

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.

1.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.

2.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.

3.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.

4.The Corazon Theater is a beautifully restored movie theater. It's actually more than a movie theater, as it also hosts elegant teas, special events, and comedy and story nights. It even has a nice cafe that serves sandwiches and beer and wine...and they will bring it to your seat if the movie has already started. Plus, it's a great place to escape the heat!

The entire theater is wheelchair accessible, with a gentle ramp from the café and bar area to the screening rooms. Handicapped accessible parking is across the street in the city parking lot. Admission is \$9 regularly, student/seniors/military for \$7, and \$6 for matinees. Costs for other events varies; check their website for more information. 36 Granada Street. www.corazoncinemaandcafe.com. 904.679.5736.

5.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

6.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.

7.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.

8.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). Tickets to the Pirate Museum are \$14.99 per person. 12 S. Castillo Drive. www.thepiratemuseum.com. 877.467.5863.

9. 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—shrunk 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.

10. 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.

11. 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.