

# *5 Autism-friendly Travel Destinations*



**Holidays are important for experiencing new things and developing crucial life skills, but autistic people can find leaving familiar spaces unnerving. Thankfully, there is an increasing number of airports, hotels, cruises, and attractions that are adapting to cater for neurodiverse travellers.**

A celebration of travel and the benefits it brings us, World Tourism Day is here. For those who live with autism or care for someone with ASD, travelling may not be something we do very regularly. But it needn't be that way.

As the world becomes more understanding of neurodiversity, destinations are beginning to offer programmes or services to make adventure more accessible.

Here are five autism-friendly attractions around the world.

## Disney theme parks

*Where: Paris, Florida, Tokyo, and more*

Disney is one of the happiest places on Earth – and that goes for autistic people too. There are Disney parks and resorts all around the world, each offering a range of services for guests with cognitive, mobility, visual, and hearing disabilities. For autistic guests in particular, the Disability Access Service lets you arrange a return time for each ride so you don't have to wait around in line. There's also a handy guide that highlights which rides might be overstimulating, and quiet zones for anyone who might need a sensory break.

## Beaches Resorts

*Where: The Caribbean*

For families who enjoy more tropical destinations, Beaches Resorts are proud to run the Caribbean's first autism-friendly kids' camps.



Staff regularly receive competency training in sensory awareness, motor skills, social skills, emotional awareness, and more, so they're well equipped to cater for autistic and non-verbal children. Parents can also work with Beaches to customise programming with their child's specific needs in mind, and one-on-one care is available if necessary.

## **The Lake District**

*Where: North-west England*

With wide open spaces and plenty of quiet, the countryside is always a good idea for autistic-friendly holidays. The Lake District is an ideal destination, with plenty of attractions and activities to choose from. When the sun is out, there are countless hiking routes, cycling trails, and fishing spots to enjoy. If it starts to rain, head indoors to a historic house or museum. Whatever the weather, there's plenty of fun to be had.



## **Norwegian Cruise Line**

*Where: All around the world*

Don't let the name confuse you - Norwegian Cruise Line offers adventures in almost every major holiday destination. As well as allowing service dogs onboard, they have special assistance coordinators who will help you plan an autism-friendly trip before you pack your bags. Once you've set sail, trained staff are on-hand to help holidaymakers with mobility, hearing, vision, or other challenges.

## **Myrtle Beach**

*Where: South Carolina, USA*

If you'd like to visit the US, Myrtle Beach should be first on your list. Not only is it widely considered one of the best family vacation spots in America, but it's also a certified autism centre. Something that makes Myrtle Beach ideal for autistic people is the Champion Autism Network card - a pass that helps families avoid overstimulation by letting them skip lines, get private seating, or avoid check-in at hotels.