchairs receive a 50% discount off the $25.99 entrance fee. 999 Anastasia Boulevard. www.alligatorfarm.com. 904.824.3337.
BONUS: If you don't have a wheelchair, but worry that you could tire during your walk through the farm, the Alligator Farm has wheelchairs that you can borrow for free! If you borrow one of their wheelchairs, the discount does not apply.

The Beach. There are so many things to do in St. Augustine, it's sometimes easy to forget that we have more than 40 miles of beaches!!
St. Johns County has three wheelchairs with very fat tires and plastic bearings that are specially designed to roll on the sand. The rentals are FREE but first come first served. Request one of the wheelchairs for your visit by calling the St. Johns County Beach Services Department at 904.209.0752. Pick the chair up at 901 Pope Road (on Anastasia Island), or request delivery at any beach in the county.

You also can visit some of the beaches that allow vehicles on the beach. Beaches that typically allow access to four wheel drive vehicles are: St. Augustine Beach, Butler Beach, Crescent Beach, Porpoise Point and Vilano Beach. Car access is occasionally limited due to beach replenishment projects, or heavy erosion, so it's best to check first.

NOTE: St. Augustine Beach is a separate city from St. Augustine. You cannot park at their meters for free.

Colonial Quarter is a living museum showcasing life in St. Augustine in the 1740s. Various exhibits such as blacksmithing and boatbuilding demonstrate the life of Spanish colonists. The Colonial Quarter also has several restaurants, a retail shop, and a great live music venue under a huge spready oak.
All parts of the Colonial Quarter are accessible, including the Colonial Experience tour. The only attraction inaccessible is the lookout tower, which is at the top of three flights of stairs. All entrances to the Colonial Quarter are on the ground level.

Park in the Castillo de San Marco parking lot, across Avenida Menendez. 33 St. George Street. www.colonialquarter.com. 888.991.0933.

Old Town Trolley Tours. We all call it the "green trolley" here in town (we're a simple group, obviously), but the official name is "Old Town Trolley Tours". It's the green and orange multi-car trolley that runs a continuous loop around the city, stopping at all of the big attractions in town (you can see a complete list of their 23 stops at www.trolleytours.com/st-augustine#home-section), and giving a nice overview of the

town's history. According to their website, the tour conductors point out 100 sites of interest during the tour.

The Green Trolley has recently been outfitted with wheelchair friendly lifts in several of their cars. To utilize it, you have to go to their first stop, located at 167 San Marco. There is ample parking at that location, including reserved handicapped spots. If you are in a wheelchair, you can't hop on/hop off throughout town, but you can take the tour.

Your ticket to the Green Trolley also gives you access to a trolley that goes to the lighthouse, alligator farm, as well as Anastasia beaches. No discounts for wheeled guests–but discounted tickets can typically be found on their website. 167 San Marco. www.trolleytours.com/st-augustine. 844.388.645

The Lightner Museum, with its seemingly endless collection of Victorian goodies, is one of my favorites! Any of these things strike your fancy? Music boxes and Victrolas,Tiffany glass, fine art paintings, a mummy, buttons, salt and pepper shakers, cut glass serving pieces, taxidermy, a mummy, human hair art, sculptures, furniture…and I'm sure I'm forgetting plenty!
The Lightner has an elevator, providing access to all four floors. Parking is available behind the Lightner, and in a lot on the western side of the building.

Wheelchair patrons get in free. 75 King Street. www.lightnermuseum.org. 904.824.2874.

St. Augustine Lighthouse. Unlike the Lightner Museum, the lighthouse does not have an elevator–it has 219 steps. However, you can see the views on a television at the bottom of the stairs (which is also great for anyone who isn't comfortable with a lot of stairs or small spaces). Even if you can't climb the tower, there is plenty to do.
The lighthouse campus has numerous new buildings, all of which are accessible to both wheelchairs and scooters. In addition, the first floor of the lightkeeper's house is also accessible. The lighthouse is beautiful, but this attraction has so much more than just the lighthouse–including displays on the shrimping industry in St. Augustine, historic discovery through archeology, and information on marine exploration.

Plus, guests in wheelchairs get in free–woohoo! 100 Red Cox Road. www.staugustinelighthouse.org. 904.829.0745.

Pirate Museum. Pirates had a huge impact on the history of St. Augustine–from Drake's Raid in 1586 to Searle's Sack in 1688 to the pirate gatherings held today, swashbucklers have left a huge imprint on our town.
So, it was awesome when Pat Croce opened a pirate museum here in 2010. Today, the museum is 5000 square feet of exciting and engaging exhibits–from realistic animatronics showing some of the maladies pirates contracted while sailing the seven seas, to authentic artifacts from Croce's personal collection. It's a great museum for kids (when my nephews were younger, they loved being able to "fire" a canon), but it's fascinating for adults as well.

The pirate museum is accessible via a ramp from Avenida Menendez. Park across the street, in the Castillo de San Marco parking lot (handicapped parking is available). 12 S. Castillo Drive. www.thepiratemuseum.com. 877.467.5863.

Ripley's Believe It or Not is an attraction within an attraction. I like it because it's in the old Castle Warden Hotel, and a lot of the building's beautiful architecture is intact. When you're not looking at the old fireplaces and moldings, you'll see all sorts of weirdness– shrunken heads, medieval torture instruments, the world's tallest man.
Ripley's is accessible to both wheelchairs and scooters. They have a wheelchair lift on all three floors. There are a few tight corners that are harder for larger motorized scooters to get through but other than that the rest of the museum is fully accessible. Park in marked spaces next to the front doors.

An admission ticket to Ripley's Believe It or Not Museum at regular price is $15.99 for adults. They offer discounts for seniors, active duty military, and veterans. The senior discount/bogo is buy the first ticket at full price and get the second for $10. The military discount is 50% of the general admission to Ripley's Believe It or Not and this discount applies to them, their spouse and immediate children. Bring your military identification for the discount. 19 San Marco Street. www.ripleys.com/staugustine. 904.824.1606.

St. Augustine Distillery. While Ripley's is a great place to take the kids, the distillery is all about the grown ups. It's housed in an old Ice Plant, and one side of the building is one of my favorite restaurants and the other side is the distillery. The distillery makes small batch rum, gin, vodka, and bourbon. The tour shows how they are all made, all the way from growing the sugar cane, wheat, corn, and citrus, to making the blend, to distilling the spirits, to distributing them around the state.
Tour the distillery, which is accessible to both wheelchairs and scooters, throughout the day. There are stairs that lead from the tasting room to the gift shop–but you can access the gift shop from a ramp on the Ice Plant restaurant side of the building. Park in the lot next to the building; handicapped spaces are located on the north side of the building.

The tour is free and first come, first served. Even better–it also includes samples! 112 Riberia Street. www.staugustinedistillery.com. 904.825.4962.

Villa Zorayda. There are lots of Spanish influences around town, but Villa Zorayda may be the quirkiest. Built by an eccentric millionaire (seriously, are there any other kinds?) in 1883, Villa Zorayda is a scaled down replica of a section of the Alhambra Palace in Spain. In addition, there are all kinds of unusual things, including a 2400 year old rug made of cat hair (and you thought you needed to vacuum at your house).
Villa Zorayda is only accessible on the first floor, but that offers a great place to appreciate the Moorish details. Plus, guests in wheelchairs get in free. 83 King Street. www.villazorayda.com. 904.829.9887.

Below is a PDF that you can print to bring with you for your trip of the above tip.
Wheelchair Accessible Attractions (1)Download - *** Designer Instructions I have provided the PDF of this to link to**.